

The Beaufort Scale

Beaufort Force	Description	Minimum Speed		Wave Height (m)	Sea State
		Knots	MPH		
0	Calm	0	0	0	Flat
1	Light air	1	1	0.1	Ripples
2	Light breeze	4	5	0.2	Small wavelets
3	Gentle breeze	7	8	0.4	Large wavelets, a few white horses
4	Moderate breeze	11	13	1	Small waves, frequent white horses
5	Fresh breeze	17	20	2	Moderate waves, many white horses
6	Strong breeze	22	25	3	Large waves, foam crests, and some spray
7	Near gale	28	32	4	Sea heaps up, foam blowing in streaks
8	Gale	34	39	5.5	Moderately high waves, foam streaks well marked
9	Severe gale	41	47	7	High waves, tumbling crests, spray may affect visibility
10	Storm	48	55	9	Heavy tumbling sea, surface completely white with foam
11	Violent storm	56	64	11	Exceptionally high waves, sea covered in foam
12	Hurricane	64	74	14+	Air filled with foam and spray

Hurricane Categories

In order for a wind to be called a hurricane, it must exceed 64knots. Hurricane-force winds are further categorised from 1-5 as shown below.

The weather systems that develop into hurricanes, tropical depressions, are formed over tropical oceans, where the water temperature exceeds 27°C.

There are various regional names for these weather systems including cyclones in the Indian Ocean; typhoons in the NW Pacific, willy-willies in the SW Pacific and hurricanes in the Americas.

There is almost, if not absolutely, no chance whatsoever of a true hurricane ever coming anywhere near Sidmouth, although 1984 saw hurricane-force winds in the SE of England.

Hurricane Category	Minimum	
	Knots	MPH
1	65	75
2	82	95
3	96	110
4	113	130
5	135	155

Some Unit Conversions

Metres to Feet	1m = 3.2803990ft
Miles/NM/Kilometres	1sm = 0.86842nm = 1.60934km
Metre to Yards	1m = 1.09361yds
Centimetres to inches	1cm = 0.03937in
Litres to pints	1L = 1.7598pts
Ton(ne)s	1tonne = 0.98 tons