

Volcanic Eruptions Chart

Approximately 50 to 60 volcanoes erupt every year. Of these, 20 to 30 produce non-explosive lava flows while the others vary in explosive severity.

The Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI) was proposed in 1982 as a way to describe the relative size or magnitude of explosive volcanic eruptions. The VEI uses several factors to assign a number, including volume of erupted pyroclastic material (i.e. - ashfall, pyroclastic flows, and other ejecta), height of eruption column, duration in hours, and qualitative descriptive terms.

VEI	Description	Column Height (In Meters)	Volume of Material (In Cubic Meters)	Frequency
0	Non-Explosive	< 100	0 +	Daily
1	Gentle	100 – 1000	10,000 +	Daily
2	Explosive	1000 – 5000	1,000,000 +	Weekly
3	Severe	3000 – 15,000	10,000,000 +	Annually
4	Cataclysmic	10,000 – 25,000	100,000,000 +	10+ Years
5	Paroxysmal	25,000 +	1,000,000,000 +	100+ Years
6	Colossal	25,000 +	10,000,000,000 +	100+ Years
7	Super-Colossal	25,000 +	100,000,000,000 +	1,000+ Years
8	Mega-Colossal	25,000 +	1,000,000,000,000 +	10,000+ Years

Source: Global Volcanism Program