

The Beaufort Wind Scale



The Beaufort wind scale was developed in 1806 by Sir Francis Beaufort, an admiral in the British navy. He used the scale to estimate wind speed based on the observable effects of the wind on his ship. Beaufort's scale has since been adapted for use on land.

| Number | Description | Observation | Wind Speed |
|--------|-----------------|---|----------------|
| 0 | Calm | Smoke goes straight up | 0–1 mph |
| 1 | Light air | Smoke drifts slowly in the direction of the wind | 1–3 mph |
| 2 | Light breeze | Leaves rustle, flags stir, wind is felt on the face | 4–7 mph |
| 3 | Gentle breeze | Leaves move constantly, light flags unfurl | 8–12 mph |
| 4 | Moderate breeze | Twigs move, flags flap, dust and loose papers blow about | 13–18 mph |
| 5 | Fresh breeze | Small trees sway, flags ripple, small waves appear on lakes | 19–24 mph |
| 6 | Strong breeze | Large branches move, flags beat, umbrellas turn inside-out | 25–31 mph |
| 7 | Moderate gale | Whole trees move, flags are extended, it becomes difficult to walk into the wind | 32–38 mph |
| 8 | Fresh gale | Twigs break off trees, it becomes very difficult to walk | 39–46 mph |
| 9 | Strong gale | Awnings rip, antennas and satellite dishes may blow down, houses are slightly damaged | 47–54 mph |
| 10 | Whole gale | Trees are uprooted, houses receive much damage | 55–63 mph |
| 11 | Storm | Violent storm, widespread damage to houses | 64–75 mph |
| 12 | Hurricane | Total devastation | 75 mph or more |