Getting online with...

BBC Weather Watchers
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Weather watching with the BBC

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What is Weather Watchers?

Weather Watchers is BBC Weather’s crowdsourced online weather club for people who want to join the nation’s favourite conversation and help tell the story of the UK’s weather. Part of BBC Make it Digital, it is open to everyone in the UK with an interest in the weather.

As a Weather Watcher you create and share weather reports on the BBC website, and your pictures and observations might even appear in BBC broadcasts.

The website has been designed to work well on any internet-connected PC, tablet or mobile and you don’t need any scientific or weather knowledge to make your report.

“It really does help us tell the weather story of the day, and at the same time show off our beautiful land. We love your pictures!”

– Carol Kirkwood, BBC Weather presenter
Exploring Weather Watchers

When you come to BBC Weather Watchers you’ll see the homepage. If you’re logged in this shows your latest reports, a summary of the reports you have made so far, and a selection of weather photos from your area. From here you can create your own weather reports.

Here you can see the latest weather reports that you have created. Click on the summary to see the full report.

Click on ‘Create a Report’ to file your report on the weather in your area – you will find out how to do this later.
You can see a summary of the reports you have made here. It also shows the temperature range of all your reports.

This is where you can see a map of reports from Weather Watchers near you. Click the weather icons to zoom into an area and drag the map to see the other areas.

This section shows photographs from your area. Click to see more reports and find out where the sun is shining!

The homepage also features the Weather Watchers bulletin which shows you weather stories you might be interested in, the latest Editor’s Pick photos, and other information from the BBC.
Signing up as a Weather Watcher is very easy. Just sign in with your BBC ID and then click ‘get started’ on the Weather Watchers home page.

If you aren’t signed in, you’ll be asked to do that now!

Once you select ‘Get Started’ you’ll see the Weather Watchers set up page where you choose a nickname and set your default location. We ask you to choose a nickname which doesn’t include your surname, for privacy reasons, and select your preferred reporting location, which for most people will be their home area. You can change the location for each individual report you make, but this sets the default and will save you time.

You can add your town, city or postcode directly in the form, but if you click the icon that looks like a wheel (to the right of the ‘reporting from’ text box) this will use geolocation to determine where you are, using your device’s GPS.

Now carefully read the rules, and if you’re happy then click “ok, i’m in”.

You’ll get an email from the BBC to confirm that you’re a registered Weather Watcher – so check your inbox. And congratulations!
Posting your own weather reports

Remember - before you can post to Weather Watchers you need to have a Weather Watchers profile. The previous pages tell you how to set one up.

Once you’ve signed up and signed in, you start posting a report by clicking “Create a report”.

What’s the weather like where you are?

I’m in

Enter a town, city or UK postcode

When’s it for?

21 March 2017 12:46

Please select a weather type.

What’s the temperature?

Arctic | Freezing | Cold | Chilly | Mild | Warm | Hot

Add a photo

Want to add a note?

Other Weather Watchers won’t see these.

Add more details

Post this report
You will then be asked to fill in the details about your local weather. Start by making sure you’re reporting about the right place – the form will show your default location, but you might be somewhere else!

You can fill in the location by typing your town, city or postcode, or you can click the wheel on the right hand side which will fill in your location for you by using your device’s GPS function.

The date and time is automatically set to the current date and time so you only need to update if you are posting a report from earlier (you can’t post from the future!).

Here is where you choose the most suitable weather icon for the weather in your area. Choose from the well-known BBC Weather icons by scrolling through the icons and clicking on the one that best matches the weather you see around you. Be sure to click on the icon otherwise you won’t be able to save your report.

Here is where you tell us the temperature. You can either use a thermometer to record the exact temperature or you can estimate using the descriptive words provided on the scale.

This is our favourite bit! Click on the camera icon to add a photo. Most computers, phones and tablets have cameras, so follow the instructions to take your photo. Then choose the one you’d like to share and select ‘upload’ to copy it from your phone, tablet or computer to the Weather Watchers website. It will still be on your computer after you do this.

You can now either add further details in the notes and “add more details” section (for example rainfall and pressure) or you can skip straight to posting your report.

Make sure you’re happy with all the details then click “Post this report”. Congratulations! You have posted a Weather Watchers report. This can be seen by members of the public on the website. It might even by selected as an “Editor’s Pick” or feature on a weather report.

Add more details
- Rainfall mm/hour
- Pressure hPa
- Windfall mph
- Humidity

Top Tip!
Take your photo just before starting your report so you can take a few and choose your favourite. You could even try experimenting with different angles and light to see what works best.
Weather Watchers knows who you are through your BBC ID, a login that lets you get more out of the BBC every time you visit the website or use iPlayer. So before you can join the community you need to create your own BBC ID.

Start by clicking “Register” on the BBC ID page (you might get to this page if you’ve tried to sign in for Weather Watchers but don’t have a BBC ID already).

First, we’d like to know if you’re over or under 18. We use this information to make sure you don’t see unsuitable material. Weather Watchers is only intended for use by people aged 16 and over.

Then you are taken to a page where we ask for your email address and postcode. We use the email address to contact you to verify your BBC ID, and to tell you things we think you’ll find useful about BBC services. We use the postcode to make sure you hear about BBC programmes in your area.

You also need to create a password, to keep your account safe. It’s a good idea to use a different password for each service you use, so that if someone breaks into one account they can’t get into all of them.
Finally, you can select whether you would like personalised emails from the BBC – you can find out more about these emails by clicking the text ‘what’s in these’. You don’t have to subscribe to any, of course.

Click ‘continue’ to create your account. Before your account is live you will need to verify your email address. This is done through a confirmation email that the BBC will send you which you should be able to see in your email inbox. You will need to click on the link in the email to verify your account.

If you’ve created your BBC ID while setting up your Weather Watchers account you’ll be taken to the Weather Watchers homepage and you can click ‘Get started’ to become a Weather Watcher.
Getting onto email

Having an email address is a great idea because it lets you sign up for many other websites and services as well as your BBC ID and Weather Watchers. You can receive personalised newsletters about your hobbies and interests, keep in touch with friends and family around the world, and create accounts for online banking and shopping.

It’s easy to get a free email address from any one of a range of providers. There are lots to choose from, so you may want to ask a friend or family member which one they use and choose the same. Popular providers include Google, Yahoo!, Apple and Microsoft.

When you get to the email provider's site that you decide you will need to click on ‘sign up’ and then you will need to choose a unique username and password. You will probably then have to fill in a few more details and then you will be set up with an email address!

You can use your email to send and receive emails. Before people can send you messages they need to know your email address. It has different parts, a bit like a postal address.
Finding Weather Watchers online

Weather Watchers is a website run by the BBC, and you use your browser to access it at the address http://www.bbc.co.uk/weatherwatchers/

Another way of finding Weather Watchers online is through a search engine. Search engines are websites that help you find other material on the web. They aren’t perfect, but they are the best place to start if you are looking for something!

There are lots of search engines including Google, Yahoo!, Bing and Ask. To get to a search engine you need to type the website address in your browser’s address bar and then you can use the search box to search what you are looking for.

When you search you type in the words you want to look for. These are sometimes called ‘keywords’. The search engine tries to find web pages that match. If you were looking for libraries in your area you might type ‘Libraries in Croydon’, while if you were looking for Weather Watchers you’d type ‘Weather Watchers BBC’.

Most searches produce large numbers of results, with the most relevant at the top, and you will generally find what you are looking for on the first page. If you don’t find it, it’s worth trying a different set of keywords.
Some words to know

**Device**
A piece of electronic equipment, like a mobile phone, tablet or computer.

**Crowdsource**
Asking lots of people to provide information for a project, usually using the internet. Sometimes used to refer to online fundraising.

**Geolocation**
A way to find out where a device is, usually using the built-in ‘Global Positioning System’ (GPS).

**Upload**
Copying information like a picture from one computer to another.

**Website**
A collection of pages about one topic or from one organisation, viewable in a browser.

**Homepage**
The starting screen of a website like Weather Watchers. The place most users expect to begin.

**Address book**
Part of your email software where you store details of your friends’ and contacts’ e-mail addresses so you don’t have to remember them.

**Browser**
A program that allows you to view files (including web pages, PDFs, images, video and audio) over the internet. Examples include Edge, Chrome and Firefox.

**Email**
A way of sending messages (usually in the form of text, with other files in attachments) electronically, from one person to another.

**Favourites/Bookmarks**
A web link that you have saved to your browser so you can easily access the page without having to type in the whole address or use a search engine.

**Search Engine**
A website that lets you search other websites for information.

**Inbox**
The electronic folder where your incoming email is held.

**Cookies**
Information stored by your browser to allow websites to remember who you are and your preferences.

**Preferences**
Your chosen options for a particular website. Can include types of news story, colours, your login details etc.