






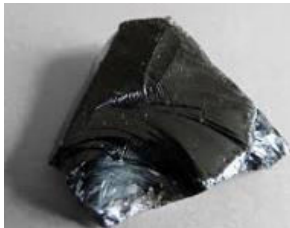



Rocks and Soils

What are rocks and soils?

- Rocks are made of one or more minerals.
- Soil is formed of fine rock particles mixed with air, water and particles from dead plant and animal matter.
- Rocks can be classified into three types:
 - **Sedimentary** – this is rock formed by layers of silt and sediment which is pressed together until it is hard and solid.
 - **Igneous** – this is harder rock formed when magma or lava cools down, like when a cake is baked! Igneous rocks are hard and dense.
 - **Metamorphic** – these are formed when sedimentary or igneous rocks are changed over time, by being heated or squeezed deep in the Earth.

<i>Sedimentary</i>	<i>Igneous</i>	<i>Metamorphic</i>
<p><i>Chalk</i></p> 	<p><i>Granite</i></p> 	<p><i>Slate</i></p> 
<p><i>Limestone</i></p> 	<p><i>Carbonite</i></p> 	<p><i>Marble</i></p> 
<p><i>Clay</i></p> 	<p><i>Obsidian</i></p> 	<p><i>Quartzite</i></p> 

What is fossilisation?

Fossils are formed when a plant or creature is buried in sediment. The imprint of the animal or plant is preserved, like a mould, as the rock around it hardens. Sometimes this mould is filled with sediment too, and dries out, forming a cast of the creature's shape.



Fun facts

- The oldest rocks ever to be found were formed about **4 billion years ago** – only two pieces of rock this old have ever been found.
- The largest **meteorite** ever discovered weighed 66 tonnes. It was named Hoba after the farm in Africa that it was found on.
- It takes over 500 years for just 2cm of topsoil to form.
- There are approximately **10,000 different types of soil** found in Europe.