

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are very large tropical storms. Hurricanes form over warm tropical ocean water like the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. Most hurricanes occur between July and October. A hurricane covers¹ a huge area of spinning² rain clouds. The diameter can be up to 800 kilometers. The clouds spin around the centre (= eye of the storm) very quickly (between 120 and 300 km/h). There are only few clouds in the eye of the storm and it is almost calm³. The storm moves slowly forward at speed of 20 km/h, but can be deadly, when it hits land.

The hurricane Fran

August 23rd 1996: Fran develops at the west coast of Africa

September 4th 1996: Fran hits the Bahamas.

September 6th 1996: Fran arrives in South and North Carolina. From there it moves to the coast of Virginia and Pennsylvania.

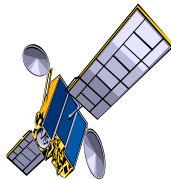
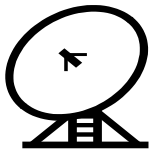
September 9th 1996: The hurricane gets weaker and calms down.

500,000 people were evacuated⁴ and 34 people were killed. Many houses and cars were destroyed. For some time people in the hurricane area had no electricity.

Hurricane forecast

The National Hurricane Center in Florida provides information about approaching hurricanes.

Hurricane forecast is possible with the help of



Protection

Many people nail wood in front of their doors and windows and leave the area. Those people who stay buy a lot of food, water cans and candles.

¹ To cover: bedecken

² to spin: sich drehen

³ calm: quiet, without wind

⁴ to evacuate: evakuieren, d.h. aus der gefährdeten Gegend wegbringen

Compare hurricanes and tornadoes!

	Hurricane	Tornado
When do they occur?		
Where do they form		
How big are they		
How long do they last?		
What damage do they cause?		
Is a forecast possible? How?		
How can you protect yourself?		