



Canada is 3.8 million square miles in area. It is the second largest country in the world, covering more than half the North American continent. There are five major geographical regions.

The Appalachian region in the east includes the Atlantic Provinces and part of southeastern Quebec, and consists of rounded hills and undulating plains.

The St. Lawrence Lowlands are an area of fertile, low-lying land bordering the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River in southern Quebec and Ontario.

The Canadian Shield is an area of very ancient rock covering about 1.8 million square miles centred on Hudson Bay, extending west and north from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arctic Ocean. It is a region of rounded hills, numerous lakes and muskeg (swamp). The Shield contains a wealth of minerals.

The Interior Plains extend from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean. In Canada, the Shield forms their eastern limit and the Cordilleran region their western limit. In the southern part of the Prairie Provinces, the Plains are unforested and are devoted largely to a grain-growing economy. North of the Prairies, the Plains are forested. The rocks of the Interior Plains contain very important deposits of oil, gas and potash.

The Cordilleran region is a strip of mountainous terrain about 500 miles wide that includes most of British Columbia and the Yukon and part of western Alberta. The Canadian Rockies and the Mackenzie Mountains form its eastern ranges; in the west are the St. Elias and Coast Ranges. Between these mountainous areas are rugged plateaux.