

What happened to the dinosaurs?

Dinosaurs ruled the world for millions of years, yet you won't see a *Tyrannosaurus rex* or a *Brachiosaurus* roaming the streets today. So what happened to them?

Asteroid

Most scientists agree that the dinosaurs were killed by a massive asteroid. The rock, 6–9 miles (10–15 kilometers) across, crashed to Earth, landing in the area that is now Mexico and creating chaos across the landscape. It caused huge tidal waves to sweep across the Americas and threw so much ash and debris into the air that it blocked out the Sun.

Volcanoes

Some people have suggested that volcanoes could also have played a part in the death of the dinosaurs. Many volcanoes erupting at the same time could have filled the sky with soot, preventing sunlight from reaching the plants and animals on Earth and drastically changing the planet's climate.

The theory that an asteroid was responsible for the extinction event that killed the dinosaurs only arose in the 1980s, when an enormous crater was discovered under the ocean near Mexico.

Whatever the reason, the air filling with ash and blocking out the Sun would have meant no sunlight reached the Earth's surface, causing the plants to die out. Fewer plants meant fewer insects, which meant fewer mammals and dinosaurs, until they eventually died out altogether.

Many other theories about what caused the dinosaurs' extinction have been debunked by scientists.



Brachiosaurus

Pteranodon

Tyrannosaurus rex

Ankylosaurus