CLOUD COVER

The clouds up in the sky can tell a lot about the weather. **Meteorologists** talk a lot about cloud cover when they make their weather **forecasts**. They predict how much of the open sky will be shown. They give warnings of rain clouds that may come.

TYPES

There are many types of cloud cover. The sky is called **clear** when it is bright blue with very few clouds. Sometimes only patches of sunny, blue sky show. When clouds cover up around half of the sky the cloud cover is called **scattered**. More clouds fill a broken, or **mostly cloudy**, sky. Little sunlight peeks through. A sky that is fully covered by clouds is called **overcast**. Sunlight is unable to pass through an overcast sky. Clouds that are dark may be thick with **precipitation**.

VISIBILITY

Visibility is the ability to see something clearly. Sometimes fog, snow, or dust can **obscure**, or make it hard to see, the sky. If there is **low visibility**, the cloud cover is difficult to see.

EFFECTS

The amount of cloud cover can have many effects. If the sky is cloudy, daytime **temperatures** are cooler. The clouds **shield**, or block, the earth from the hot sun. Clouds keep temperatures warmer at night because they **trap** the heat close to the earth. Clouds do not protect people from the sun's harmful **rays**. They can still pass through the clouds and cause **sunburn**. It is important to always wear **sunscreen** for protection against the sun's rays.

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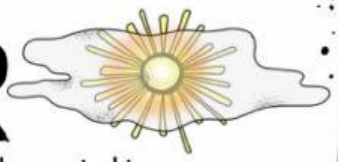
CLOUD COVER



IDENTIFY: Use the word bank to identify each description.

meteorologist	clear	scattered	sunburn
temperature	visibility	dust	forecast

	1. The ability to see something clearly
	2. Person who studies and predicts the weather
	3. When the sky has no, or few, clouds
	4. Skin condition from being out in the sun
	5. Guess of what the weather will be like
	6. When up to half the sky is filled with clouds
	7. How hot or cold it is outside
	8. Can obscure the sky

MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the best answer.

9. Why do clouds keep temperatures warmer at night?
A. They shield the earth from the hot sun.
B. They trap heat close to the earth.
C. They block the heat from the sun.

10. What does the sky look like if it is overcast?
A. It is fully covered by clouds.
B. Patches of sunny, blue sky show through.
C. The sky is bright blue with very few clouds.

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