

What are these stripes?

No words. No numbers. No graphs. Just a series of colored bars. These 'climate stripes' are visual representations of Arctic temperatures since 1900. Each band represents the average temperature in the Arctic for a single year, relative to the average temperature over 1900 to 2021. The color shade corresponds to the rank of each year from coldest, dark blue, to warmest, bright red.

Why do they matter?

The numerous and consistently bright red stripes on the right-hand side of the wall show the undeniable warming trend in the Arctic over the past three decades. Scientists now indicate that the Arctic is warming several times faster than the rest of the globe. Here at the International Arctic Research Center we are working to understand the changing Arctic and make a difference for its future.

How was the data compiled?

These color stripes were developed by extracting the average annual temperature in the Arctic for each year 1900 to 2021. For this graphic, we defined 'Arctic' as the region north of the Arctic Circle (66 degrees 33 minutes N latitude).

- We ranked each year's annual temperature from 1 (coldest) to 121 (warmest).
- We then applied a color ramp to this rank: The darkest blue corresponds to the coldest average annual temperature for this period. The brightest red corresponds to the warmest.
- Colors between dark blue and bright red represent temperatures in between these extremes.

The data came from the Berkeley Earth dataset, which uses land based temperature observations and ocean surface temperatures to produce global temperature data for each month since 1850.

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