

Earthquake Statistics

Frequency of Earthquakes Worldwide¹

Descriptor	Magnitude	Annual average
<i>Great</i>	8 or higher	1
<i>Major</i>	7–7.9	18
<i>Strong</i>	6–6.9	120
<i>Moderate</i>	5–5.9	800
<i>Light</i>	4–4.9	c. 6,200
<i>Minor</i>	3–3.9	c. 49,000
<i>Very minor</i>	2–3	c. 1,000 ²
<i>Very minor</i>	1–2	c. 8,000 ²

1. Since 1900. 2. Per day

The Ten Largest Earthquakes of the Past Century

Country or place	Date	Magnitude ¹
Chile	May 22, 1960	9.5
Alaska	March 27, 1964	9.2
Russia	Nov. 4, 1952	9.0
Ecuador	Jan. 31, 1906	8.8
Alaska	March 9, 1957	8.8
Kuril Islands	Nov. 6, 1958	8.7
Alaska	Feb. 4, 1965	8.7
India	Aug. 15, 1950	8.6
Argentina	Nov. 11, 1922	8.5
Indonesia	Feb. 1, 1938	8.5

1. MOMENT MAGNITUDE

Largest Earthquakes in the United States

Rank	Magnitude	Date	Location
1	9.2	March 27, 1964	Prince William Sound, Alaska
2	8.8	March 9, 1957	Andreanof Islands, Alaska
3	8.7	Feb. 4, 1965	Rat Islands, Alaska
4	8.3	Nov. 10, 1938	East of Shumagin Islands, Alaska
5	8.3	July 10, 1958	Lituya Bay, Alaska
6	8.2	Sept. 10, 1899	Yakutat Bay, Alaska
7	8.2	Sept. 4, 1899	Near Cape Yakataga, Alaska
8	8.0	May 7, 1986	Andreanof Islands, Alaska
9	7.9	Feb. 7, 1812	New Madrid, Missouri
10	7.9	Jan. 9, 1857	Fort Tejon, California
11	7.9	April 3, 1868	Ka'u District, Island of Hawaii
12	7.9	Oct. 9, 1900	Kodiak Island, Alaska
13	7.9	Nov. 30, 1987	Gulf of Alaska
14	7.8	March 26, 1872	Owens Valley, California
15	7.8	Feb. 24, 1892	Imperial Valley, California

Source of Data: National Earthquake Information Center, U.S.G.S.