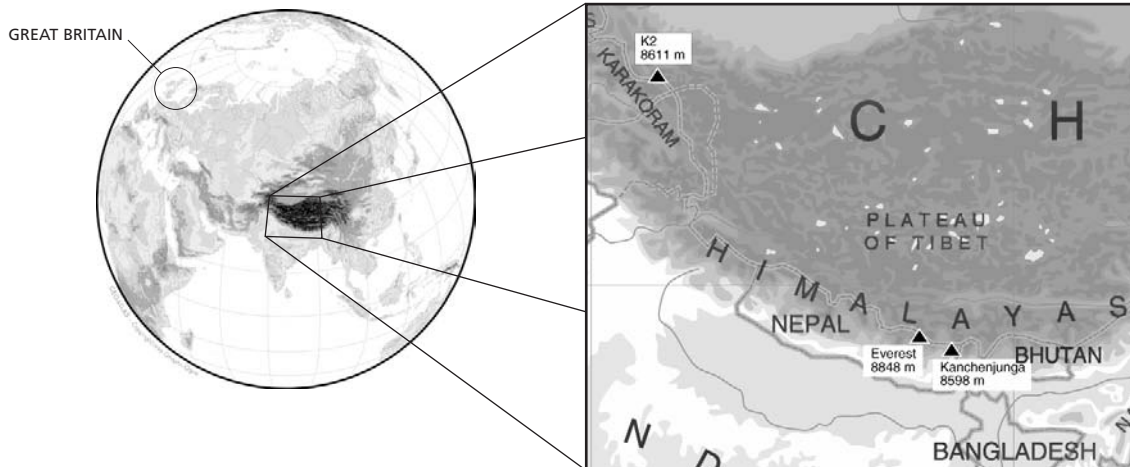


# The world's highest mountains



The world's three highest mountains are in Asia. The area is sometimes called 'the roof of the world', because it is so high up. The air around these mountains is very thin, so no plants can grow. The mountains are bare, rocky and covered in ice and snow. Climbers have to wear special clothes to keep warm and oxygen masks to help them breathe.

## Mount Everest (8848 metres above sea level)

The tip of Mount Everest is the highest place on Earth. It is part of a mountain range called the Himalayas, between the countries of Nepal and China. We call it Everest after an Englishman who worked out it was the highest mountain, 150 years ago. However, the Chinese call it Qomolangma and in Nepal its name is Sagarmatha. As far as we know, the first people to stand on top of Everest were Edmund Hillary from New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay from Nepal. They reached the summit on 29 May, 1953.

## K2 (8611 metres above sea level)

The second highest mountain is a long way north-west of Everest, in a mountain range called the Karakhorams. It is in North Pakistan. When people were measuring the mountains in the range, K2 was the second one they did and that's how it got its name. It was first climbed in 1954 by a team of Italian climbers.

## Kanchenjunga (8598 metres above sea level)

Like Mount Everest, Kanchenjunga is part of the Himalyan range. It has five peaks and in the language of Tibet its name means 'the five treasures of the snow'. Kanchenjunga was first climbed in 1955 by a British team but they stopped a few metres before the summit because it was against the religion of

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