

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## Water

Water is the only substance on Earth that is commonly found in all three states of matter, as solid ice, liquid water, and gaseous water vapour. A water molecule is simple, with two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen. But it is perhaps the most important substance on Earth. Most of our planet's surface is covered with water and it makes up 60 per cent of our own bodies.

**What are the three states of matter?**

### DRYING UP

Water needs heat to "dry", that is, turn from liquid into gas.

This is why puddles dry out faster on hot, sunny days. Our sweat is mostly water. This dries by drawing heat from the body, which keeps us cool in hot conditions.



▲ **COOLING EFFECT** *Hippopotamuses spend up to 16 hours a day submerged in rivers and lakes to keep their massive bodies cool.*

**How does water turn into a gas?**

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## CLOUDS AND WATER VAPOUR

The gas form of water, known as water vapour, is invisible. It can make up as much as 0.04 per cent of the air around us, but we cannot see it. What we can see is when this vapour cools and turns back into tiny droplets of liquid water, so small and light that they float – what we call clouds.



Each cloud has trillions of water droplets.

What is the gas form of water called?

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