

The different hurricane categories

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale classifies hurricanes into five categories based on their sustained wind speed at the indicated time. The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale provides information on wind impacts only. The scale does not address the potential for other hurricane-related impacts, such as storm surge, rainfall-induced floods and tornadoes. Hurricanes reaching Category 3 and higher are considered major hurricanes because of their potential for significant loss of life and property. Category 1 and 2 storms are still dangerous, however, and require preventive measures.

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale Summary

Category	Sustained Winds	Damage
1	74-95	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Minor damage to exterior of homes■ Toppled tree branches, uprooting of smaller trees■ Extensive damage to power lines, power outages
2	96-110	Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Major damage to exterior of homes■ Uprooting of small trees and many roads blocked■ Guaranteed power outages for long periods of time – days to weeks
3	111-129	Devastating damage will occur <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Extensive damage to exterior of homes■ Many trees uprooted and many roads blocked■ Extremely limited availability of water and electricity
4	130-156	Catastrophic damage will occur <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Loss of roof structure and/or some exterior walls■ Most trees uprooted and most power lines down■ Isolated residential due to debris pile up■ Power outages lasting for weeks to months
5	157 or higher	Catastrophic damage will occur <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A high percentage of homes will be destroyed■ Fallen trees and power lines isolate residential areas■ Power outages lasting for weeks to months■ Most areas will be uninhabitable

Source: Ready.gov