

PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCES OF PENNSYLVANIA

PHYSIO- GRAPHIC PROVINCE	PHYSIO- GRAPHIC SECTION	DOMINANT TOPOGRAPHIC FORM	LOCAL RELIEF ¹	UNDERLYING ROCK TYPE	GEOLOGIC STRUCTURE	APPROXI- MATE ELEVATION ² Min. Max.	DR AINAGE PATTERN	BOUNDARIES	ORIGIN
CEN- TRAL LOW- LANDS	Eastern Lake	Northwest-sloping, lake-parallel, low-relief ridges.	Very low to low.	Shale and siltstone.	Beds either horizontal or having low south dip.	570 1,000	Parallel.	Northwest: Lake Erie. Southeast: Base of escarpment.	Glacial, lake, and fluvial deposition and erosion.
APPALAGHIAN PLATEAUS	Northwestern Glaciated Plateau	Broad, rounded upland and deep, steep-sided, linear valleys partly filled with glacial deposits.	Very low to moderate.	Shale, siltstone, and sandstone.	Subhorizontal beds.	900 2,200	Dendritic.	Northwest: Base of escarpment. Southeast: Glacial border.	Fluvial and glacial erosion; glacial deposition.
	High Plateau	Broad, rounded to flat uplands having deep, angular valleys.	Moderate to high.	Sandstone, siltstone, shale, and conglomerate; some coal.	Low-amplitude, open folds.	980 2,360	Dendritic.	Northwest: Glacial border. Northeast: Margins of deep val- leys. South: Arbitrary along drainage divides between coal and noncoal areas.	Fluvial erosion; periglacial mass wasting.
	Pittsburgh Low Plateau	Smooth to irregular, undulating surface; narrow, relatively shallow valleys; strip mines and reclaimed land.	Low to mod- erate.	Shale, siltstone, sandstone, limestone, and coal.	Moderate- to low-amplitude, open folds, decreasing in occurrence northwestward.	660 2,340	Dendritic.	Northwest: Glacial border. Elsewhere: Arbitrary at topographic changes with adjacent sections.	Fluvial erosion; periglacial mass wasting; strip mining.
	Waynesburg Hills	Very hilly with narrow hilltops and steep-sloped, narrow valleys.	Moderate.	Sandstone, shale, red beds, and limestone.	Horizontal beds.	848 1,638	Dendritic.	Arbitrary at change of topography.	Fluvial erosion and land- slides.
	Allegheny Mountain	Wide ridges separated by broad valleys; ridge elevations decrease to north.	Moderate to high.	Sandstone, siltstone, shale, and con- glomerate; some limestone and coal.	Large-amplitude, open folds.	775 3,210	Dendritic.	East: Arbitrary between coal and noncoal areas. West: Base of west flank of Chestnut Ridge. North: Approximates northeast terminus of large-amplitude, open folds.	Fluvial erosion; some peri- glacial mass wasting.
	Allegheny Front	East: Rounded to linear hills rising by steps to an escarpment; hills cut by narrow valleys. West: Undulating hills sloping away from escarpment.	Moderate to high.	Shale, siltstone, and sandstone.	South: Broad fold. Elsewhere: Beds having low northwest dip; some faults.	540 2,980	Parallel and trellis.	East: Stream at base of hills below escarpment. West: Arbitrary between coal and noncoal areas.	Fluvial erosion; periglacial mass wasting.
	Deep Valleys	Very deep, angular valleys; some broad to narrow uplands.	Moderate to very high.	Sandstone, siltstone, shale, and conglomerate.	Moderate-amplitude, open folds that control valley orientations.	560 2,560	Angulate and rectangular.	Arbitrary at margins of deep valleys, either at top of valley slope or along drainage divide.	Fluvial erosion; periglacial mass wasting.
	Glaciated High Plateau	Broad to narrow, rounded to flat, elongate uplands and shallow valleys.	Low to high.	Sandstone, siltstone, shale, and conglomerate; some coal.	Moderate-amplitude, open folds.	620 2,560	Angulate and dendritic.	East: Base of escarpment. Elsewhere: Arbitrary with margins of deep valleys.	Fluvial and glacial erosion; glacial deposition.
	Glaciated Low Plateau	Rounded hills and valleys.	Low to mod- erate.	Sandstone, siltstone, and shale.	Low-amplitude folds.	440 2,690	Dendritic.	Base of escarpments of adjacent uplands; base of Pocono escarpment. Elsewhere: Arbitrary.	Fluvial and glacial erosion; glacial deposition.
	Glaciated Pocono Plateau	Broad, undulatory upland surface having dissected margins.	Low to mod- erate.	Sandstone, siltstone, and shale; some conglomerate.	Beds having low north dip; some small folds.	1,200 2.320	Deranged.	South and east: Base of Pocono escarpment. North: Crest of drainage divide. West: Arbitrary.	Fluvial and glacial erosion; glacial deposition.
RIDGE AND VALLEY	Appalachian Mountain	Long, narrow ridges and broad to narrow valleys; some karst.	Moderate to very high.	Sandstone, siltstone, shale, conglomerate, limestone, and dolomite.	Open and closed plunging folds having narrow hinges and planar limbs; variety of faults.	440 2,775	Trellis, angu- late, and some karst.	Southeast: Base of slope change on southeast side of Blue Mountain. West and northwest: Center of valley bottom west of westernmost linear ridge. Ekewhere: Base of slope change of eastern ridges; arbitrary between ridges.	Fluvial erosion; solution of carbonate rocks; periglacial mass wasting.
	Susquehanna Lowland	Low to moderately high, linear ridges; linear valleys; Susquehanna River valley.	Low to mod- erate.	Sandstone, siltstone, shale, conglomerate, limestone, and dolomite.	Open and closed plunging folds having narrow hinges and planar limbs.	260 1,715	Trellis and angulate.	Base of slope change to higher ridges of all surrounding areas; arbitrary in valley areas.	Fluvial erosion; some glacial erosion and deposition in northeast.
	Anthracite Valley	Narrow to wide, canoe-shaped valley having irregular to linear hills; valley enclosed by steep-sloped mountain rim.	Low to mod- erate.	Sandstone, siltstone, conglomerate, and anthracite.	Broad, doubly-plunging syncline; faults and smaller folds.	500 2,368	Trellis and parallel.	Outer base of surrounding mountain.	Fluvial and glacial erosion; some glacial deposition.
	Anthracite Upland	Upland surface having low, linear to rounded hills, strip mines, and waste piles; upland surrounded by an escarpment, a valley, and a mountain rim.	Low to high.	Sandstone, shale, conglomerate, and anthracite.	Many narrow folds having steep limbs; many faults.	320 2,094	Trellis.	Northeast: Arbitrary between coal and noncoal areas. Elsewhere: Outer base of surrounding mountain.	Fluvial erosion; some glacial erosion and periglacial mass wasting.
	Blue Mountain	Linear ridge to south and valley to north; valley widens eastward and includes low linear ridges and shallow valleys.	Moderate to high.	Sandstone, siltstone, and shale; some limestone and conglomerate.	Southwest: South limb of broad fold. Northeast: Small folds north of Blue Mountain.	300 1,680	Trellis.	Southeast: Base of slope change on southeast side of Blue Mountain. Northwest: Base of mountain; base of Pocono escarpment. Northeast: Arbitrary.	Fluvial erosion; some glacial erosion and deposition in northeast.
	Great Valley	Very broad valley. Northwest half: Dissected upland. Southeast half: Low karst terrain.	Low to mod- erate.	Northwest: Shale and sandstone; slate at east end. Southeast: Limestone and dolomite.	Thrust sheets, nappes, overturned folds, and steep faults; many thirdand fourth-order folds.	140 1,100	Dendritic and karst.	North: Base of slope change on southeast side of Blue Mountain. South: Base of slope change to adjacent up- lands.	Fluvial erosion; solution of carbonate rocks; some periglacial mass wasting.
	South Mountain	Linear ridges, deep valleys, and flat uplands.	Moderate to high.	Metavolcanic rocks, quartzite, and some dolomite.	Major anticlinorium having many second- and third-order folds.	450 2,080	Dendritic.	Base of slope change to adjacent lowlands.	Fluvial erosion of highly variable rocks; some periglacial mass wasting.
NEW BN- GLAND	Reading Prong	Circular to linear, rounded hills and ridges.	Moderate.	Granitic gneiss, granodiorite, and quartzite.	Multiple nappes.	140 1,364	Dendritic.	Base of slope change to adjacent lowlands.	Fluvial erosion; some peri- glacial mass wasting.
PIEDMONT	Gettysburg- Newark Lowland	Rolling lowlands, shallow valleys, and isolated hills.	Low to mod- erate.	Mainly red shale, siltstone, and sand- stone; some conglomerate and diabase.	Half-graben having low, mono- clinal, northwest-dipping beds.	20 1,355	Dendritic and trellis.	Base of slope changes with adjacent uplands and low- lands. Elsewhere: Arbitrary.	Fluvial erosion of rocks of variable resistance.
	Piedmont Lowland	Broad, moderately dissected, karst valleys separated by broad, low hills.	Low.	Dominantly limestone and dolomite; some phyllitic shale and sandstone.	Complexly folded and faulted.	60 700	Dendritic and karst.	South: Base of slope change to adjacent upland. North: Mesozoic red rocks.	Fluvial erosion; some peri- glacial mass wasting.
	Piedmont Upland	Broad, rounded to flat-topped hills and shallow valleys.	Low to mod- erate.	Mainly schist, gneiss, and quartzite; some saprolite.	Extremely complexly folded and faulted.	100 1,220	Dendritic.	East: Base of low to vague Fall Line escarpment. North: Base of slope change to adjacent lowlands.	Fluvial erosion; some peri- glacial mass wasting.
ATLANTIC COASTAL PLAIN	Lowland and Intermediate Upland	Flat upper terrace surface cut by shallow valleys; Delaware River floodplain.	Very low.	Unconsolidated to poorly consolidated sand and gravel; underlain by schist, gneiss, and other metamorphic rocks.	Unconsolidated deposits under- lain by complexly folded and fault- ed rocks.	0 200	Dendritic.	Northwest: Base of low to vague Fall Line escarpment. East: Arbitrary.	Fluvial erosion and deposition.

¹Local relief: 0 to 100 feet, very low; 101 to 300 feet, low; 301 to 600 feet, moderate; 601 to 1,000 feet, high; >1,000 feet, very high. (Relief categories listed here for Pennsylvania do not necessarily apply to other states or countries.)

²Elevations are in feet.