

BEAUFORT SCALE OF WIND FORCE

Force	Descriptive Term	Open Sea Criterion	Mean wind speed in knots	Sea State	Average Height in Metres	Probable Maximum Height In Metres
0	Calm	Sea like a mirror	<1	Calm		
1	Light air	Ripples with the appearance of scales are formed, but without foam crests	1-3	Calm	0.1	0.1
2	Light breeze	Small wavelets, still short but more pronounced; crests have a glassy appearance and do not break	4-6	Smooth	0.2	0.3
3	Gentle breeze	Large wavelets; crests begin to break; foam of glassy appearance; perhaps scattered white horses	7-10	Smooth	0.6	1.0
4	Moderate breeze	Small waves, becoming larger; fairly frequent white horses	11-16	Slight	1	1.5
5	Fresh breeze	Moderate waves, taking a more pronounced long form; many white horses are formed (chance of some spray)	17-21	Moderate	2	2.5
6	Strong breeze	Large waves begin to form; the white foam crests are more extensive everywhere (probably some spray)	22-27	Rough	3	4
7	Near gale	Sea heaps up and white foam from breaking waves begins to be blown in streaks along the direction of the wind	28-33	Very rough	4	5.5
8	Gale	Moderately high waves of greater length; edges of crests begin to break into spindrift; the foam is blown in well-marked streaks along the direction of the wind	34-40	High	5.5	7.5
9	Strong gale	High waves; dense streaks of foam along the direction of the wind; crests of waves begin to topple, tumble and roll over; spray may affect visibility	41-47	Very High	7	10
10	Storm	Very high waves with long overhanging crests; the resulting foam, in great patches, is blown in dense white streaks along the direction of the wind; on the whole, the surface of the sea takes a white appearance; the tumbling of the sea becomes heavy and shock like; visibility affected	48-55	Very High	9	12.5
11	Violent storm	Exceptionally high waves (small and medium sized ships might be for a time lost to view behind the waves); the sea is completely covered with long white patches of foam lying along the direction of the wind; everywhere the edges of the wave crests are blown into froth; visibility affected	56-63	Phenomenal	11.5	16
12	Hurricane	The air is filled with foam and spray; sea completely white with driving spray; visibility very seriously affected	64 and over	Phenomenal	14	20 or more