

# Weathering

Use the words below to complete the passage about weathering.

cold	roots	cracks	surface	chemical	stalactites
dissolve	breaking	freezes	particles	fungus	hot

The Earth is constantly changing. Along with erosion and deposition, weathering is changing the Earth's surface every day. Weathering refers to the \_\_\_\_\_, or wearing down, of rocks. There are three types of weathering: physical weathering, biological weathering and \_\_\_\_\_ weathering.



Physical weathering is sometimes referred to as mechanical weathering and is generally characterised by the process of abrasion (scraping). An example of physical weathering is wind blowing tiny \_\_\_\_\_ of sand through the air, striking a rock formation. Similar to how sandpaper works, the particles of sand rub against the rock formation. This wears the rock down over time. Similarly, waves crashing against a rock wall will very slowly break down the rock. Rain can also cause weathering. Water collects within the \_\_\_\_\_ of a rock. When the temperature drops, this water \_\_\_\_\_ and in doing so, expands, causing the crack to grow. When the water thaws, it reaches further into the crack and the process repeats. A final example of physical weathering is rocks frozen within a glacier. The glacier moves slowly, rubbing the trapped rocks heavily against the ground, causing rocks underneath it to break. Physical weathering occurs more intensely in very \_\_\_\_\_ or very \_\_\_\_\_ environments.

Biological weathering is when rocks are broken down as a result of plants, animals and bacteria. An example of biological weathering is the \_\_\_\_\_ of a plant growing within the cracks of a rock and over time breaking the rock. Burrowing animals also contribute to the weathering of rocks. When animals burrow, they move fragments of rock closer to the \_\_\_\_\_. The fragments are then more exposed to environmental factors that can lead to weathering. \_\_\_\_\_ and algae growing on rocks can also release chemicals that cause rocks to break down.

Chemical weathering occurs when the composition of a rock changes. The processes of hydrolysis and oxidation can cause a number of changes to rocks. As an example, water can \_\_\_\_\_ the minerals within certain rocks. This is how limestone caves are formed. The dissolved minerals from the rocks form stalagmites and \_\_\_\_\_.

A	K	W	E	A	R	D	O	W	N	Z	U
P	L	A	C	I	G	O	L	O	I	B	L
H	M	G	L	K	S	M	G	U	L	U	L
X	S	M	N	A	Y	E	M	W	D	N	Q
L	L	L	C	I	C	C	V	S	X	Q	B
N	K	E	A	H	R	I	R	A	L	I	Z
K	D	P	H	M	E	E	S	X	W	P	G
A	N	Z	T	H	I	M	H	Y	T	I	U
E	I	S	J	C	Q	N	I	T	H	A	F
R	W	F	A	N	L	Y	A	C	A	P	E
B	E	L	E	I	Q	Q	J	P	A	E	I
J	G	O	U	I	Y	Y	U	E	W	L	W

weathering	physical	biological	chemical	break
wear down	glaciers	animals	waves	wind