

WHERE PLANTS AND ANIMALS LIVE

Environment

An **environment** is everything that surrounds a living thing or person. Everything that lives on Earth lives in a certain environment. Living things get everything they need to survive from their environment. An environment includes living and nonliving things. Examples of nonliving things in an environment are air, water, soil, and the sun. All the parts of environment, both the living and nonliving parts, depend on each other for all living things to survive.

Lesson Checkpoint: What is an environment?

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Habitat

Where do you live? A **habitat** is where living things make their homes and live. A habitat supports a plant or animal, and has everything they need to survive. A plant needs sunlight, air, water, and soil in its environment to survive.



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Lesson Checkpoint: What is a habitat?

Ecosystem

Now think bigger about the world around you...An **ecosystem** is all the parts of an environment that work together, or interact with each other. An example of a living part depending on nonliving parts in an environment: a plant needing soil to grow in. In a rain forest ecosystem, the soil has nutrients for foliage that can survive in the rain forest, such as ferns and certain flowers.

Ecosystems change over time. One part of an ecosystem can change an entire environment. An example of one part of environment changing another part of an environment is when fewer plants grow during winter which means less food for animals. Or when tall trees in a forest are cut down for lumber, which changes the amount of sunlight and shade that the shorter plants receive.

There are many parts of an ecosystem.

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Lesson Checkpoint: What is an ecosystem?



Grassland

A **Grassland** is an ecosystem that has a lot of grass and flowering plants but not a lot of trees. Grasslands have warm and often hot summers, and cooler and even cold winters. Grasslands also have little rain which is why trees do not grow well in this ecosystem. Trees need damp or wet soil in order to grow and survive. Grasses in a grassland have deep roots which allow them to find water that is deep in the soil. As you can see, this climate supports the plants that live in this ecosystem.



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Desert

Some deserts have little to no rain. They are often cool and dry. There is little water in the desert.

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Tundra

The **tundra** is an ecosystem that is cold and on dry land. The soil of the tundra stays frozen all year long which means no trees are able to grow in this ecosystem. The winter days of the tundra are very short. Some areas of the tundra do not even receive sunlight during the winter. The days during summer last a long time. Some areas of the tundra receive sunshine 24 hours a day in the short summer.



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Wetlands

Some like it wet...The **wetlands** are low lands that are covered by water for some time during the year. Water flows very slowly through a wetland ecosystem.



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Lesson Checkpoint: Name three kinds of ecosystems.