

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK, NORTH CAROLINA

LOCATION: Great Smoky Mountain National Park straddles the Tennessee-North Carolina border in southeastern Tennessee and northwestern North Carolina. The Park is situated in the Great Smoky Mountains, part of the Appalachian Mountain chain. Elevations in the Park range from 840 feet above sea level at the western tip of the Park to 6,643 feet at the summit of Clingman's Dome, near the middle of the Park. This is the most visited national park in the United States, and can be quite crowded from Memorial Day to Labor Day, during the spring rhododendron bloom, and during the fall color show. This Guide focuses on the southern (North Carolina) slopes of the Park.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	10:04	10:53	11:57	13:04	14:01	14:31	14:18	13:30	12:27	11:20	10:21	9:50
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	4:55	5:49	6:50	8:16	8:55	9:20	8:40	7:53	7:29	7:08	5:48	4:45
AREA OF BLUE SKY	37%	39%	40%	44%	42%	42%	39%	41%	45%	53%	46%	39%
LOW FOR MONTH	6°	5°	15°	28°	36°	43°	51°	50°	39°	26°	16°	9°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	26°	26°	33°	40°	48°	56°	59°	59°	53°	40°	32°	26°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	49°	51°	58°	68°	75°	81°	84°	83°	79°	69°	59°	50°
HIGH FOR MONTH	64°	65°	74°	78°	83°	90°	91°	90°	88°	80°	71°	64°
FROSTY MORNINGS	73%	74%	57%	23%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	19%	59%	73%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	5%	10%	7%	3%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	58%	54%	51%	47%	54%	57%	60%	61%	59%	53%	54%	58%
DRY DAYS	67%	66%	64%	68%	66%	60%	60%	65%	75%	81%	78%	71%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	76%	70%	70%	73%	73%	72%	68%	74%	80%	82%	81%	76%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.81	0.90	0.91	0.70	0.69	0.73	0.87	0.71	0.53	0.49	0.53	0.81
LIKELY SNOWFALL	2.9"	2.7"	2.0"	0.1"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.1"	0.7"	1.9"
DAYS WITH SOME SNOW	9%	8%	5%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	5%
DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER	2%	4%	8%	11%	21%	30%	34%	29%	12%	3%	2%	1%
DAYS WITH SOME FOG	9%	6%	6%	5%	12%	17%	21%	30%	26%	19%	10%	10%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 59% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 48% in December, to a high of 64% in May and June. The year's lowest temperature should be close to 3°, and the highest should be near 93°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be up to 4° cooler than actual ones from October through May, and a degree or two warmer than actual ones in July and August. Table data are representative of the 1,800-foot level on the southern slopes. You can expect afternoon temperatures to drop an average of 1°F for each 300' increase in elevation—making the summits some ten to twenty degrees cooler than the table elevation. The summits will also be a bit cloudier and substantially wetter.