

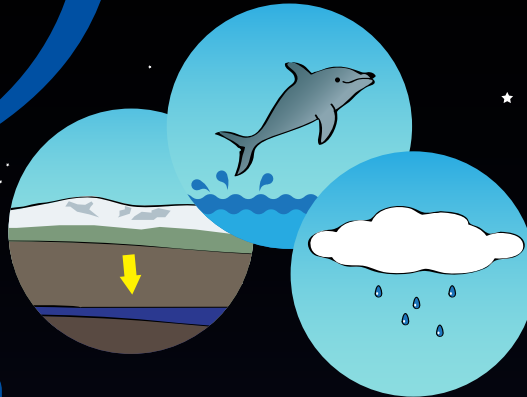
# How much water is on Earth?

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

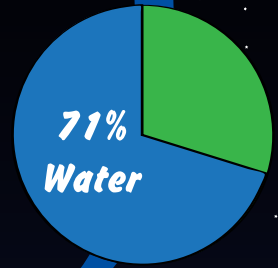


Earth is special because it has so much water

It's in the ground, forms big oceans, and it's in our atmosphere.



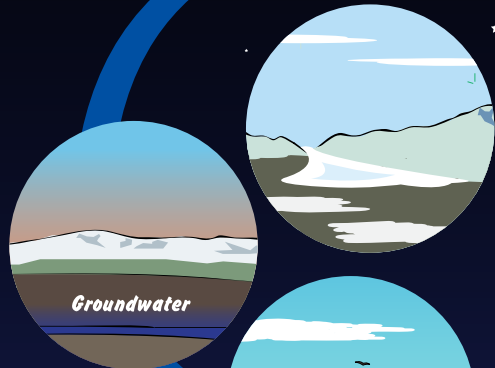
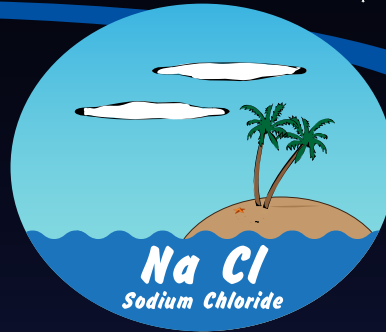
It's also in living things. Your body is made up mostly of water.



Water covers 71% of Earth's surface.

Just 3.5% of the water on Earth is fresh water we can drink. And most of that fresh water, 68%, is trapped in ice and glaciers.

Almost all of it — 96.5% — is salt water. Salt water has different kinds of salt in it, but it mostly has sodium chloride; the same salt we add to our food.



Groundwater

A third of the fresh water is in the ground. We call it groundwater. The last 2% of fresh water is in the rivers, lakes, and streams.

A very small amount is in our atmosphere, where it exists as water vapor. That's what clouds are made of.



If you took all the water on Earth and put it together it would be a ball 860 miles wide.

That's a lot of water!