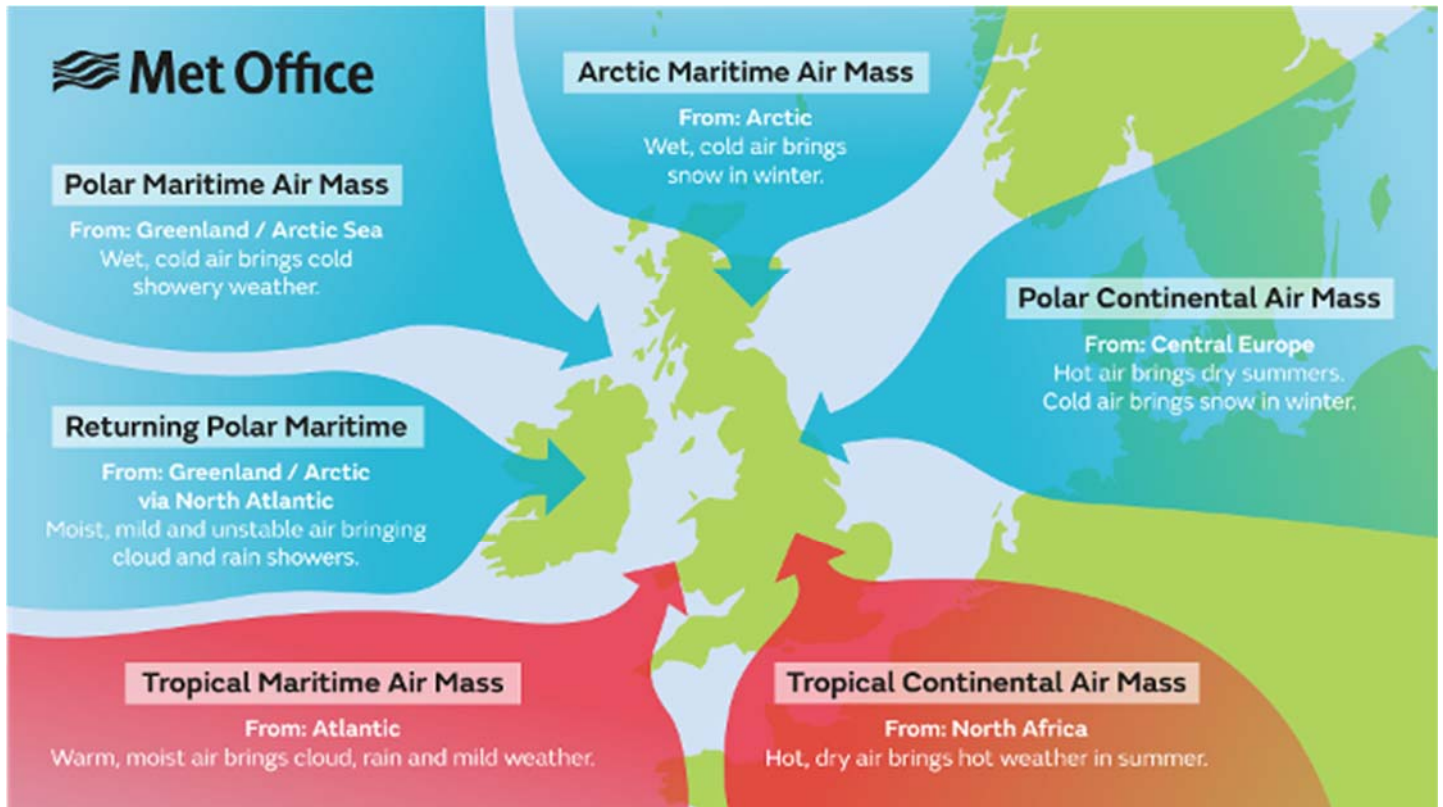


Air Masses Explained



The temperature of an air mass will depend mostly on where it comes from and its journey over the land or sea. This might lead to warming or cooling because of lots of contact with a warm or cool surface.

A warm air mass is made by lots of contact with a warm surface.

A cold air mass is produced by lots of contact with a cold surface.

Warming up or cooling down the air happens slowly. It may take a week or more to warm up the air by 10 °C right through the atmosphere.

Tropical Continental air masses have warmed up over the **Sahara Desert** - they bring warm and dry weather.

Tropical Maritime air masses have warmed up over **tropical oceans**. They bring warm and moist weather.

Polar Continental air masses move across from **Siberia** and **Central Europe** and bring snow on cold air in the winter. In the summer they can bring hot weather on dry air.

Polar and Arctic Maritime air masses move across the **Arctic** and the **Arctic Ocean**. They bring cold and wet weather.