

What is a Hurricane?

Hurricanes are large, rotating storms that form over the warm waters of the tropics. Wind speeds must exceed 74mph for a storm to be categorised as a hurricane. There are 5 categories of hurricane. The scale of categories is called the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale.

Task: Draw a line from the category description to the correct example:

Category 1 74 – 95mph winds minimal damage	Category 2 96 – 110mph winds moderate damage	Category 3 111 – 129mph winds extensive damage	Category 4 130 – 156mph winds extreme damage	Category 5 157mph+ winds catastrophic damage
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Hurricane Arthur (2014) Maximum wind speed 100mph Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind-damaged buildings and trees• A storm surge caused a flood of seawater near the coast.	Hurricane Harvey (2017) Maximum wind speed 130mph Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 70 deaths• 39 000 homeless• \$180 billion of damage.	Hurricane Irma (2017) Maximum wind speed 185mph Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 72 deaths (to date)• Widespread flooding• Millions left without power• Food and drinking water shortages• Thousands homeless• \$14 billion of damage (estimated).	Hurricane Isaac (2012) Maximum wind speed 80mph Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 41 deaths• Produced several tornadoes• Flooding caused structural damage to houses and infrastructure• \$2.3 billion of damage.	Hurricane Katrina (2005) Maximum wind speed 125mph Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1836 deaths• Broken flood defences caused flooding in New Orleans• \$81 billion of damage.
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Extension Task: Choose one of these hurricanes to research further and write a newspaper article about it.

What is a Hurricane? Answers

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