

Topography of the Ocean Floor

Continental Shelf

The continental shelf is the shallow seabed just adjacent to the continents.

Continental Slope

The continental slope is the part of the ocean floor that extends downward from the continental shelf.

Continental Rise

The continental rise is the gently sloping section of the continental margin. It connects the continent to the abyssal plain.

Abyssal Plain

The abyssal plain is a relatively flat area that covers most of the ocean floor and is the deepest part of the ocean floor.

Ocean Trench

The ocean trenches are deep valleys that cut into the ocean floor.

Volcanic Island

A volcanic island is a piece of land that forms by volcanic activity at the ocean floor and the resulting build up of lava.

Seamount

A seamount is a submerged underwater volcano.

Guyot

A guyot is an extinct undersea volcano. They have distinctive flat tops because they have been eroded by ocean waves.