

Indian River Systems: Comprehensive Guide to Major Rivers in India

India's river network is broadly classified into two categories based on their origin: the Himalayan rivers and the Peninsular rivers. While the Himalayan rivers are perennial, the Peninsular rivers are seasonal and rely primarily on rainfall.

Classification of Rivers

Understanding the hydrological and geographical characteristics of these rivers is essential. The following table breaks them down into five main categories:

Category	Examples	Key Features
Himalayan	Ganga, Indus, Brahmaputra	Snow-fed, perennial, deep valleys.
Peninsular	Godavari, Krishna, Narmada	Rain-fed, seasonal, broad valleys.
East-flowing	Mahanadi, Kaveri, Pennar	Flow into Bay of Bengal, form deltas.
West-flowing	Narmada, Tapi, Sabarmati	Flow into Arabian Sea, form estuaries.
Inland Drainage	Luni	Disappears in Rann of Kachchh.

Major Himalayan River Systems

These rivers originate from the Himalayas and act as the backbone for irrigation and hydropower in North India. Key details are summarized below:

River	Source	Mouth	Key Facts
Indus	Tibetan Plateau	Arabian Sea	Forms deep gorges in Ladakh.
Ganga	Gangotri Glacier	Bay of Bengal	Longest river in India.

River	Source	Mouth	Key Facts
Brahmaputra	Angsi Glacier	Bay of Bengal	Flood-prone, forms braided channels.
Yamuna	Yamunotri Glacier	Prayagraj	Right-bank tributary of the Ganga.

Peninsular River Systems: Tips to Remember

To keep track of the major east-flowing rivers, you can use the acronym **"G-K-M-K"** (Godavari, Krishna, Mahanadi, Kaveri). These rivers serve as the lifeblood of the southern plateau.

River	Source	Key Features
Godavari	Trimbakeshwar	Longest peninsular river, known as 'Dakshin Ganga'.
Krishna	Mahabaleshwar	Important dams: Nagarjuna Sagar.
Narmada	Amarkantak	Flows through a rift valley.
Kaveri	Talakaveri	Known as the Ganga of South India.

Exam Highlights (High-Yield Facts)

Make sure you memorize these for competitive exams:

- Largest river basin in India: Ganga Basin.
- Longest river within India: Ganga (approx. 2,525 km).
- Largest Delta: Sundarbans.
- Sorrow of Bihar: Kosi River.
- Sorrow of Bengal: Damodar River.

These facts are frequently tested in exams like UPSC, WBCS, and other government assessments. To further test your knowledge, participate in our practice quiz and evaluate your preparation.

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