

DEADLY DESERTS

Seen enough water to last a lifetime? Looking forward to being back on dry land? Luckily, the next stop on our tour is one of the most parched places on the planet. So where on Earth are we heading? To the desperate desert, of course. But keep your water bottle handy. Unluckily, deserts are so desperately dry that you can easily die of thirst.

DESERT WEATHER REPORT

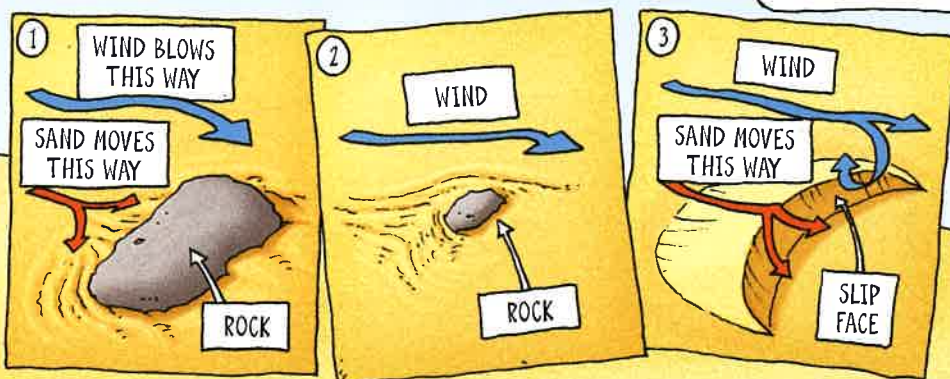
It's desperately hot in the desert by day because there aren't any clouds for shade. The temperature in the Sahara can reach well over a scorching 50°C! Phew! At night, though, it can drop below freezing, as heat is lost from the ground. Brrrr!

Top ten desperate deserts



Shifty sand dunes

Not all deserts are sandy. Some are rocky or covered in piles of pebbles. But if it's sand you're after, why not head for the scorching Sahara with Parky and watch a sand dune shift? Here's what happens:



- 1 THE SAND'S SHIFTED BY THE WIND. IT SLOWS DOWN IF IT HITS A ROCK OR A BUSH.
- 2 THEN IT SETTLES AND STARTS TO PILE UP.
- 3 IT BLOWS UP ONE SIDE...
- 4 ...UNTIL IT REACHES THE PEAK.
- 5 THEN IT FLOWS DOWN THE OTHER SIDE...
- 6 ...BURYING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.



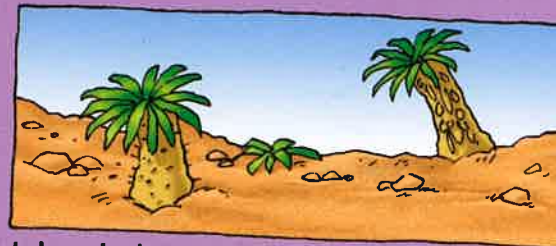
Horrible Holiday Guide: DESERTS

All deserts are dry and dusty but they're also horribly different. Dip into our brand-new Horrible Holiday Guide to work out which sort of desert you're in:

Tropical deserts

Location: On either side of the equator.

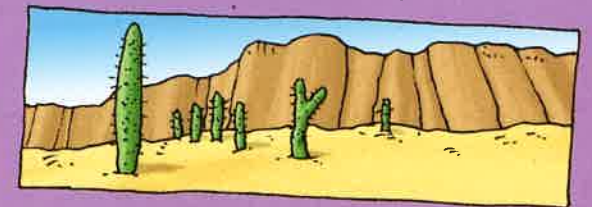
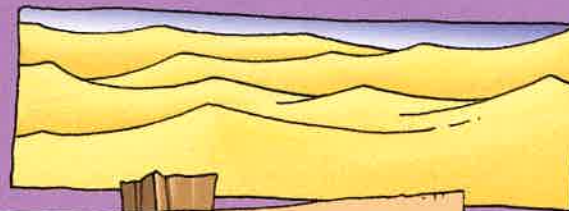
Formation: Warm air cools and sinks. This creates a patch of high pressure that brings hot, dry weather.



Inland deserts

Location: In the middle of some continents.

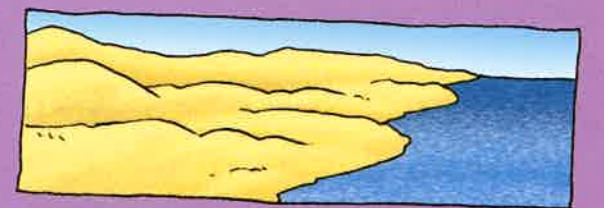
Formation: They're so far from the sea, any rain's fallen long, long ago.



Rain-shadow deserts

Location: On the sheltered side of some mountains.

Formation: Rain clouds form over mountains. But by the time they reach the other side, they've dumped all their rain.



Coastal deserts

Location: Off the west coast of some countries.

Formation: Cold ocean currents cool the air blowing inland, so it's too dry to form rain clouds.

WICKED WORLD FACTS

Europe's the only continent that doesn't have deserts.

The sensational Sahara's as big as the whole of the USA.

The Empty Quarter in the Arabian Desert is a massive stretch of baking-hot sand.



TEACHER TEASER



Test your teacher's desert know-how with this teaser. What on Earth's a hammada?

a) A type of shifting sand dune. b) A rocky desert plain. c) A tool for banging in nails.

Answer: b) Hammada is the Arabic word for a rocky desert that's been stripped bare of sand and dust by the wind.

