

Fossil Fuel Reserves

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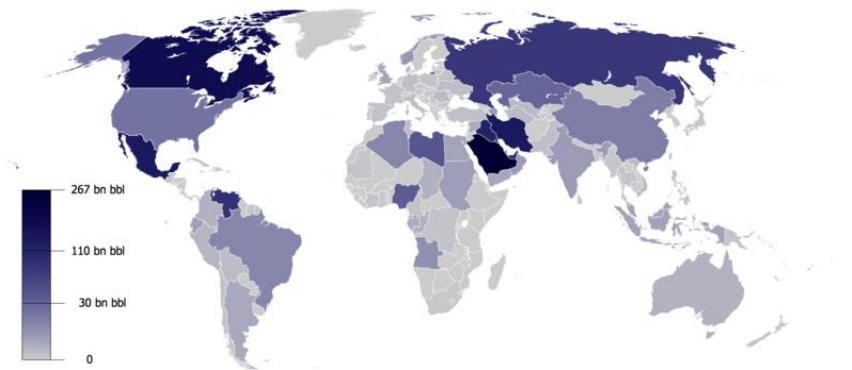
- Fossil fuels provide about 85% of the world's energy at this time
- Worldwide fossil fuel usage has increased many times over in the past half century, because of...
 - Population increases
 - Increases in the number of cars, televisions, and other fuel-consuming uses in the developed world
 - Lifestyle improvements in the developing world
- The amount of fossil fuels that remain untapped is unknown, but can likely be measured in decades for oil and natural gas and in a few centuries for coal

Study Tip

Break down the term “fossil fuel” to better understand its meaning. *Fossil fuels are fuels formed by natural processes such as anaerobic decomposition of buried dead organisms. or fossils.*

Alternative Fossil Fuels

- As the easy-to-reach fossil fuel sources are depleted, alternative sources of fossil fuels are increasingly being exploited
 - **Oil shale** is rock that contains dispersed oil that has not collected in reservoirs
 - **Tar sands** are rocky materials mixed with very thick oil
- Development of alternative energy sources is favorable, for the following reasons:
 - Environmental consequences of mining fuels
 - Fuels do not have a limitless supply



Worldwide oil reserves.

Concept Check

- What are oil shales and tar sands?
- How do scientists and politicians determine how much fossil fuel is left? Why is this number undoubtedly inaccurate?
- Why is the need for fossil fuels increasing?