

Measuring Wind Strength



Beaufort Number	Description	Meters per second (m/s)	Description of Air
0	Calm	< 0.3	Calm. Smoke rises vertically.
1	Light air	0.3 – 1.5	Wind motion visible in smoke.
2	Light breeze	1.6 – 3.4	Wind felt on exposed skin. Leaves rustle.
3	Gentle breeze	3.4 – 5.4	Leaves and smaller twigs in constant motion.
4	Moderate breeze	5.5 – 7.9	Dust and loose paper lifted. Small branches begin to move.
5	Fresh breeze	8.0 – 10.7	Branches of a moderate size move. Small trees begin to sway.
6	Strong breeze	10.8 – 13.8	Large branches in motion. Whistling heard in overhead wires. Umbrella use becomes difficult. Empty plastic bins tip over.

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7	High wind, Moderate gale, Near gale	13.9 – 17.1	Whole trees in motion. Effort needed to walk against the wind. Swaying of skyscrapers may be felt.
8	Gale, Fresh gale	17.2 – 20.7	Some twigs broken from trees. Cars veer on road. Walking is very difficult.
9	Strong gale	20.8 – 24.4	Some branches break off trees, and some small trees blow over. Construction/temporary signs and barricades blow over. Damage to tents and canopies.
10	Storm, Whole gale	24.5 – 28.4	Trees are broken off or uprooted. Slates fall off roofs.
11	Violent storm	28.5 – 32.6	Widespread damage to vegetation. Many roofs are damaged.
12	Hurricane-force	≥ 32.7	Very widespread damage to vegetation. Some windows may break; mobile homes and poorly constructed sheds and barns are damaged. Debris may be thrown about.

The Beaufort scale was thought up by Admiral Francis Beaufort in 1805, and is a measure of the wind speeds at sea. Nowadays we have equipment called Anemometers which measure wind speed and wind direction. How windy is your Garden or School Playground? Using the Beaufort scale measure the wind speed!