



# How to Check Weather Signs when Outdoors

When you're staying in the great outdoors, knowing what the weather might bring you is important. This article provides some basic generalisations that can be used for checking the weather when you're camping, etc. Always rely on having adequate outdoor gear supplies to hand and do not venture forth into any weather that can cause you to become lost, hypothermic, or endangered in any way.

## Steps

- 1 Check the night sky before going to sleep.** The following sky indicators provide general ideas of what the weather might bring the next day:
  - If there is a halo that becomes wider around the moon, rain and winds are likely to be on their way.<sup>[1]</sup>
  - If there is a dark, low-looking sky and there is a warm feeling in the air all of a sudden, this can be an indicator of snow on its way. It will usually go very still and there are usually no winds unless it's a nor'easter.
  - If the sky is clear and star-filled during wintertime, this will probably mean that there will be frosts during the night with a sunny day to follow.
  - If the stars have a dull appearance and don't seem to twinkle, there is a possibility of rain in the morning.
- 2 Check the weather in the morning.** Some signs include:
  - If there are white, fluffy clouds, the weather will stay fine for about 12 hours.
  - If the sun feels very hot as soon as it rises, the day will be very hot.
  - If the sky darkens quickly, producing low, dark clouds, find shelter quickly so that you aren't standing around in a storm. Low, dark clouds usually bring heavy rain or snow.
  - If the clouds are low, dark, and stretched out, there will be bad weather soon.
  - If the clouds are high, wispy and white, this means fine weather.
- 3 Keep out of lightning.** Lightning strikes are very dangerous - see [how to avoid being struck by lightning](#) for tips.

## Tips

- Remember the saying: "Red sky at night, sailor's delight; red sky in the morning, sailor's warning". Although this is by no means a guarantee of the said weather, it is a folklore predictor with some success at certain latitudes.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Warnings

- Don't stand out and watch the sky if the storm is going to come in your city. Seek shelter immediately.
- You can make mistakes when forecasting the weather, so be careful. For example, it may rain heavily for some time and give way to bright sunshine or it may be sunny for a few minutes and can cause heavy rain in the afternoon.

## Things You'll Need

- Shelter
- Raincoats

- Observation
- Access to internet/radio/TV/newspaper to check forecasts

### Sources and Citations

- Adapted from *Out in the Wild: How to Look After Yourself*, 1977, Penguin Books Australia, ISBN not provided.
1. Moonlight Effect, Moon Ring Weather Folklore
  2. Red Sky at Night, Red Sky at Night