

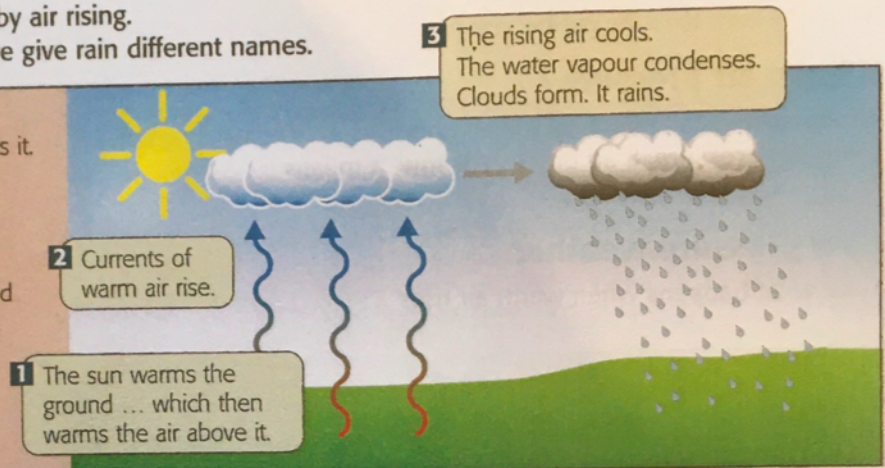
## Three types of rainfall

All rain is just water. All rain is caused by air rising.  
But it rises for different reasons – so we give rain different names.

### Convective rainfall

Here the air rises because the ground heats it. It rises in warm currents. We call these **convection currents**. So we call the rain **convective rainfall**.

In the UK we get convective rainfall inland in summer, where the ground gets hottest, far from the cooling effects of the sea.

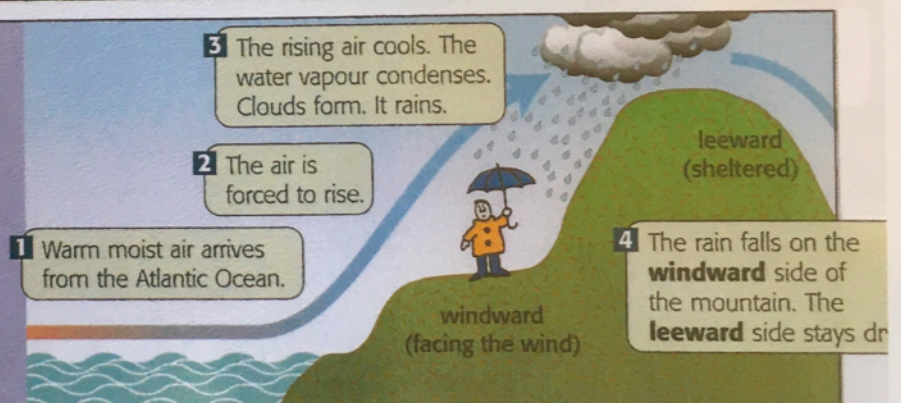


### Relief rainfall

Wind is moving air.

When the wind meets a line of high hills or mountains, there's only one way to go – up! So the air rises and cools – and we get rain. We call it **relief rainfall**.

In the UK the prevailing wind is from the south west. So we get relief rainfall on the high land along the west coast.



### Frontal rainfall

As you'll see in Unit 2.4, huge blocks of air called **air masses** move around the Earth.

When a warm air mass meets a cold one the warm air is forced to rise. So we get rain. This is **frontal rainfall**.

Frontal rain can fall anywhere, since air masses can travel anywhere. But in the UK, they often arrive in from the Atlantic Ocean. So the west of the UK gets a lot of frontal rain.

