



Chine Time!

The map below shows the 'Chines' that are found on the Isle of Wight.

In this study, you will be finding out:

- ✓ What chines are and what they look like
- ✓ How chines vary on the IOW
- ✓ How chines have been used in the past.

- 1 Small Hope
- 2 Shanklin
- 3 Luccombe
- 4 Blackgang
- 5 New Walpen
- 6 Old Walpen



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- 7 Ladder
- 8 Whale
- 9 Shepherd's
- 10 Cowleaze
- 11 Barnes
- 12 Grange/Marsh
- 13 Chilton
- 14 Brook
- 15 Churchill
- 16 Shippards

- 17 Compton
- 18 Alum Bay
- 19 Widdick

- 20 Colwell
- 21 Brambles
- 22 Linstone



What is a chine?

Take a look at the photo below, which shows Brook Chine. Label the main features that you can see in the photo, and then use your labels to write a description of what you think a chine is:



I think that a chine is...

Defining chines...

The word 'chine' comes from the Saxon 'Cinan' meaning 'gap' or 'yawn'. If you look again at the picture of Brook Chine, you will see that it does, indeed, look like a 'gap' in the cliffs.

You probably also noticed the river in the picture? Most of the chines on the island are river valleys where a river flows through the coastal cliffs to the sea.

The term 'chine' is a local one; chines are found in Dorset, Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight.

Chine creation...

Take a look at the cliffs around you. How would you describe them?

Chines form where a river cuts a valley through the soft clays and sands, which are easily and quickly eroded by the water. The rivers start on the *downs* which form the 'spine' of the Isle of Wight, further inland from the sea – can you see these downs?

It is only a short distance from this high ground to the sea, and the rivers must reach sea level quickly. In order to do this, the river must cut a gap through the cliffs, and this is the chine.

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In the box below, make a sketch of the chine you are looking at, and then label its main features. You could also add annotations to explain how it has formed.

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Comparing chines...

There are currently 22 chines on the Island. However, the exact number varies on an ongoing basis!

Existing chines may disappear, and new ones may be created. They are constantly changing – the soft rocks are so easily eroded you can see visible differences from one day to the next sometimes, especially following a storm which can cause cliff falls along the chine, and erosion at the mouth of the chine where it meets the sea.

At Blackgang, the former chine valley no longer exists due to intensive coastal erosion and unstable cliffs.

The features of each chine vary considerably, and each one has its own character. The picture on the left below shows Whale Chine, and the one on the right shows Grange/Marsh Chine. Compare them and then write down as many differences between them as you can:

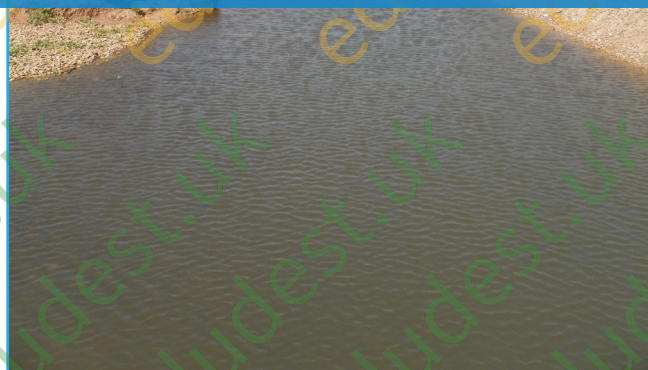
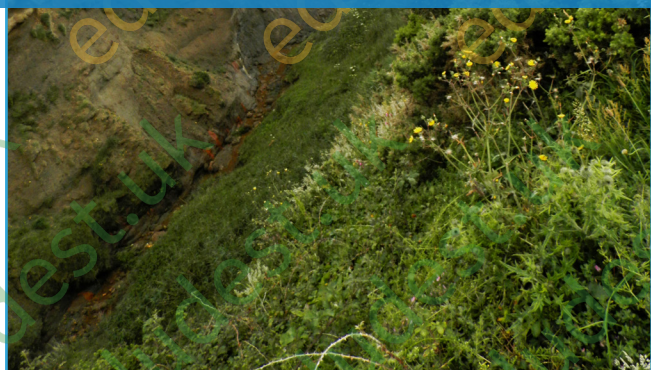


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Differences between Whale Chine and Grange/Marsh Chine:

Stepping Back in China...

The chines on the Isle of Wight have a colourful past and a tale or two to tell!



Smuggling! Chines were a popular location for smuggling, with their safe sandy beaches to land on and their valleys providing a sheltered and secluded route inland. It was once big business on the island, with the squires, wealthy farmers and estate owners organising the 'dodgy deals'!

Shipwrecks! The south-west coast of the island is exposed and the waters can be treacherous, also the coast is dotted with countless shipwrecks. At the foot of Whale Chine, on a calm, clear day, the boilers of the *Cormorant* Steam Ship can be still be seen. It ran aground in thick fog on 21st December 1886 and, over the next two years, Islanders stripped her of her cargo and sold it.

Saving! The large number of wrecks led to three lifeboat stations being set up and the boats were rowed out in terrible storms to rescue people from stricken vessels. Some of the crew of these lifeboats were once smugglers!

Teaching resource

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in France.

A Chine Tale

Choose ONE of the categories above from the history of chine and write a story of an event that happened involving a chine of your choice...



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