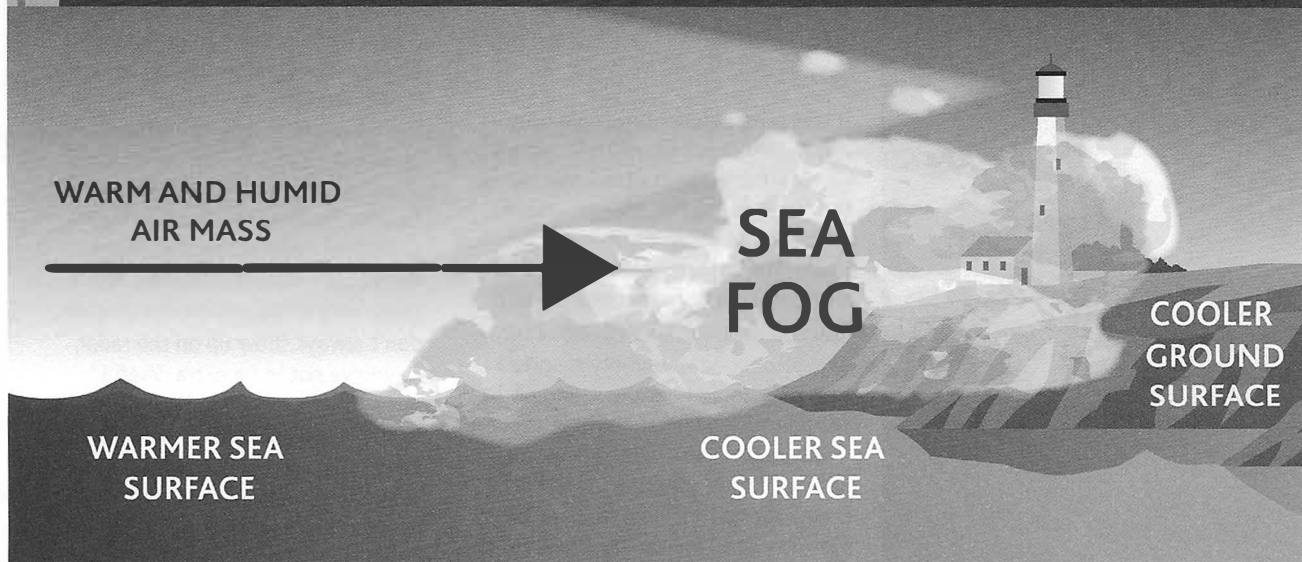


HOW FOG FORMS



HOW TO COPE WITH FOG

Check the weather forecast throughout the day (not just the moment before you set off), especially if you notice a temperature change, and keep an ear on the shipping forecast while afloat. It's a common misconception that fog always gets 'burned off' by the sun as the day progresses; sea fog can still linger well into the afternoon.

If you find yourself out at sea with dwindling visibility, RNLI Community Safety Product Manager and Ocean Sailor Pip Hare recommends:

- When you see fog approaching, immediately do a position fix on your GPS and on your paper chart.
- Make yourself visible and help yourself see other vessels – switch on navigation lights, make sure your radar reflector's up, and use your radar and AIS (Automatic Identification System).
- Nominate extra crew for lookout duty and check all are wearing lifejackets.
- Listen on VHF Ch 16 and, in restricted waters, Ch 13. If entering a harbour, monitor ship movements on the port's working channel.
- At a safe speed and a steady course, head for shallower water where you

won't be in any busy shipping lanes. There, drop anchor and sit it out.

- Use the right fog signals and listen out for other vessels' signals. These sounds can be distorted in fog, but they're better than nothing.
- If you're really worried you're stuck in a dangerous place, use your VHF radio to call for help.

A final piece of advice if you find yourself at sea, surrounded by clammy grey fog, is to use your ears. Even low-cost radars these days can be fantastic pieces of kit, but they're even better with the additional back-up of your own senses. Don't be tempted to stick on the

radio while you're waiting for the fog to clear, or get distracted by conversation – keep listening out for engine noise, horns, voices and other signs of vessels nearby.

MYTHBUSTER

According to the World Meteorological Organization, it's only defined as fog if water droplets in the air reduce visibility to less than 1km (0.62 miles), described as 'very poor' visibility in the inshore/shipping forecast.

If it's mist or haze, visibility will be greater (about 1–2km or 0.62–1.2 miles), described as 'poor'.



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