# Climate zones explain weather around the world

KS2 GEOGRAPHY Ages 9-12 ⏰ 3 min read

## What are climate zones?

A **climate zone** is an area on Earth with a particular type of weather and temperature that stays pretty much the same year round. Instead of thinking about weather (which changes day to day), climate zones help us understand long-term weather patterns across huge regions.

Imagine Earth is like a giant target with rings, where each ring has its own temperature and rainfall pattern. Scientists divide the world into different zones based mostly on how far they are from the **equator** — the imaginary line running around the middle of Earth.

Think of it like: a swimming pool where one end is warm and the other is cold. The water temperature changes depending on where you are in the pool, just like Earth's climate changes depending on where you are on the planet.

## The main climate zones

The **tropical zone** sits right around the equator and is hot and wet all year round. This is where rainforests grow, with places like the **Amazon** getting incredible amounts of rain.

The **temperate zones** are in the middle latitudes and have four proper seasons — spring, summer, autumn and winter. Most of Europe, North America and southern Australia sit here. These areas get a nice mix of warm and cold.

The **polar zones** are at the very top (Arctic) and very bottom (Antarctic) of Earth. They're freezing cold all year, covered in ice and snow, and have very little rain.

Between these main zones are **subtropical zones** (hot and dry, like deserts) and **Mediterranean zones** (warm summers and mild winters with some rain).

Think of it like: an oven where different shelves have different temperatures. The top shelf near the heat source (like the poles near cold air) is one temperature, while the

middle shelf (like the equator) is completely different.

## Why does this matter?

Understanding climate zones helps us know what animals and plants live where, and why people build their homes differently in different places. It also helps us predict how **climate change** might affect different regions around the world.