

The Northwest Highlands

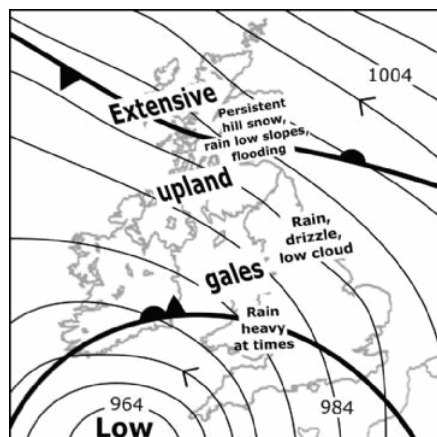
Areas north from Knoydart in the west, and the Great Glen towards the east (NB. Does not include Mull and areas west of Loch Linnhe, these are found in the West Highlands forecast.)



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General Summary for Friday, 23 January, 2026



British Mountain Summary:

Based on forecast chart for noon 23 January, 2026

Gales widespread across all mountain areas, powerful turbulent gusts downslope toward the west in places. Prolonged upland snow southeastern Highlands into southern Cairngorms, increasingly rain to mid-heights. Further rain also spreads north across Wales then the Pennines. Low cloud widely.

Headline for The Northwest Highlands

Gales, severe on tops. Snow mostly east, clearer west.

Detailed Forecast for Friday, 23 January, 2026

How windy? (On the Munros)	East-southeasterly 50 to 60mph, in places 70mph around high mountains in morning; powerful downslope gusts. Peak speeds moderating a little during afternoon
Effect of wind on you?	Difficult conditions, mobility limited and gusts may knock you over not just on highest terrain. Severe wind chill.
How wet? (Precipitation and its impact)	Snow northeast, little west and near Skye Frequent to persistent snow in Caithness, patches drifting further west to Ben Hope, sleet or rain on lower slopes, rising to 600m later in day. Further south, odd spots or flurries in the wind, but often dry toward Skye.
Cloud on the hills?	Fairly extensive east, broken west Low cloud banks likely to cover many eastern hills, some drifting over higher slopes further westwards. Cloud mostly isolated to the high slopes of Skye and coastal Wester Ross, many coastal slopes clearing for periods.
Chance of cloud free Munros?	20%, to 60% near west coast around Skye.
Sunshine? Air clarity (below cloud)	Some sun west coast, good visibility toward Skye, cloudier north and east and rather hazy, poor or very locally appalling visibility if in snow around Ben Hope.
How Cold? (at 900m)	0 or -1C, up to +1C Skye; as low as -3C toward Ben Hope. Wind chill feels as cold as -15 to -20C.
Freezing Level	500-600m Caithness and Sutherland, slight rise later. Up to 800m inland Wester Ross or just above freezing to many upper slopes nearest coast and on Skye.

The Northwest Highlands - Looking Ahead

	Saturday 24 January	Sunday 25 January
How windy? (On the Munros) Effect of wind on you?	East to southeasterly 40 to 55mph, powerful gusts downslope to the west. Challenging conditions; walking and balance difficult in exposed areas, buffeting gusts lower down; severe wind chill.	East to southeasterly, speed may vary, possibly tending to lessen during day, in range 30 to 50mph, very gusty in west. Challenging walking conditions may persist over much higher terrain, buffeting gusts lower down. Significant wind chill
How wet? (Precipitation and its impact)	Snow mostly northeast hills Snow flurries mostly eastern hills, sleet or rain lower slopes toward east coast; may be frequent or persistent near/north of Dornoch Firth. Very little across most west coast mountains.	Intermittent hill snow northeast Snow flurries mostly east and northernmost areas, sleet or rain lower elevations. Small amounts or often dry Wester Ross to Skye.
Cloud on the hills?	Most persistent northeast, breaks west Covering eastern hills from Ben Hope to Ben Wyvis most or all day, to mid-slopes or lower near to North Sea. Higher and more broken cloud west and southwest toward Skye and Torridon, at times clearing tops.	Fairly extensive, breaks west Often covering many high tops, lowest cloud base eastern areas from Ben Hope to Ben Wyvis. Some breaks higher up near to western coasts, Skye to Torridon.
Chance of cloud free Munros?	20% east/north, to 50% near Skye.	30%
Sunshine? Air clarity (below cloud)	Glimpses of weak sun west coast, where visibility good below cloud, though some haze. Otherwise cloudy, poor visibility where in snow locally.	Glimpses of sun mostly west coastal areas where visibility good. Hazier north/east, poorer in snow/rain.
How Cold? (at 900m) Freezing Level	-1 or -2C inland, north and east, up to +1C coastal tops around Skye. Directly in the wind feeling like -15 to -18C. 500-600m in east & northern areas, higher toward Wester Ross and Skye, 800m or above on some coastal mountains.	-1 or -2C, but locally up to +1C some west coast higher terrain, including Skye. Feeling like -10 to -15C in the wind. 600m or slightly lower in some northeastern areas, but nearer 800m further west, locally higher west coast.

Planning Outlook

All mountain areas of Britain from Saturday, 24 January, 2026

East to southeasterlies continue through the weekend and onward into next week, frequently strong to gale-force over the mountains, giving severe chill factor. Below freezing across high terrain in Scotland, and into early next week a lowering freezing level over hills in England and Wales. Frequent or persistent snowfall over east and southern Scottish mountains, rain on lower slopes causing flooding in the short term. Patchier and small amounts reaching coastal regions in west-northwest Scotland. Areas of rain and increasingly hill snow push across England and Wales as low pressure remains dominant. Low cloud often covering many hills.

Forecast issued at 16:01 on Thursday, 22 January, 2026

The production of the Scottish forecasts is fully funded by the Scottish Government through Mountaineering Scotland with the support of sportscotland. Forecasts are issued daily by 16:30 and are kept under review and amended as necessary. However, expected conditions can still change after issue. © Copyright Mountain Weather Information Service, 2026.