

A vibrant, cartoon-style illustration of a landscape. In the top right, a bright orange sun with yellow rays shines against a light blue sky. To its left, two white clouds are shown with dashed lines representing rain falling. The middle ground features a green, hilly island with several dark green coniferous trees and palm trees. A blue river winds through the island. In the foreground, a blue body of water contains a single fish. The bottom of the image shows a brown, sandy or muddy seabed.

# The Water Cycle

By Hunter Pearce

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# What is the water cycle?



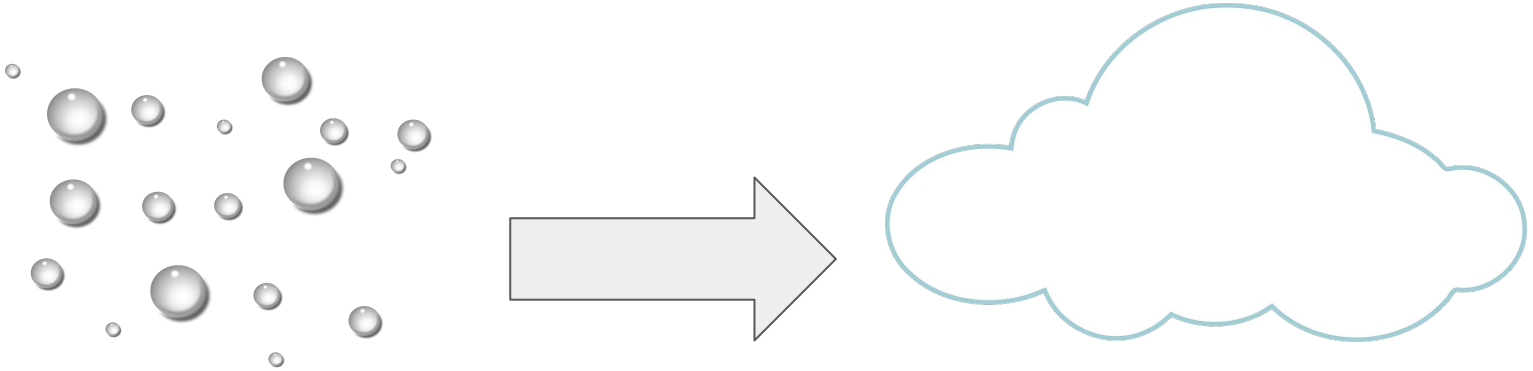
Water is always moving around the Earth. This process is called the **water cycle**. Water can be found on land and up in the clouds. Let's learn about the different parts of the water cycle!

# Evaporation



The sun warms water on the earth and turns it into water vapor. **Vapor** is water in the form of a clear gas. This process happens when water becomes very hot. Water vapor travels from the earth into the sky. This is called **evaporation**.

## Condensation



Water vapor cools off when it is in the sky. It turns into tiny droplets of water. These droplets move together to form clouds. This is called **condensation**.

# Precipitation



More and more water droplets combine until a cloud becomes very heavy. The cloud is ready to produce rain. Rain falls from the cloud back down to the earth. This is called **precipitation**. Sometimes when it is very cold snow will fall!

# Runoff



When it rains, lots of water falls back onto the earth. Some of the water is absorbed and used by grass, trees, and other plants. The rest of the water falls flows down into lakes, rivers, and ponds. This is called surface **runoff**.

# Who uses water?



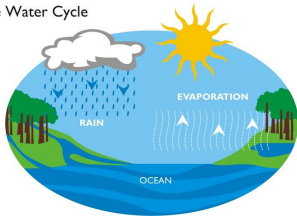
Every living thing needs water to survive. Humans, plants, and animals all use water every day. Water gives us energy and helps us grow and live healthy lives. Knowing more about the water cycle helps us protect the water on our planet.



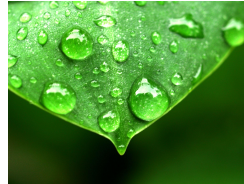
# Glossary

## Water Cycle

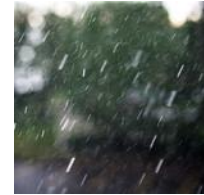
The Water Cycle



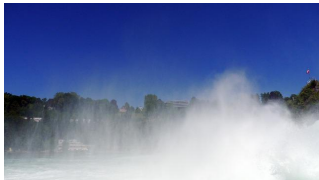
## Condensation



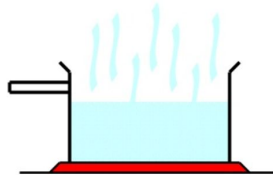
## Precipitation



## Vapor



## Evaporation



## Runoff



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Evaporation Vidralta, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Runoff by Jonathan Hutchins (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Purple level  
Multisyllabic Words  
Four syllable words

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