

CLOUD IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

HIGH ALTITUDE (ABOVE 20,000 FT)

CIRRUS

Cirrus Thin, wispy, hair-like strands composed of ice crystals.

CIRROCUMULUS

Cirrocumulus Small white patches, often looking like fish scales.

CIRROSTRATUS

Cirrostratus Transparent veil covering the sky, often creates halos.

MIDDLE ALTITUDE (6,500 - 20,000 FT)

ALTOCUMULUS

Alto cumulus White or grey patches/rolls; looks like cotton balls.

ALTOSTRATUS

Altostratus Grayish sheet; sun may be visible as a bright disk.

NIMBOSTRATUS

Nimbostratus Thick, dark layer blotting out the sun; steady rain.

LOW ALTITUDE (BELOW 6,500 FT)

CUMULUS

Cumulus Fluffy, white "cauliflower" clouds with flat bases.

STRATUS

Stratus Uniform gray layer resembling fog that doesn't touch the ground.

CUMULONIMBUS

Cumulonimbus Towering storm clouds with anvil-shaped tops.

Field Observation Notes:
