

How Tornadoes Form

Name _____

Date _____

sunburned	the person	the interior	the outside	the outside
burned	the exterior	inside	the outside	the interior
burned out	the interior of	the outside	the outside	the interior

A _____ is a violently rotating column of air in contact with and extending between a _____ (often a thunderstorm cloud) and the surface of the earth. Winds in most tornadoes blow at 100 mph or less, but in the most violent, and least frequent, tornadoes, wind speeds can _____ 250 mph.

Tornadoes, often nicknamed "_____," typically track along the ground for a few miles or less, and are less than 100 yards wide, although rare instances can remain in contact with the earth for well over 50 miles, and exceed one mile in _____.

Several conditions are required for the development of tornadoes, and the thunderstorms clouds with which most tornadoes are associated. Abundant low level _____ is necessary, and a "trigger" (perhaps a cold front or other low level zone of converging winds) is needed to lift the moist air aloft.

Once the air begins to rise, and becomes saturated, it will continue rising to great heights and produce a thunderstorm cloud if the atmosphere is _____. An unstable atmosphere is one in which the temperature decreases rapidly with height. Atmospheric instability can also occur when dry air overlays moist air near the earth's surface.

Tornadoes usually form in areas where winds at all levels of the atmosphere are not only strong but also turn with height in a _____, or spiraling, direction.

Tornadoes can appear as a traditional _____ shape, or in a slender rope-like form. Some have a