

Figure 9-30. Convergence induced by flow around topography.

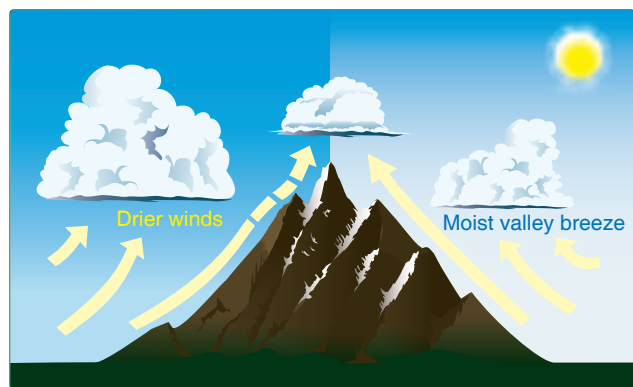


Figure 9-31. Mountain-top convergence.

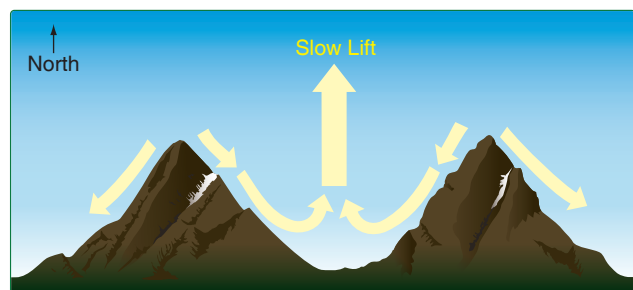


Figure 9-32. Convergence induced by flow around topography.

Obtaining Weather Information

One of the most important aspects of flight planning is obtaining reliable weather information. Fortunately, pilots have several outlets to receive reliable weather reports and forecasts to help them determine if a proposed flight can be completed safely. For visual flight rules (VFR) flights, federal regulations require pilots to gather weather reports and forecasts only if they plan to depart the airport vicinity. Nevertheless, it is always a good idea to be familiar with the current and expect weather anytime a flight is planned. Preflight weather information sources include Automated Flight Service Stations (AFSS) and National Weather Service (NWS) telephone briefers, the Direct User Access Terminal System (DUATS), and the Internet. In addition, a multitude of commercial vendors provide custom services.

For complete details regarding available weather services and products, refer to the current version of the FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 00-45, Aviation Weather Services, and in the Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge, Chapter 12, Aviation Weather Services.

Preflight Weather Briefing

Often times in order to obtain a preflight weather briefing, certain background information must be given to the weather specialist: type of flight planned, whether flying VFR (Visual Flight Rules) or IFR (Instrument Flight Rules), aircraft registration or pilot's name, aircraft type, departure airport, route of flight, destination, flight altitude(s), estimated time of departure (ETD), and estimated time en route (ETE). Operators of airports, gliderports, or fixed-base operators (FBO) may obtain current reports and forecasts from the AFSS or NWS at various times throughout the day and post them on a bulletin board for easy reference.

Weather briefers do not actually predict the weather; they simply translate and interpret weather reports and forecasts within the vicinity of the airport, route of flight, or the destination airport if the flight is a cross-country. A pilot may request one of four types of briefings: standard, abbreviated, soaring [Figure 9-33], or outlook.

Weather-Related Information

Weather-related information can be found on the Internet, including sites directed toward aviation. These sites can be found using a variety of Internet search engines. It is important to verify the timeliness and source of the weather information provided by the Internet sites to ensure the information is up to date and accurate. Pilots should exercise caution when accessing weather information on the Internet, especially if the information cannot be verified. Other sources of accurate weather information are the NWS website located at