

# [Sierra nevada’s](https://assignbuster.com/sierra-nevadas/)

The Sierra Nevada mountain range stretches across the eastern side of the state of California. The range begins in the south at the Tehachapi Pass near Bakersfield and stretches north to Lake Almanor. The Sierra Nevada range is 400 miles long, north-to-south and has an average width of 70 miles wide. It was formed through subduction when the Pacific plate slid under the North American plate. The range is made up of deeply imbedded rock otherwise known as batholiths.

The eastern slope of the mountains rose steeply which cause those slopes to be steep while the western sides are only gradually steep but not like the east 1. Thus the range provided as an early barrier to entrance into California and travelers had to go through the various passes to proceed, such as the famous Donner Pass. Although the Sierra Nevada mountain range, which in Spanish means the snowy range, is grandeur as a whole certain mountains and peaks throughout the range are more important.

The biggest mountain of the whole would be Mount Whitney which happens to be the tallest mountain in all of the continental United States. Mount Whitney stands at a modest 14, 505 feet. It is located right outside of the town of Lone Pine and is an obvious attraction because of its record holding. Therefore, many people are eager to reach the highest point in the US so a trail was built on the western slope to allow hikers to conquer the mountain. The main trail is the Mount Whitney trail and it is 21. 3 miles long and can be completed in a day 2.

Other trails are also available but take longer and usually require overnight stays but do provide more views of the mountain. Mount Whitney is not the only mountain available to hike in the Sierra Nevada’s but is one of the most popular because of its sheer height. Another significant mountain in the range lies right up the US395 and is called Mammoth Mountain. Mammoth is actually an active volcano and was formed through a series of volcanic eruptions throughout the years. However, there are not any major eruptions anymore just minor ones.

The mountain peaks at 11, 059 feet but it contains a great ski resort that is actually the highest ski resort in California. Mammoth receives 400 plus inches ofsnowevery year and is considered to be one of the best if not the best resort in California 3. Also, located near Mammoth Mountain is the National Monument called the Devil’s Postpile. It is a natural awe which is columnar basalt that is created by a lava flow that when slowly cooled and dried creates what looks like symmetrical posts.

Before the site became a monument in 1911, declared by President Taft, it was almost blown up for the creation of a dam 4. Thankfully, the project was not completed or many sight seers would have not had the opportunity to see this amazing work of nature. Another spectacular sight in the Sierra Nevada range is the half dome at Yosemite National Park. The rock which is in the shape of a half dome rests above the Yosemite Valley and is a well known sight often used as a logo such as for the Sierra Club.

Half Dome was formed by exfoliation where the rock cracks into sheets and then the missing face was carried away by the apparent glaciers that once filled the valley during the Pleistocene Ice Ages 5. However, geologists believe that there was never a full rock and that the current state of the rock is fairly close to what it looked like before the ice age. Nevertheless, Half Dome has dramatic views that hikers enjoy when climbing to the top. The park rangers are on site at the bottom of the rock from May to October when there are poles and wires attached to the rock to assist hikers in the 400 foot climb to the top of the rock.

Basically, the Sierra’s offer numerous attractions as well as awesome views that can accommodate anyone who enjoys being outdoors and appreciates the wonders of nature. Works Cited " Devils Postpile National Monument (U. S. National Park Service). " U. S. National Park Service - Experience Your America. http://www. nps. gov/depo/index. htm (accessed February 20, 2011). " Mammoth Mountain - Skiing and Riding. " Mammoth Mountain Ski Area - Skiing, Snowboarding, Rentals, Lodging and More. http://www. mammothmountain. om/MountainActivities/WinterActivities/SkiingRiding/ (accessed February 20, 2011). " Mount Whitney: Climbing Mt Whitney. " Mount Whitney: Climbing Mt Whitney. http://www. mount-whitney. com/climbing\_mt\_whitney. php (accessed February 20, 2011). Resendes, Mary. " Geology of the Sierra Nevadas. " Central Sierra Historical Society. http://www. sierrahistorical. org/archives/geology. html (accessed February 20, 2011). " Yosemite National Park, California. " Learning Online @ MJC Home Page. http://virtual. yosemite. cc. ca. us/ghayes/yosemphot. htm (accessed February 20, 2011).