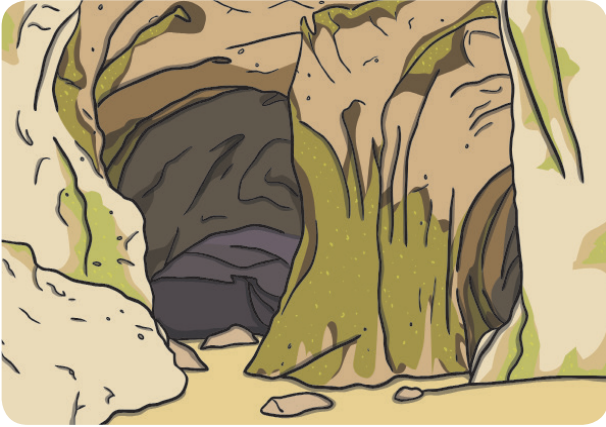


Cave Facts



How Are Caves Made?

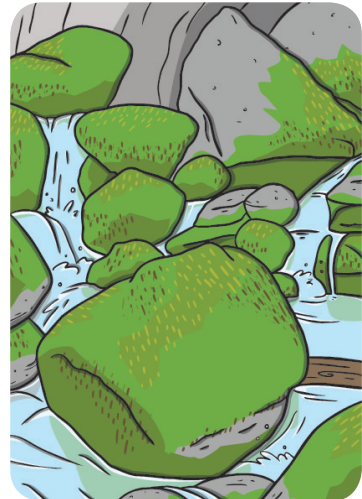
Caves take millions of years to form. They are made when water runs over soft rock and dissolves it (breaks it down). A cave will slowly get bigger as the water keeps flowing over it.

Caves can also be formed when:

- hot lava melts and holes are made;
- the ceiling of a cave collapses, making a big room or cavern;
- strong waves bash against the rock along the coast and wear it away.

Plants in Caves

Plants need sunlight to live. Light is found at the opening or entrance to caves and so trees or grasses may grow here. Mosses and ferns may also grow because it is cool and damp.



Animals in Caves

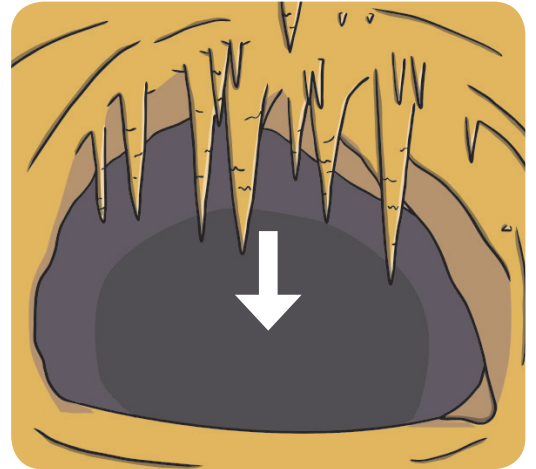
Caves are cold, dark and often wet, but many animals live in them. You may find crickets, millipedes, spiders, snakes, cave beetles, glow-worms, bats or even bears.



Cave Facts

Stalagmites and Stalactites

Stalactites hang from the ceilings of caves. As water with minerals in it drips down, the droplets grow hard and bigger.



Stalactites point down.



Stalagmites point up.

Stalagmites are found on the ground. They are made when the water droplets land on the floor. They then grow taller and become hard over time.

Did You Know...?

The proper name for cave exploring is **spelunking**.

It is important to explore caves because they have interesting plants and animals living in them.

Ancient things left by humans, have been found in caves around the world. These give us clues about life a long time ago.

