

THE LIVING ROOMS

THE CONTINENTS

JUST UNDER 58 MILLION SQ. MI.:

THE SURFACE AREA OF TODAY'S CONTINENTS.

1 AN EVOLVING HOME

Everything on Earth changes, including the shape and number of continents! Because of plate tectonics, the Earth's land masses are constantly moving around and changing shape.



The old loft

More than 250 million years ago, there was just one continent, Pangaea, surrounded by a single ocean.



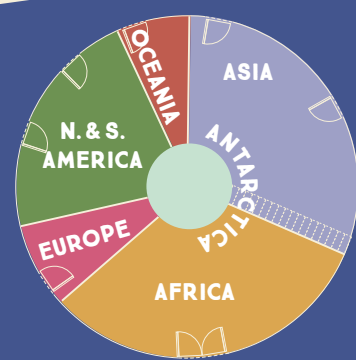
The two-room apartment

Pangaea gradually broke into two land masses, separated by a newly formed ocean, the Tethys.



The current house

The two continents continued to split apart...



SIX OR SEVEN ROOMS?
Today, most Americans believe there are seven continents: North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica (1). But the international scientific community groups Europe and Asia into a single continent (Eurasia), for a total of six (2)! Some Europeans think of North and South America as one continent (3).

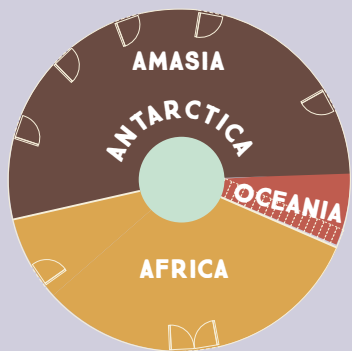


2 BACK TO THE LOFT?

Today's continents are still moving at a rate of up to 2.8 in. per year. If these movements continue at the current rate, there could be a single continent again in about 250 million years! But not all scientists foresee the same scenario:



SCENARIO 1
The joining of Eurasia and North America could create Amasia.



SCENARIO 2
Africa, Eurasia, and the Americas could come together to form Pangaea Ultima.



SCENARIO 3
As Australia, eastern Asia, and Antarctica move towards the existing continents, it could give rise to New Pangaea.



DIFFERENT-SIZED ROOMS

THE BIG BEDROOM
16 MILLION SQ. MI.
POPULATION: 1 BILLION
35 COUNTRIES

North and South America are connected by a narrow strip of land separating the Caribbean Sea from the Pacific Ocean. This is called the Isthmus of Panama.

THE GAME ROOM, TV ROOM, AND OFFICE
3.3 MILLION SQ. MI.
POPULATION: 40 MILLION +
16 COUNTRIES

Oceania has the lowest population of all the continents except Antarctica. It is the only continent composed entirely of islands: Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, and more than 10,000 islands in the Pacific Ocean.

A GIGANTIC DINING ROOM
17.2 MILLION SQ. MI.
POPULATION: 4 BILLION
47 COUNTRIES

Nearly 60% of the world's population lives in Asia. People living in China and India account for half of that.

THE BIGGEST AND THE MOST POPULATED CONTINENT.

THE SMALL BEDROOM
4 MILLION SQ. MI.
POPULATION: 750 MILLION
45 COUNTRIES

In Europe, nearly 287 languages are spoken. But that's nothing compared to the 7,000+ languages spoken on Earth!

A BIG LIVING ROOM
11.7 MILLION SQ. MI.
POPULATION: 1.2 BILLION +
54 COUNTRIES

Africa's population has doubled in the past 50 years.

SECOND-MOST POPULATED CONTINENT.



4 THE WALK-IN FREEZER

4 MILLION SQ. MI.
POPULATION: LESS THAN 1,800 A YEAR.

57.5 * UK =

98% OF THE "WHITE CONTINENT" IS COVERED IN ICE.

Antarctica is the coldest and windiest continent and has winds of up to 198 mph. For this reason, humans have never settled here, leaving the continent untouched



by civilization. The few inhabitants are mostly scientists on research missions, living and working temporarily in about 50 research stations.

MORE THAN 2.9 MILLION SQ. MI.

32 * UK



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