

Unusual Weather

General Weather & Sky

Overcast – the sky is completely covered with clouds

Clear skies – no clouds in the sky

Crepuscular rays – beams of sunlight shining through clouds, often at dawn or dusk

Cumulonimbus – tall, dark clouds that bring thunderstorms

Cirrus – thin, wispy clouds high in the sky

Stratus – flat, grey clouds covering most of the sky

Misty – light fog or haze in the air

Foggy – thick mist that makes it hard to see

Rain & Ice

Drizzle – light rain, not heavy

Downpour – very heavy rain

Sleet – a mix of rain and snow

Hail – small balls of ice falling like rain

Thundersnow – a snowstorm with thunder and lightning

Storms & Winds

Thunderstorm – a storm with thunder and lightning

Lightning bolt – a flash of electricity during a storm

Gust of wind – a sudden strong burst of wind

Gale – very strong wind

Tornado – a violently rotating column of air

Firenado – a fire tornado created by heat and wind

Heat & Air

Humid – the air feels wet and sticky

Dry spell – a period without rain

Heatwave – many very hot days in a row

Chill in the air – a slight cold feeling

Frost – a thin layer of ice forming overnight

Blizzard – a snowstorm with very strong winds

Rainbow – colored arc in the sky after rain

Drought – a long time without rain

Warm-Up Questions

1. What is the strangest weather you've ever experienced?
2. Do you know any weather disasters in Osaka?
3. Which do you prefer: hot and humid weather, or cold and frosty weather?

Story: The Wild Weather Weekend

Last Saturday began quietly, with the sky completely **overcast** and heavy **stratus** clouds blocking the sun. By mid-morning, however, thin **cirrus** clouds appeared above, and through them I noticed beautiful **crepuscular rays** of sunlight. I thought the day would brighten, but soon dark **cumulonimbus** clouds rolled in.

At first, a light **drizzle** made the streets damp, but it quickly turned into a heavy **downpour**. People ran for cover, umbrellas bending under each sudden **gust of wind**. The rain then changed to icy **sleet**, and a short burst of **hail** rattled against rooftops.

By afternoon, the storm intensified. A flash of a **lightning bolt** lit up the sky, followed by loud cracks of thunder. To my surprise, snowflakes started falling during the storm—it was **thundersnow**! Within an hour, the city was covered in white. The snow thickened into a **blizzard**, and visibility dropped to just a few meters.

The next morning, the storm cleared. The air was **foggy** and **misty**, and there was a sharp **chill in the air**. As the fog lifted, the sun returned, revealing a bright **rainbow** over the valley. But soon the weather swung again: the temperature rose sharply, creating a short **heatwave**. The air became sticky and **humid**, while in the countryside, farmers worried about a long **dry spell** that could turn into a **drought**.

Later that evening, the wind picked up. A strong **gale** rattled windows, and suddenly a swirling **tornado** appeared on the horizon. As if that weren't dramatic enough, a wildfire broke out nearby, and the strong winds created a rare and terrifying **firenado**—a spinning column of fire. By nightfall, frost began forming on the ground as the heat vanished, leaving shimmering ice crystals. It was the most unpredictable weekend of weather I had ever lived through.

Comprehension Questions

1. What types of clouds were seen during the weekend?
2. What happened when the drizzle changed?
3. Which rare event happened during the snowstorm?
4. How did the weather shift after the blizzard?
5. What extreme event involved fire?

Vocabulary Practice

1. A tall, dark cloud that brings thunderstorms is called a _____.
2. A snowstorm with thunder and lightning is _____.
3. A rainbow is often seen after a heavy _____.
4. Thin, wispy clouds are known as _____.
5. A spinning column of fire is called a _____.

Gale | Cumulonimbus | Frost | Heatwave | Drought

- a) A period of very hot weather
- b) Very strong wind
- c) Long time with no rain
- d) Tall storm cloud
- e) Thin ice on surfaces in the morning

Conversation

Have you ever seen unusual weather, such as hail or a rainbow?

What weather do you find the most dangerous? Why?

Imagine you are a weather reporter. How would you describe today's weather?