

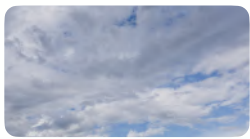
Understanding the relationship between clouds and weather fronts allows us to see a weather front as it develops and passes over us. This basic knowledge can help us determine what weather to expect in the short and medium term.

Using this reference material, try cloud spotting and determine where you are in a weather front.



Cirrus

Cirrus clouds are short, detached, hair-like clouds found at high altitudes. These delicate clouds are wispy, with a silky sheen, or look like tufts of hair. In the daytime, they are whiter than any other cloud in the sky. While the Sun is setting or rising, they may take on the colours of the sunset.



Altostratus

Altostratus is large mid-level sheets of thin clouds. Usually composed of a mixture of water droplets and ice crystals, they are thin enough in parts to allow you to see the Sun weakly through the cloud. They are often spread over an extensive area and are typically featureless.



Nimbostratus

Nimbostratus clouds are dark, grey, featureless layers of cloud thick enough to block out the Sun. Producing persistent rain, these clouds are often associated with frontal systems provided by mid-latitude cyclones. These are the least picturesque of all the main cloud types.



Advection fog

Advection fog occurs when moist, warm air passes over a colder surface and is cooled. A common example of this is when a warm front passes over an area with snow cover. It is also common at sea when moist tropical air moves over cooler waters. If the wind blows in the right direction, sea fog can be transported over coastal land areas.



Cumulonimbus

Cumulonimbus clouds are menacing-looking multi-level clouds extending high into the sky in towers or plumes. More commonly known as thunderclouds, cumulonimbus is the only cloud type that can produce hail, thunder and lightning. The base of the cloud is often flat, with a very dark wall-like feature hanging underneath, and may only lie a few hundred feet above the Earth's surface.



Alto cumulus

Alto cumulus clouds are small mid-level layers or patches of clouds called cloudlets, most commonly in the shape of rounded clumps. There are many varieties of alto cumulus, however, meaning they can appear in a range of shapes. Alto cumulus are made up of a mix of ice and water, giving them a slightly more ethereal appearance than the big and fluffy lower-level cumulus.

