

DIFFERENT COLORS

The color of an aurora depends on which gas is excited by the incoming particles and where that gas is located in the atmosphere. When a particle interacts with either oxygen or nitrogen, the excess energy from the interaction results in a burst of light. Oxygen and nitrogen can emit green, red, or blue lights. The combination of the different amounts of gases can produce purple, pink, and white lights. All together, the cascade of energy, location, and interactions produce the wonderful colors of the auroras.

COLOR	ALTITUDE	COMPOSITION
RED	Above 120 Miles	Oxygen
GREEN	75 - 110 Miles	Nitrogen
BLUE	75 - 110 Miles	Oxygen and Nitrogen
PINK	Below 60 Miles	Nitrogen