



Cavum Clouds

[Source: NASA](#)

Cavum clouds, also known as **hole-punch clouds** or **fallstreak holes**, have long captivated observers with their unusual appearance, often sparking speculation about extraterrestrial origins.

- Recently, it was found that Cavum clouds are formed when **aircraft pass through mid-level [altocumulus clouds](#)** containing supercooled liquid water droplets.
 - Altocumulus Clouds are mid-level clouds (ranging 2-7 kms) that form white or grey patches or layers. They often have a wavy or lumpy appearance.
- As the planes disrupt the air around them, the droplets freeze into ice crystals, which eventually become heavy and fall out of the sky, leaving voids in the cloud layer.
 - The falling ice crystals are visible as wispy trails of precipitation called **virga**.
 - This phenomenon was captured recently by [NASA's Terra satellite](#) showing cavum clouds over the **Gulf of Mexico** off Florida's west coast.

