

CoalFast Facts

Coal is:

- Composed primarily of carbon
- A sedimentary rock. Formed by decaying plant and animal matter under heat and pressure millions of years ago
- Formed as sub-bituminous coal, bituminous coal, or anthracite
- Known as having a bright, shiny lustre or can be very dull
- Varying in hardness from soft to hard
- Used as a fuel source in the generation of electricity.
- Pulverised (crushed) and burnt to heat steam-generating boilers in power stations
- Called steaming coal when used for electricity generation
- Washed to remove pieces of rock or mineral that may be present, to reduce ash and improve overall quality before exporting
- Called coking coal when it is used in furnaces to make steel.
- Is exported from Australia to countries overseas to use in electricity generation and the production of steel particularly in the Asian regions.

For more information on coal see [Geoscience Australia Mines Atlas](#)



Coal – Image courtesy of Queensland Resources Council

