



Beaufort scale



The Beaufort scale is a scale used to classify wind speeds. It was devised in 1805 and named after its creator, Sir Francis Beaufort (1774–1857), a British naval officer. It is a measure for describing wind speeds based on observed land and sea conditions. The scale is used to classify wind velocity, ranging from 0 for calm or no wind, to 12 for hurricane-strength winds. Its full name is the Beaufort wind force scale.

Observed land conditions*	Description	Beaufort number	Wind speed (kph)
Air calm; smoke rises vertically.	Calm	0	< 1
Direction of wind shown by smoke drift but not by wind vanes.	Light air	1	1–5
Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; wind vanes moved by wind.	Light breeze	2	6–11
Leaves and small twigs in continual motion; wind extends light flags.	Gentle breeze	3	12–19
Raises dust and loose paper; moves small branches.	Moderate breeze	4	20–29
Small trees in leaf begin to sway.	Fresh breeze	5	30–39
Large branches in motion; umbrellas used with difficulty; telephone wires 'whistle'.	Strong breeze	6	40–50
Whole trees in motion; inconvenience felt walking against wind.	Moderate or near gale	7	51–61
Breaks twigs off trees; wind generally impedes progress.	Fresh gale	8	62–74
Slight structural damage occurs.	Strong gale	9	75–87
Trees uprooted; considerable structural damage occurs.	Whole gale or storm	10	88–101
Widespread damage.	Violent storm	11	102–118
Devastation.	Hurricane	12	> 118

*Observed sea conditions in scale not given in this passage.