

The Biggest Cave in the World

This cave in Vietnam is the largest known cave in the world. The cave is so big, a jungle grows inside it! How does a cave like this form?

Water seeps through cracks in the rocky ground. The water slowly **dissolves**, or melts away, some of the rock. Then the water carries the dissolved rock away. This process is called **erosion**. Over thousands of years, the water carves out a larger and larger space. A cave is formed!

This process can also make new shapes inside a cave. Some look like rock icicles hanging down from the ceiling. These are called **stalactites**. Some look like rock piles that grow from the ground. These are called **stalagmites**.

These rock shapes can make caves look like works of art. But Earth's caves will never be finished. Water will keep shaping them . . . very, very slowly.

