



Swiss Cheese on a Red Planet

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The Martian south polar cap is a layer of carbon dioxide ice, full of pits that make it look like Swiss cheese. The pits form when the Sun heats the ice and makes it sublime (transform from a solid to a gas). Because it’s at the pole, the Sun never gets very high in the sky, so steep slopes get more heat and sublime faster, causing pits to form and grow. (NASA/JPL/University of Arizona. Alt: 246 km above the surface, less than 1 km across.)

