

Pangea
Supercontinent that existed about 250 million years ago.

Ridge
A long, narrow chain of hills or mountains.

Trench
A long, steep-sided valley on the ocean floor.

Sediment
Material that settles on the bottom of the ocean.

Polarity
The relative direction of a magnetic field.

Paleomagnetism
The study of the Earth's past magnetic fields as recorded in rock.

Core (drilling)
A long, cylindrical section of rock or sediment extracted with a special drill.

Tectonic
"Builder" or "builder of plates."

Plate (also called tectonic plate or lithospheric plate)
A section of the lithosphere that drifts as a unit on top of the asthenosphere.

Plate boundary
Any area where two plates meet.

Divergent boundary
An area where two plates are moving apart. New crust is being formed. A constructive area. Usually found underwater. Can be found on land where two plates of continental crust are moving apart.

Rift valley
A valley formed by diverging plates.

Convergent boundary
An area where two plates are moving toward each other. Usually a destructive area.

Subduction zone
An area where one plate sinks under another plate as a result of a collision.

Transform boundary
An area where plates slide past each other. Crust is neither created or destroyed.

Slab pull
The subducting region of a plate pulls the rest of the plate along with it.

Ridge push
The older, cooler, denser oceanic crust is pulled downhill by gravity.