

The Hurricane: Nature's Fury

Every year between _____ and _____ (commonly called hurricane season), hurricanes threaten the eastern and gulf coasts of the United States, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. In the Eastern Hemisphere, these same types of storms are called _____ or _____. These huge storms wreak havoc when they make landfall. They can kill thousands of people and cause billions of dollars in property damage when they hit heavily populated areas.

What makes a Hurricane, a Hurricane?

According to the National Hurricane Center, the word "hurricane" comes from the name "Hurican", the Caribbean god of evil.

A hurricane is defined by the following characteristics:

- They are **tropical**, meaning _____.
- They are **cyclonic**, meaning _____.
- They are **low-pressure systems**. _____.
- The winds swirling around the center of the storm have a sustained speed of _____.

How does a hurricane form?

Hurricanes form in tropical regions where there is warm water (at least 80 degrees), moist air, and converging winds. Most Atlantic hurricanes begin off the west coast of Africa, starting as thunderstorms that move out over the warm, tropical waters. A thunderstorm reaches hurricane status in three stages:

- **Tropical depression** – swirling clouds and rain with wind speeds of less than ____ mph.
- **Tropical storm** – wind speeds of ____ to ____ mph.
- **Hurricane** – wind speeds greater than ____ mph.

What are the parts of a hurricane?

Once a hurricane forms, it has three parts:

- **Eye** – _____.
- **Eye wall** – _____.
- **Rain Bands** – _____.

