

Clouds

Stratus –Low clouds

Alto- Middle clouds

Cirrus- High clouds

Cumulus- Clouds that grow vertically

Alto Clouds

Altostratus clouds are gray or blue-gray mid level clouds composed of ice crystals and water droplets. The clouds usually cover the entire sky. In the thinner areas of the clouds, the sun may be dimly visible as a round disk. Altostratus clouds often form ahead of storms with continuous rain or snow.

Altostratus clouds are mid level clouds that are made of water droplets and appear as gray puffy masses. They usually form in groups. If you see altostratus clouds on a warm, sticky morning, be prepared to see thunderstorms late in the afternoon.



Cirrus Clouds

Cirrus clouds are the most common of the high clouds. They are composed of ice and are thin, wispy clouds blown in high winds into long streamers. Cirrus clouds are usually white and predict fair to pleasant weather. By watching the movement of cirrus clouds you can tell from which direction weather is approaching. When you see cirrus clouds, it usually indicates that a change in the weather will occur within 24 hours.



Cumulus Clouds

Cumulus clouds are white, puffy clouds that look like pieces of floating cotton. Cumulus clouds are often called "fair-weather clouds". The base of each cloud is flat and the top of each cloud has rounded towers. When the top of the cumulus clouds resemble the head of a cauliflower, it is called cumulus congestus or towering cumulus. These clouds grow upward and they can develop into giant cumulonimbus clouds, which are thunderstorm clouds.



Stratus Clouds

Stratus clouds are uniform grayish clouds that often cover the entire sky. They resemble fog that doesn't reach the ground. Light mist or drizzle sometimes falls out of these clouds.

