

THE BEAUFORT SCALE

Force	Wind	Speed		Description
		knots	m/s	
0	Calm	Below 1	Below 1	Sea glassy.
1	Light air	1 – 3	1 - 2	Smoke ashore goes straight up. Ripples on water.
2	Light breeze	4 – 6	2 – 3	Wind vanes ashore moved. Slight crests on waves.
3	Gentle breeze	7 – 10	4 – 5	Flags blown out fully. Crests begin to break up.
4	Moderate breeze	11 – 16	6 – 8	Small waves, white tops on many of them.
5	Fresh breeze	17 – 21	9 – 11	Deeper, longer waves, most of them have white tops. Medium size craft would tend to shorten sail.
6	Strong breeze	22 – 27	11 – 14	Large waves, much spray. Quite loud whistling in rigging. Definitely double reefing.
7	Moderate gale	28 – 33	14 – 17	Scudding foam. Longer, larger waves. Life on deck decidedly uncomfortable.
8	Fresh gale	34 – 40	17 – 21	A lot of water getting into the wind. Foam flying and, if you have not made harbour, good luck!
9	Strong gale	41 – 47	21 - 24	Waves getting uncomfortably tall, seemingly solid chunks of water flying about, landing heavily on deck.
10	Whole gale	48 – 55	25 – 28	Cheer up! Ashore, trees are being rooted up & thrown about. Waves now very high, so much foam & spray you can hardly see anything.
11	Storm	56 – 64	29 – 33	Any lone yachtsman who started out an atheist will be cured of that by now. This is the sort of thing for which Cape Horn is famed.
12	Hurricane	Above 64	Above 33	Some brilliant sailors have survived one, not many!

Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort (1774-1857) invented the scale in 1805.

An annual prize was instituted at the Royal Naval College (for success in navigation, etc.) in his honour.

In the minds of yotties in the clubhouse, the Beaufort Force is often enhanced by two, particularly if no other club member was there!