

Scotland's Landscape

We can divide Scotland's landscape into three areas: the Highlands and Islands, the Central Lowlands and the Southern Uplands.

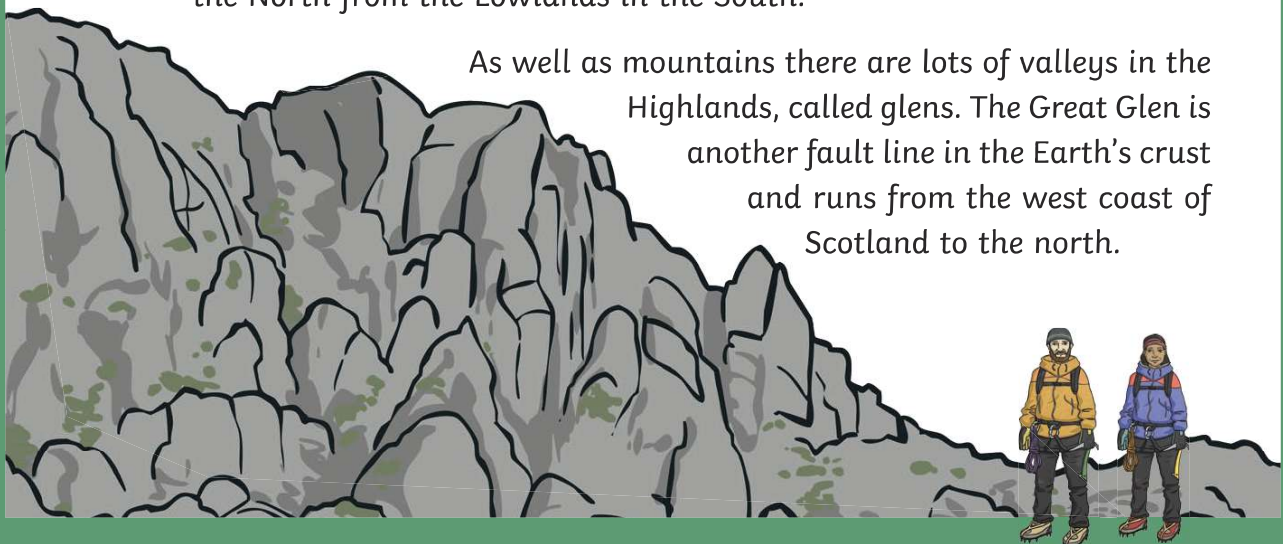
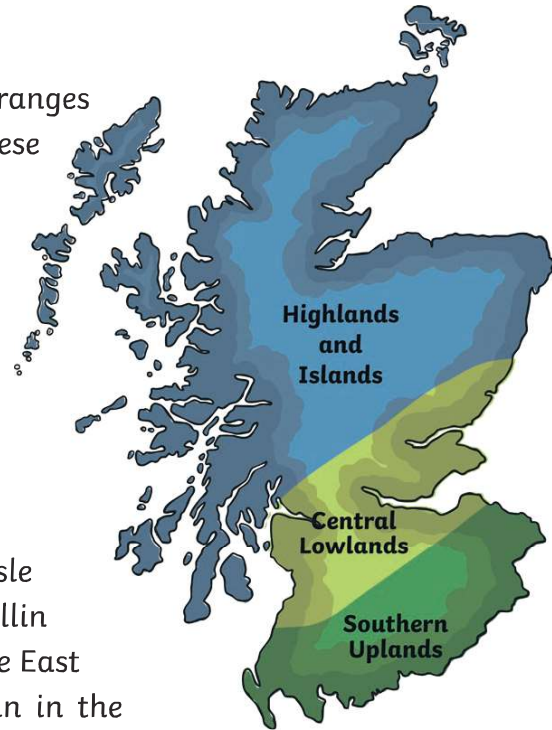
Highlands

The Highlands of Scotland have mountain ranges like the Grampians and the Cuillins. These mountains were carved by the movement of glaciers during the last ice age. Ben Nevis, near Fort William in the Highlands, is the highest mountain in Britain at 1344m above sea level. Fossils have been found in the North West Highlands from 750 million years ago. These are some of the oldest mountain ranges in the world.

The Cuillin mountains are found on the Isle of Skye. They are known as the Red Cuillin and the Black Cuillin. The Red Cuillin in the East are soft and rounded but the Black Cuillin in the West are sharp and jagged.

Highland mountains are popular in both summer and winter with walkers, climbers and skiers, and whilst they are beautiful, they can also be very dangerous places.

The Highland Boundary Fault is a break in the rock of the Earth's crust. This runs across Scotland from an area around Helensburgh in the south west to around Stonehaven in the north east. This fault line naturally divides the mountains in the North from the Lowlands in the South.



As well as mountains there are lots of valleys in the Highlands, called glens. The Great Glen is another fault line in the Earth's crust and runs from the west coast of Scotland to the north.

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Islands

Scotland has 790 islands, but only around ninety-five of these are inhabited.

The Shetland Isles are the most northerly part of Scotland and are nearer to Norway than they are to the Scottish mainland. There are around one hundred Shetland Islands with only sixteen of these being inhabited. The largest island, known as Mainland, is where the main town, Lerwick, is found. Other inhabited islands such as Yell, Unst, Bressay, Whalsay, East and West Burra and Trondra can be reached by ferry or road bridge. The highest point in Shetland is Ronas Hill at 450m.



Orkney is not one island but a group of around seventy islands between mainland Scotland and the Shetland Isles. Around eighteen of these islands have people living on them. The main town in Orkney is Kirkwall.



The Outer Hebrides are a group of islands off the north-west coast of mainland Scotland. The main islands are Lewis and Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, and Barra. The town with the largest population is Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis.

The Inner Hebrides are a group of islands between the coast of mainland Scotland and the Outer Hebrides. The largest islands in this group are Islay, Jura, Mull, Rum and Skye. Ferries travel between many of these islands and the mainland. The island of Skye can be reached by crossing the Skye road bridge.

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Central Lowlands

The Central Lowlands are found between the Highlands in the North and the Southern Uplands in the South. They stretch from the Firth of Forth on the East coast to the Firth of Clyde on the West coast. Scotland's capital city, Edinburgh, and Scotland's largest city, Glasgow, are found at either side of the Central Lowlands. Over half of Scotland's population live in this area.

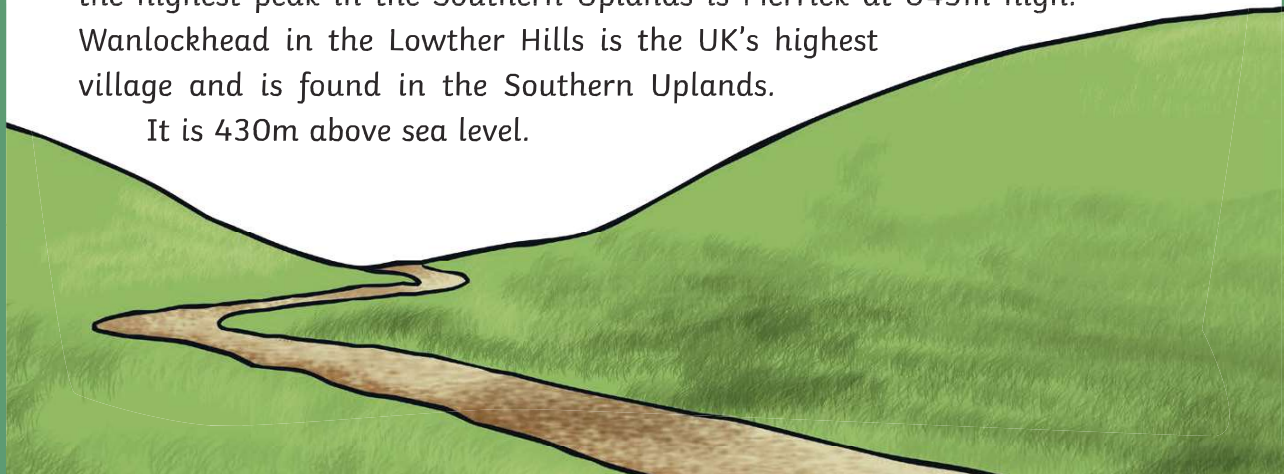


Southern Uplands

The Southern Uplands are the most southerly part of Scotland. These lands border England. The Uplands have ranges of hills like the Galloway Hills and the Lammermuir Hills. Although they are not as mountainous as the Highlands, the highest peak in the Southern Uplands is Merrick at 843m high.

Wanlockhead in the Lowther Hills is the UK's highest village and is found in the Southern Uplands.

It is 430m above sea level.



Scotland's Landscape Questions

1. Name the three areas of Scotland's landscape.

2. How were the mountains in the Highlands of Scotland made?

3. What is the highest mountain in Britain called, where is it and how high is it?

4. What is the difference between the Red Cuillin and the Black Cuillin mountains?

5. The Shetland Islands have close business and tourism as well as historic links with Norway. Why do you think this is the case?

6. How many Orkney Islands are uninhabited?

Scotland's Landscape Questions

7. Where are the Outer Hebrides and Inner Hebrides found?

8. Why do you think over half of Scotland's population lives in the Central Lowlands?

9. Name a range of hills found in the Southern Uplands.

10. What is the name of the highest village in the UK, where is it and how high above sea level is it?
