

Cloud base

If the thermal has a cumulus cloud forming over it we call the base of the cloud the “cloud base”. The very young cumulus cloud needs a little time to properly define the base – in fact morning cumuli often dissolve before the cloud base is even properly defined.



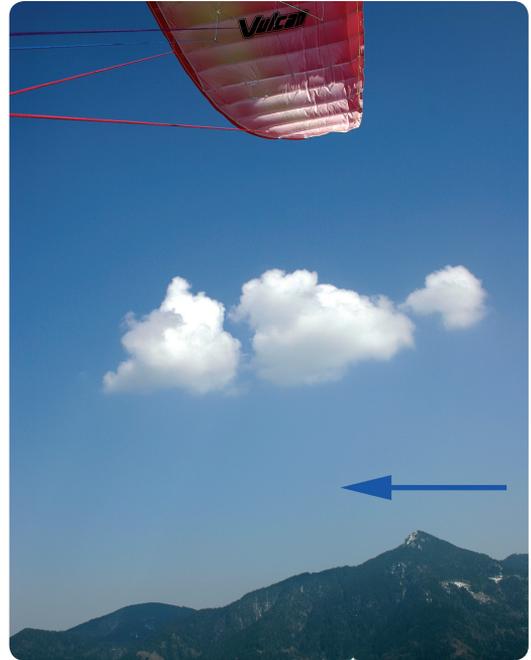
Picture 1.12 Cumulus cloud with well-defined base on the left. We can see that it is the result of 4 thermal pulsations, with the right one being active. Notice the indentation in the base of the right hand cloud section; this is the clue to the active part.

House thermals and wandering thermals

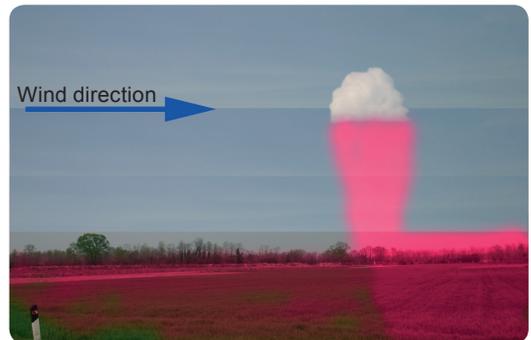
Thermals that originate from a very defined, static source are often referred to as “house thermals”. They are very common in the mountains, see picture 1.4.

In the flatlands, particularly on even grounds, we may sometimes encounter “wandering thermals”. These originate in one place but are pushed by the wind

and continually fed from the warm air encountered by the thermal as it wanders along.



Picture 1.13 Pulsating thermal. The wind comes from the right, which is also where the thermal is generated. The cu's dissolve downwind. If crossing to this cloud we must aim for the little cloud on the right.



Picture 1.14 Wandering thermal. The wind pushes the entire thermal along so that it continues to receive warm air influx from the ground downwind. After the thermal has passed it takes a while before the ground can feed another thermal.