You may think that every drop of rain that falls from the sky, or each glass of water that you drink is brand new, but in fact, it has always been here and is a constant part of the Water Cycle!

The heat of the sun provides energy to make the water cycle work.

The sun evaporates water from the oceans into water vapor. The invisible vapor rises into the atmosphere, where the air is colder.

The water vapor condenses into clouds.

Air currents move clouds all around the Earth.

Water drops form in clouds, and the drops then fall to Earth as precipitation (rain and snow).

In cold climates, precipitation builds up as snow, ice, and glaciers.

Snow can melt and become runoff, which flows into rivers, the oceans, and into the ground.

Some ice evaporates directly into the air, skipping the melting phase (sublimation).

Volcanoes emit steam, which forms clouds. This invisible vapor rises into the atmosphere, where the air is colder.

Plants take up groundwater and evaporate or transpire, or evaporate, it from their leaves.

Some groundwater seeps into rivers and lakes, and can flow to the surface as springs.

Groundwater close to the land surface is taken up by plants.

Some groundwater goes very deep into the ground and stays there for a long time.

Groundwater flows into the oceans, keeping the water cycle going.

Water from lakes and rivers can also seep into the ground.

Some rain soaks into the ground, as infiltration, and if deep enough, recharges groundwater.

Rainfall on land flows downhill as runoff, providing water to lakes, rivers, and the oceans.

Water moves underground because of gravity and pressure.

Some rain evaporates directly into the air, skipping the melting phase (sublimation).

Groundwater storage.

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

Stefanie Noon, Jim Morgan, Gabriele Zanolli, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Howard Perlman, Gerard Gonthier, U.S. Geological Survey

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