

Be a Weather Forecaster

Who needs a weather app when you can be like your ancient ancestors and become an observer of the natural world around you. Use these tools a clues to upcoming weather conditions.

Easy-to-Make Barometer

You'll Need

- 30 cm (12 inch) ruler
- drinking glass
- clear plastic drinking straw
- modelling clay
- clear tape
- food colouring
- paper and pencil

1. Tape the plastic straw to the ruler so the bottom end is lined up with the 2 cm (3/4 inch) mark on the ruler.
2. Stand the ruler upright in the glass. Tape in place at the top of the glass.
3. Fill the glass three-quarters full of water and add a couple of drops of food colouring.
4. Use the modelling clay to plug the top end of the straw.
5. Carefully pour out some of the water until the glass is half full. Make sure the bottom of the straw stays below the surface of the water as you do this. If it's done correctly, the level of water in the straw will remain higher than the water level in the glass.



6. Measure how high the water rises in the straw, and note it on a piece of paper. Every day, check your barometer and see if the level has changed.

What's Going On?

A barometer measures air pressure. When the air pressure rises, the level of water in your straw will go up. When the air pressure drops, it will go down. Higher air pressure is associated with better weather, so you can use your barometer to tell if good weather is on the way – or if a storm is coming.

Reading Nature's Signs

- **Are the stars unusually crisp and bright? Expect cooler weather tomorrow.**
- **Are flies swarming? Flying is harder in warm, moist air, so flies sit around more on humid days.**
- **If pine cones, tulips or daisies close up, it's a sign of high relative humidity. Rain may be on the way.**

