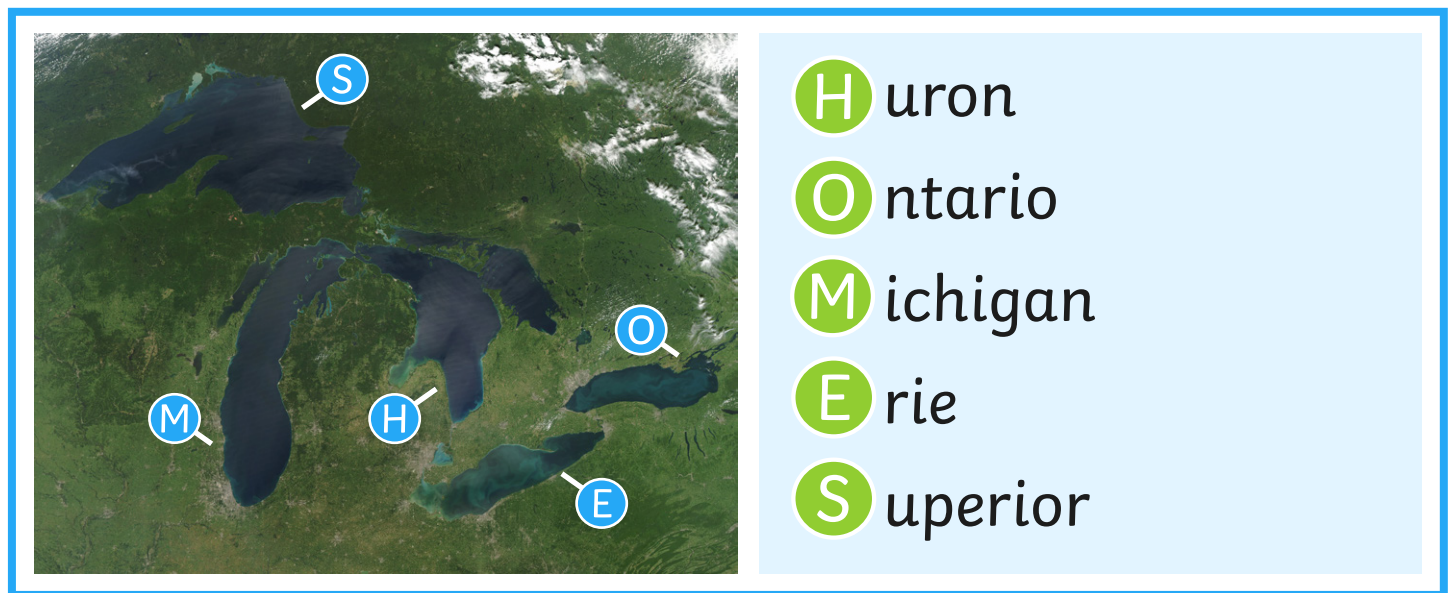


Canada's Great Lakes

The Great Lakes are located along the border of Canada and the United States. They include Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie and Lake Superior. The most popular mnemonic device used to remember the great lakes, is HOMES:



Why The Great Lakes are Important

Many Canadians and American's rely on The Great Lakes as a primary source for drinking water. The Great Lakes make up the planet's biggest freshwater ecosystem. They are home to many species of wildlife and big mammals such as moose and bobcats. A wide range of birds also call the area their home.

How The Great Lakes Were Formed

The last glacial period around 14,000 years ago marked the beginning of the formation of The Great Lakes.



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Lake Ontario

Length: 311km

Maximum Depth: 224m

Total Area: 18 960km²

Name

Lake Ontario was called Lake St. Louis in 1632. It was renamed Lac de St. Louis in 1656. In 1660, it was called Lacus Ontarius, which means 'beautiful lake' in Iroquois.

Location

Lake Ontario is between Ontario, Canada and New York, U.S.A. It connects with Lake Erie. Some larger Canadian cities are located on the shoreline of Lake Ontario, such as Toronto.

Lake Ontario is at the base of Niagara Falls.



Did you know?

- Lake Ontario is the smallest of The Great Lakes.
- Harbours along Lake Ontario are frozen between the months of December and April.
- There are many islands on the lake, including the Thousand Islands area, which is made up of 2,000 islands around the Canada-U.S.A. boarder. Many of these islands are very small, in fact too small to live on.
- Canals were built after the War of 1812, which helped with trade. Steamships used these canals and were the main source of shipment until the railroad was built.
- The first European to come to Lake Ontario was Étienne Brulé.

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Lake Superior

Length: 563km

Maximum Depth: 406m

Total Area: 82 100km²

Name

The French explorers called it lac superieur, which means 'upper lake' because it is above Lake Huron. The Chippewas called it kitchi-gummi which means 'great-water' or 'great-lake'.

Location

Lake Superior is located south of Ontario, Canada and north of Wisconsin and Michigan, U.S.A.



Did you know?

- Many shipwrecks have been found under Lake Superior and are protected. Recreational divers are able to explore these shipwrecks.
- It is the largest freshwater lake in the world (according to surface area).
- There is enough water in Lake Superior to fill all the Great Lakes and another three Lake Eries.
- It is the cleanest and clearest of all the Great Lakes.
- It has many natural resources.

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Lake Michigan

Length: 464km

Maximum Depth: 282m

Total Area: 57 800km²

Name

The explorer, Samuel de Champlain originally called Lake Michigan, the Grand Lac. It was later named 'Lake of the Stinking Water', 'Lac de Illinois' and then Lake Michigan. 'Michigan' comes from the Ojibwa word mishigami meaning 'great water' or 'large lake'.

Location

Lake Michigan is surrounded by Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana.



Did you know?

- Lake Michigan is the only Great Lake that is entirely within the United States.
- Many fisheries are on the lake, including salmon and trout. 43% of fishing in all the Great Lakes occurs in Lake Michigan.
- Petoskey stone (fossilized coral) is unique to the shores of Lake Michigan and is Michigan's state stone.
- There can be severe temperature changes along the shores of Lake Michigan.
- Lake Michigan is the biggest freshwater lake in the U.S.A.
- The sand on the beaches of Lake Michigan is commonly known as 'sugar sand' because it looks like grains of sugar. It is also called 'singing sand' because of the quartz in it making a squeaking noise when being walked on.

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Lake Huron

Length: 332km

Maximum Depth: 22m

Total Area: 59 600km²

Name

Lake Huron was called La Mer Douce, meaning fresh-water sea. It was later named after the Wyandot or Hurons, who lived around the lake.

Location

Lake Huron is located between Ontario, Canada and Michigan, U.S.A.



Did you know?

- In 1913, a huge storm (16 hours in length) hit Lake Huron. It was the biggest storm to ever hit any of the Great Lakes. Ten ships sank in total.
- Lake Huron is a popular recreational spot in the summer because of its warm temperatures (23 degrees Celsius).
- Lake Huron is surrounded by large forested areas. There are petrified trees underwater in the lake which are around 7,000 years old.
- Lake Huron was the first of the Great Lakes to be discovered by the French.

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Lake Erie

Length: 388km

Maximum Depth: 64m

Total Area: 25 700km²

Name

The word Erie comes from the Iroquois word Erielhonan, meaning 'long tail.' The First Nations who lived along the shores of Lake Erie called themselves 'the people of the long tail cat', after the mountain lions in that region.

Location

New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan (U.S. States) as well as Ontario, Canada all surround Lake Erie.



Did you know?

- Lake Erie is the shallowest of the Great Lakes.
- Numerous concord grapes grow in the rich soil around Lake Erie.
- Lake Erie is the warmest of the Great Lakes.
- It freezes over, more than any of the other Great Lakes, which makes it a popular location for ice-fishing.
- It is the most biologically productive of the Great Lakes, and the Lake Erie walleye fishery is widely considered the best in the world.
- The Erie Canal connects Lake Erie and the Hudson River. It was one of the first entries to the West and was used for transporting goods.

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