

Cirrus Indicating a Deterioration

When watching cirrus the question uppermost in your mind should be “Is this cloud associated with a warm front?”.

Very often the cirrus will begin to thicken into cirrostratus. That is what is happening in the picture opposite. The spectacular cirrus formation in the centre of the picture draws the eye, but take a look out to sea. Notice that the cloud is becoming more ‘flattened’ and thicker. This is an area of encroaching cirrostratus cloud. In this situation one should watch the cirrus clouds closely for signs of further thickening to cirrostratus.

If the thickening of the cloud continues rain may follow this stage within 4 to 8 hours, depending on the speed of movement of the warm front. In this example rain arrived about five hours after the picture was taken.



