

Tōhoku (Japan) Earthquake

An earthquake is the shaking of the Earth's crust. Approximately 15 major earthquakes occur each year around the world. Their effects can be devastating.

When Did It Happen?

The earthquake struck the coast of Japan at 2:46 p.m. on March 11th 2011.

Where Did It Happen?

North-east of Honshu, Japan's main island, a powerful earthquake occurred out at sea. Its epicentre was 15 miles (24km) below the seabed and was triggered by the rupturing of part of the oceanic trench, which moved 50 metres sideways and thrust 10 metres up.

What Happened?

The 9.0 magnitude earthquake lasted for about six minutes and aftershocks continued for weeks.

The quake triggered a huge tsunami. In places, the tsunami waves reached as far as 10km inland and entire towns were destroyed.

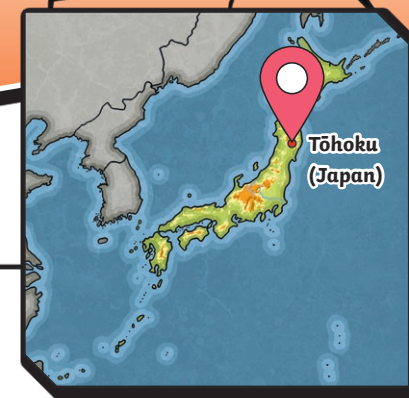
Other Facts

It was one of the most powerful earthquakes on record.

345 fires occurred as a direct result of the earthquake.

One of the waves measured approximately 40 metres (132ft) high.

The tsunami waves caused three major nuclear reactors to stop working.



What Were the Effects?

Infrastructure

Electricity supplies were affected for weeks.

More than 120,000 homes were destroyed and a million more were damaged.

A dam burst near Fukushima city.

Social and Economic

Over 18,000 people were killed and over 6000 were injured.

Water supplies contaminated from damaged pipes.

Billions of pounds have been spent on repairs and rebuilding.

Response

Temporary housing and toilets.

Search and rescue teams sent from overseas to help.

100,000 members of the Japanese military were drafted in to help.