

Earthquakes



What Are They?

Earthquakes are the sudden movement of Earth's **crust**.

The **crust** is made of huge pieces of rock, called **plates**.

When the **plates** move, the land shakes and **quakes**.

Where They Happen

Earthquakes happen near cracks in the Earth called **faults**. **Plates** meet at **faults**.

Plates push against each other. One **plate** can also move under another.

The movement is an earthquake.

Measuring Earthquakes

The **Richter scale** is used to **measure** earthquakes.

Strong earthquakes **measure** 6.0 or higher on the scale.

Seismographs measure how much the Earth moves during an earthquake.

Earthquake Damage

Earthquakes can cause much damage. Strong earthquakes can bend and crack roads.

Bridges and buildings fall.

Earthquakes can break pipes of **natural gas**. The broken pipes **explode**, causing fires.

Staying Safe

Earthquakes happen without warning. Outside, stay away from trees and buildings.

Drop to the ground. Inside, stay away from mirrors and windows. Drop to the floor.

Hide under a desk or table.

Glossary Terms

measure - to find out the size, weight, speed, or amount of something

crust - the hard outer layer of a planet

explode - to blow apart with a loud bang and a great force

quake - to shake or tremble

Richter scale - a scale that measures the amount of energy in an earthquake; earthquakes with low numbers cause little or no damage.

seismograph - a machine that records the wave motion of the ground during an earthquake

natural gas - a methane gas that is found beneath the Earth's surface; it is used for heating and cooling.

fault - a crack in Earth's crust; some faults are just a few inches long; other faults stretch for hundreds of miles.

plate - a large sheet of rock that is a piece of Earth's crust

"Earthquakes." *Science*. Capstone, www.pebblego.com. Accessed 20 Mar. 2020.