

Geography

LOCATION: Palestine lies on the western edge of the Asian continent. Historic Palestine is bound to the north by Lebanon and Syria, to the west by the Mediterranean Sea, to the south by the Gulf of Aqaba and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, and to the east by Jordan. Present-day Palestine is composed of two physically separated territories: the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.



	West Bank	Gaza	WBGS
Geographic coordinates	32' 00 N, 35'15 E	31' 25 N, 34' 20 E	
Land boundaries – total	404 km	62 km	
– coastline	n.a.	40 km	
Borders – with Israel	307 km	51 km	
– with Jordan/Egypt	97 km	11 km	
Area	5,655 km ²	365 km ²	6,020 km ²
– Length	130 km	45 km	
– Width	40-65 km	5-12 km	
Land area			26,323 km ²
Water area			~ 438 km ²

CLIMATE: Mediterranean: hot, dry summers, wet, cool winters; temperature and rainfall vary with altitude and region (hills, coastal plain, Jordan Valley, Naqab desert). **Climate models** for the region predict 3-5°C mean temperature increases by 2050 and mean annual rainfall reductions of 10-50%. Sea levels are predicted to rise by 30-100 cm by 2100 (World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza Environment Priorities Note*, 2019).

Air Temperatures (C°) (2020)	Bethlehem	Hebron	Jericho	Ramallah	Nablus	Jenin
Mean	18.1	17.5	25.3	16.1*	19.6	21.9
Mean Relative Humidity (2020)		70%	47%		80%	69%
Annual Rainfall (2021/2022)						
Total quantity (mm)	463	467	132	697	643	463
% of mean average	89%	78%	80%	113%	97%	89%

Sources: PCBS, *Meteorological Statistics*; PCBS, *Statistical Yearbook 2021*. *2019.



AREA (GOVERNORATES):

	West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	District	Area (km ²)	District	Area (km ²)
	Jenin	583	North Gaza	61
	Tubas	402	Gaza	74
	Tulkarem	246	Deir Al-Balah	85
	Nablus	605	Khan Yunis	108
	Qalqilya	166	Rafah	64
	Salfit	204	Total Gaza	365*
	Ramallah	855	Grand Total	6,020
	Jericho	593		
	Jerusalem	345	* 24% of which Israel controls, including a 1,500 m long buffer zone along the Eastern border	
	Bethlehem	659		
	Hebron	997	Source: PCBS	
	Total WB	5,655		



TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES:

District	highest elevation	lowest elevation ¹	average annual rainfall (mm)	
			(1967-1998)	(1997-2008) ²
Bethlehem	900 m (Beit Jala)	- 400 m (Dead Sea area)	700 (west)-100 (east)	-
Jericho	350 m (northeast border)	- 370 m (near Dead Sea)	160	215.2
Hebron	1,011 m (Halhul area)	100 m	588	477
Ramallah	1,022 m (at Tal A'sur)	- 24 m (southeast border)	694	-
Nablus	918 m (Jabel 'Ibal)	- 349 m (southeast border)	663	647.4
Jenin	750 m (Jabel Hureish)	90 m (Al-Mukhabba)	475	405.5
Tulkarem	500 m (Ras Rashin)	40 m	651	587.4
Jerusalem	880 m ('Radar Hill')	367m (near Dead Sea)	584	358.6
Gaza	105 m (Abu 'Awdah)	0 m (Mediterranean shore)	415	-

¹ - = below sea level; ²PCBS, *Meteorological Statistics*, 2008.

MOUNTAINS (*italics indicate locations in historical Palestine*): *Jabal Jermac (1,210 m)*; *Jabal Heidar (1,047 m)*; *Jabal Tal Asur (1,016 m)*; *Jabal Adathir (963 m)*; *Jabal Ebal (940 m)*; *Jabal 'Ein Al-Hayek (546 m)*; *Mt. Gerazim (881 m)*; *Jabal Tabor (588 m)*; *Ras Ar-Rumman (1,035 m, border to Egypt)*; *Khalet Batrikh (1,020 m)*, *Halhoul (1,013 m)*, *Su'eer (1,018 m)*, *Bani Na'im (951 m)* and *Dura (838 m)*.

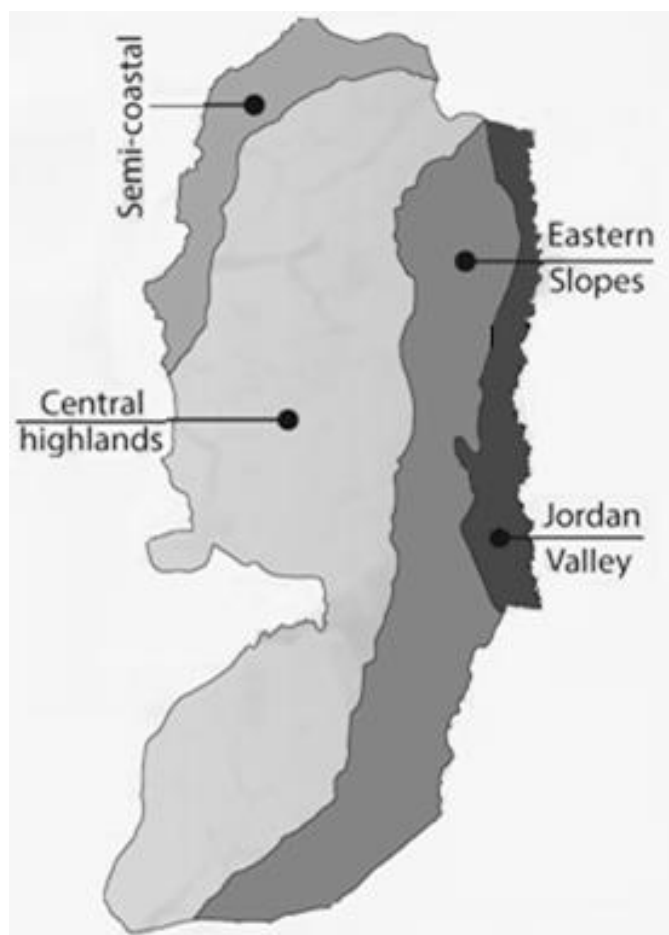
Jerusalem: *Tal Al-Asur (1,016 m)*, *Mt. Nabi Samuel (Mt. Joie - 875 m)*; *Mt. Masharif (Mt. Scopus - 825 m)*; *Mt. of Olives (Jabel Az-Zaytun - 820 m)*.

RIVERS: *Jordan (253 km)*, *Yarmuk (40 km)*, *Naher Al-Auja (26 km)*, *Naher Al-Muqatta (13 km)*.

AQUIFERS: **Gaza**: The **coastal aquifer** is located under the coastal plain, extending 120 km from Gaza (south), to Mount Carmel (north) with a width of 3-20 km.



West Bank: The aquifer system extends over 130 km from Mt. Carmel (north) to Beer Sheba (south), 35 km wide and divided into three groundwater basins: the **Eastern** (100% in West Bank), the **Northeastern** (80%) and the **Western Aquifer**, 80% of whose recharge area is in the West Bank, and 80% of the storage area in Israel.



Recommended Research Sources:

<http://www.arij.org>
<http://blog.bibleplaces.com/2009/04/survey-of-western-palestine.html>
<http://vprofile.arij.org> (locality profiles)
<https://fanack.com/palestine/geography-of-palestine/>

Maps: <https://maps.lib.utexas.edu/maps/gazastrap.html> <http://passia.org/maps/37>
<https://www.un.org/unispal/map-collection/> <https://www.ochaopt.org/maps>
<http://www.palestineremembered.com/Maps/index.html> <http://www.palmap.org>

ARIJ. *An Atlas of Palestine*. January 2000.

The Palestine Question in Maps, 1878-2014. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 2014.

PCBS, *Meteorological Conditions in the Palestinian Territory, Annual Reports*.

UNEP, *State of Environment and Outlook Report for the occupied Palestinian territory 2020*, 2020.

World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza - Urban Climate Risk Analysis*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, 2022.