

Климат и природа Великобритании

The climate in Great Britain is generally mild and temperate, due to the influence of the Gulf Stream. The southwestern winds carry the warmth and moisture into Britain. The climate in Britain is usually described as cool, temperate and humid. British people say: "Other countries have a climate, in England we have weather."

The weather in Britain changes very quickly. One day may be fine and the next day may be wet. The morning may be warm and the evening may be cool. Therefore it is natural for the people to use the comparison "as changeable as the weather" for a person who often changes his or her mood or opinion about something.

The weather is the favourite topic of conversation in Britain. When two Brits are introduced to each other, if they can't think of anything else to talk about, they will talk about weather. When two people meet in the street, they will often say something weather-related as they pass, just to show their friendliness.

Every daily paper publishes a weather forecast. Both the radio and television give the weather forecast several times each day. The English also say that they have three variants of weather: when it rains in the morning, when it rains in the afternoon or when it rains all day long. Sometimes it rains so heavily that they say "It's raining cats and dogs". Rainfall is more or less even throughout the year.

In the mountains there is heavier rainfall than in the plains of the south and east. The driest period is from March to June and the wettest months are from October to January. The average range of temperature (from winter to summer) is from 15 to 23 Celsius degrees above zero. During a normal summer the temperature sometimes rises above 30 degrees in the south. Winter temperatures below 10 degrees are rare. It seldom snows heavily in winter, and frost is rare. January and February are usually the coldest months, and July and August the warmest. Still the wind may bring winter cold in spring, or on summer days. Sometimes it brings whirlwinds or hurricanes. Droughts are rare.

So, we can say that British climate has three main features: it is mild, humid and changeable. That means that it is never too hot nor too cold. Winters are extremely mild. Snow may come but it melts quickly. In winter the cold is a humid cold, not of the dry variety. This humid and mild climate pattern is good for plants. Trees and flowers begin to blossom early in spring.

In British homes there has been no central heating up till recently. The fireplaces are often fired-up, but coal is not used as it's very expensive, so people use wood instead for fireplaces. Britain doesn't have any high-grade coal, and has to import it into the country. Many schools and universities don't have any central heating either, and the floors there are made of