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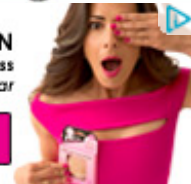
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## Earth Symbols and Meanings

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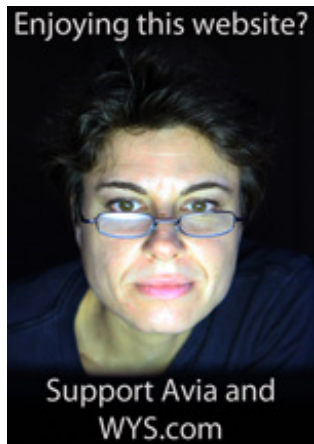
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### Common Earth Symbols and Their Meanings from Around the World

Earth symbols are a pale [mimicry](#) to the **vast complexity** they imply. I've provided a few concrete symbols for earth on this page, but they really don't do the concept justice. Indeed, the symbolic meaning of Earth is so far-reaching, it's just too awesome to capsuleate into a



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few limiting words or icons.

Nevertheless, as symbolic practitioners we must doggedly **dig into the secrets Earth holds** for us because her influence is pervasive. No corner of our lives goes untouched by the Earth's effect. And so, her symbolism holds keys to clarity and profound insight.

Sidenote: I refer to Earth as a feminine or "[mother](#)" because of personal preference. I understand there are religions who worship Earth as a mother or goddess figure. This is not my intent. I simply infer feminine gender because it feels right to me. Indeed, many cultures identify Earth as male, or even a non-gender entity.

In a word, **Earth is *the* symbol of life.** All life.

Sure, the other elements ([water](#), [air](#), [fire](#)) are life forces too. But Earth is the accommodator:

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## Earth Accommodates Other Elements

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She allows great swaths to be sliced from her body as she yields to the [waters](#) of our world.

She communicates with the [air](#) and without the Earth, air would be a lost and sorrowful daughter.

[Fire](#) lives in the belly of Mother, and could not consummate without the foundational spark originating from Earth-based matter.

Within these contemplative contexts, we sense all threads of life are first woven with the fiber of Earth.

Furthermore, this interconnectedness reminds us not [only is](#) the Earth a stabilizing and a wholly physical symbol, it also represents a network. **Earth is synonymous with *belonging*.** She represents community and tribal wisdom. Earth is the embodiment of the concept of HOME.

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In ancient [Celtic symbolism](#), the Earth is a **unifying** force. Indeed, when a kinsman/woman passed on, he/she would not be reunited with their heavenly clan unless the element of earth (preferably from their birthplace) touched their bodies. Consequently, native soil was required to cover the physical remnants of the dead. Celts aren't the first to bury their dead beneath the soil, but it's fascinating so many of our forebears intuitively knew the connection. The Earth is a *consecrator*. It anchors, reunites, and re-establishes all things in need of her balancing effect.

In the spirit of communicating that sense of wholeness and rooted dominion, many cultures strive to impress their surroundings with pictographs representing Earth. Here are a few for your consideration:

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## Common Earth Symbols and Meanings

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**Earth Symbol:** This is commonly known as a standard [planetary symbol](#) for Earth. Logically, [the circle](#) symbolizes the globe; the Earth itself. The cross has variable symbolic meaning (four "corners" of the earth, four directions, four seasons, four clans of mankind, four virtues, etc). In the sixteenth century the cross indicated the presence of Christianity (indeed, this symbol is also an icon meaning "church"). This symbol is common in many Native American tribes (see next Earth symbol). [The circle](#) is a common, but not universal symbol for Earth. However, some cultures such as Chinese adopt the square as their Earth icon.

**[Native American](#) Earth Symbol:** This is an artistic rendition of Ojibwa (Chippewa) symbol for Earth. The center circle symbolizes the Earth in its infant form. The vertical and horizontal lines represent the [cosmic](#)

  
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[directions: North, South, East and West](#). The figures in each section symbolize the four great nations of mankind settling and ordering the Earth with a vision for cosmic harmony with all tribes and all life. [See also Native American symbols](#).



[Mayan Earth Symbol](#): An artistic rendition of *Kab*, Mayan for Earth. The spiraling feature is symbolic of the creative god force moving upon and within the earth. The line is symbolic of foundation and time. [The circles](#) represent the phases of moon cycles (as the Maya hieroglyph for Earth is also the Moon-goddess who embodies the cycles of fertility) as well as the accumulative phases of immaterial progressing to the realm of material (Earth wrought from the phases of the birth process). Be sure to double [check](#) your facts on Mayan symbols/designs (this version was passed on to me by an uncle. There may be other variations in design ). [See also Mayan symbols](#).



[Chinese](#) Trigram for Earth: This trigram is called the K'un (or K'uen) it represents "Big Earth," the Mother, and passive/receptive energy (*k'ien* being the active principle). In Fung Shui this trigram signifies southwest directions and yielding properties. **Note**, Chinese symbology denotes [the square](#) as the symbol for earth where as many other cultures view a circle or oval as an

Earth symbol. [The Chinese Tiger](#) is also a cultural corresponds with Earth in the Chinese culture. [See also Chinese symbols.](#)



**Aristotelian Element Earth Symbol:** The Greek philosopher Aristotle was one of the first to establish a structured set of symbols for all the elements. These are comprised of a series of triangles each representing the foundational, elemental law-holders of the Universe. I appreciate the triangular theme in each of these elemental symbols. [Triangles](#) are steeped in symbolism pertaining to creation, more specifically, co-operative creativity. See *all* the Aristotelian elemental symbols [by clicking here.](#)

Correspondences to Earth in the [animal realm](#) are infinite. Most interestingly, in many cultures we see the Earth resting on the backs of various animals. Here are a few examples in myth and lore where we see animals carrying the Earth on their backs...

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## Animals as Earth Symbols in Various Cultures

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Egypt = a brilliant [Scarab](#)

Asia (southeast) = an epic [Elephant](#)

Japan = a giant [Fish](#) (see also [Koi](#))

South and central Americas = a magnificent [Serpent](#)

India = the steady [turtle](#) (see also [mother symbolism](#))

We can learn more about ourselves and others by observing Earth signs in [astrology](#) too. Astrology adopts the personality traits of the elements, and

Taurus, Capricorn and Virgo are the Earth signs of the zodiac. By studying the character [traits of these signs](#), we can translate some fascinating meanings in ourselves, our friends and family.

Another phenomenal study source for Earth characteristics is the [suit of pentacles](#) in the esoteric Tarot system. By contemplating the value of this suit, we give ourselves a symbolic language to which pentacles offer us key understanding to the underpinnings of Earth symbolism and its function in the grand scheme of life and behavior.

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## Earth Symbolism: Mythology

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Mythology holds court to countless gods and goddesses associated with the Earth. To wit, the Greek word for land is Gaia, and she is the classic goddess of Earth. Gaia was also depicted in [triple form](#) with Persephone the maiden, Demeter as mother and Hecate as crone. By studying this and other deities, our knowledge of Earth becomes **personified** – more human – and easily translatable to our every-day experience. Here are a few other archetypes who hail Earth as their prime energy force:

Cihuacoatl – Aztec goddess of Earth and childbirth

Geb – one of the rare male perspectives, he an Egyptian Earth god

Nerthus – Germanic fertility goddess

Ida – [Nurturing](#) Hindu earth goddess

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In closing, I hope this article brought the concept of Earth closer home for you, and prompts you to further your ideas about Earth and all her implications.

Moreover, I trust these thoughts inspire you to embark on your own personal journey through the symbolism of Earth.

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