

CLOUD IDENTIFICATION CHART

Field Observation Guide & Checklist

High Altitude (Above 20,000 ft)

Cirrus Thin, wispy, "mare's tails" made of ice crystals.

Cirrocumulus Small white ripples, "mackerel sky" pattern.

Cirrostratus Transparent veil, often creates halos around sun/moon.

Middle Altitude (6,500 - 20,000 ft)

Altostratus Grayish sheet, sun may appear "watery" or dimly visible.

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Low Altitude (Below 6,500 ft)

Stratus Uniform gray layer covering the sky like a blanket.

Stratocumulus Low, puffy, grayish layers with dark patches.

Nimbostratus Dark, wet-looking layer; steady rain or snow.

Vertical Development (All Altitudes)

Cumulus Fluffy "cotton balls" with flat bases and sharp outlines.

Cumulonimbus Towering storm clouds with an anvil-shaped top.

Field Notes:

Date:

Location:

Wind Direction/Speed:

Additional Observations: