

Mandatory Pressure Levels

Mandatory Level	Remarks (if any)	Standard Height Above Sea Level
1000 mb		0 meters
925 mb		750-800 meters
850 mb	Besides the surface, 850 mb is used to calculate temperature advection. Also used in weather forecasting to determine high temperatures on sunny, warm days and also used to determine maximum wind gust on sunny, well-mixed days.	1500 meters
700 mb	The "free atmosphere" begins here. This pressure level skims the tops of the Rockies, so, for practical purposes, there is little ground above this level. The last mandatory level in the lower troposphere.	3000 meters
500 mb	This pressure marks the approximate level where half the weight of the local air column is below and half the weight is above (1000 mb, which is a typical sea-level pressure, corresponds to the weight of the entire air column.) Thus, 500 mb is considered to represent the middle troposphere.	5500 meters
400 mb	The approximate level where winds steer the most powerful hurricanes (Category 5). The first mandatory level in the upper troposphere.	7000 meters
300 mb	The pressure level near the cruising altitude of most commercial aircraft. The approximate pressure at the summit of Mt. Everest.	9000 meters
250 mb	The typical pressure level of the jet stream over the middle latitudes.	10500 meters
200 mb	The typical pressure level of the tropopause over the middle latitudes.	12000 meters
150 mb		13500 meters