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A light blue world map is centered in the background. A large, dark grey, curved arrow starts from the right side of the map and points towards the Suez Canal region in the Middle East.

The Suez Canal - A vital shortcut for global commerce



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Basic Information

- **Located in Egypt**
- **Allows water transportation directly between Europe (the Mediterranean) and Asia (the Red Sea)**
- **Alternatives are**
 - navigating around Africa
 - carrying goods overland between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea
- **The northern terminus is Port Said**
- **The Suez Canal is the man-made feature most easily spotted from space**





8,900 kilometres saved



Via the Suez Canal

- 6,400 nautical miles (12,000 km)
- 14 days

Around Africa

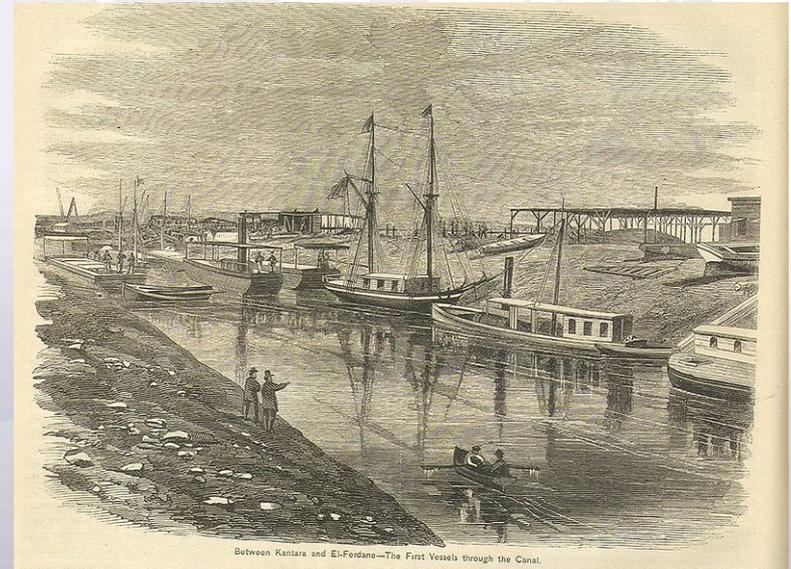
- 11,300 nautical miles (20,900 km)
- 24 days

- **The shortcut reduces the distance by 43%**



History

- **Almost 2,000 years BC** **Pharaoh Senusret III created a link between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea**
- **Following centuries** **Silted up**
Trade is carried overland across Asia
Ships sail around Southern Africa
Several attempts are made to establish a waterway
- **1799** **Napoleon Bonaparte revives the idea**
- **1859 - 1869** **The modern Suez Canal is built**
- **1967 – 1975** **Blockade**
- **Today** **One of the most important waterways in world trade**





Facts

- **Length:** 192 km (119 miles) of waterway
163 km (101 miles) of constructed area
- **Owned and maintained by:** The Suez Canal Authority (SCA) of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- **Maximum capacity:** Ships of up to 150,000 tons displacement and 16 metres (53 ft) draft, planned to increase to 22 metres (72 ft) by 2010
- **Maximum throughput per day:** 106 vessels, in one north bound and two south bound convoys
- **Breadth:** At water level 300 metres
- **Maximum draught of ships:** 16.1 metres
- **Speed limit:** 11-16 km/hr
- **Average transit time:** 14 hours
- **Speed limit:** Around 8 knots (15 km/hr)
- **Records:** The minor sea level difference and the flat terrain make the Suez Canal the longest canal without locks



Importance today

- **In 2007, more than 7,700 container ships passed the Suez Canal, carrying more than 318,000 tons of cargo**
- **That is 7.5% of the world's total ocean trade**
- **North bound cargo: Mainly oil from the Arabian Gulf to Western Europe**
- **South bound cargo: Mainly manufactured goods and grain from Europe and North America to the Far East and southern Asia**
- **Earns more than USD 5,000,000,000 in annual revenue**



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For more information about the liner shipping industry that uses the Suez Canal, visit www.worldshipping.org

For more information about the Suez Canal, visit www.suezcanal.gov.eg