

NORTH AMERICA

NORTH America includes many Arctic islands, a huge mainland area (quite narrow in Central America) and the islands in the Caribbean Sea. The map shows the great mountain ranges, including the Rockies, which are the most impressive feature of this continent.

Almost all of the west is high and mountainous, yet Death Valley is below sea level. The rocks have been folded into mountain ranges, but the highest peaks are volcanoes. The Appalachian Mountains in the east are also fold mountains. In between are the Great Plains (known as the Prairies in Canada), which are flat and fertile. The Canadian Shield in the far north is made of very old hard rocks.



▲ **Flyovers, Los Angeles, USA.** There are three levels of road at this road junction in Los Angeles; sometimes there are traffic jams as well! In 1994, a huge earthquake destroyed many road bridges.

The political map of North America is quite a simple one. The boundary between **Canada** and the **USA** is mostly on exactly latitude 49°N. Look at the Great Lakes on both maps. Four of the five have one shore in Canada and one shore in the USA*.

Canada's two biggest cities, Toronto and Montreal, are south of the 49° line. Find them on the map on page 71.

Greenland used to be a colony of Denmark, but now it is self-governing. Most of Greenland is covered by ice all year. See page 88 for more about Greenland and the Arctic Ocean, and page 73 for Alaska (which is part of the USA).

*Which lakes? Answer on page 97.

