

# STRATEGY TO PREPARE GEOGRAPHY OPTIONAL FOR UPSC

By Arpita Sharma

# CSE



Geography is an important subject as far as the UPSC civil services exam is concerned. It is a part of the UPSC prelims and mains exams. Geography is also an optional subject offered by the commission and as far as the numbers go, it is an immensely popular optional.

**FOR GS YOU HAVE TO STUDY EXTENSIVELY , FOR  
OPTIONAL YOU HAVE TO STUDY INTENSIVELY**



## Positives of Geography as optional:

- Help in **Prelims**.
- Help in **GS-1**.
- Help in **GS-3**.
- Help in **Essay**.
- Current based Paper-2.

## Negatives of Geography as optional:

- **Too many Aspirants** opt it. It leads to inconsistency in marking.
- Too many Engineers opting it blindly in name of semi-technical subject and 'lack of other options'.
- **Open ended** syllabus, especially Paper-1.
- Too many '**out of syllabus**' questions of late.



# GEOGRAPHY OPTIONAL

## STRATEGY

### *General instructions:*

Read the syllabus thoroughly and remember all the topics

After completing a unit from the syllabus, refer to the questions of previous years and try to frame answers.

For Paper 2, make small bullet point notes for often repeated topics from standard sources.

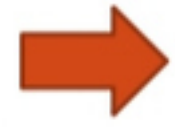
Read any topic from at most 2-3 sources (generally a textbook and a classroom material) and then revise it multiple times.

For Paper 1, have special focus on one section, either Physical Geography or Human Geography. Know beforehand from which section you'll attempt 3 questions.

Prepare region wise maps of India from standard books in which all aspects of a region are covered like terrain, drainage, resources, agriculture, industries etc

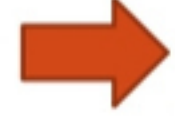
# THERE ARE THREE STEPS WHICH YOU SHOULD FOLLOW FOR GEOGRAPHY OPTIONAL AND THEY ARE:

## *Reading*



In this you would have to cover books ranging from basic to advance i.e. NCERTs and standard books.

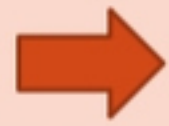
## *Writing*



In this you would have to write a lot, from questions given after each chapter in NCERTs (initially) to previous years and other tests.

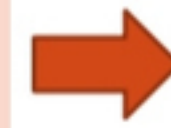
## *Mapping*

### **Capital**



*Make a habit of learning 10 global capitals on a daily basis.*

### **Use of**



Amit Sengupta

### **The book list :**

1. New NCERTs 6,7,8,11,12 (9,10) not necessary as **youtube** covered already.
2. Old NCERTs 11,12 a total of three books .
3. Savindra Singh for physical geography
4. GC Leong for Human geography
5. Dr. Khullar for Indian geography.
6. Yojana and down to earth magazine for current affairs.



# Sources and preparation methodology for Paper 1:

## Paper

Physical Geography and Human Geography in general

1. Follow NCERT's of Class 11th & 12<sup>th</sup> , Physical Geography Book by Savinder Singh
2. Previous Year's Question Papers
3. Certificate Physical and Human Geography by Goh Chang Leong
4. Read Models and Theories from Indian and World Geography by Majid Hussain

Geomorphology

Climatology



# Sources and preparation methodology for Paper2:

## Paper

## Detailed Questions about India

1. **2** Follow NCERT's of Class 6th to 12th
2. India Comprehensive Geography by DR Khullar
3. Census Data

### Diagrams - Study Sources

- For Diagrams make sure that you study Physical Geography in Diagrams by RB Bunnett and for the Maps follow [Oxford Student Atlas \(for the India maps\)](#) and [Orient Longman School Atlas](#) - (for the World maps).

# ANSWER STRUCTURE:

- **Headings.**
- Answers in mix of **points-para-bullets** so that there is optimum use of space.
- **1 diagram** per page. Make **Maps-block diagrams-tables-charts** etc. Enclose them in **box and label**.
- Use of **paper-1 concepts in paper-2.**
- Make **points directly from syllabus**, especially in random questions asked in paper-2. Example answer effect of climate change in headings like physical settings, agriculture, transport, cultural settings etc.
- **Integrate as much current** as possible.
- **Underline** important keywords.
- **Do not forget to mention** Intro-definitions-examples-theories-thinkers-conclusion.



**Part 1 – Principles of Physical Geography:**

**1. Geomorphology:** Factors controlling landform development; endogenetic and exogenetic forces; Origin and evolution of the earth's crust; Fundamentals of geomagnetism; Physical conditions of the earth's interior; Geosynclines; Continental drift; Isostasy; Plate tectonics; Recent views on mountain building; Vulcanicity; Earthquakes and Tsunamis; Concepts of geomorphic cycles and Landscape development ; Denudation chronology; Channel morphology; Erosion surfaces; Slope development ; Applied Geomorphology : Geohydrology, economic geology and environment.

**2. Climatology:** Temperature and pressure belts of the world; Heat budget of the earth; Atmospheric circulation; atmospheric stability and instability. Planetary and local winds; Monsoons and jet streams; Air masses and frontogenesis, Temperate and tropical cyclones; Types and distribution of precipitation; Weather and Climate; Koppen's, Thornthwaite's and Trewartha's classification of world climates; Hydrological cycle; Global climatic change and role and response of man in climatic changes, Applied climatology and Urban climate.

**3. Oceanography:** Bottom topography of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans; Temperature and salinity of the oceans; Heat and salt budgets, Ocean deposits; Waves, currents and tides; Marine resources: biotic, mineral and energy resources; Coral reefs, coral bleaching; sea-level changes; law of the sea and marine pollution.

**4. Biogeography:** Genesis of soils; Classification and distribution of soils; Soil profile; Soil erosion, Degradation and conservation; Factors influencing world distribution of plants and animals; Problems of deforestation and conservation measures; Social forestry; agro-forestry; Wildlife; Major gene pool centres.

**5. Environmental Geography:** Principle of ecology; Human ecological adaptations; Influence of man on ecology and environment; Global and regional ecological changes and imbalances; Ecosystem their management and conservation; Environmental degradation, management and conservation; Biodiversity and sustainable development; Environmental policy; Environmental hazards and remedial measures; Environmental education and legislation.



## Part 2 – Human Geography:

**1. Perspectives in Human Geography:** Areal differentiation; regional synthesis; Dichotomy and dualism; Environmentalism; Quantitative revolution and locational analysis; radical, behavioural, human and welfare approaches; Languages, religions and secularisation; Cultural regions of the world; Human development index.

**2. Economic Geography:** World economic development: measurement and problems; World resources and their distribution; Energy crisis; the limits to growth; World agriculture: typology of agricultural regions; agricultural inputs and productivity; Food and nutrition problems; Food security; famine: causes, effects and remedies; World industries: locational patterns and problems; patterns of world trade.

**3. Population and Settlement Geography:** Growth and distribution of world population; demographic attributes; Causes and consequences of migration; concepts of the over-under-and optimum population; Population theories, world population problems and policies, Social well-being and quality of life; Population as social capital. Types and patterns of rural settlements; Environmental issues in rural settlements; Hierarchy of urban settlements; Urban morphology: Concepts of primate city and rank-size rule; Functional classification of towns; Sphere of urban influence; Rural-urban fringe; Satellite towns; Problems and remedies of urbanization; Sustainable development of cities.

**4. Regional Planning:** Concept of a region; Types of regions and methods of regionalisation; Growth centres and growth poles; Regional imbalances; regional development strategies; environmental issues in regional planning; Planning for sustainable development.

**5. Models, Theories and Laws in Human Geography:** Systems analysis in Human geography; Malthusian, Marxian and demographic transition models; Central Place theories of Christaller and Losch; Perroux and Boudeville; Von Thunen's model of agricultural location; Weber's model of industrial location; Ostov's model of stages of growth. Heartland and Rimland theories; Laws of international boundaries and frontiers.



## 2 Syllabus

### Geography of India

**1. Physical Setting:** Space relationship of India with neighbouring countries; Structure and relief; Drainage system and watersheds; Physiographic regions; Mechanism of Indian monsoons and rainfall patterns, Tropical cyclones and western disturbances; Floods and droughts; Climatic regions; Natural vegetation; Soil types and their distributions.

**2. Resources:** Land, surface and groundwater, energy, minerals, biotic and marine resources; Forest and wildlife resources and their conservation; Energy crisis.

**3. Agriculture:** Infrastructure: irrigation, seeds, fertilizers, power; Institutional factors: land holdings, land tenure and land reforms; Cropping pattern, agricultural productivity, agricultural intensity, crop combination, land capability; Agro and social forestry; Green revolution and its socioeconomic and ecological implications; Significance of dry farming; Livestock resources and white revolution; aquaculture; sericulture, apiculture and poultry; agricultural regionalisation; agro-climatic zones; agro-ecological regions.

**4. Industry:** Evolution of industries; Locational factors of cotton, jute, textile, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilizer, paper, chemical and pharmaceutical, automobile, cottage and agro-based industries; Industrial houses and complexes including public sector undertakings; Industrial regionalisation; New industrial policies; Multinationals and liberalization; Special Economic Zones; Tourism including eco-tourism.

**5. Transport, Communication and Trade:** Road, railway, waterway, airway and pipeline networks and their complementary roles in regional development; Growing importance of ports on national and foreign trade; Trade balance; Trade Policy; Export processing zones; Developments in communication and information technology and their impacts on economy and society; Indian space programme.



## UPSC Geography Optional – Paper

### 2 Syllabus

**6. Cultural Setting:** Historical Perspective of Indian Society; Racial, linguistic and ethnic diversities; religious minorities; major tribes, tribal areas and their problems; cultural regions; Growth, distribution and density of population; Demographic attributes: sex-ratio, age structure, literacy rate, work-force, dependency ratio, longevity; migration (inter-regional, intraregional and international) and associated problems; Population problems and policies; Health indicators.

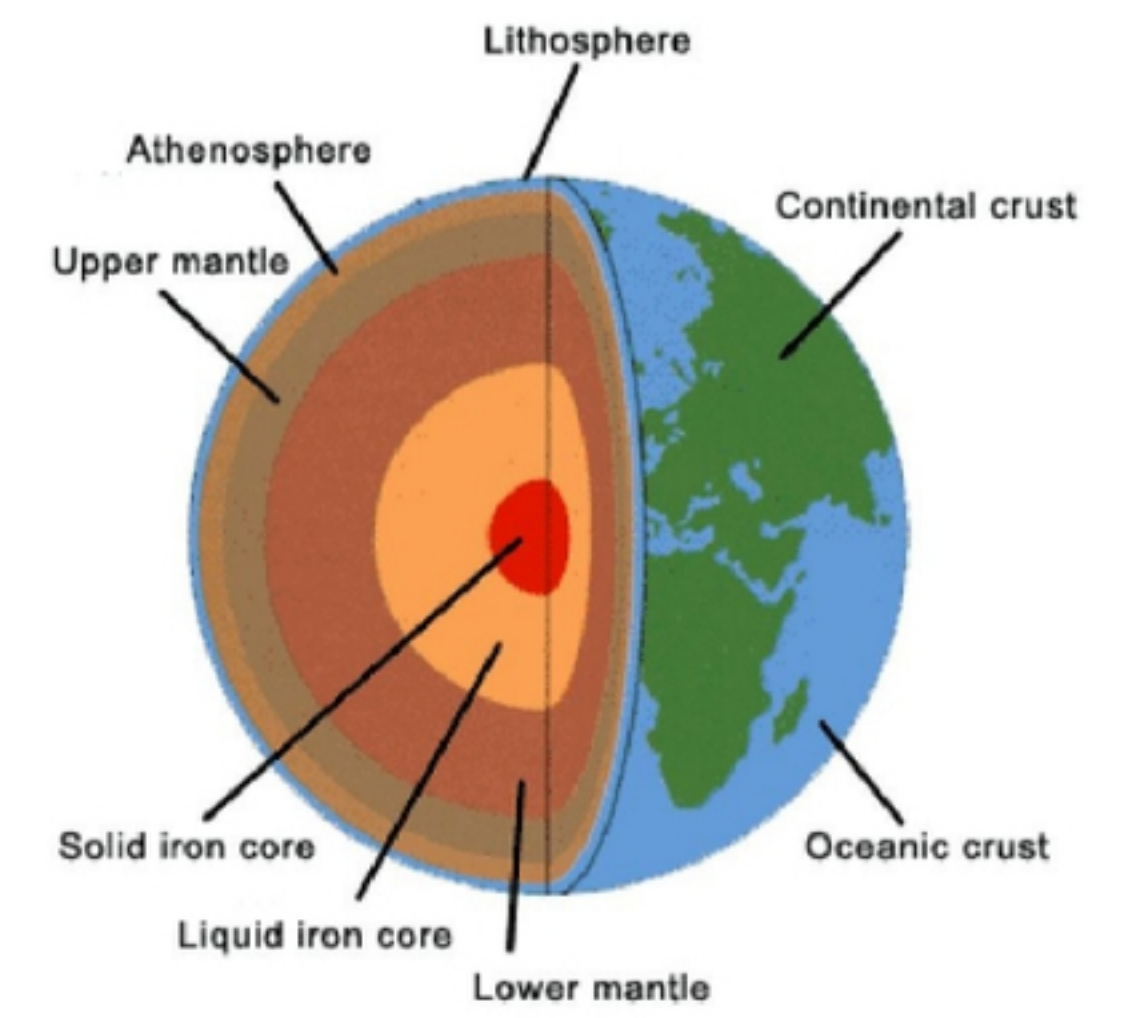
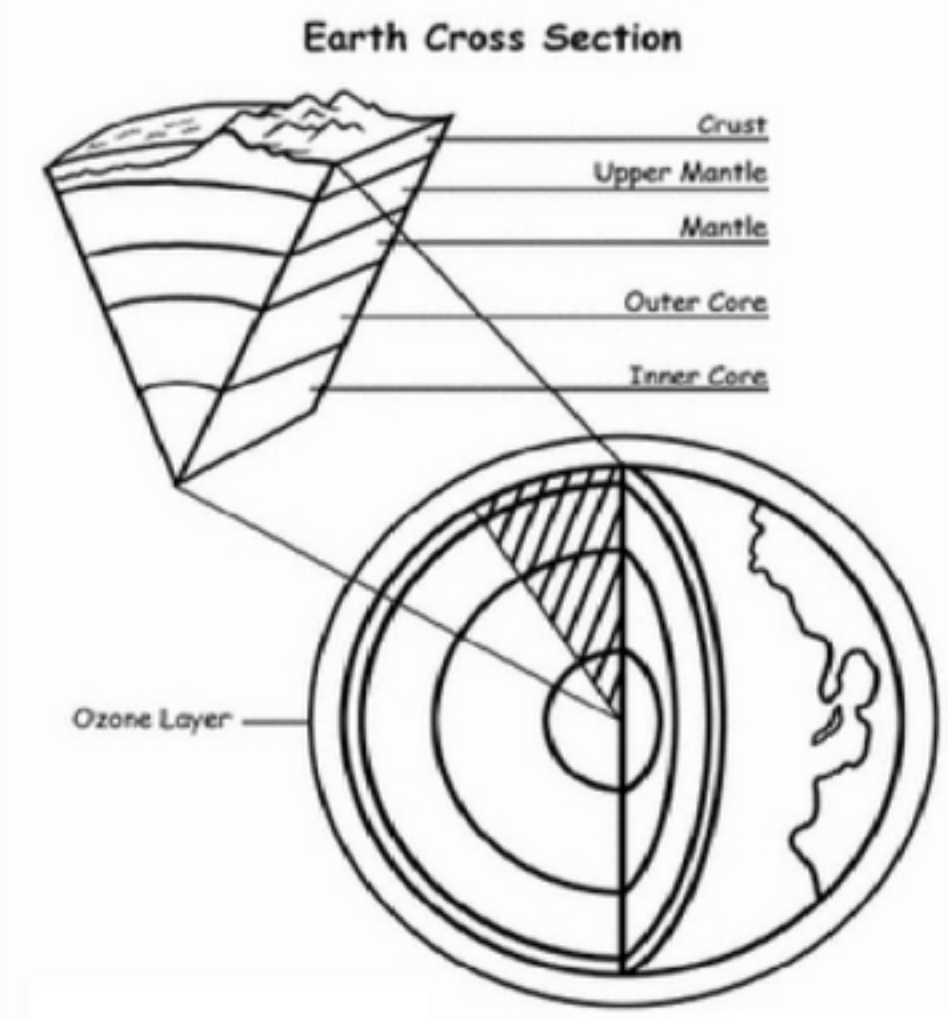
**7. Settlements:** Types, patterns and morphology of rural settlements; Urban developments; Morphology of Indian cities; Functional classification of Indian cities; Conurbations and metropolitan regions; urban sprawl; Slums and associated problems; town planning; Problems of urbanization and remedies.

**8. Regional Development and Planning:** Experience of regional planning in India; Five Year Plans; Integrated rural development programmes; Panchayati Raj and decentralised planning; Command area development; Watershed management; Planning for backward area, desert, drought-prone, hill, tribal area development; multi-level planning; Regional planning and development of island territories.

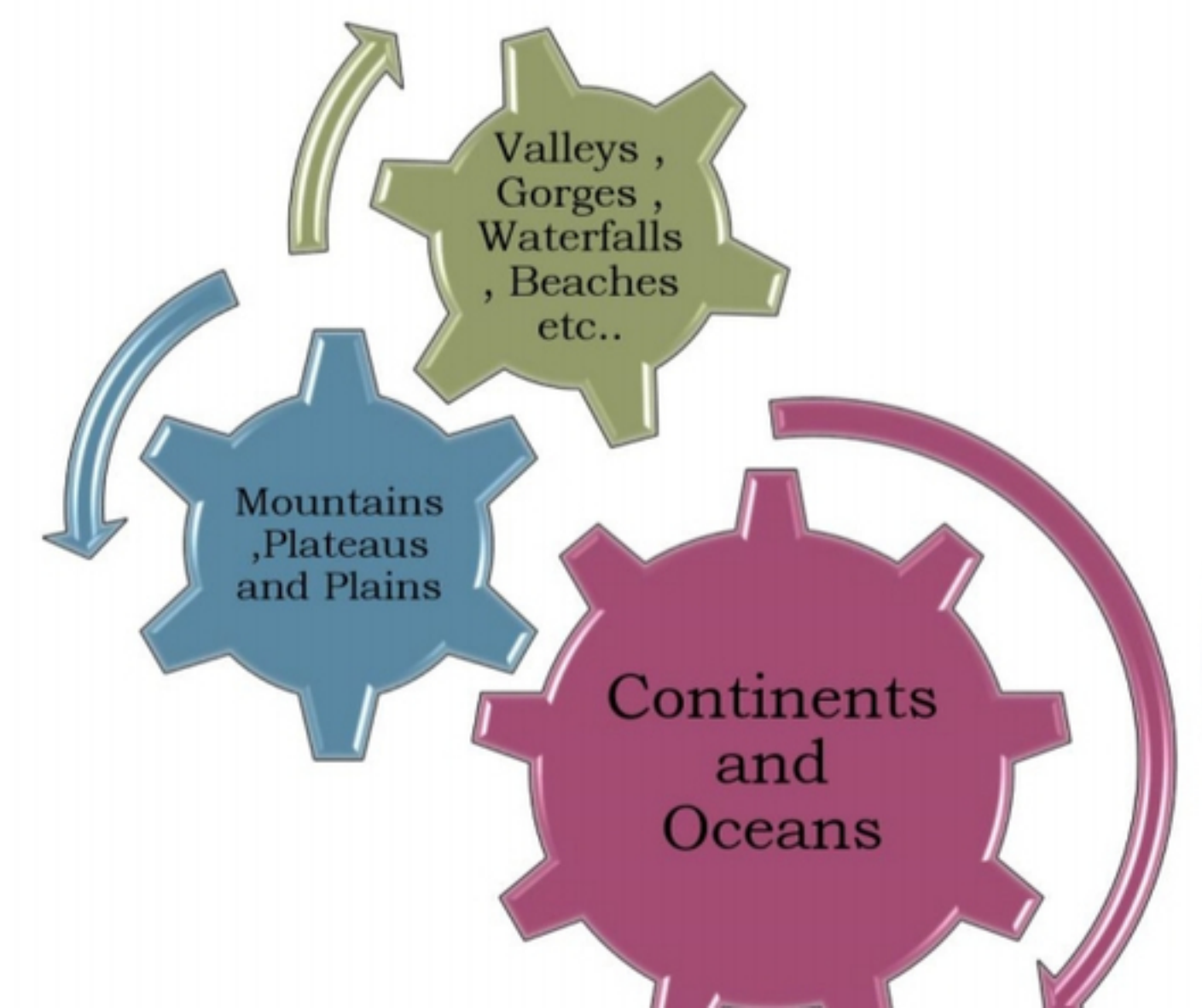
**9. Political Aspects:** Geographical basis of Indian federalism; State reorganisation; Emergence of new states; Regional consciousness and interstate issues; international boundary of India and related issues; Cross-border terrorism; India's role in world affairs; Geopolitics of South Asia and Indian Ocean Realm.

**10. Contemporary Issues:** Ecological issues: Environmental hazards: landslides, earthquakes, Tsunamis, floods and droughts, epidemics; Issues relating to environmental pollution; Changes in patterns of land use; Principles of environmental impact assessment and environmental management; Population explosion and food security; Environmental degradation; Deforestation, desertification and soil erosion; Problems of agrarian and industrial unrest; Regional disparities in economic development; Concept of sustainable growth and development; Environmental awareness; Linkage of rivers; Globalisation and Indian economy.





# Landforms



# Process of Wind Formation

