



## Be Your Own Weatherman

By Patti Hutchison

Have you tried to forecast the weather lately? You can do it without computers or high-tech machines. You can forecast the weather using equipment that you carry around with you all the time. All you need are your eyes, ears, and skin. Using your senses of sight, hearing, and touch can tell you a lot about the weather.

Use your sense of sight to look up into the sky. Notice what color it is. Maybe it is bright blue or dull gray. Do you see the sun shining? Are there clouds in the sky?

Clouds come in different forms. They can tell you if the weather is fair or stormy. Thin, wispy cirrus clouds predict fair weather. Cumulus clouds that look like cotton balls are also fair weather clouds. If the clouds remind you of sheep's wool, a cold front is coming. Be prepared for a thunderstorm! A low, gray blanket of clouds means steady rain or snow. Tall, dark clouds carry thunderstorms and sometimes tornadoes.

Your sense of sight can also tell you about the wind. Look at the trees, are they standing tall, or bending over? They will tell you if the wind is blowing hard or soft.

Your sense of hearing can also tell you how hard the wind is blowing. If it is blowing hard, you might start to feel cool. A storm may be blowing your way. Your ears might hear thunder, even if you don't see any lightning. Heavy rain, hail, and sleet make noise as they hit the roof or your window.

What can your sense of touch tell you? You can feel the air. Is it warm or cold? On a humid day, your skin might feel sticky. Try to feel which direction the wind is coming from. If it is coming from the south, the weather will probably turn warmer. Wind that comes from the north usually makes it colder.

Using your senses is called observation. Weathermen use observations to help them forecast the weather. You can be your own weatherman by using your senses.