

Vocabulary



compass a tool used to find direction
A compass contains a magnet (the needle) that can turn freely. The north pole of a compass needle is a north-seeking pole. So, the north pole of the compass magnet points toward Earth's magnetic north pole. Compasses were once very useful to people traveling around the world. They still are, but now we also have other tools to find direction.

Earth's geographic poles the northernmost and southernmost points on the globe
Earth rotates around an imaginary line called an axis. This axis runs through Earth's center from north to south. The northern end of the axis marks Earth's geographic north pole. The southern end of the axis marks Earth's geographic south pole.

Earth's magnetic poles the poles of the magnetic field that surrounds Earth
The magnetic north pole of Earth is located about 1200 miles away from Earth's geographic north pole. The north-seeking pole of a compass is attracted to the magnetic north pole.