



Sea State Description Codes

Observe the sea surface and the wind speed, then find the corresponding Beaufort Sea State Number on this chart.

Beaufort Sea State Number	Observed Sea Surface Condition	Sailor's Term	Effects on Land	Typical Wind Speed (MPH)
0	Mirror smooth and glassy surface	Calm	Calm; smoke rises straight up.	0
1	Small ripples or capillary waves on glassy surface.	Light Air	Smoke drifts with wind direction.	1 - 3
2	Larger ripples or wavelets on glassy surface.	Light Breeze	Leaves begin to rustle; wind felt on face.	4 - 7
3	Wavelets of irregular direction and shape; a few crests break on glassy surface.	Gentle Breeze	Small flags extend; leaves in constant motion.	8 - 12
4	Small chop, defined direction; numerous whitecaps.	Moderate Breeze	Dust, leaves & loose paper move.	13 - 18
5	Heavy chop; many white foaming crests; some spray.	Fresh Breeze	Small trees begin to sway.	19 - 24
6	Larger surface waves form; whitecaps everywhere; more spray.	Strong Breeze	Large branches move; whistling heard in wires.	25 - 31
7	Sea heaps up; white foam starts to blow in streaks along direction of wind; spindrift forms.	Moderate Gale	Resistance strong when walking.	32 - 38
8	Moderately high waves, crests begin to break into spindrift; well marked streaks of foam.	Gale	Twigs and small branches broken off trees.	39 - 46
9	High waves, sea begins to roll; spray begins to reduce visibility; dense streaks of foam.	Strong Gale	Structural damage occurs esp. to roofs.	47 - 54
10	Sea mostly covered in white foam; visibility reduced; exceptionally large waves.	Storm	Trees uprooted; considerable structural damage.	55 - 63
11 - 17	Beach Research Cancelled Today			