

How to set your domestic barometer to read the correct sea level pressure

Domestic aneroid (ie not mercury) barometers can be set to show the correct pressure at sea level by adjusting a small screw at the back to make the pointer agree with observations from the nearest Met Office station.

This is best done on a calm day, so that pressure will be relatively constant over a wide area and will not be changing rapidly with time.

Pressure measurements are always corrected to sea level as then measurements at stations with different altitudes can be compared. Met Office pressure measurements are always given at sea level, no matter where the station is.

1. To find the correct sea level pressure go to the Met Office website: www.metoffice.gov.uk
2. Enter your location in the "Search for a place" box. This will offer you a list of matching places (or maybe just one) so click on your correct location. You will then get a weather forecast for your location over the next few days.
3. Just beneath the forecast, on the left hand side, in quite small print, you will see **< LAST 24 HOURS**. This will show hourly observations at the nearest Met Office station to your town, which includes Pressure (hPa).
4. The last observation (on the right) will generally be within the last hour or so, and this is the one to adjust your barometer to read.
5. Find the adjustment screw on the back, and carefully turn this with a small screwdriver so that your barometer needle points to this pressure on the dial. Tap it gently in case it is sticky, and re-adjust if necessary.

hPa (hectoPascal) is the unit that pressure is measured in, and generally varies from about 950 to 1050hPa.

It used to be called millibars (mb) which may be the units shown on your barometer. If your barometer is even older, then the pressure will be shown in inches, with a range of perhaps 27 to 31 inches. To convert from hPa on the Met Office website to inches, you will have to divide by 33.86. So, for example, if the Met Office observation shows 1013 hPa, then you should set your barometer to $1013/33.86 = 29.92$ inches, or as close as possible to this.

After a few days you can check that the barometer is changing correctly by going back to the Met Office website.



Barometer with inch and mb scales



Reverse showing adjustment screw in centre



Older barometer with only inch scale