

The Water Cycle

Show water evaporating

Evaporation is when the sun heats up water in oceans, lakes or the ground and turns it into water vapor. The water vapor then leaves the river, lake or ocean and goes into the air.

Water vapor in the air gets cold and changes back into liquid, forming clouds. This is called **condensation**.

Precipitation occurs when water has condensed that the air cannot hold it anymore. The clouds get heavy and water falls back to the earth in the form of rain, hail, sleet or snow.

When water falls back to earth it is called **precipitation**, and it may fall back to the oceans, lakes or rivers or it may collect on land. When it ends up on land, it will either soak into the earth and become part of the "ground water" that plants and animals can use, or it may run over the soil and collect in the oceans, lakes or rivers where the cycle starts.

Show water precipitating from back to ocean