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Contents

1	9	1
1.1	9.guide	1
1.2	9.guide/Arctic Ocean	1
1.3	9.guide/Geography (Arctic Ocean)	2
1.4	9.guide/Government (Arctic Ocean)	3
1.5	9.guide/Economy (Arctic Ocean)	3
1.6	9.guide/Communications (Arctic Ocean)	3

Chapter 1

9

1.1 9.guide

Texified version of data for Arctic Ocean.

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Arctic Ocean

1.2 9.guide/Arctic Ocean

Arctic Ocean

Geography (Arctic Ocean)
 Government (Arctic Ocean)
 Economy (Arctic Ocean)
 Communications (Arctic Ocean)

1.3 9.guide/Geography (Arctic Ocean)

Geography (Arctic Ocean)
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Location:

body of water mostly north of the Arctic Circle

Map references:

Arctic Region, Asia, North America, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area:

total area:

14.056 million km²

comparative area:

slightly more than 1.5 times the size of the US; smallest of the world's four oceans (after Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, and Indian Ocean)

note:

includes Baffin Bay, Barents Sea, Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, East Siberian Sea, Greenland Sea, Hudson Bay, Hudson Strait, Kara Sea, Laptev Sea, and other tributary water bodies

Coastline:

45,389 km

International disputes:

some maritime disputes (see littoral states); Svalbard is the focus of a maritime boundary dispute between Norway and Russia

Climate:

polar climate characterized by persistent cold and relatively narrow annual temperature ranges; winters characterized by continuous darkness, cold and stable weather conditions, and clear skies; summers characterized by continuous daylight, damp and foggy weather, and weak cyclones with rain or snow

Terrain:

central surface covered by a perennial drifting polar icepack that averages about 3 meters in thickness, although pressure ridges may be three times that size; clockwise drift pattern in the Beaufort Gyral Stream, but nearly straight line movement from the New Siberian Islands (Russia) to Denmark Strait (between Greenland and Iceland); the ice pack is surrounded by open seas during the summer, but more than doubles in size during the winter and extends to the encircling land masses; the ocean floor is about 50% continental shelf (highest percentage of any ocean) with the remainder a central basin interrupted by three submarine ridges (Alpha Cordillera, Nansen Cordillera, and Lomonsov Ridge); maximum depth is 4,665 meters in the

Fram Basin

Natural resources:

sand and gravel aggregates, placer deposits, polymetallic nodules, oil and gas fields, fish, marine mammals (seals and whales)

Environment:

endangered marine species include walruses and whales; ice islands occasionally break away from northern Ellesmere Island; icebergs calved from glaciers in western Greenland and extreme northeastern Canada; maximum snow cover in March or April about 20 to 50 centimeters over the frozen ocean and lasts about 10 months; permafrost in islands; virtually icelocked from October to June; fragile ecosystem slow to change and slow to recover from disruptions or damage

Note:

major chokepoint is the southern Chukchi Sea (northern access to the Pacific Ocean via the Bering Strait); ships subject to superstructure icing from October to May; strategic location between North America and Russia; shortest marine link between the extremes of eastern and western Russia, floating research stations operated by the US and Russia

1.4 9.guide/Government (Arctic Ocean)

Government (Arctic Ocean)

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1.5 9.guide/Economy (Arctic Ocean)

Economy (Arctic Ocean)

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Overview:

Economic activity is limited to the exploitation of natural resources, including petroleum, natural gas, fish, and seals.

1.6 9.guide/Communications (Arctic Ocean)

Communications (Arctic Ocean)

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Ports:

Churchill (Canada), Murmansk (Russia), Prudhoe Bay (US)

Telecommunications:

no submarine cables

Note:

sparse network of air, ocean, river, and land routes; the Northwest Passage (North America) and Northern Sea Route (Eurasia) are important seasonal waterways
