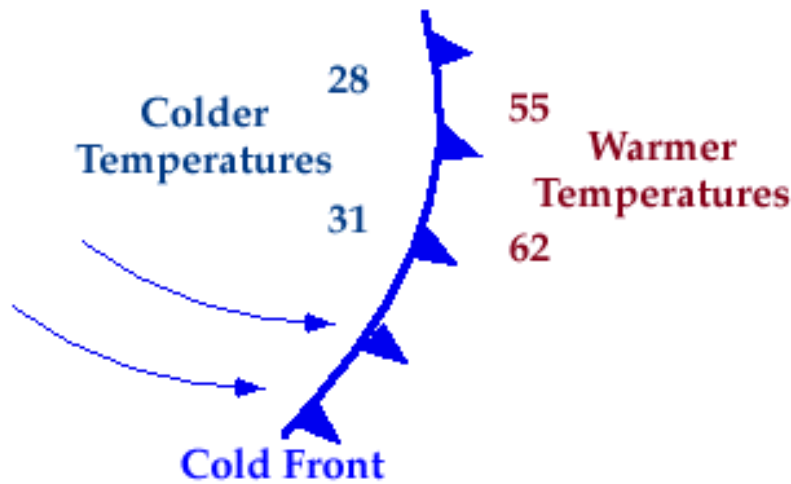


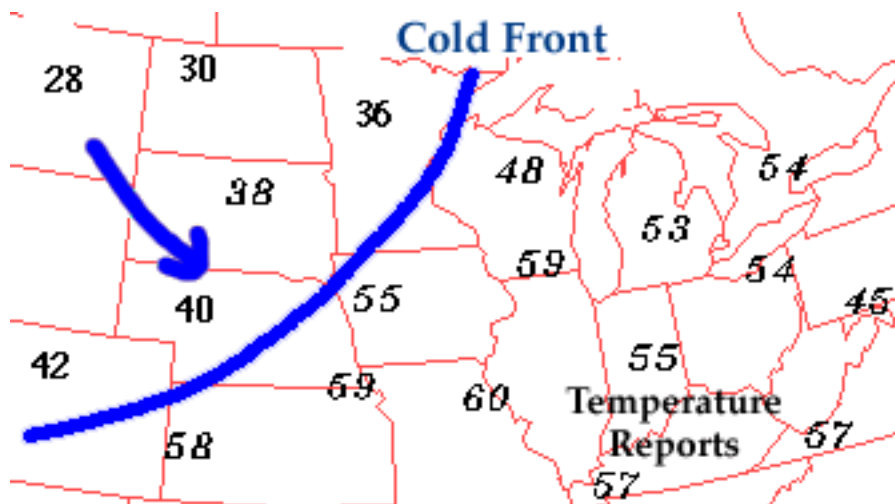
Cold Front

transition zone from warm air to cold air

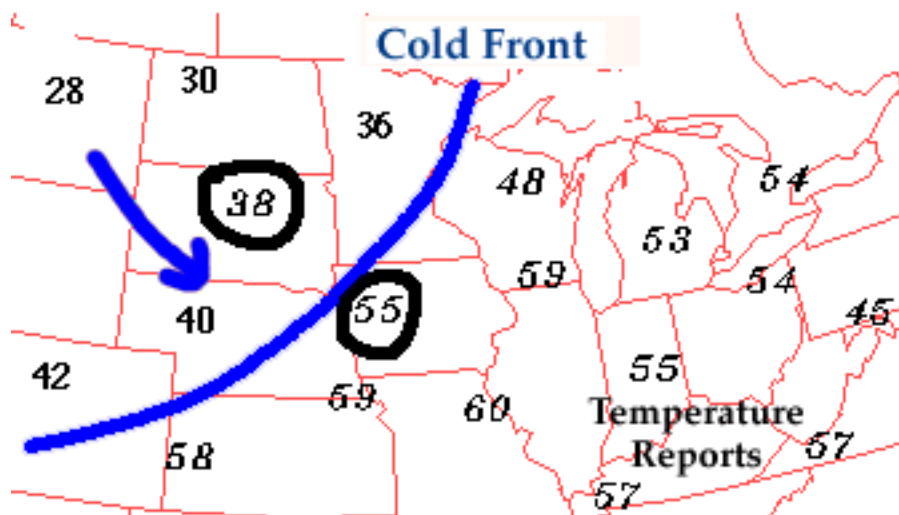
A cold front is defined as the transition zone where a cold air mass is replacing a warmer air mass. Cold fronts generally move from northwest to southeast. The air behind a cold front is noticeably colder and drier than the air ahead of it. When a cold front passes through, temperatures can drop more than 15 degrees within the first hour.



Symbolically, a cold front is represented by a solid line with triangles along the front pointing towards the warmer air and in the direction of movement. On colored weather maps, a cold front is drawn with a solid blue line.



There is typically a noticeable temperature change from one side of a cold front to the other. In the map of surface temperatures below, the station east of the front reported a temperature of 55 degrees Fahrenheit while a short distance behind the front, the temperature decreased to 38 degrees. An abrupt temperature change over a short distance is a good indicator that a front is located somewhere in between.

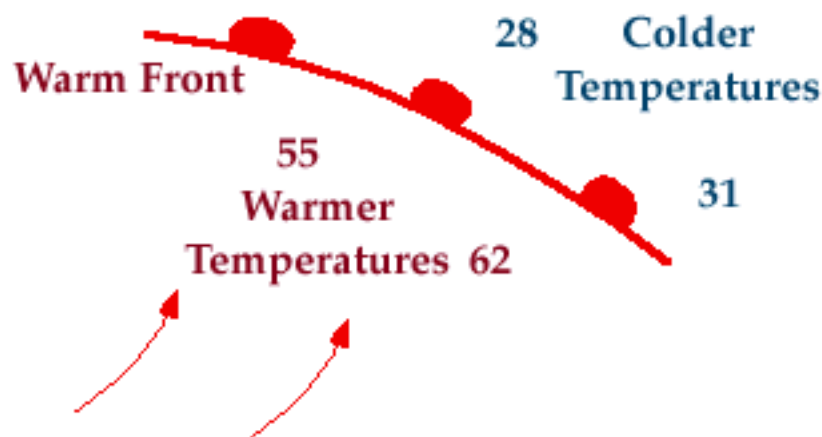


If colder air is replacing warmer air, then the front should be analyzed as a cold front.

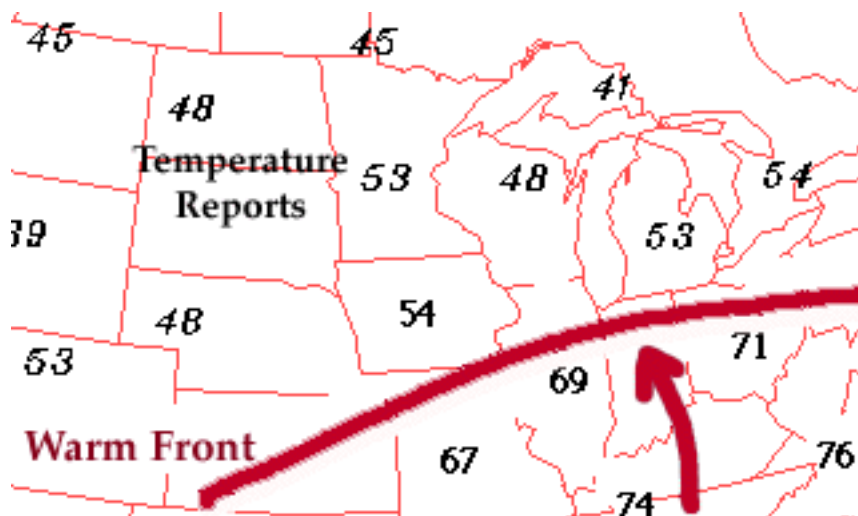
Warm Front

transition zone from cold air to warm air

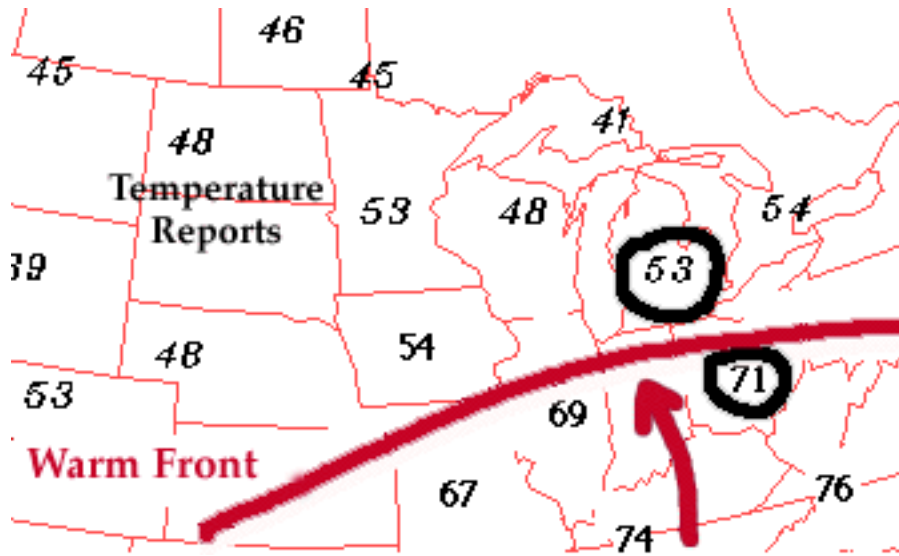
A warm front is defined as the transition zone where a warm air mass is replacing a cold air mass. Warm fronts generally move from southwest to northeast and the air behind a warm front is warmer and more moist than the air ahead of it. When a warm front passes through, the air becomes noticeably warmer and more [humid](#) than it was before.



Symbolically, a warm front is represented by a solid line with semicircles pointing towards the colder air and in the direction of movement. On colored weather maps, a warm front is drawn with a solid red line.



There is typically a noticeable temperature change from one side of the warm front to the other. In the map of surface temperatures below, the station north of the front reported a temperature of 53 degrees Fahrenheit while a short distance behind the front, the temperature increased to 71 degrees. An abrupt temperature change over a short distance is a good indication that a front is located somewhere in between.



If warmer air is replacing colder air, then the front should be analyzed as a warm front.