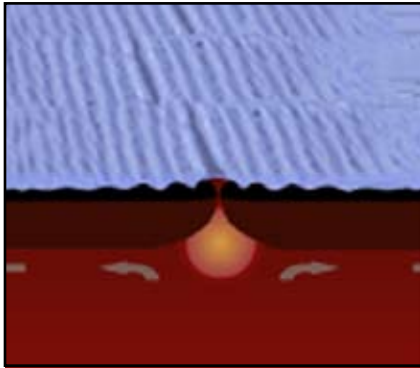
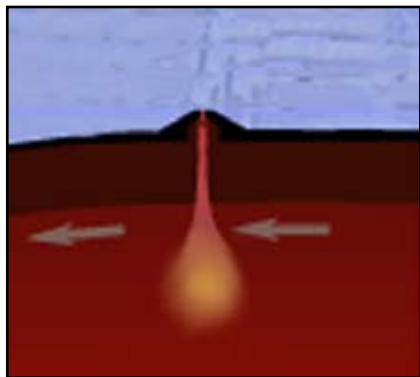


Magma is hot, molten rock that forms deep inside Earth's mantle. Convection current carries magma to Earth's surface, where it becomes lava. Magma can reach Earth's surface at divergent boundaries, convergent boundaries, and hotspots.



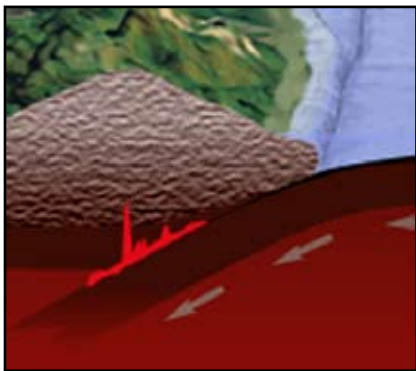
Divergent boundaries:

At divergent boundaries, hot magma squeezes up through a long crack between two plates. The magma becomes hot lava on the ocean floor and piles up in layers, forming a shield volcano. A shield volcano has a smooth, broad, low shape with gentle, sloping sides.



Hotspots:

Hotspots are plumes of magma that migrate toward Earth's surface from one spot. Magma flows from these hotspots, and piles up to form shield volcanoes above them. More than 100 hotspots around the world have been active over the past 10 million years.



Convergent boundaries:

Many cracks form at convergent boundaries, where two plates crash together. Sometimes one plate slides beneath the other. Then magma and the remelted plate flow upward to the surface where they form composite or "strato" volcanoes. These volcanoes have rugged, steep sides and are made up of layers of lava, ash, and cinder.