

# The Atlas

**Definition:** a bound collection of maps often including illustrations, informative tables, or textual matter.

## **Why do we need to know how to use an Atlas?**

In geography, history, social studies, and urban studies it is essential to be familiar with the world and its many features. Atlases provide us with a great deal of information that we can use in an interpretive or comparative fashion. For example, we may want to see what the relationship is between climate and population density or the relationship between agriculture and land elevation.

## **Types of maps that are shown in the Atlas**

<b><i>Political Maps</i></b>	Show national, provincial, and regional boundaries.
<b><i>Physical Maps</i></b>	Show relief (elevation), rivers, bodies of water, and other features.
<b><i>Climatic Maps</i></b>	Maps that are seasonal (January and July) and show such things as temperature, precipitation, snowfall, etc.
<b><i>Physiographic Maps</i></b>	Show regions such as hills, mountains, plains, lowlands, etc. Also show vegetation and soils.
<b><i>Demographic Maps</i></b>	Maps that focus on population features such as population density, ethnic composition, religious divisions, etc.
<b><i>Land Use Maps</i></b>	Maps that focus on human endeavors such as agriculture, mining, fishing, manufacturing, energy, etc.
<b><i>Topographical Maps</i></b>	Maps that focus on levels of land elevation.
<b><i>Historical Maps</i></b>	Maps that have an historical context and show specific time periods or eras.