

Our Changing Earth

Movement of the tectonic plates is the main driver of change on the surface of the Earth.

The Rock Cycle is a way of illustrating these changes and shows that any rock type may be transformed into a different rock type by natural processes. These changes might take millions or even billions of years.

Melting and Charles silling sillin

Igneous rocks



- Form from cooled magma below the ground or on the surface
- Made of small or large crystals
- Include rocks made of lava or ash.

Image: Wikimedia Commons-Gnuckx

CYCLE

Weathering, erosion and deposition Melting and crystallisation



- Made of grains (sediments)
- Layers within the rocks
- May contain fossils.

Image credit: Wikimedia Commons-Sailko

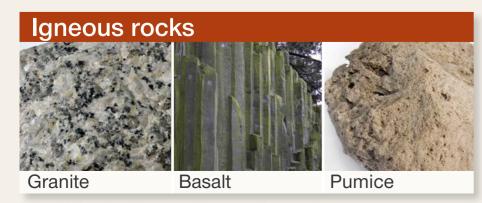
• Form deep under the ground • Often recrystallised and/or folded

Metamorphic rocks

• May have shiny 'layers'.

Weathering, erosion and deposition

Heat and/or pressure



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