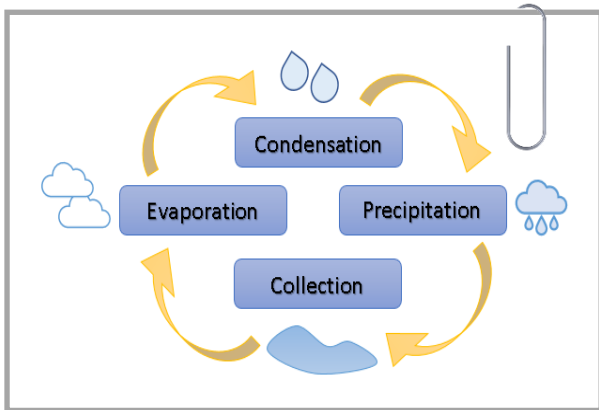


The Water Cycle

Did you know that there is the same amount of water on Earth now as there was when the Earth was first formed? This is because of a process that includes precipitation, collection, evaporation and condensation known as The Water Cycle.



How does the Water Cycle work?

1. To begin with, water, which is stored on Earth in lakes, seas, oceans, streams and rivers, is heated up by the sun. This turns the liquid water into a gas called water vapour.
2. At this point, the water vapour rises and it is seen in the sky as clouds. This is evaporation.
3. As the water vapour rises, it begins to cool down and becomes liquid again. This part of the process is called condensation.

* You sometimes see condensation on kitchen and bathroom windows.



The heat from the sun is a vital part of the cycle.

These water droplets eventually fall back to earth as precipitation - rain, snow, hail or sleet.

4. As the water reaches the ground, it flows back to rivers, sea, streams and oceans. Some water is absorbed by plants or drunk by animals, but most ends up in bodies of water. This final part is called collection.

5. The cycle is now ready to begin again.

This process is continuous and is happening all around us, all the time. The Water Cycle is vital for life on Earth. Without it, life would not be able to exist on our planet.

Did you know?

The Water Cycle is also known as the Hydrological Cycle.

