

A

Weather conversations

Here are some less common but nonetheless useful words about weather, so that you can have typical weather conversations where you agree with someone by using a near-synonym. In these examples, B replies using more informal language.

A: Bit **cold** today, isn't it?

B: Yes, it's **chilly/freezing/nippy**, isn't it?

A: It's **hot**, isn't it?

B: Yes, it's **boiling/sweltering/roasting!**

A: It's a bit **windy** today!

B: Yes, really **blowy/breezy**, isn't it?

A: What **oppressive/sultry** weather!

B: Yes, isn't it **stifling/heavy/close?**

A: What a **downpour/deluge!**

B: Yes, it's **chucking it down / it's pouring!**

A: Isn't it **humid** today?

B: Yes, horrible **muggy/clammy/sticky** weather!



B

Climate and metaphors

Climate metaphors are often used, particularly in written English.

The word **climate** can refer to the general atmosphere or situation in society.

His secrecy and dishonesty created a **climate of distrust**.

The government reforms have contributed to a **climate of change**.

The words **cultural, current, economic, financial, moral, political, social** and **prevailing** all collocate strongly with **climate** in this social sense.

She has a very **sunny disposition** – she's hardly ever miserable.

Though they won the championship last year, the outlook for the team is less **sunny** this year.

Unfortunately, our plans met with a **frosty** reception.

I'm **snowed under** with work – I'll never get through it all in time.

After the company accounts were examined, the manager left **under a cloud**.

Don't let your love for him **cloud your judgement**.

The soldiers were hit with a **hail of bullets**.

The Prime Minister was greeted with a **hail/storm of abuse**.

I've only a **hazy memory** of my first day at school.

The truth is hidden **in the mists of history**.

The article sparked a **whirlwind** of speculation.

They had a **whirlwind romance** and got married just a month after they met.

The horses **thundered** down the racetrack.

Thunderous applause followed his speech.

(Note that **thundery** is used to describe stormy weather while **thunderous** describes a loud, deep noise.)

The **winds of change/discontent/democracy** are blowing across the country.



Exercises

29.1 Respond to these statements about the weather. Agree using slightly more formal language like that of speaker A in the conversations on the opposite page.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 It's a bit nippy outside, isn't it? | 5 Close today, isn't it? |
| 2 What a sweltering day! | 6 It's chucking it down! |
| 3 Isn't it muggy here? | 7 It's clammy today, isn't it? |
| 4 It's blowy, isn't it? | 8 What a sticky day! |

29.2 What are the metaphorical meanings of these words from B opposite?

- | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| 1 sunny – <i>pleasant and positive</i> | 4 snowed under | 7 climate |
| 2 frosty | 5 whirlwind | 8 hazy |
| 3 to cloud | 6 hail | 9 to thunder |

29.3 Find collocations for these words. You will find some on the opposite page, but use a dictionary to find more if necessary.

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| 1 climate | | 4 the winds of | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 2 prevailing | | 5 a frosty | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 3 to cloud | | 6 a hail of | |
| | | | |

29.4 Read the text below and find words in it which mean the following.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 average | 6 rays from the sun |
| 2 dry | 7 make less extreme |
| 3 height above sea level | 8 situated very far from the sea |
| 4 distance from the equator | 9 differing weather conditions at different times of the year |
| 5 rain and snow | |

Schemes for dividing the Earth into climatic regions are based on a combination of indices of mean annual temperature, mean monthly temperature, annual precipitation totals and seasonality. The climate of a place is affected by several factors. Latitude affects the amount of solar radiation received, with the greatest in equatorial regions

and the least in polar regions. Elevation affects both temperature and precipitation; mountainous areas are generally cooler and wetter. Location close to the sea or to large bodies of water moderates temperature; continental areas are generally more arid and more affected by extremes of temperature.

29.5 Over to you

- What words can you use to describe the climate in your country?
- How would you describe the economic climate?