DECODING THE FORECAST

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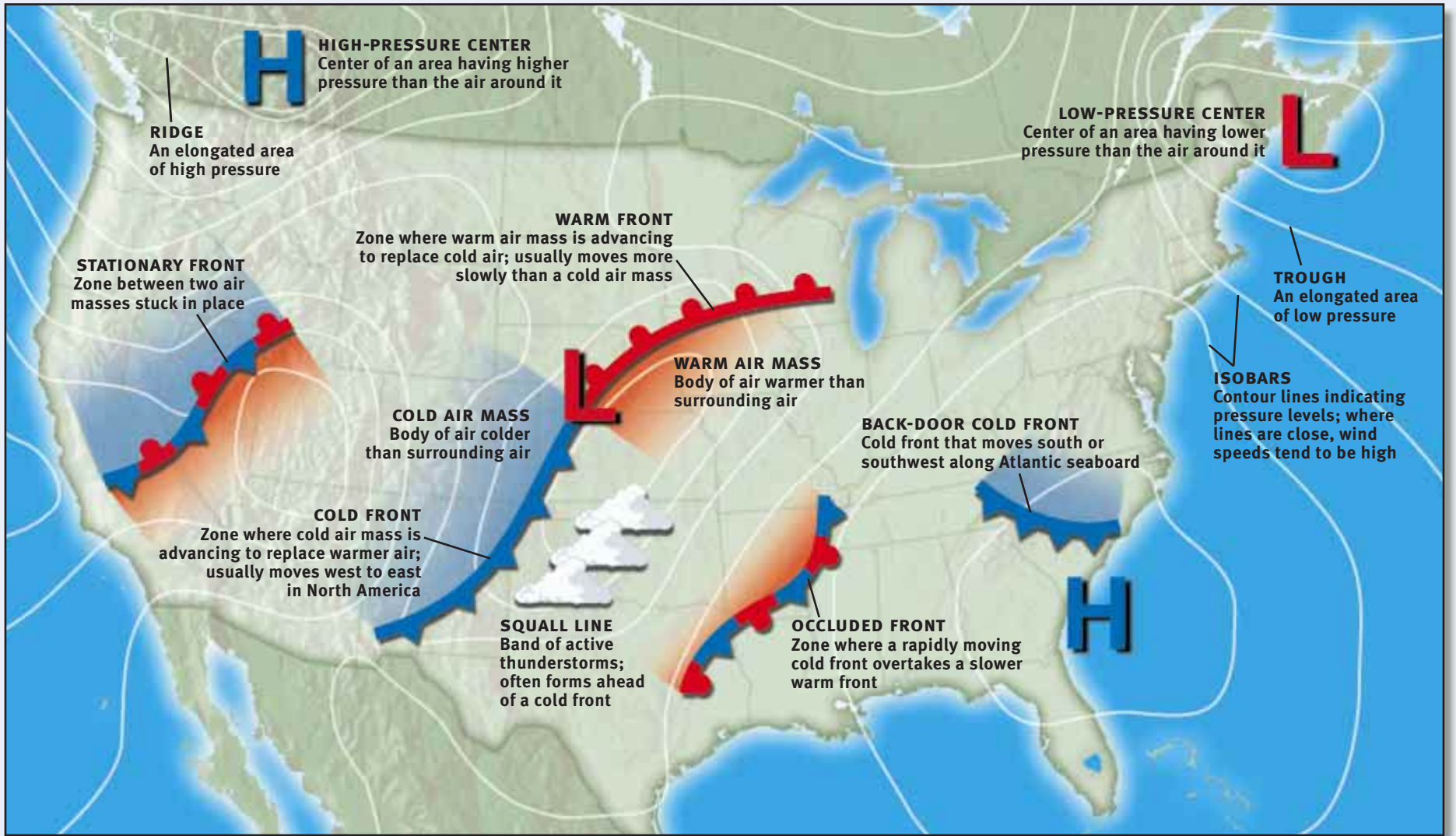
A glossary of common weather terms



WINDCHILL

How cold the air feels when the effects of temperature and wind speed are combined

TEMPERATURE (DEGREES FAHRENHEIT)

WIND SPEED	20	10	0	−10	−20	−30
5 mph	16	6	−5	−15	−26	−36
10 mph	3	−9	−22	−34	−46	−58
15 mph	−5	−18	−31	−45	−58	−72
20 mph	−10	−24	−39	−53	−67	−81
25 mph	−15	−29	−44	−59	−74	−88
30 mph	−18	−33	−49	−64	−79	−93

Windchill	Frostbite Risk
0 to −20	Medium
−21 to −60	High
Below −60	Imminent

HEAT INDEX

How hot the air feels when the effects of temperature and humidity are combined; also known as apparent temperature

TEMPERATURE (DEGREES FAHRENHEIT)

RELATIVE HUMIDITY	70	80	90	100	110	120
30	67	78	90	104	123	148
40	68	79	93	110	137	
50	69	81	96	120	150	
60	70	82	100	132		
70	70	85	106	144		
80	71	86	113			
90	71	88	122			
100	72	91				

Apparent Temperature	Health Effects
80 to 90	Fatigue
91 to 105	Heat cramps and exhaustion possible
106 to 130	Heatstroke possible
131 and higher	Heatstroke imminent

TROPICAL CYCLONES

Large low-pressure weather systems that typically form over warm oceans

Name	Wind Speed	Description
Tropical Disturbance	Below 23 mph	A mass of storms with relatively low wind speeds, out of which hurricanes sometimes develop
Tropical Depression	23 to 38 mph	A more organized cluster of storms
Tropical Storm	39 to 73 mph	A well-organized storm system
Hurricane	74 mph and up	A storm system with counterclockwise winds in the Atlantic or eastern Pacific
Typhoon	74 mph and up	A tropical cyclone arising in the western Pacific
Cyclone	74 mph and up	A tropical cyclone arising in the Indian Ocean

MORE WEATHERSPEAK

Degree days A calculation used by utility companies to determine how much energy is used for heating or cooling. They count one heating or cooling degree day, respectively, for each degree Fahrenheit below or exceeding 65: the temperature at which people are unlikely to run either heaters or air conditioners. Any day can have more than one cooling or heating degree day.

Dew point The temperature at which air becomes saturated and moisture condenses into dew.

Dry line A boundary separating warm, dry air from warm, humid air.

Relative humidity An indicator of moisture in the air. A 50 percent relative humidity means the air is half-saturated.

GLOBAL WINDS

Surface winds (*below*) are often described by the direction from which they originate: easterlies move from east to west, westerlies from west to east. Trade winds typically travel from subtropical, high-pressure zones to areas of low pressure near the equator. Jet streams (*not shown on map*) are narrow bands of wind that move rapidly high up in the atmosphere (generally from west to east) over midlatitudes.