El Niño in Australia

El Niño is part of a natural cycle in the tropical Pacific Ocean that can affect global weather.

El Niño is only one factor in a complex system that influences Australia's climate. The long-range forecast is the best guide to the season ahead.

Signs of El Niño



Temperatures

in the tropical Pacific Ocean warm, both at the surface and below.



Trade winds

weaken and sometimes reverse.



Surface pressure

changes across the Pacific; higher in the west, lower in the east.



Cloud

increases near the Date Line.

Historical climate impacts



Increase

- daytime temperatures in southern Australia
- bushfire risk
- number of heatwaves
- winter frost risk
- seabreeze strength
- later start to northern rainfall after the dry season



Decrease

- rainfall in eastern **Australia**
- number of tropical cyclones
- chance of widespread floods
- chance of Indian Ocean heatwaves
- alpine snow depths

When does El Niño occur?



El Niño usually forms in

autumn/ winter

They usually start to decay in

summer

El Niño events have lasted from

6 to 12 months

(and rarely but sometimes up to 2 years)

They occur on average every

every 3 to 5 years

Every El Niño is different

Winter to spring rainfall varies in each El Niño





