

Spatial Scales

The world is a pretty big place. Spatial scales are the different lenses geographers and others use to explore the world. By breaking the world into smaller chunks and zooming in on specific places, we can see more details about the place.

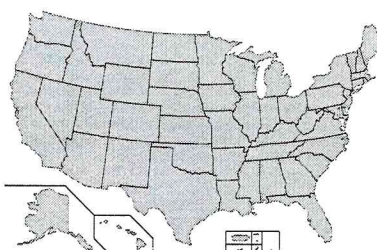
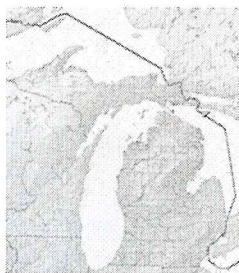
It may help to think of the different spatial scales as working like different camera lenses. Sometimes you want to zoom in and see the faces of the people in the picture. At other times, you want to see the scenery around the people in the photograph. When you zoom out, you might not see the freckles on some of the faces, but you can see where the people are in relation to their environment.

The same is true with spatial scales. We can zoom into a town and see the streets and houses. However, if we zoom out, we would be able to see where that town is in relation to the state, county, or continent. We will be using different spatial scales – local, regional, interregional, and global – to investigate our world.

The pictures below show Michigan at different spatial scales.



Local



Global

Sources: <http://www.city-data.com/city/Detroit-Michigan.html>; https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Blank_map_of_the_United_States.PNG; https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Relief_map_of_USA_Michigan.png; <https://openclipart.org/detail/29983/globe-with-borders>

Advancements in Geography

The field of geography continues to evolve. Advances in technology allow geographers to know more than ever before about our planet and how we interact with it. As geographers use new technology in their investigations, they are able to learn more about our world and how we live, work, and play there.