

List of rivers by length

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This is a **list of the longest rivers on Earth**. It includes river systems over 2,000 kilometers.

Definition of length

The length of a river is not always easy to calculate. It depends on the identification of the source, the identification of the mouth, and the precise measurement of the river length between source and mouth. As a result, the length measurements of many rivers are only approximations. In particular, there is disagreement whether the [Amazon](#) or the [Nile](#) is the world's longest river.

The source of a river may be hard to determine because a river typically has many tributaries. Among the many sources, the one that is farthest away from the mouth is considered as the source of the river, thus giving a maximal river length. In practice, the [tributary](#) with the farthest source is not always the one given the name of the river. For example, the farthest source of the [Mississippi River](#) system is the source of the [Missouri River](#); but a different tributary is identified as the Mississippi. When the river is measured from mouth to farthest source, it is called the *Mississippi-Missouri*. Also, it is hard to state exactly where a river begins as very often rivers are formed by seasonal streams, [swamps](#), or changing [lakes](#). In this article, *length* means the length of the river system, including all tributaries.

The mouth of a river may be hard to determine in cases where the river has a large [estuary](#) that gradually widens and opens into the ocean; examples are the [Amazon River](#) and the [Saint Lawrence River](#). Some rivers do not have a mouth, instead they evaporate, and the exact point where the river ends will vary seasonally.

The length of a river between source and mouth may be hard to determine because of a lack of precise [maps](#). In these cases, the measured length of a river will depend on the scale of the map on which the measurement is based; in general, due to the fractal quality of a river, the larger the [scale](#), the longer the resulting length measurement. This issue was discovered by [Lewis Fry Richardson](#) and also applies when measuring borders between countries and coastlines. Ideally, length measurements should be based on maps that are of a large enough scale to show the width of the river.

Even when precise maps are available, the length measurement is not always clear. A river may have multiple arms. It may depend on whether the center or the edge of the river is taken as reference point. It may not be clear how to measure the length through a

lake: this may also vary by season. These points make it difficult, if not impossible, to get a precise measurement of the length of a river or stream.

List of rivers longer than 2000 km

One should take the aforementioned discussion into account when using the data in the following table. For most rivers, different sources provide conflicting information on the length of a river system. The information in different sources is between parentheses.

<u>Continent</u> color key					
Africa	Asia	Europe	North America	Australasia	South America

	<u>River</u>	Length (km)	Length (miles)	<u>Drainage area</u> (km ²)	<u>Average discharge</u> (m ³ /s)	Outflow	<u>Countries in the drainage basin</u>
1.	<u>Nile</u>	6,690	4,157	2,870,000	5,100	<u>Mediterranean Sea</u>	<u>Sudan</u> , <u>Ethiopia</u> , <u>Egypt</u> , <u>Uganda</u> , <u>Tanzania</u> , <u>Kenya</u> , <u>Rwanda</u> , <u>Burundi</u> , <u>Eritrea</u> , <u>Democratic Republic of the Congo</u>
2.	<u>Amazon</u>	6,387 (6,762)	3,969 (4,202)	6,915,000	219,000	<u>Atlantic Ocean</u>	<u>Brazil</u> , <u>Peru</u> , <u>Bolivia</u> , <u>Colombia</u> , <u>Ecuador</u> , <u>Venezuela</u>
3.	<u>Yangtze</u> (Chang Jiang)	6,380 (5,797)	3,964 (3,602)	1,800,000	31,900	<u>East China Sea</u>	<u>P.R. China</u>

4.	Mississippi - Missouri	6,270 (6,420)	3,896 (3,989)	2,980,000	16,200	Gulf of Mexico	United States (98.5%), Canada (1.5%)
5.	Yenisey - Angara	5,550 (4,506)	3,449 (2,800)	2,580,000	19,600	Kara Sea	Russia , Mongolia
6.	Ob' - Irtysh	5,550*	3,449*	2,990,000	12,800	Gulf of Ob	Russia , Kazakhstan , P.R. China
7.	Huang He (Yellow)	4,667 (4,350)	2,900 (2,703)	745,000	2,110	Bohai Sea (Balhae)	P.R. China
8.	Amur (Heilong)	4,368*	2,714*	1,855,000	11,400	Sea of Okhotsk	Russia , PR China , Mongolia
9.	Congo (Zaire)	4,371 (4,670)	2,716 (2,902)	3,680,000	41,800	Atlantic Ocean	Democratic Republic of the Congo , Central African Republic , Angola , Republic of the Congo , Tanzania , Cameroon , Zambia , Burundi , Rwanda
10.	Lena	4,260 (4,400)	2,647 (2,734)	2,490,000	17,100	Laptev Sea	Russia

11.	Mackenzie	4,241 (5,427)	2,635 (3,372)	1,790,000	10,300	Beaufort Sea	Canada
12.	Niger	4,167 (4,138*)	2,589 (2,571*)	2,090,000	9,570	Gulf of Guinea	Nigeria (26.6%), Mali (25.6%), Niger (23.6%), Algeria (7.6%), Guinea (4.5%), Cameroon (4.2%), Burkina Faso (3.9%), Côte d'Ivoire , Benin , Chad
13.	Mekong	4,023	2,500	810,000	16,000	South China Sea	Laos , Thailand , P.R. China , Cambodia , Vietnam , Myanmar
14.	Paraná (Río de la Plata)	3,998 (4,700)	2,484 (2,920)	3,100,000	25,700	Atlantic Ocean	Brazil (46.7%), Argentina (27.7%), Paraguay (13.5%), Bolivia (8.3%), Uruguay (3.8%)
15.	Murray - Darling	3,750 (3,520)	2,330 (2,187)	3,490,000	767	Southern Ocean	Australia

16.	Volga	3,645*	2,265	1,380,000	8,080	Caspian Sea	Russia (99.8%), Kazakhstan (minor), Belarus (minor)
17.	Shatt al-Arab - Euphrates	3,596 (2,992)	2,234 (1,859)	884,000	856	Persian Gulf	Iraq (40.5%), Turkey (24.8%), Iran (19.7%), Syria (14.7%)
18.	Purus	3,379 (2,948) (3,210)				Amazon	Brazil , Peru
19.	Madeira	3,239				Amazon	Brazil , Bolivia , Peru
20.	Yukon	3,184	1,978	850,000	6,210	Bering Sea	USA (59.8%), Canada (40.2%)
21.	Indus (Sindhu)	3,180	1,976	960,000	7,160	Arabian Sea	Pakistan , India , PR China , disputed territory (Kashmir), Afghanistan (6.3%)
22.	São Francisco	3,180* (2,900)	1,976* (1,802)	610,000	3,300	Atlantic Ocean	Brazil

23.	Syr Darya	3,078	1,913	100,000	?	Aral Sea	Kazakhstan , Kyrgyzstan , Uzbekistan , Tajikistan
24.	Salween (Salwin) (Nù Jiāng)	3,060	1,901	324,000	?	Andaman Sea	P.R. China (52.4%), Myanmar (43.9%), Thailand (3.7%)
25.	Saint Lawrence	3,058	1,900	1,030,000	10,100	Gulf of Saint Lawrence	Canada (52.1%), USA (47.9%)
26.	Rio Grande	3,057 (2,896)	1,900 (1,799)	570,000	82	Gulf of Mexico	USA (52.1%), Mexico (47.9%)
27.	Lower Tunguska	2,989			3,600	Yenisei	Russia
28.	Brahmaputra	2,948*	1,832*	1,730,000	43,900	Bay of Bengal	India (58.0%), P.R. China (19.7%), Nepal (9.0%), Bangladesh (6.6%), Disputed India/P.R. China (4.2%), Bhutan (2.4%)
29.	Danube	2,850*	1,771*	817,000	7,130	Black Sea	Romania (28.9%), Hungary

							(11.7%), Austria (10.3%), Serbia and Montenegro (10.3%), Germany (7.5%), Slovakia (5.8%), Bulgaria (5.2%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (4.8%), Croatia (4.5%), Ukraine (3.8%), Czech Republic (2.6%), Slovenia (2.2%), Moldova (1.7%), Switzerland (0.32%), Italy (0.15%), Poland (0.09%), Albania (0.03%)
30.	Tocantins	2,699	1,677	1,400,000	?	Atlantic Ocean, Amazon	Brazil
31.	Zambezi (Zambesi)	2,693*	1,673*	1,330,000	4,880	Mozambique Channel	Zambia (41.6%), Angola (18.4%), Zimbabwe (15.6%), Mozambique

							(11.8%), Malawi (8.0%), Tanzania (2.0%), Namibia , Botswana
32.	Vilyuy	2,650				Lena	Russia
33.	Araguaia	2,627	1,632	?	?	Tocantins	Brazil
34.	Amu Darya	2,620				Aral Sea	Uzbekistan , Turkmenistan , Tajikistan , Afghanistan
35.	Japurá (Rio Yapurá)	2,615*	1,625*	?	?	Amazon	Brazil , Colombia
36.	Nelson - Saskatchewan	2,570	1,597	1,093,000	2,575	Hudson Bay	Canada , USA
37.	Paraguay (Rio Paraguay)	2,549	1,584	?	4,300	Paraná	Brazil , Paraguay , Bolivia , Argentina
38.	Kolyma	2,513				East Siberian Sea	Russia
39.	Ganges	2,510			14,270	Brahmaputra , Bay of Bengal	India , Bangladesh , Nepal

40.	Pilcomayo	2,500				Paraguay	Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia
33.	Ural	2,428	1,509	237,000	475	Caspian Sea	Russia, Kazakhstan
34.	Arkansas	2,348	1,459	505,000 (435,122)	?	Mississippi	United States
35.	Dnieper	2,287	1,421	516,300	1,670	Black Sea	Russia, Belarus, Ukraine
36.	Colorado	2,333	1,450	390,000	1,200	Gulf of California	United States, Mexico
37.	Ayeyarwady River	2,170	1,348	411,000	13,000	Andaman Sea	Myanmar
38.	Xi Jiang (West) (Si Kang)	2,130	1,324	437,000	13,600	South China Sea	P.R. China
39.	Ohio-Allegheny	2,102	1,306	490,603	?	Mississippi	United States
40.	Orinoco	2,101	1,306	41,000	30,000	Atlantic Ocean	Venezuela, Colombia
41.	Orange	2,092	1,300	?	?	Atlantic Ocean	South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho

Notes:

- When the length of a river is followed by an asterisk (*), it is an average of multiple sources. If the difference in lengths between given sources is significant, all lengths are listed. Likewise, if the lengths from secondary sources are similar themselves, they are averaged and that figure has an asterisk.
- Either the Nile or the Amazon may be considered the longest river on Earth. The Amazon becomes the longest if it is measured by the long way around the south of the [Isla de Marajó](#). Some believe a fair statement is that the Nile is the longest in the world, while the Amazon is the strongest.
- Generally, the most commonly used/anglicised name of the river is used. The name in a native language or alternate spelling may be shown.
- The exact percentage of each river in countries may be disputed (including the effects of political frontier disputes) or unknown.

List of rivers longer than 1000 km

This list should be merged into the list above.

1. 6,690 km - [Nile](#), [Africa](#)
2. 6,387 km - [Amazon](#), [South America](#)
3. 6,380 km - [Yangtze](#) (Chang Jiang), [People's Republic of China](#)
4. 6,270 km - [Mississippi-Missouri](#), [USA](#)
5. 5,550 km - [Yenisei-Angara](#), [Mongolia](#) / [Russia](#), (5,870 km)
6. 5,410 km - [Ob-Irtysh](#), [North Asia](#)
7. 4,410 km - [Amur](#), [East Asia](#)
8. 4,380 km - [Congo](#), [Africa](#), (or 4,670 km, the source of the river is disputed.)
9. 4,350 km - [Huang He](#) (Yellow), [People's Republic of China](#), (or 5,463 km)
10. 4,425 km - [Mekong](#), [South-East Asia](#)
11. 4,260 km - [Lena](#), [Russia](#) ([North Asia](#))
12. 4,240 km - [Mackenzie](#), [Canada](#)
13. 4,184 km - [Niger](#), [Africa](#), 4,167 km (4,030 km) (4,200 km)
14. 3,998 km - [Paraná](#), [South America](#), (4,500 km) (3,300 km) (3,700 km)
15. 3,717 km - [Murray-Darling](#), [Australia](#), (3,750 km) (2,574 km)
16. 3,685 km - [Volga](#), [Russia](#) ([Europe](#)) (3,530 km without the delta)
17. 3,596 km - [Shatt al-Arab-Euphrates](#), [Southwest Asia](#)
18. 3,379 km - [Purus](#), [Peru](#) / [Brazil](#), (2,948 km) (3,210 km) (tributary of [Amazon](#))
19. 3,239 km - [Madeira](#), [Bolivia](#) / [Brazil](#) (tributary of [Amazon](#))
20. 3,199 km - [São Francisco](#), [Brazil](#), (2,900 km) (3,161 km)
21. 3,184 km - [Yukon](#), [Canada](#) / [USA](#)
22. 3,180 km - [Indus](#), [South Asia](#)
23. 3,078 km - [Syr Darya](#), [Central Asia](#), (2 212 km)
24. 3,060 km - [Salween](#), [South-East Asia](#), (2 600 km)
25. 3,058 km - [Saint Lawrence](#), [USA](#) / [Canada](#)

26. 3,057 km - [Rio Grande, USA / Mexico](#), (2 870 km) (2 896 km)
27. 2,989 km - [Lower Tunguska, Russia \(North Asia\)](#) (tributary of [Yenisei](#))
28. 2,896 km - [Brahmaputra, South Asia](#)
29. 2,858 km - [Danube, Europe](#)
30. 2,820 km - [Yapura, Colombia / Brazil](#)
31. 2,750 km - [Tocantins, Brazil](#), (2,416 km) (2,640 km) (tributary of [Amazon](#))
32. 2,650 km - [Zambezi, Southern Africa](#)
33. 2,650 km - [Vilyuy, Russia \(North Asia\)](#), (tributary of [Lena](#))
34. 2,620 km - [Amu Darya, Central Asia](#)
35. 2,575 km - [Araguaia, Brazil](#)
36. 2,570 km - [Nelson-Saskatchewan, Canada](#)
37. 2,549 km - [Paraguay, South America](#) (tributary of [Paraná](#))
38. 2,534 km - [Ural, Russia / Kazakhstan](#), (2,428 km)
39. 2,513 km - [Kolyma, Russia \(North Asia\)](#), (2,219 km)
40. 2,510 km - [Ganges, India / Bangladesh](#)
41. 2,500 km - [Orinoco, Venezuela / Colombia](#), (2 140 km) (3 000 km)
42. 2,500 km - [Pilcomayo, South America](#)
43. 2,490 km - Upper [Ob, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
44. 2,490 km - [Shabele, Ethiopia / Somalia](#)
45. 2,450 km - [Ishim, Kazakhstan / Russia](#)
46. 2,410 km - [Juruá, Peru / Brazil](#)
47. 2,348 km - [Arkansas, USA](#)
48. 2,333 km - [Colorado, USA / Mexico](#), (2,250 km)
49. 2,300 km - [Ubangi, Central Africa](#)
50. 2,292 km - [Olenyok, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
51. 2,285 km - [Dnieper, Europe](#)
52. 2,273 km - [Aldan, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
53. 2,250 km - [Columbia, Canada / USA](#), (1,953 km)
54. 2,250 km - [Negro, South America](#)
55. 2,188 km - [Red, USA](#)
56. 2,153 km - [Kasai, Angola / Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)
57. 2,150 km - [Ayeyarwady River, Myanmar](#), (1,880 km)
58. 2,129 km - [Xi Jiang, People's Republic of China](#)
59. 2,100 km - [Tarim, People's Republic of China](#)
60. 2,100 km - [Xingu, Brazil](#)
61. 2,010 km - [Northern Salado, Argentina](#)
62. 1,978 km - [Vitim, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
63. 1,950 km - [Tigris, Turkey / Iraq](#)
64. 1,927 km - [Songhua, People's Republic of China](#)
65. 1,900 km - [Tapajós, Brazil](#)
66. 1,870 km - [Don, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
67. 1,865 km - [Stony Tunguska, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
68. 1,860 km - [Orange, Southern Africa](#)
69. 1,809 km - [Pechora, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
70. 1,805 km - [Kama, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
71. 1,800 km - [Limpopo, Southern Africa](#)

72. 1,749 km - [Guaporé, Brazil / Bolivia](#)
73. 1,726 km - [Indigirka, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
74. 1,670 km - [Snake, USA](#)
75. 1,641 km - [Senegal, West Africa](#)
76. 1,610 km - [Uruguay, South America](#)
77. 1,600 km - [Blue Nile, Ethiopia / Sudan](#)
78. 1,600 km - [Churchill, Canada](#)
79. 1,600 km - [Khatanga, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
80. 1,600 km - [Volta, West Africa](#)
81. 1,600 km - [Okavango, Southern Africa](#)
82. 1,599 km - [Beni, Bolivia](#)
83. 1,594 km - [Platte, USA](#)
84. 1,591 km - [Tobol, Kazakhstan / Russia](#)
85. 1,579 km - [Ohio, USA](#)
86. 1,575 km - [Içá, South America](#)
87. 1,550 km - [Magdalena, Colombia](#)
88. 1,532 km - [Han, People's Republic of China](#)
89. 1,500 km - [Lomami, Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)
90. 1,500 km - [Oka, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
91. 1,490 km - [Pecos, USA](#)
92. 1,480 km - Upper [Yenisei, Mongolia / Russia](#)
93. 1,465 km - [Godavari, India](#)
94. 1,438 km - [Colorado, USA](#)
95. 1,420 km - [Belaya, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
96. 1,415 km - [Marañón, Peru](#)
97. 1,411 km - [Dniestr, Ukraine / Moldova](#), (1,352 km)
98. 1,400 km - [Benue, Cameroon / Nigeria](#)
99. 1,400 km - [Ili, People's Republic of China / Kazakhstan](#)
100. 1,376 km - [Yamuna, India](#)
101. 1,370 km - [Sutlej, India / Pakistan](#)
102. 1,370 km - [Vyatka, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
103. 1,368 km - [Fraser, Canada](#)
104. 1,360 km - [Grande, Brazil](#)
105. 1,352 km - [Brazos, USA](#)
106. 1,345 km - [Liao, People's Republic of China](#)
107. 1,323 km - [Yalong, People's Republic of China](#)
108. 1,320 km - [Iguaçu, Brazil / Argentina](#)
109. 1,320 km - [Olekma, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
110. 1,320 km - [Rhine, Europe](#)
111. 1,300 km - [Krishna, India](#)
112. 1,300 km - [Iri, Brazil](#)
113. 1,289 km - [Narmada, India](#)
114. 1,271 km - [Ottawa, Canada](#)
115. 1,242 km - [Zeya, Russia \(East Asia\)](#)
116. 1,240 km - [Juruena, Brazil](#)
117. 1,236 km - Upper [Mississippi, USA](#)

118. 1,231 km - [Athabasca, Canada](#)
119. 1,223 km - [Canadian, USA](#)
120. 1,220 km - [North Saskatchewan, Canada](#)
121. 1,210 km - [Vaal, South Africa](#)
122. 1,200 km - [Shire, Southern Africa](#)
123. 1,200 km - [Tapajós, Brazil](#)
124. 1,190 km - [Nen, People's Republic of China](#)
125. 1,175 km - [Green, USA](#)
126. 1,173 km - [Milk, USA / Canada](#)
127. 1,159 km - [Elbe, Czech Republic / Germany](#), (1 165 km)
128. 1,158 km - [Chindwin, Myanmar](#)
129. 1,143 km - [James, USA](#)
130. 1,130 km - [Helmand, Afghanistan / Iran](#)
131. 1,130 km - [Madre de Dios, Peru / Bolivia](#)
132. 1,130 km - [Tietê, Brazil](#)
133. 1,130 km - [Vycheгда, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
134. 1,123 km - [Cimarron, USA](#)
135. 1,120 km - [Anadyr, Russia \(North Asia\)](#)
136. 1,115 km - [Liard, Canada](#)
137. 1,100 km - [Huallaga, Peru](#)
138. 1,102 km - [White, USA](#)
139. 1,094 km - [Gambia, West Africa](#)
140. 1,086 km - [Chenab, India / Pakistan](#)
141. 1,080 km - [Yellowstone, USA](#)
142. 1,078 km - [Donets, Ukraine / Russia](#), (1 053 km)
143. 1,075 km - [Koksoak, Canada](#)
144. 1,050 km - [Bermejo, South America](#)
145. 1,050 km - [Guaviare, Colombia](#)
146. 1,050 km - [Kuskokwim, USA](#)
147. 1,050 km - [Fly, Papua New Guinea / Indonesia](#)
148. 1,049 km - [Tennessee, USA](#)
149. 1,020 km - [Daugava, Europe](#)
150. 1,015 km - [Gila, USA](#)
151. 1,014 km - [Vistula, Poland](#)
152. 1,012 km - [Loire, France](#)
153. 1,010 km - [Essequibo, Guyana](#)
154. 1,010 km - [Khopor, Russia \(Europe\)](#)
155. 1,006 km - [Tagus, Spain / Portugal](#)

Note that this list is still incomplete, especially with respect to rivers from Africa, North Asia, and South America.

Longest rivers that have probably existed in the past

Nile

The [Virunga Volcanoes](#) started to form in the [Miocene](#) period, blocking the [African Rift Valley](#). Before that, the water which now accumulates in [Lake Tanganyika](#) drained northwards into the [Albert Nile](#), which would make the Nile somewhere around 1500 km = 900 miles longer, with its longest headwater in [Zambia](#).

Amazon-Congo

The [Amazon basin](#) formerly drained westwards into the [Pacific Ocean](#), until the [Andes](#) rose and reversed the drainage.

The [Congo](#) basin is completely surrounded by high land, except for its long narrow exit valley past [Kinshasa](#), including [waterfalls](#) around [Manyanga](#). That gives the impression that most of the Congo basin was formerly on a much higher land level and that it was [rejuvenated](#) by much of its lower course being removed.

In [Permian](#) and early [Triassic](#) times [Africa](#) and [South America](#) were close against each other with no sea between (see [continental drift](#) and [plate tectonics](#)), and the Congo probably drained into the Amazon basin and eventually into the Pacific. Including part of its course that was completely lost when the South Atlantic opened, the total course length may have been anything up to approximately 12000 km = 7200 miles long.

References

- [Time](#) Almanac 2004
- [Principal Rivers of the World](#)

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