

Wondrous Water Erosion: Nature's Nurturer and Nuisance

Erosion is a natural process that gradually wears away the Earth's surface, shaping and changing the land over time. Water erosion is a type of erosion caused by the movement of water. When it rains or when water flows in rivers and streams, it has the power to move and carry small particles of soil and rock, called **sediment**. As the water moves, it picks up the sediment and transports them downstream. This constant movement of water can create valleys and deep canyons in the landscape.



Water erosion can have both positive and negative impacts on the environment. On one hand, it helps to shape the Earth's surface, forming beautiful landscapes and carving out river valleys. On the other hand, excessive erosion can lead to problems such as soil loss and the destruction of habitats. Human activities like deforestation and improper land management can accelerate water erosion, making it important for us to take measures to prevent and control it.



Let's take a closer look at water erosion.

1. Get in groups of 2 or 3 students.
2. Fill your shallow pan up to about halfway with sediment.
3. Find something to raise one side of the pan.
4. Using a water container, slowly pour water on the top end of the pan.
5. Repeat step 4 three more times.
6. Describe what you see. _____

7. Now add rocks, leaves, sticks, and grasses to your soil.
8. Repeat the experiment.
9. What are some things that were different this time? _____
