

This Old House

ROCK SCAVENGER HUNT GUIDE

Rock hunting is a simple, fun activity to do with the family in the safety of your backyard.

Rocks form the Earth's outer layer, called the crust. You can find them anywhere!

Even the smallest rock has a story that's a million years old and covers a journey that has taken it across the Earth.

In some cases, rocks come from outer space!

One thing is certain; humans have collected rocks, worshiped them, carved them into statues and created structures with them since the beginning of time.

This Old House Mason, Mark McCullough, has collected rocks his entire life. He's put together a Scavenger Hunt List for families to use to start their very own rock collection.



Did You Know?

There are many different types of rocks, but did you know that they're grouped into three main types: Metamorphic, Igneous, and Sedimentary! Learn more about them, below!

METAMORPHIC



Metamorphic rocks are formed under the surface of the Earth from the change that happens due to intense heat and pressure. The rocks that result from these processes often have ribbonlike layers and may have shiny crystals, formed by minerals growing slowly over time, on their surface.

IGNEOUS



Igneous rocks are formed when molten rock deep within the Earth, called magma, cools and hardens. Sometimes the magma cools inside the earth, and other times it erupts onto the surface from volcanoes in the form of lava. When lava cools very quickly, no crystals form and the rock looks shiny and glasslike. Sometimes gas bubbles are trapped in the rock during the cooling process, leaving tiny holes and spaces in the rock.

SEDIMENTARY



Sedimentary rocks are formed from tiny particles of material like sand, shells, pebbles. Together, all these fragments are called sediment. The sediment accumulates in layers and over a long period of time hardens into rock. Sedimentary rock is fairly soft and may break apart or crumble easily. You can often see sand, pebbles in the rock, and it is usually the only type that contains fossils!



Did You Know?

When this country was founded, farmers needed to clear the land to plant crops. Every time a farmer hit a rock with his plow he would pick the rock up and move it to the side of the field, there were so many rocks, they made stone walls to line their fields. Some of these simple walls are older than the United States itself.

Now you're ready to go on your very own Rock Scavenger Hunt! Grab your trowel and see how many of these rocks you can find.

Show us what you find and use #TOHRockHunt in your post!

- A rock with one flat side
- A smooth, round rock
- A rock with a lot of little holes
- A rock bigger than your fist
- A rock smaller than your pinky
- A rock with layers or stripes
- A rock that is all one color
- A rock shaped like a heart
- A rock with moss or algae on it
- A rock with two colors

Pro Challenge: Can you figure out to which group each rock belongs?