

System

A group of things working together.

Atmosphere

The mixture of gasses surrounding a body in space.

Hydrosphere

The water of the Earth's surface.

Cryosphere

The frozen parts of the Earth's surface including ice caps, glaciers, ice sheets, and frozen ground.

Geosphere

The solid part of the Earth.

Biosphere

The area where life exists on Earth.

Crust

The thin, hard shell of the Earth (or any other planet).

Mantle

The middle, rocky layer of the Earth. The upper mantle is cooler and brittle. The lower mantle is hotter, soft, and fluid-like. Heat is transferred through the mantle by convection currents.

Core

The core is the metallic center of the Earth. Divided into an inner, solid core and an outer, liquid core. Iron and nickel make up most of the mass.

Solid

A state of matter where the particles are closely packed and don't move freely.

Liquid

A state of matter where the particles are closely packed and can move freely around and past each other.

Lithosphere

The hard, rigid outer portion of the Earth that is made of tectonic plates. The lithosphere is made of the crust and the upper, hard portion of the mantle.

Asthenosphere

The fluid portion of the mantle that the tectonic plates float on.

Plastic

Capable of being shaped. Malleable.

Residual heat

Heat that remains after turning off the heat source.

Radioactive decay

The breaking down of the atoms of one substance to turn into another accompanied by the release of energy.

Half-life

The time required for half of the atoms in a sample to undergo radioactive decay.