



Forecast terminology

The UK Inshore Waters Forecast contains details of forecast wind direction and force, sea state, weather, and visibility, and uses specific terms to describe them.

Gale Warnings

Where there are warnings of gales in the forecast these are always mentioned at the start of the forecast.

Strong Wind Warning – average winds of **F6** (22-27 knots) or **F7** (28-33 knots)

Gale Warning – if winds of **F8** or more (34–40 knots) or gusts reaching (43–51 knots)

Severe Gale Warning – winds of **F9** (41–47 knots) or gusts reaching 52–60 knots

Storm – winds of **F10** (48–55 knots) or gusts reaching 61–68 knots

Timings

Timing of forecast winds are described as being;

Imminent – which is within 6 hours of time of issue.

Soon – which is within 6 to 12 hours of time of issue.

Later – which is more than 12 hours from time of issue.

Sea State

Sea state is a description of wave height and waves are the result of friction between the wind and the surface of the sea.

Smooth

Wave height less than 0.5 m

Slight

Wave height of 0.5 to 1.25 m

Moderate

Wave height of 1.25 to 2.5 m

Rough

Wave height of 2.5 to 4.0 m

Very rough

Wave height of 4.0 to 6.0 m

High

Wave height of 6.0 to 9.0 m

Very high

Wave height of 9.0 to 14.0 m

Weather

A narrative describing the weather in general terms, for example

Rain then showers

Intermittent light rain

Thundery showers

Heavy rain

Light snowfall

Fair

Fog patches

Fog banks

Visibility

Very poor – less than 1,000 metres

Poor – between 1,000 metres and 2 nautical miles

Moderate – between 2 and 5 nautical miles

Good – more than 5 nautical miles