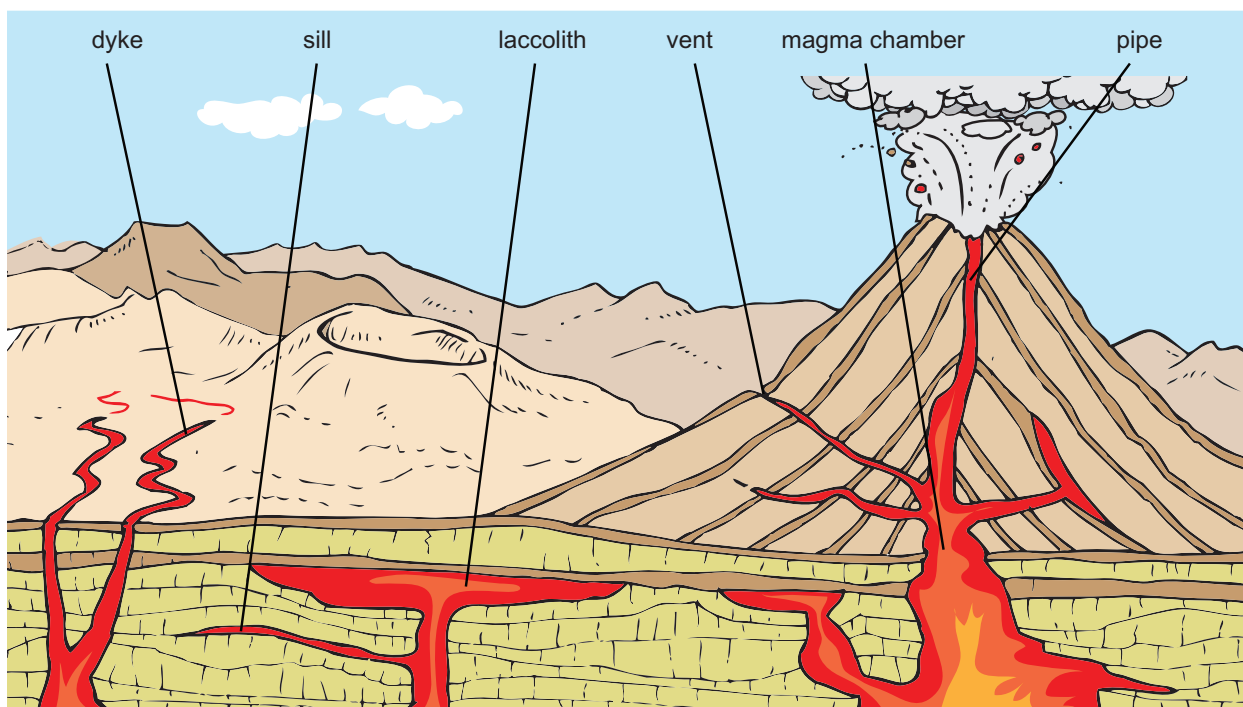


Volcano features

There are over 1500 potentially active, above-ground volcanoes worldwide and eight to ten can be erupting at one time. There are many more volcanoes under the ocean and many dormant volcanoes around the world. Virtually all the volcanoes in Australia are extinct. Scientists believe further minor volcanic activity is possible from long-dormant ones in South Australia and Victoria.

What makes a volcano?

A volcano is a vent or chimney, which transfers molten rock known as magma from a great depth to the Earth's surface. Magma is essence of a volcano. Magma is molten rock and forms in large underground reservoirs called magma chambers. It is like a thick paste and is under such enormous pressure that it forces its way into cracks in the Earth's crust, which builds up the cone surrounding a pipe.



Sometimes the magma cools and solidifies in cracks before it can reach the Earth's surface in what geologists call sills and dykes.

Sometimes the magma forces its way into underground caves and solidifies, forming laccoliths.

A large volcanic crater is called a caldera.

Once magma reaches the surface it is called lava.

Adapted from *Tell Me How* by Mike Callaghan, Peter Knapp, Ross Latham and Peter Sloan, HBJ, 1990