

Erosion



What Is It?

Erosion is the wearing away of Earth's surface by wind, water, and ice. These forces break rock and soil into smaller pieces. Wind, water, and ice carry **pebbles** and sand from place to place.

Wind Erosion

Wind erodes land that is not protected by plants and trees.

Wind erosion is greatest in **desert** areas. Sand blown by wind scrapes against rocks.

Blowing sand wears the rocks into new shapes.

Water Erosion

Water is more powerful than wind in causing erosion.

Acid in rain makes cracks and holes in rock. Rain and snow wash broken rock down hills into rivers. Waves pound and slowly wear away rocks.

Ice Erosion

Ice causes the strongest erosion. Water seeps into rock and freezes. Ice takes up more room than water. Ice cracks the rock. **Glaciers** are giant blocks of ice, scraping land as they move.

Soil Erosion

Plants and farm **crops** grow in **topsoil**. This soil has food that plants need to grow. Wind and rain erode **topsoil**. People protect land from soil erosion.

Glossary Terms

glacier - a huge sheet of ice found in mountain valleys or polar regions

acid - a substance that sometimes is found in water; acid can wear away rock.

crop - food plants grown in large amounts

pebble - a small, round stone

topsoil - the top or surface layer of soil; topsoil is good for planting because it contains decaying leaves, grass, and other organic matter.

desert - a dry area that gets little rain; many deserts are hot and sandy

crop - food plants grown in large amounts

glacier - a huge sheet of ice found in mountain valleys or polar regions

pebble - a small, round stone

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