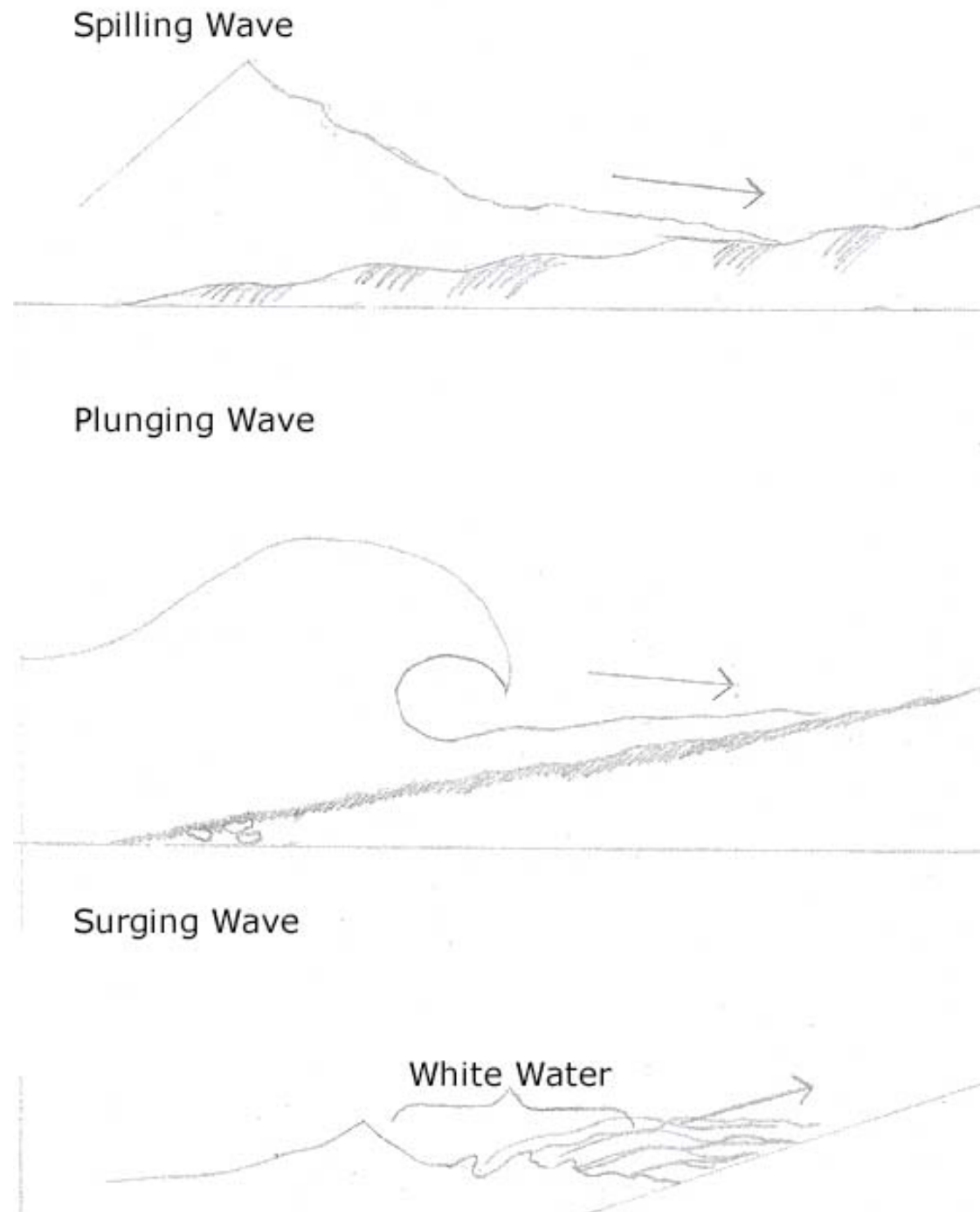


Types of Waves



Types of waves

Spilling waves – This type of wave is usually present on a moderately flat sloping beach. It is formed as the white foamy water forms a crest. As the crest becomes heavy the top of the crest begins to curl over, before breaking quite gently on the shore. The swash washes the water up the beach, before retreating with a weak backwash. All the energy is released in the swash. This type of wave is a constructive wave, helping to build up the beach with sediment.

Plunging waves – Plunging waves fall into the category of destructive waves. These are created when a moderate wind blowing over the sea creates an advancing water wall. As the crest increases it advances towards the shore, before it curls and descends violently into the waves trough. This type of wave creates a moderately medium to steep sloping beach.

Surging waves – Surging waves fall into the category of constructive and destructive waves. These can be fairly high-energy waves with a wavelength of about 20m.