

## List E - Geologic age (stratigraphic) terms



## List E - Geologic age (stratigraphic) terms

**List E-1** Geologic age (stratigraphic) terms - alphabetical list

**List E-2** Geologic age (stratigraphic) terms - hierarchical list

### General notes

These thesaurus lists, lists A-R, are used by GeoRef indexers for selecting index terms and by searchers for additional information not necessarily found in individual term records in the body of the Thesaurus. In most cases, an hierarchical list is given. In some cases, an alphabetical or other list is provided.

The notes under **Searching** attempt to guide the searcher in the use of the list. Searchers might also read the notes on **Indexing** for further clues but should be aware that these notes reflect current practice which in some cases differs from past practice. Further notes on specific terms are in the body of the Thesaurus and additional notes on searching are in the GeoRef Thesaurus, 11th edition Introduction section on searching beginning on page x. Information specific to searching and the individual list topics is included, e.g., a section including geologic age terms begins on page xi.

Under **Indexing** the current indexing practice is given. These notes should be read along with the instructions under the individual terms in the body of the Thesaurus.

### Geologic age (stratigraphic) terms

The authority generally used in GeoRef for age and stratigraphic terms is the Geological Time Table, compiled by B. U. Haq, Sixth revised, enlarged and updated edition, Amsterdam, Elsevier, 2007. We are also using the International Commission on Stratigraphy's International Chronostratigraphic Chart for some of the newly approved names and dates (continually updated from 2013); <http://www.stratigraphy.org/index.php/ics-chart-timescale>. These are followed for nomenclature except in a few cases where previous usage in GeoRef strongly supports alternate terms.

Throughout, the "stratigraphic" upper, middle, and lower rather than the "chronologic" early, middle, and late are used to modify age terms, e.g. Upper Cambrian instead of Late Cambrian. "Uppermost" and "lowermost" are not used. Many of the stratigraphic terms are listed in the alphabetical list. The alphabetical list does not include some ancient lakes and ice sheets. Rock unit terms are found in the main body of the Thesaurus and in List R.

Most of the terms include complete autoposting to the level of the Eon for the Precambrian, e.g. Proterozoic; and the Period for the Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic, e.g. Ordovician, Triassic, Paleogene. In a few cases, the hierarchies are completed by supplemental indexing.

A general outline of the age terms used is in the hierarchical list.

### Searching

All terms in the list may be searched. A high degree of specificity is often possible.

In searching for certain broad terms such as Cretaceous, it suffices to use the term as is and not worry about subdivisions, since these automatically post Cretaceous. This applies to all the Eras and Periods and to the Eons of the Precambrian.

## **Indexing**

Use the hierarchical list to ensure that specific age terms are indexed and their hierarchical age terms are added from specific to general until a term from the alphabetical list is used. In most cases, only the most specific term need be indexed, since use of the specific term will result in automatic posting of its broader term(s).

"Upper", "middle", and "lower" are capitalized for Mesozoic and Paleozoic periods (e.g. Upper Cretaceous). This practice does not apply to Precambrian and Cenozoic subdivisions. See the hierarchical list.

Where an age in years is given, use the chart of Major geochronologic and chronostratigraphic units to assign a geologic age. You can use the Geological Time Table to find lunar ages.

[Back to top](#)

---