

Difference Between Fog and Mist, Visibility, Droplet Concentration

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The Difference Between Fog and Mist explains how tiny water droplets suspended in air influence visibility and surface weather. Both are formed due to condensation of water vapor near the ground, but their intensity and effects differ significantly.

Fog is denser and reduces visibility sharply, while Mist is lighter and causes only slight visual obstruction. These phenomena depend on droplet size, number density, moisture content, and local atmospheric stability.

Difference Between Fog and Mist

The major Difference Between Fog and Mist has been tabulated below:

Difference Between Fog and Mist		
Aspects	Fog	Mist

Visibility Range	Fog reduces horizontal visibility at the Earth's surface to less than 1 kilometer.	Mist reduces visibility but not below 1 kilometer. Objects remain visible at moderate distances.
Droplet Concentration	Fog contains a high number density of microscopic water droplets suspended close to the surface.	Mist has fewer suspended droplets per unit volume of air.
Droplet Size and Structure	In fog, droplets are large enough and numerous enough to be visible to the naked eye when illuminated. Their size distribution and turbulent movement contribute to rapid changes in fog thickness over short distances and time.	Mist droplets are generally smaller and more sparsely distributed. They are not easily visible individually, and their structure remains relatively uniform, producing a smoother and lighter haze near the surface.
Moisture Sensation	Air during foggy conditions feels damp, moist and sometimes wet. Surfaces often become coated with moisture due to continuous contact with dense droplets, leading to reduced comfort and increased surface wetness.	Misty air feels only slightly moist and rarely wet. The lower water content means surfaces usually remain dry or only mildly damp, causing minimal physical discomfort compared to fog.
Visual Appearance	Fog forms a thick whitish veil that blankets landscapes uniformly.	Mist appears as a thin greyish veil that lightly covers the landscape.
Light Interaction	Fog strongly scatters and diffuses light due to dense droplets.	Mist scatters light weakly, allowing better contrast and color perception.
Duration	Fog often persists for longer durations because of stable droplet structures and continuous moisture supply.	Mist is usually short lived and dissipates quickly with slight warming or air movement.
Spatial Extent	Fog can cover large continuous areas, especially in valleys, plains, or coastal regions.	Mist generally occurs in localized patches and thinner layers.
Association with Pollution	When fog mixes with smoke or dust, it may take on faint coloration and enhance chemical interactions between droplets and pollutants. Such conditions can intensify atmospheric chemical reactions near the surface.	Mist has a weaker interaction with pollutants due to lower droplet density. Chemical reactions within droplets are limited and visual discoloration from mixed particles is generally minimal or absent.

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