

## Maps

As you can remember, the Earth has the shape of an almost perfect sphere. So, the best way for us study the earth is with a globe. Here is a picture of a globe.



However, to study the Earth in detail we would need a globe so big, it would be impossible to build. So, because of this problem we use flat representations: **maps**. Below is a picture of a world map.



The maps we use in society today are divided into two categories: **Topographic Maps** and **Thematic Maps**.

### Topographic Maps

Topographic maps are maps that include info about the earth's physical surface and man made things such as buildings and roads. These maps serve as the base for all other maps. Here is a **topographic map** of Spain.



## **Thematic Maps**

Thematic maps show only one aspect. They have got unlimited aspects but some of the principal ones you will see are:

- **Climate** – Climate maps show info about precipitation, temperature, types of climate etc.
- **Economic Resources** – These maps show the economic resources of a place. Resources include agriculture, fishing, mining, industry, tourism and other income for a given place's economy.
- **Population** – They show info about the population of a given place. Population density, migrations, birth rates, death rates, urban centers and any info on a given place's population.
- **Political** – They include political borders, regions, capitals and the existing cities within.
- **Transportation** - They show highway, trains and airport systems.
- **Relieve** - These maps show the geographical features of a given place. Mountain chains with altitude, plains, plateaus, rivers, capes, gulfs, etc.