

The Times Atlas of the World

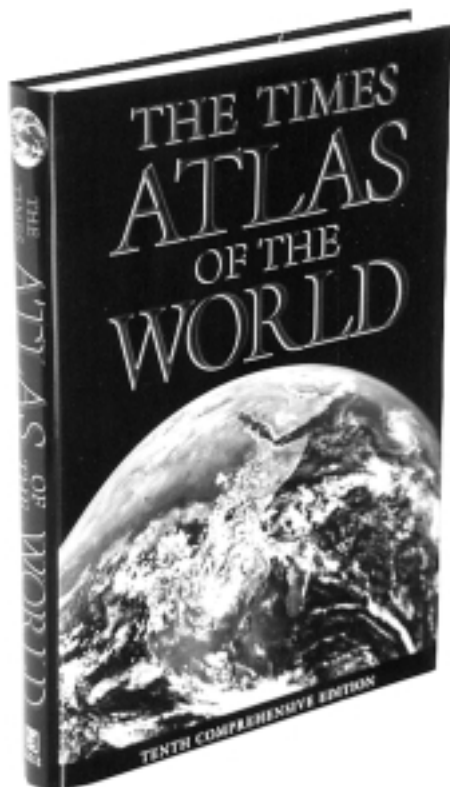
This is the best atlas of the world. Period. It is the most accurate, clearest, most-up-to-date, and most comprehensive atlas ever published. Unlike previous atlases, it locates and names those hundreds of thousands of towns where most of the people of the world live. Take any place you want in any other atlas you want—Afghanistan, Botswana, China—and compare that spot to the stunningly crisp and full maps here. You suddenly realize the other atlas is just waving their arms vaguely. Usually places outside of the US and Europe are reduced in size and left blank. Here, they prosper in splendid microscopic detail. In my travels I've found even large country-specific maps don't have the depth of reality of these pages. I now wince with pain if I have to use another atlas; browsing this one is bliss. It's got all the creeks of the Congo, all the roads of Russia, all the oases in the Gobi. And half this atlas is a divine index of 225,000 place names, with geographical coordinates in degrees and minutes. I'm in heaven! This is the fairest picture of human places on this planet yet.

—KK

The Times Atlas of the World

1999 (10th Comprehensive Edition), 400 pages
\$250
Times Books

This is the part of the world that is normally left blank. Known as the Empty Quarter, it isn't empty here.



Ethnologue

The Ethnologue is one of the most satisfying and evocative global snapshots I've ever come across. Compiled by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, a global Bible-translation organization, the Ethnologue is an attempt to inventory and describe all extant (and many dying) languages around the world—in two fat, complete volumes. Open up to the "Language Family Index" and you can test your knowledge of the relationships between ethnic groups in your favorite part of the world. How about the various writing systems for Batak Toba, or the total number of languages in Papua New Guinea, or the population of Swahili speakers in the United States? I often find myself roaming through it, wandering imaginatively across the tangled pathways of evolutionary, political, and economic history that these 7,000 languages represent.

—Jim Mason



Ethnologue

Barbara F. Grimes
1999 (14th Edition)
Vol I: *Languages of the World*, 858 pages, \$44
Vol II: *Maps and Indexes*, 727 pages, \$36
CD-ROM version, including both volumes, \$29.95
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Much of the material is online in a very searchable format at
www.sil.org/ethnologue/

