

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE BIG SKY RESORT COUNTRY, MONTANA

LOCATION: The Big Sky Country is located in southwestern Montana. The region is centered in the valley of the Gallatin River, between Gallatin Gateway and the Northwest Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Elevations range between just over 5,400 feet at Gallatin Gateway to 11,166 at the summit of Lone Mountain. This summary is representative of areas around 6,000 feet above sea level. The area is popular with trout-fishing enthusiasts.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:11	10:22	11:53	13:29	14:52	15:36	15:17	14:07	12:36	11:01	9:36	8:50
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	3:40	5:20	6:36	7:43	8:23	9:49	11:14	10:04	8:11	6:17	4:20	3:24
AREA OF BLUE SKY	31%	35%	35%	38%	37%	45%	57%	57%	51%	45%	35%	32%
LOW FOR MONTH	-23°	-24°	-11°	3°	21°	30°	36°	25°	22°	10°	-8°	-17°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	7°	11°	15°	26°	35°	42°	47°	46°	38°	30°	20°	11°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	26°	33°	38°	49°	61°	70°	80°	78°	68°	56°	38°	29°
HIGH FOR MONTH	46°	50°	57°	66°	78°	85°	92°	95°	83°	71°	55°	46°
FROSTY MORNINGS	98%	98%	95%	78%	47%	15%	6%	11%	40%	68%	93%	97%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	67%	64%	56%	49%	44%	40%	35%	38%	44%	52%	61%	68%
DRY DAYS	79%	78%	77%	82%	69%	64%	75%	79%	80%	81%	77%	79%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	82%	84%	82%	83%	79%	75%	89%	89%	87%	85%	82%	82%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.35	0.28	0.31	0.31	0.46	0.52	0.23	0.28	0.31	0.27	0.29	0.33
LIKELY SNOWFALL	26.0"	18.5"	20.8"	10.5"	3.5"	0.6"	0.0"	0.1"	1.0"	6.3"	17.2"	23.1"
DAYS WITH SOME SNOW	21%	22%	23%	18%	6%	1%	0%	0%	2%	14%	23%	21%
DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER	0%	0%	0%	1%	13%	27%	34%	31%	12%	1%	1%	0%
DAYS WITH SOME FOG	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 56% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 39% in December, to a high of 74% in July. The year's lowest temperature should be close to -30°, and the highest should be near 99°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be essentially the same as actual ones—except during spring and autumn, when they will be a few degrees cooler than actual ones. The Big Sky Country has an upland version of the standard mid-latitude four-season year. Summers are short, sunny, and warm--rarely hot. Winters are long, cloudy, and bitterly cold. Below-freezing temperatures and snow flurries can and do occur in every month. Snow stays on the ground (although it may not cover it) from November through early May. During the summer months, mornings are clearer than afternoons, as the clouds build up over the mountains on both sides as the day warms. During the winter months, the low sun angles combined with mountains both to the east and west of the valley make the middle of the day the sunniest period.