

DID YOU KNOW?

Fun facts about science...

Volcanoes are classified as active, dormant or extinct depending on the amount of volcanic activity happening. 'Active' means there's regular activity, 'dormant' means there's been recent activity but that it's currently quiet and 'extinct', meaning it's been so long since the last eruption that it's unlikely to ever erupt again.

- Put simply, a volcano is an opening (usually in a mountain) in the Earth's surface from which gas, hot magma and ash can escape.
- Volcanoes can actually be a variety of shapes. Shield (flat), composite (tall and thin), cinder cones (circular or oval cones), and lava domes (where dome-shaped deposits of hardened lava have built up around the vent, as the lava is too thick to flow very far).
- Volcanoes are often found at meeting points of what are called "tectonic plates". These plates are pieces of the Earth's surface that fit together just like a jigsaw puzzle. Volcanoes aren't only found on the boundaries of tectonic plates, though. They can also occur over "mantle plumes" - super hot areas of rock inside the Earth.
- The 'Ring of Fire', a 40,000 km Horseshoe shaped area of the Pacific Ocean is home to 90% of all volcanoes on the Earth.

