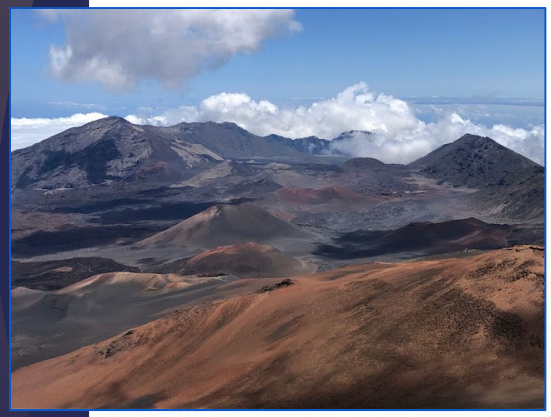
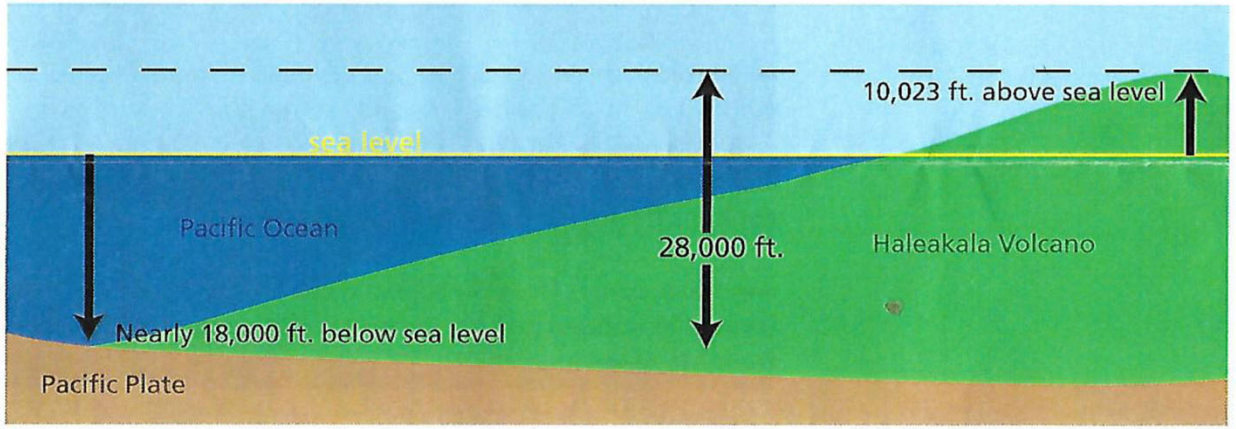
Statistics

Haleakalā: Shield Volcano

All Hawaiian volcanoes are called "shield volcanoes" because the gradual buildup of many thin layers of lava erupting from the hot spot creates a shape like a warrior's shield —long, broad, and gently curved. About 40% of the volcanoes on Earth are shield volcanoes. The shape of Haleakalā means that only the very top — only about 5% — is above sea level.

Fourteen multicolored *pu'u* (cinder cones) can be seen dotting the summit valley of Haleakalā. *Pu'u* form when gas is trapped in lava during an eruption and forces the lava to eject as a fountain; much like when you shake a carbonated drink can and then break the seal. The hot lava falls as sticky cinders all around the base of the fountain and a *pu'u* is built.





The summit of Haleakalā currently stands at 10,023ft. (3,055m.), but is believed to have once reached 15,000ft. (4,572m.) above sea level. Erosion has worked heavily upon Haleakalā and it is so heavy it has also begun to sink into the crust of the Earth. Even with this loss in height, however, the volcano stands 28,000ft. (8534m.) above the sea floor, making it the third-tallest mountain on Earth.

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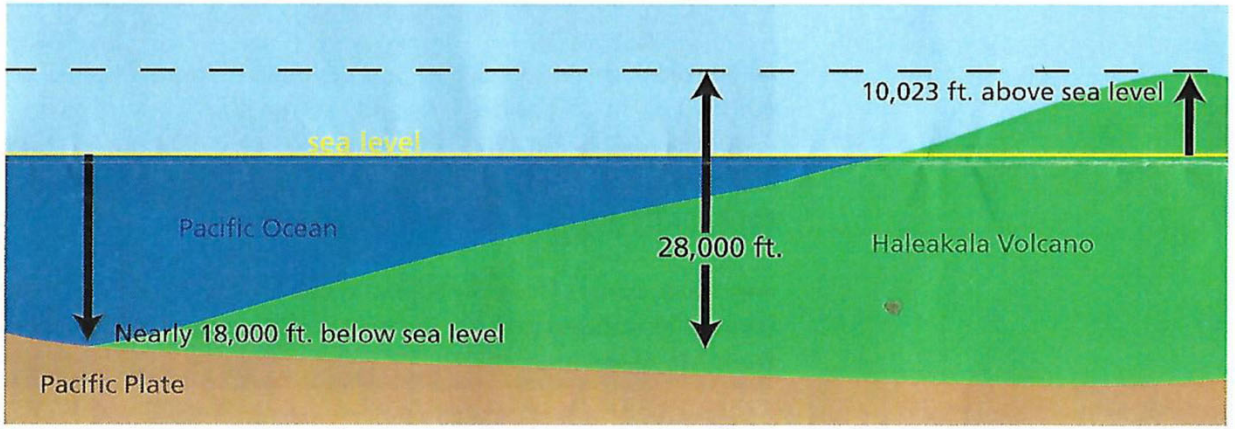

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Statistics + Perspective

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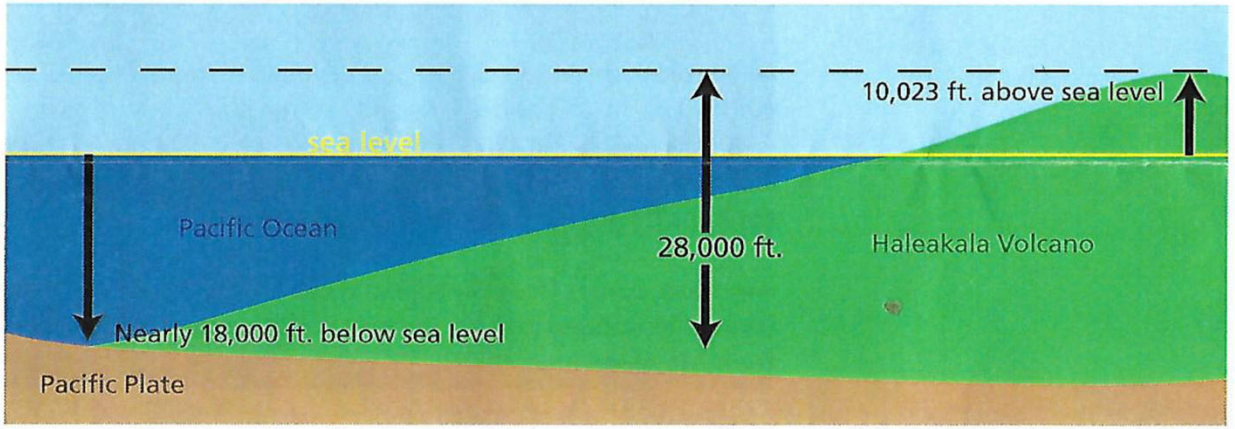

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