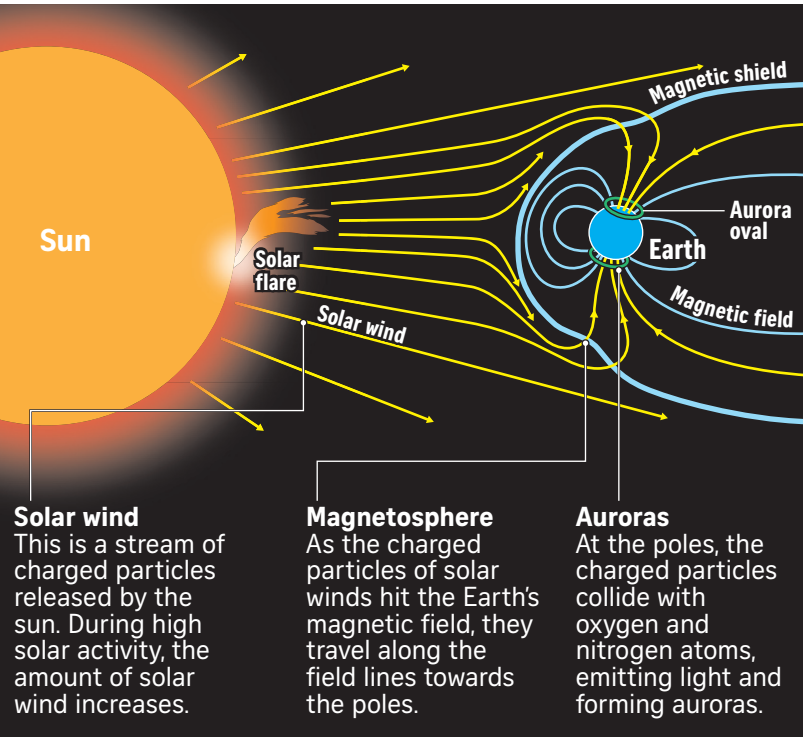
# What creates the Northern Lights




**Solar wind**
This is a stream of charged particles released by the sun. During high solar activity, the amount of solar wind increases.

**Magnetosphere**
As the charged particles of solar winds hit the Earth's magnetic field, they travel along the field lines towards the poles.

**Auroras**
At the poles, the charged particles collide with oxygen and nitrogen atoms, emitting light and forming auroras.

## FUN FACTS

In 1619, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei named the lights "Aurora Borealis" after Aurora, the Roman goddess of the morning.

During the solar storm of 1859, auroras were so bright that newspapers could be read easily under the aurora light.

Other planets have them too. Voyagers 1 and 2 brought back pictures of auroras on Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.

Although rare, auroras sometimes also produce faint sounds such as claps, crackles and muffled bangs.


Auroras tend to be brighter and more frequent during high solar activity around every 11 years. The last peak was in 2014.

SOURCES: HOWSTUFFWORKS.COM, NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM, SPACE.COM
SUNDAY TIMES GRAPHICS