

No. 507

A Science Service Feature

Dec. 25

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WHICH WAY IS THE WIND?

Wind direction is of such importance in controlling weather that wind vanes are often known as weather vanes. What do the different wind directions commonly indicate? Throughout most of the United States our general fair weather winds are westerly, in summer southwesterly, except on the Pacific coast, where they are northwesterly or northerly. Sea-breezes and mountain and valley winds cause many local variations. In winter, the passage of a cyclone is accompanied by a typical sequence of wind changes. If the center of a "low" is passing to the north, you experience "veering" winds, that is, the wind is first from the south-east, then southerly, turning to southwesterly and finally west or northwest. "Backing" winds, on the other hand, indicate that the center of the low is passing to the south. Thus with backing winds the succession is an east or northeast wind shifting to north and then to northwest or west.

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(Tomorrow: Wind and Barometer in Forecasting)

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