



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Tornadoes

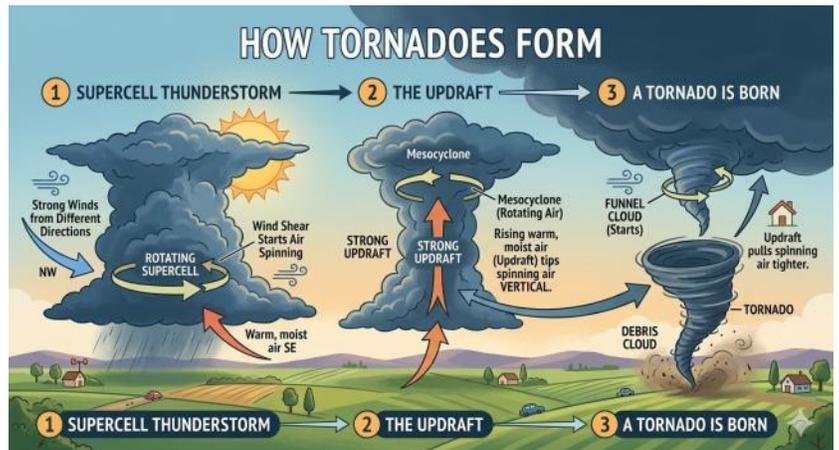
Imagine you are outside on a hot, sticky afternoon. The sky suddenly turns a strange shade of green, and the wind begins to howl. High above, a dark cloud starts to reach down toward the ground like a giant, gray trunk. You are looking at a tornado!

## What is a Tornado?

A tornado is a powerful tube of spinning air. It connects a thunderstorm cloud in the sky all the way down to the Earth. Tornadoes are often called "twisters" because of the way they spin in a circle. While some are small and only last a minute, others can be very wide and travel for miles across the land.

## How Do They Form?

Tornadoes usually start inside very strong thunderstorms called supercells. When warm, moist air from the south hits cold, dry air from the north, the air begins to get "unstable." If the wind changes direction and speed, it can cause the air to start spinning horizontally (sideways). Then, strong rising air—called an updraft—tips that spinning air vertical (up and down). Once that spinning funnel touches the ground, it officially becomes a tornado.



## Measuring the Strength

Scientists use a special scale called the Enhanced Fujita (EF) Scale to rate how strong a tornado is. It looks at the damage a storm causes to trees and buildings.

- EF0: These are weak and might only break a few tree branches.
- EF5: These are the strongest and most dangerous. They can wipe entire houses off the ground!

## Staying Safe

Because tornadoes can happen quickly, it is important to have a plan. If a tornado warning is issued, it means a tornado has been spotted or seen on radar. You should immediately go to a basement or a small room in the middle of the house, like a closet or bathroom. Stay away from windows and cover your head!



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1. What is the main idea of the section "How Do They Form?"
  - A. Tornadoes are rated on a scale from EF0 to EF5.
  - B. Supercells are the only type of clouds in the sky.
  - C. Tornadoes are created when different types of air meet and start to spin.
  - D. Basements are the safest place to be during a storm.
  
2. In the sentence, "Then, strong rising air—called an updraft—tips that spinning air vertical," what does the word vertical mean?
  - A. Pointing straight up and down.
  - B. Moving very slowly.
  - C. Lying flat across the ground.
  - D. Spinning in a tiny circle.
  
3. Based on the passage, how is the text organized?
  - A. It tells a story about a kid who chased a storm.
  - B. It uses headings to group different facts about tornadoes.
  - C. It argues that tornadoes are better than hurricanes.
  - D. It lists every tornado that happened last year in order.
  
4. If a meteorologist says there is a "tornado warning" for your town, what can you infer?
  - A. It is a good time to go outside and play.
  - B. The storm has finished and it is safe to come out.
  - C. There is a high chance of danger and you need to find shelter.
  - D. The sky is going to be blue and sunny all day.
  
5. Why did the author compare a tornado to a "giant, gray trunk"?
  - A. To explain that tornadoes are made of elephant skin.
  - B. To help the reader visualize the long, narrow shape of a funnel cloud.
  - C. To show that tornadoes move very slowly like elephants.
  - D. To prove that tornadoes always happen in the jungle.
  
6. Which of the following is an opinion, rather than a fact from the text?
  - A. Tornadoes connect a cloud to the ground.
  - B. An EF5 tornado is the scariest thing in the world.
  - C. Scientists use the EF Scale to measure damage.
  - D. Supercells are strong thunderstorms.