

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH COUNTRY, COLORADO

LOCATION: This is the countryside above 10,000 feet up in the Rocky Mountains of central Colorado. Quite a few of the old mining towns have developed tourist facilities and attractions. In addition, a good many of the area's ski runs are at these elevations. Much of this area is at or above the tree line. As might be expected, the area is a mecca of mountain-based recreational activities. These include skiing (both downhill and cross-country), hiking, climbing, riding, biking, camping, hunting, fishing, scenic railway excursions, and mountain driving.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:45	10:42	11:56	13:13	14:19	14:53	14:39	13:43	12:30	11:13	10:05	9:29
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	6:40	7:23	8:07	9:02	9:50	11:16	10:53	10:04	9:30	8:16	6:54	6:15
AREA OF BLUE SKY	49%	46%	45%	43%	45%	57%	55%	55%	61%	60%	53%	51%
LOW FOR MONTH	-14°	-12°	-7°	2°	13°	24°	34°	30°	20°	9°	-5°	-10°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	5°	6°	9°	18°	27°	35°	40°	39°	33°	24°	13°	7°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	29°	30°	34°	43°	53°	64°	70°	67°	61°	51°	38°	30°
HIGH FOR MONTH	44°	45°	48°	57°	65°	76°	78°	75°	72°	63°	52°	47°
FROSTY MORNINGS	100%	100%	100%	100%	81%	33%	2%	4%	43%	92%	100%	100%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	54%	45%	37%	31%	32%	27%	29%	31%	31%	33%	46%	53%
DRY DAYS	67%	63%	61%	66%	74%	77%	57%	60%	74%	76%	77%	67%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	81%	79%	80%	80%	85%	88%	80%	78%	86%	87%	86%	84%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.25	0.28	0.28	0.32	0.23	0.20	0.43	0.36	0.23	0.19	0.19	0.22
LIKELY SNOWFALL	28.8"	28.8"	28.2"	27.5"	10.9"	3.0"	0.0"	0.1"	4.6"	13.2"	21.9"	26.8"
SNOWY DAYS	33%	37%	39%	34%	20%	6%	0%	0%	9%	24%	23%	33%
THUNDER DAYS	0%	0%	1%	6%	17%	25%	34%	30%	13%	3%	0%	0%
FOGGY DAYS	5%	5%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%	4%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 71% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 66% in December, to a high of 76% in June—and again in September. The year's lowest temperature should be close to -20° at the 10,000' level and lower than that at higher elevations. The highest should be near 87°, and—again—lower than that at the summits. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be up to 5° cooler than actual ones. Winds tend to blow strongly down the slopes at night, and rather weakly up the slopes during the daylight hours. Elevation and--to a lesser degree--slope orientation rule local climates. You can expect daytime temperatures to drop an average of 1°F for each 300'-increase in elevation--and vice versa going downhill. As in all mountains, the direction the slope is facing makes a tremendous difference in how much sunshine and how much rain the slope gets.