

Force	Description	Specification for use at sea*	Equivalent speed at 10 metres above sea level				Description in forecast	State of sea	Probable height of waves* /metres
			Mean		Limits				
			/knots	/ms <sup>-1</sup>	/knots	/ms <sup>-1</sup>			
0	Calm	Sea like a mirror	0	0.0	<1	0.0 to 0.2	Calm	Calm	0.0
1	Light air	Ripples with the appearance of scales are formed, but without foam crests	2	0.8	1 to 3	0.3 to 1.5	Light	Calm	0.1 (0.1)
2	Light breeze	Small wavelets, still short but more pronounced. Crests have a glassy appearance and do not break	5	2.4	4 to 6	1.6 to 3.3	Light	Smooth	0.2 (0.3)
3	Gentle breeze	Large wavelets. Crests begin to break. Foam of glassy appearance. Perhaps scattered white horses	9	4.3	7 to 10	3.4 to 5.4	Light	Smooth	0.6 (1.0)
4	Moderate breeze	Small waves, becoming longer, fairly frequent white horses	13	6.7	11 to 16	5.5 to 7.9	Moderate	Slight	1.0 (1.5)
5	Fresh breeze	Moderate waves, taking a more pronounced long form; many white horses are formed. Chance of some spray	19	9.3	17 to 21	8.0 to 10.7	Fresh	Moderate	2.0 (2.5)
6	Strong breeze	Large waves begin to form; the white foam crests are more extensive everywhere. Probably some spray	24	12.3	22 to 27	10.8 to 13.8	Strong	Rough	3.0 (4.0)
7	Near gale	Sea heaps up and white foam from breaking waves begins to be blown in streaks along the direction of the wind	30	15.5	28 to 33	13.9 to 17.1	Strong	Very rough	4.0 (5.5)
8	Gale	Moderate high waves of greater length; edges of crests begin to break into spindrift. The foam is blown in well-marked streaks along the direction of the wind	37	18.9	34 to 40	17.2 to 20.7	Gale	High	5.5 (7.5)
9	Strong gale	High waves. Dense streaks of foam along the direction of the wind. Crests of waves begin to topple, tumble and roll over. Spray may affect visibility	44	22.6	41 to 47	20.8 to 24.4	Severe gale	Very high	7.0 (10.0)
10	Storm	Very high waves with long over-hanging crests. The resulting foam, in great patches, is blown in dense white streaks along the direction of the wind. On the whole the surface of the sea takes on a white appearance. The 'tumbling' of the sea becomes heavy and shock-like. Visibility affected	52	26.4	48 to 55	24.5 to 28.4	Storm	Very high	9.0 (12.5)
11	Violent storm	Exceptionally high waves (small and medium-sized ships might be for a time lost behind the waves). The sea is completely covered with long white patches of foam lying along the direction of the wind. Everywhere the edges of the wave crests are blown into froth. Visibility affected	60	30.5	56 to 63	28.5 to 32.6	Violent storm	Phenomenal	11.5 (16.0)
12	Hurricane	The air is filled with foam and spray. Sea completely white with driving spray; visibility very seriously affected	-	-	64 and over	32.7 and over	Hurricane force	Phenomenal	14.0 (-)

\*These columns are a guide to show roughly what may be expected in the open sea, remote from land. Figures in brackets indicate the probable maximum height of waves. In enclosed waters, or when near land with an offshore wind, wave heights will be smaller and the waves steeper.