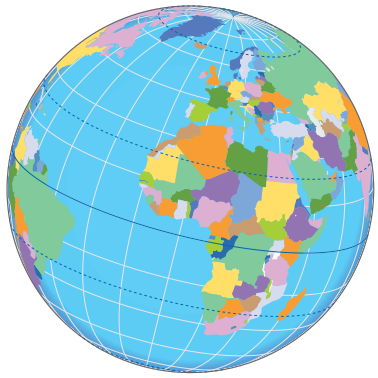


Mapping The World:

Lines of
Latitude and
Longitude



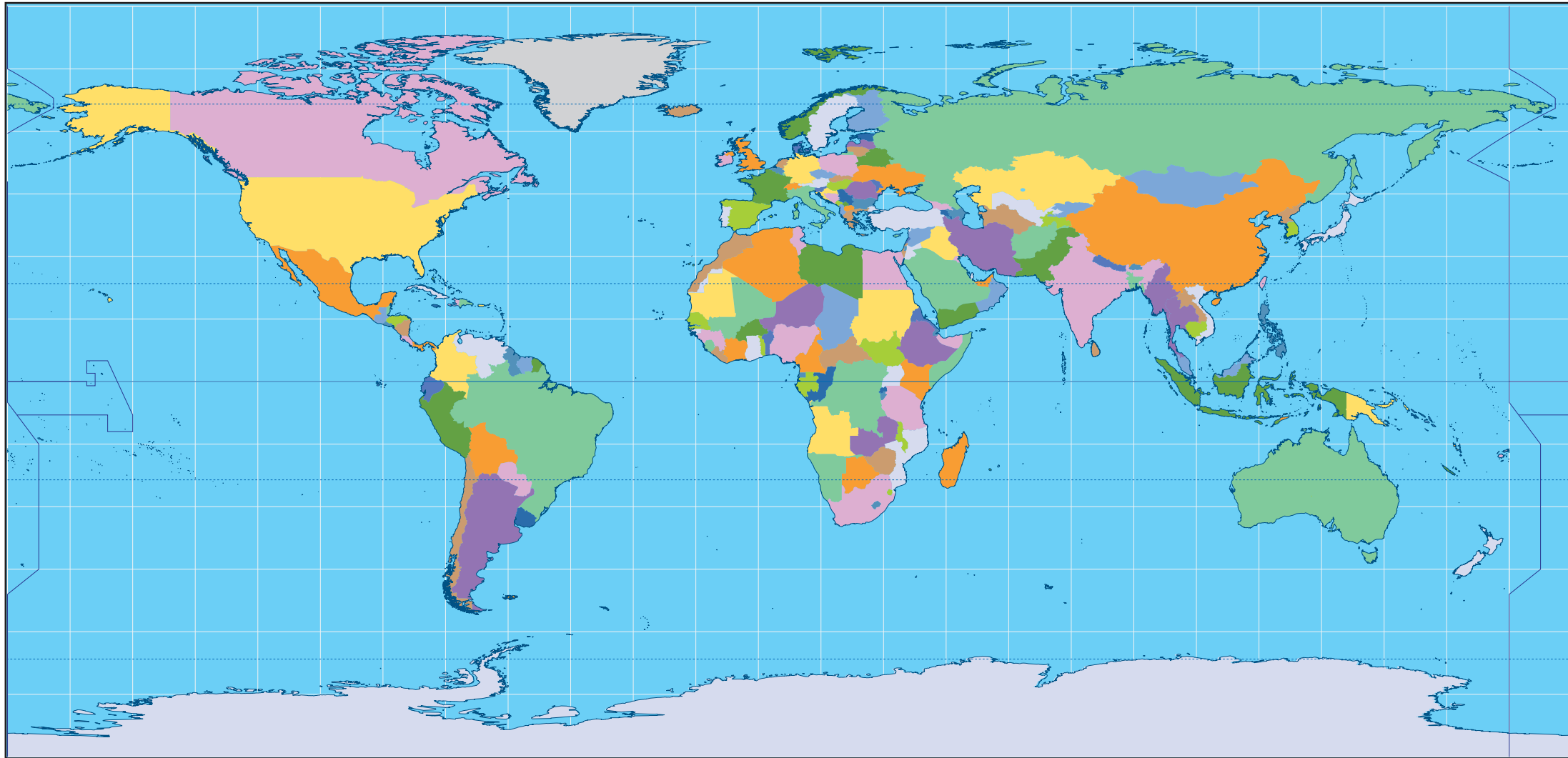
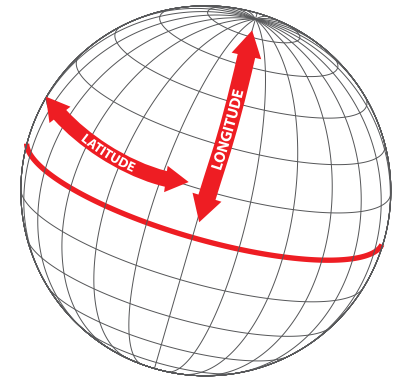


Imagine peeling off the outer layer of the Earth's surface and laying it out flat. You would have a giant map of the world!

The vertical lines you see on a world map are lines of longitude.

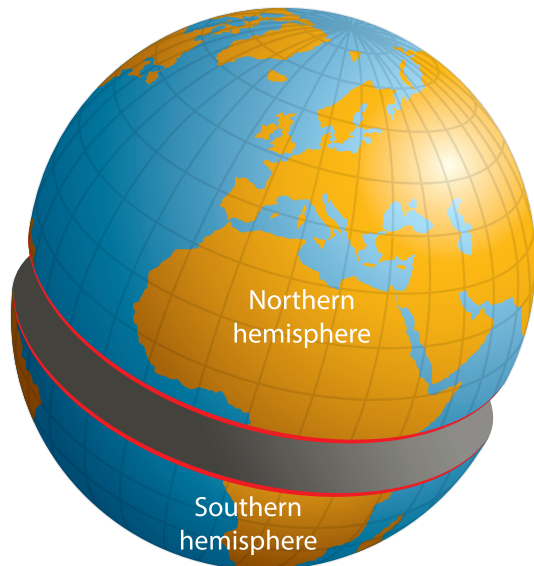
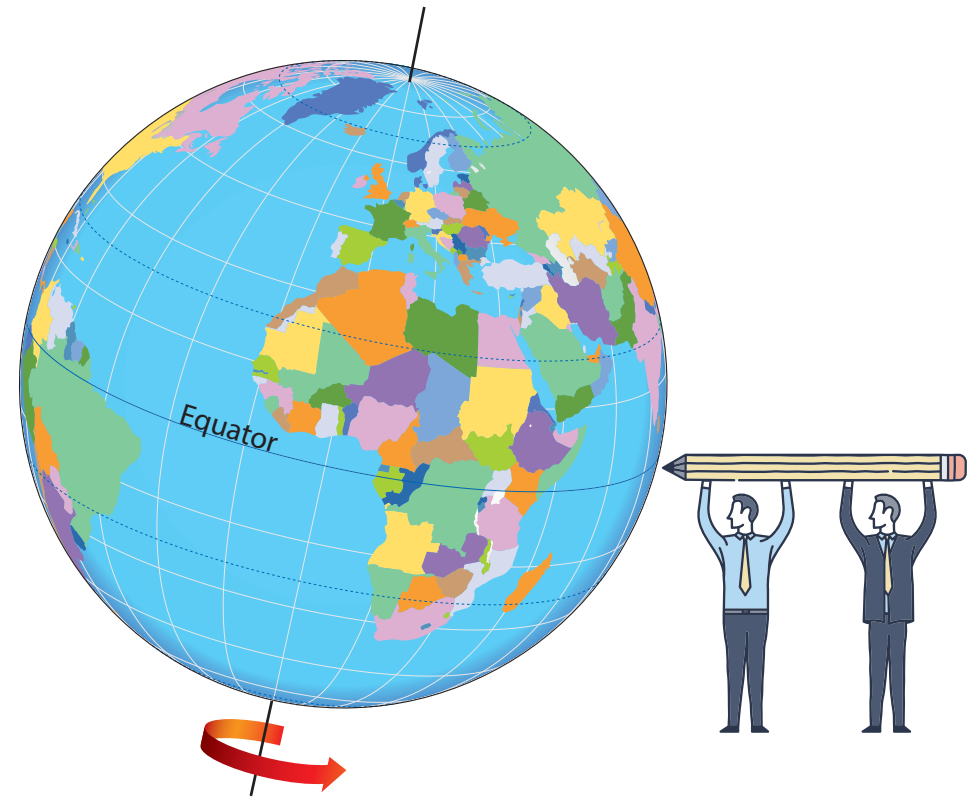
The horizontal lines are lines of latitude.

The line that divides the planet into two hemispheres is the equator.

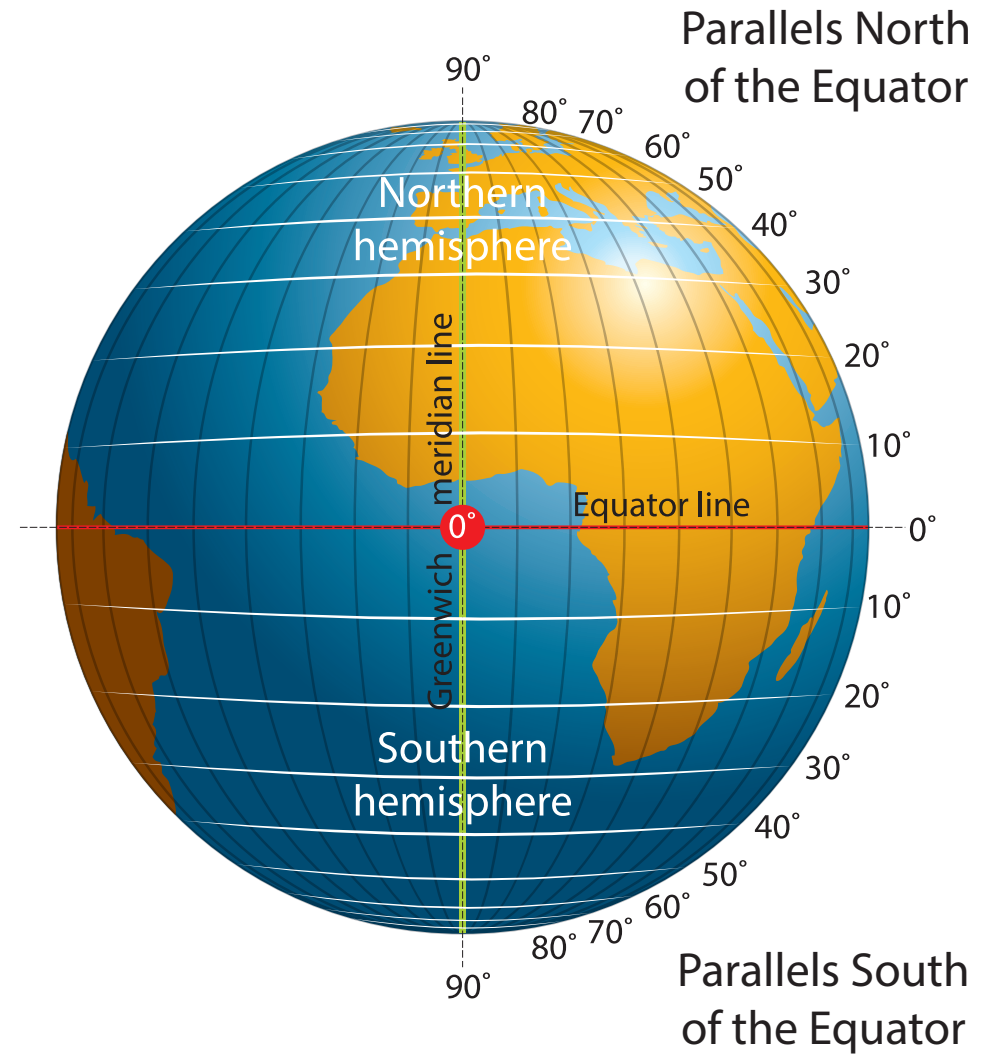
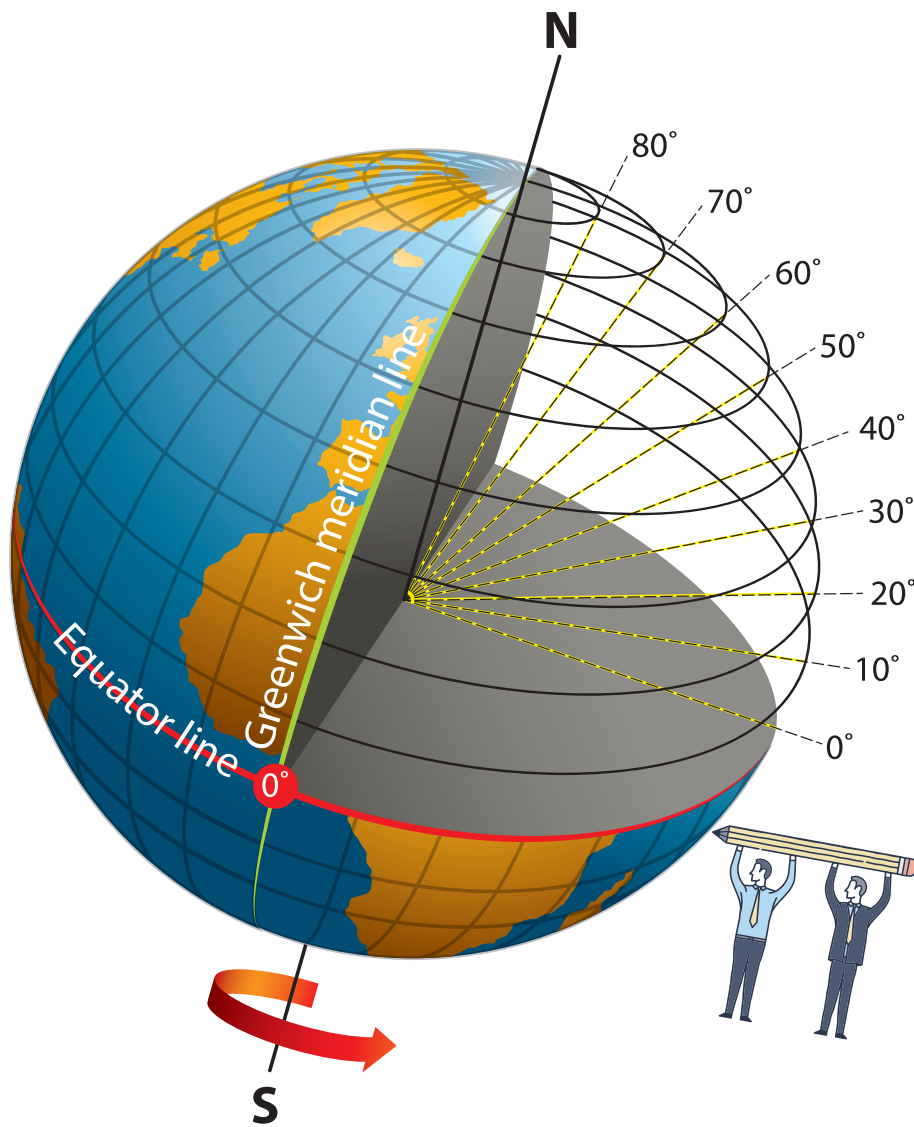


The Equator

The equator is an imaginary line that marks the widest point of the globe. It is the region that receives the most light from the sun and so is the hottest part of the planet. If you held a pencil at this point and spun the Earth a line would form.



The equator is the line of 0° latitude. The half of the globe above this line is called the northern hemisphere. The half below the equator is called the southern hemisphere.



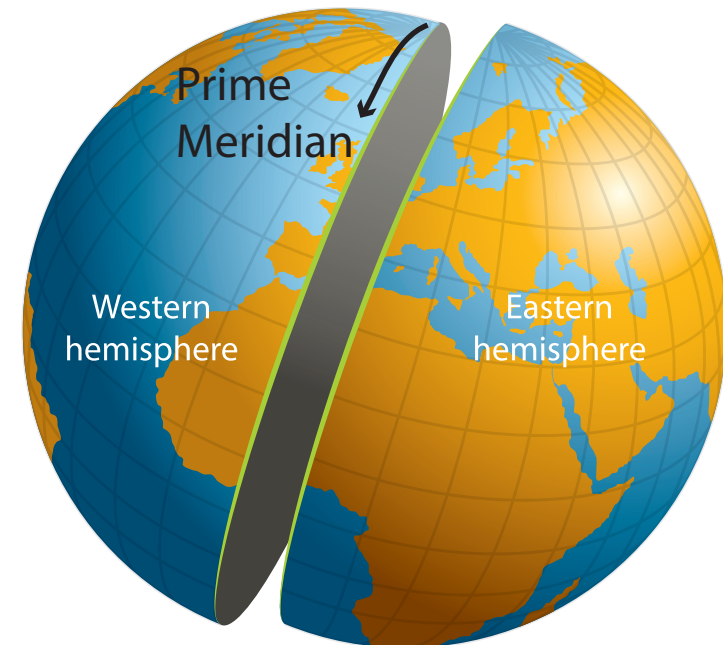
Lines of Latitude

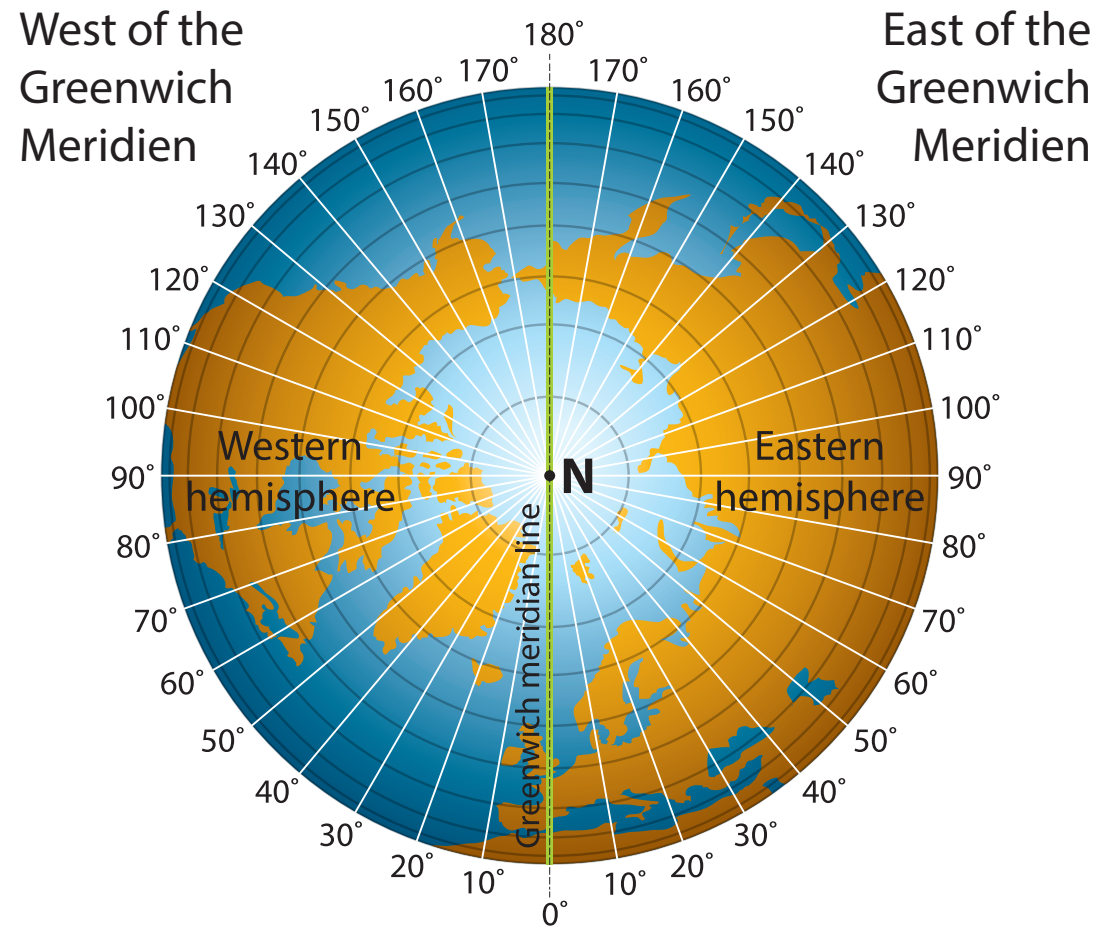
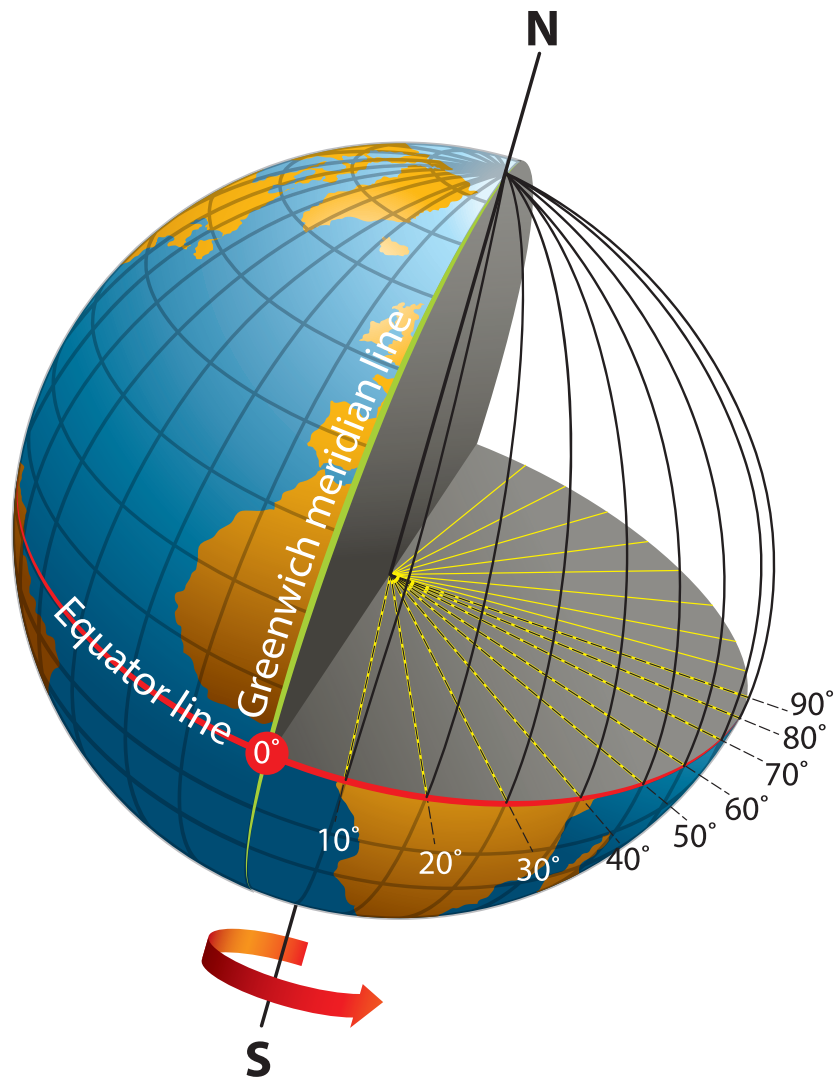
Lines of latitude are measured in degrees. Their positions are measured using angles. Imagine a line drawn from a point on the Earth's surface to the centre of the Earth and a line drawn from the equator to the centre of the Earth. The angle is measured between these two lines. If you held a pencil at a point on the Earth's surface and spun the Earth, a line of latitude would be drawn. Each line is called a parallel.

The Prime Meridian

A meridian is a line that is drawn from the north pole to the south pole. The Prime Meridian is an imaginary line drawn to mark 0° longitude. It was set in 1851, passing through the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, London. It is often referred to as the Greenwich Meridian.

The opposite meridian, called the antimeridian, is located at 180° longitude. Together with the Prime Meridian, this line divides the globe into the eastern and western hemispheres.





Lines of Longitude

Lines of longitude, also called meridians, are measured in degrees. Their positions are measured using angles. Imagine a line drawn along the surface of the globe from the north pole to the south pole, running through the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, London. This meridian was named the Prime Meridian (0°) and became the world standard for mapping and time keeping. Longitude measurements are taken east and west of the line up to 180°.