



One big ocean

Background reading for teachers

This reading gives you the background for each slide, with sources you can check.

How much ocean?

The ocean covers about 71% of Earth's surface.¹ About 96.5% of all Earth's water is in the ocean, which the slides round to 97%.² Most of the fresh water is locked in ice caps and glaciers, and much of the rest is underground.

One ocean

The five named ocean basins, the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Southern and Arctic, are connected into one global ocean. The Philippines is an archipelago of more than 7,600 islands between the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea.

Salty seas

Seawater is about 3.5% salt. Rain slightly dissolves rocks on land, rivers carry the dissolved minerals to the sea, and evaporation removes water but leaves the salts behind.

Sources

1. NOAA. Ocean facts. oceanservice.noaa.gov
2. USGS Water Science School. How much water is there on Earth? usgs.gov

Free to use and share for education. Made by Marine Conservation Philippines. More free lessons: marineconservationphilippines.org/resources/teachers-resources/ Updated September 2026.