






Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

The **Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale** is used to classify hurricanes into five categories based on their sustained wind speeds. It helps people understand how dangerous a storm could be and what kind of damage it might cause. The higher the category, the stronger the hurricane!

⚠️ Important: The scale only measures wind speed. It does not include rain, flooding, or storm surge, which can also be very dangerous!




Category 1 (74–95 mph)

Very dangerous winds will produce some damage.

-  Trees with shallow roots may be toppled.
-  Minor damage to home roofs, gutters, and siding.
-  Power outages possible, especially for a few days.




Category 2 (96–110 mph)

Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage.

-  Many trees may be snapped or uprooted.
-  Major roof and siding damage to homes.
-  Widespread power outages likely, lasting days to weeks.




Category 3 (111–129 mph) – Major Hurricane

Devastating damage will occur.

-  Well-built homes may suffer major roof and wall damage.
-  Many trees downed, blocking roads and isolating areas.
-  Electricity and water may be unavailable for several days to weeks.



Category 4 (130–156 mph) – Major Hurricane

Catastrophic damage will occur.

-  Most trees snapped or uprooted.
-  Severe damage to homes, with roof failure possible.
-  Power and water outages may last for weeks or longer.

Category 5 (157+ mph) – Major Hurricane

Catastrophic damage – the worst level of hurricane.

-  High percentage of homes will be destroyed.
-  Total roof failure and wall collapse possible.

- ⚡ Power outages could last for **months** in some areas.
- 🛑 Area may be uninhabitable for a long time.

📖 Quick Summary

Category Wind Speed Damage Level

1	74–95 mph	Some damage
2	96–110 mph	Extensive damage
3	111–129 mph	Devastating damage
4	130–156 mph	Catastrophic damage
5	157+ mph	Worst, total failure

🌟 Hurricane Facts!

🌀 Hurricanes spin differently depending on the hemisphere!

In the **Northern Hemisphere**, they spin **counterclockwise**. In the **Southern Hemisphere**, they spin **clockwise**—it’s all thanks to something called the **Coriolis Effect!**

🌊 The word “hurricane” comes from the Taino word “Huracán,” which means “**evil spirit of the wind**.” The Taino were Indigenous people from the Caribbean.

📅 **Hurricane Season** in the Atlantic runs from **June 1 to November 30**, with the **peak around mid-September**.

🌊 Hurricanes need **warm ocean water (at least 80°F)** to form. That’s why they’re more common in summer and early fall.

🌀 A hurricane can be **hundreds of miles wide** and last for **over a week!**

🛑 Hurricane names get **retired** if the storm was especially deadly or costly (like **Katrina, Harvey, or Maria**).

✈️ The **U.S. Air Force “Hurricane Hunters”** fly special planes **into hurricanes** to gather data. Brave and amazing work!

📈 The strongest hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic was **Hurricane Wilma (2005)**, with winds of **185 mph** and the **lowest pressure ever measured** in that ocean.
