

The heat of the sun provides energy to make the water cycle work.



The sun evaporates water from the oceans into water vapor.

This invisible vapor rises into the atmosphere, where the air is cooler.



The water vapor condenses into clouds.



Volcanoes emit steam, which forms clouds.



Air currents move clouds all around the Earth.



Water droplets form in clouds, and the drops then fall to Earth as precipitation (rain and snow).



In cold climates, precipitation falls as snow, ice, and glaciers.



Snow can melt and become runoff, which flows into rivers, the oceans, and into the ground.



Some ice evaporates directly into the air, skipping the melting phase (sublimation).



World Water Day
United Nations
International Year of
Water Cooperation

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

Stefanie Neno, Jim Morgan, Gabriele Zanotti, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Howard Peilman, Gerard Gonthier, U.S. Geological Survey

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<http://gl.water.usgs.gov/edu/watercycle-kids.html>

The Water Cycle

You may think that every drop of rain that falls from the sky, or each glass of water that you drink is brand new, but in fact, it has always been here and is a constant part of The Water Cycle!

THE ATMOSPHERE

PRECIPITATION

CONDENSATION

EVAPOTRANSPIRATION

EVAPORATION

