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Store ▾



SANDSTORMS DUSTSTORMS & HABOOBS

What is a sandstorm?

A sandstorm refers to a high amount of wind occurring in sandy areas, usually in deserts, where the wind speed is able to lift the top layer of sand from the ground, and push it in every imaginable direction.



What causes a sandstorm? **Wind!**

Dust storms arise when a gust front or other strong wind blows loose sand and dirt from a dry surface.



What's the difference between a sandstorm and a dust storm?

The term **sandstorm** is used most often in the context of **desert** sandstorms, especially in the Sahara Desert, or places where **sand** is a more prevalent soil type than dirt or rock, when, in addition to fine particles obscuring visibility, a considerable amount of larger sand particles are blown closer to the surface.

The term **dust storm** is more likely to be used when finer particles are blown long distances, especially when the **dust storm** affects **urban areas**.



a sandstorm



a duststorm

What is a haboob?

The word "haboob" comes from the Arabic word habb, meaning "wind." A haboob is a **wall of dust** as a result of a microburst or downburst. The air forced downward is pushed forward by the front of a thunderstorm cell, dragging dust and debris with it, as it travels across the terrain.

a haboob



Facts and Features

How high can a sandstorm get?

The sand involved in the sandstorm can reach heights of approximately 10-50 feet (3.05-15.24m). Usually, the height of a sandstorm corresponds to wind strength. Dust particles associated with some sandstorms have been found at 5000 feet (1524 m), though these are more rare.

How fast can sandstorms move?

Sandstorms have wind speeds of at least 25 miles per hour (40 kilometers), so they can happen really quickly. One minute they're not there, and the next minute they're right next to you!

When do sandstorms take place?

They mostly occur during summer, but can occur in spring too in the United States.

Facts and Features



Where do sandstorms occur?

You'll mostly find them in dry, hot desert regions. You can also find them in the US, especially in dry and flat regions like Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. They can occur in desert regions across the world.

How big are the particles in a sandstorm?

A lot of the particles in a dust storm or sandstorm are between 0.08mm and 1mm which also means 0.0032 and 0.04 inches in size.



Facts and Features

How do you navigate during a sandstorm?

It is very dangerous to navigate through a sandstorm, since your ability to see ahead can be severely obstructed.

Additionally, sand can get into the nose, eyes, mouth and lungs. If you happen to be caught in a sandstorm protective eyewear like goggles, and wearing a moistened scarf over the nose and mouth are highly recommended.

