

**Atlas of Canada 6th Edition  
(archival version)**

**Geological Provinces**

The seventeen geological provinces of Canada are characterized by rocks and structures of varying types and ages. They form one shield (consisting of seven geological provinces), four platforms, three orogens, and three continental shelves. A geological province is an extensive region with distinctive characteristics that differentiate it from surrounding areas. A shield is an large area of very ancient rocks that have been levelled by erosion. A platform is that part of a continent covered by flat-lying or gently tilted rock and underlain by very ancient rocks consolidated during deformations that preceded deposition of the overlying platform layer. The rocks of the platform layer are usually sedimentary in nature. An orogenic belt is a part of the continent where the Earth's crust has been subjected to deformation leading to the creation of a mountain range. Finally, a continental shelf (or continental platform) represents the extension of a continent under an ocean. It is characterized by a very gentle slope and generally reaches depths of less than 200 metres, at which point there is a steep slope down to the ocean floor.

0 150 300 450 600 km

Lambert Conformal Conic Projection, Standard Parallels 49°N and 77°N

Geological Provinces	Populated Places	Boundaries
Appalachian Orogen	• 1 - 4 999	— International
Arctic Continental Shelf	• 5 000 - 49 999	— Provincial / Territorial
Arctic Platform	• 50 000 - 99 999	— Canada / Kalaallit Nunaat dividing line
Atlantic Continental Shelf	• 100 000 and greater	— EEZ (200 mile)
Bear Province	○ Provincial and Territorial Capital	— Subdivision by epoch and rock type
Churchill Province	★ National Capital	
Cordilleran Orogen		
Grenville Province		
Hudson Bay Platform		
Inuitian Orogen		
Interior Platform		
Nain Province		
Pacific Continental Shelf		
Slave Province		
Southern Province		
St. Lawrence Platform		
Superior Province		
Oceanic crust		
unknown		
Water Area		
Regions outside Canada		

**Source(s):**  
Geological Provinces  
Geological Map of Canada - Map D1860A [CD-ROM], 1997. Ottawa, Ontario: Geological Survey of Canada, Natural Resources Canada.

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