

Skills Card










Assessing wind speed

This is the normal and very useful way of describing wind strength and its effects on sheltered waters.

The scale is from 0 (calm) up to 12 (hurricane). Force 8 is known as Gale Force, but Force 6 is often called a small boat gale. Generally Scout boating should not take place if the local wind is greater than Force 4.

Brought to you by the Scout Team
in conjunction with the Sea Scout
Team



| Force | Name | Wind speed (kts) | Appearance at sea | Appearance on land | Appearance at sea |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|---|---|---|
| 0 | Calm | <1 | Mirror smooth | Smoke rises vertically |  |
| 1 | Light air | 1 to 3 | Ripples on water | Smoke moves but not on a wind vane |  |
| 2 | Light breeze | 4 to 6 | Pennant moves. Very small waves. | Felt on face. Leaves rustle |  |
| 3 | Gentle breeze | 7 to 10 | Light flag extends, Crests on small waves | Leaves and twigs move, flag extended |  |
| 4 | Moderate breeze | 11 to 16 | Small waves with some white horses | Small branches moved, papers lifted |  |
| 5 | Fresh breeze | 17 to 21 | Small waves with some white horses | Small trees begin to sway |  |
| 6 | Strong breeze | 22 to 27 | *Small craft warning* Large waves white foam crests everywhere | Large branches move, umbrellas difficult to use |  |
| 7 | Near gale | 28 to 32 | Sea heaps up with white foam blown into streaks for breakers | Whole trees move, difficult to walk |  |
| 8 | Gale | 33 to 40 | Sea very rough and disturbed with well-marked streaks of foam | Twigs break off, very difficult to walk |  |