

28 Weather

A Conditions

English weather is unreliable, **to say the least**. We can have winters that are **bitterly cold** or extremely **mild**, and summers with long **spells** of hot weather when it can get very **humid**, or ones that stay generally cloudy and **dull**. Almost any day outside of summer can be mild or **chilly**. Equally possible are **torrential rain**, **thick fog**, **flashes of lightning**, **scattered showers** and the **odd** rainbow.

rainbow

GLOSSARY

to say the least	used to say that sth is much worse or more serious than you are saying	chilly	(of the weather) too cold to feel comfortable
bitterly cold	extremely cold	torrential rain	heavy rain SYN a downpour
mild	during cold weather, warmer than you expect	thick fog	= fog that is difficult to see through SYN dense fog
spell	a short period of time: a spell of hot/cold weather	flash	a sudden bright light that comes and goes quickly: a flash of lightning
humid	(of climate) warm and feeling slightly wet humidity n	scattered showers	rain spread over a large area or happening several times during a period of time
dull	(of the weather) not bright, with a lot of clouds	odd	not regular or fixed; happening occasionally

1 Which is worse, or are they the same?

- 1 cold OR bitterly cold
- 2 thick fog OR dense fog
- 3 hot OR hot and humid
- 4 a chilly day OR a mild day
- 5 torrential rain OR a downpour
- 6 a dull day OR a bright day
- 7 the odd shower OR scattered showers
- 8 quite wet OR quite wet, to say the least

2 Replace the underlined word(s) with a single word that keeps the same meaning.

- 1 We've had a number of showers today.
- 2 We had a short period of cold weather last week.
- 3 It's been really cold this winter.
- 4 We had very heavy rain this morning.
- 5 I drove through some very bad fog.
- 6 It was too cold to feel comfortable today.
- 7 I thought it would be cold, but actually it was warmer than I expected.
- 8 We get the occasional spell of hot weather.

3 Complete the texts.

While we were out, we had a sudden (1) of rain followed by several (2) of lightning. It was a bit frightening and we also got very wet, to say the (3) But then the rain stopped, the sun came out and there was a beautiful (4) By the end of the day I was sweating: it was hot and the (5) was unbearable.

It was (6) cold for May, and even by midday it still felt quite (7) Yesterday had been quite hot, but today was cloudy and (8) with (9) expected later, though not heavy or lasting for any period of time.



TEST YOURSELF

B Effects of weather

Many people in this country listen to the **weather forecast** very **closely**, as it can have a **significant** impact on people's lives. Farmers are obviously **dependent on** weather conditions for the success of their crops, but the weather affects everyone:

- * A **heatwave** can eventually lead to water **shortages** and **drought**.
- * When there is heavy snow and **blizzards**, traffic **comes to a standstill**, and this causes **widespread disruption** on the roads.
- * **Gales** cause damage to people's property, and this may be **widespread**.

GLOSSARY

weather forecast	a description of the weather that is expected in the coming days
closely	carefully and with interest
significant	important enough to be noticed and have an effect
dependent (on sth/sb)	needing sth/sb to support you
heatwave	a period of unusually hot weather
shortage	a situation where there is not enough of sth OPP surplus
drought	a long period without rain
blizzard	a bad storm with strong winds and a lot of snow
come to a standstill	reach a situation in which all activity or movement has stopped ALSO bring sth to a standstill
widespread disruption	found or happening over a large area: widespread damage a situation in which it is difficult for sth to continue in the normal way
gale	a very strong wind. A breeze is a light, usually pleasant, wind.

- 4 Is the pronunciation of the underlined letters the same or different? Write S or D. Use the  to help you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 widespread <u>h</u> eatwave | 4 <u>g</u> ale <u>d</u> amage |
| 2 <u>s</u> hortage <u>d</u> amage | 5 <u>s</u> urplus <u>d</u> isruption |
| 3 <u>s</u> urplus <u>b</u> lizzard | 6 <u>d</u> rought <u>t</u> hought |

- 5 Circle the correct answer.

- 1 A surplus is *too much* / *not enough* of something.
- 2 A breeze is a *strong* / *light* wind.
- 3 Disruption *causes* / *doesn't cause* problems.
- 4 If you are dependent on something, you *need* / *would like* it.
- 5 A blizzard usually has *strong winds* / *very low temperatures*.
- 6 A significant effect is quite *small* / *large*.
- 7 A forecast talks about the *future* / *past*.
- 8 A heatwave is a *day* / *period* of hot weather.

- 6 Complete the texts.

The weather (1) yesterday predicted heavy snow during the night, and they were right. Traffic came to a (2) on the A4 this morning, and there was widespread (3) on many of the minor roads as well. I will certainly listen (4) to the forecast tonight!

Farmers in this country are (5) on rain for their crops to grow and flourish, and if the current (6) continues with no further rain, it will be a second year of (7), and that means serious water (8)

We had 65 mph (9) today, and this has caused (10) damage to a number of houses. If these conditions get worse, the damage will become more (11)

- 7 **ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY** Write answers to the questions, or ask another student.

- 1 Which of the weather conditions on pages 64 and 65 are common in your country?
- 2 What effect do they have on people's lives?
- 3 Which of the weather conditions are rare in your country?



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