

About Mountains

Mountains are all over the world and each have their own various shapes and sizes, kinds of wildlife, and plants on them. Despite their steep slopes and the severe climate, mountains are can still be harmed. The growing demand for country homes, mineral exploration, and old growth timber cutting has threatened many mountain habitats throughout the world. Though many mountain ranges are in protected parks now, they still suffer from too many people using them. Many parks have begun to limit the numbers of people at a time using mountain areas. They many seem strong, but the world's mountain habitats need to be protected from too much traffic and careless human use.

Mountains are formed by movements of the earth's crust, which is made up of drifting plates. When the plates hit into each other, over millions of years, they heave up into "*faults* and *folds*," forming mountain ranges. *Volcanoes*, like the ones crowning the Andes Mountains, also push through the earth's crust. "*Fault blocks*" rise up to become ragged peaks. "*Folds*" form more rounded peaks.

Fault-block mountains form along cracks in the Earth's crust called faults or fault lines. Large chunks of rock uplift along a fault via tectonic forces, while the other side is forces down. This movement of plates creates fault-block mountains. These mountains can be very steep along the fault, but slope gently down away from the fault. Example of fault-block mountains are the Tetons in Wyoming and Sierra Nevadas in California.

