

**Caves**



In areas where there are alternating beds of rocks with limestone or dolomites in between or in areas where, limestone are dense, massive and occurring as thick beds, cave formation is prominent. Water percolates down either through the materials or through cracks and joints and moves horizontally along bedding planes. It is along these bedding planes that the limestone dissolves and long and narrow to wide gaps called caves

**Depositional Landforms**

Many depositional forms develop within the limestone caves. The chief chemical in lime stone is calcium carbonate, which is easily soluble in carbonated water (carbon dioxide absorbed rainwater). This calcium carbonate is deposited when the water carrying it in solution evaporates or loses its carbon dioxide as it trickles over rough rock surfaces. Stalactites, Stalagmites and Pillars Stalactites hang as icicles of different diameters. Normally they are broad at their bases and taper towards the free ends showing up in a variety of forms. Stalagmites rise up from the floor of the caves. In fact, stalagmites form due to dripping water from the surface or through the thin pipe, of the stalactite, immediately below it. Stalagmites may take the shape of a column, a disc, with either a smooth, rounded bulging end or a miniature crater like depression. The stalagmite and stalactites eventually fuse to give rise to columns and pillars of different diameters Difference between stalagmites and stalactites