

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH DAKOTA

LOCATION: Badlands National Park is located in the southwestern corner of South Dakota, some 75 miles southeast of Rapid City. The Park borders on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of the Oglala Sioux. It consists of essentially three units--two of which (Stronghold and Palmer Creek) are surrounded by the reservation. The landscape is one of heavily eroded tablelands and gullies. The fact that almost all the surface is in slopes of one kind or another, making wagon travel extremely difficult, gave the topography its name. Elevations are around 2,800 feet above sea level.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:20	10:28	11:54	13:25	14:43	15:24	15:07	14:00	12:34	11:04	9:44	9:00
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:27	6:28	7:20	8:10	9:02	10:14	11:16	10:24	8:44	7:18	5:28	4:57
AREA OF BLUE SKY	39%	39%	36%	36%	38%	46%	57%	57%	55%	50%	41%	40%
LOW FOR MONTH	-13°	-9°	-1°	17°	29°	41°	49°	46°	31°	19°	3°	-9°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	10°	13°	22°	33°	44°	53°	59°	58°	47°	36°	24°	15°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	34°	36°	45°	57°	67°	77°	86°	84°	75°	62°	47°	37°
HIGH FOR MONTH	59°	62°	71°	82°	89°	96°	102°	101°	95°	86°	71°	62°
FROSTY MORNINGS	96%	95%	86%	45%	8%	0%	0%	0%	4%	33%	82%	96%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	12%	34%	32%	11%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	58%	57%	52%	43%	45%	46%	40%	37%	37%	41%	51%	57%
DRY DAYS	81%	78%	73%	70%	62%	59%	70%	73%	79%	83%	83%	82%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	97%	94%	91%	85%	79%	79%	84%	87%	90%	93%	94%	96%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.07	0.08	0.17	0.32	0.50	0.54	0.40	0.30	0.22	0.16	0.10	0.07
LIKELY SNOWFALL	4.9"	5.6"	8.6"	5.2"	0.9"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.2"	1.6"	4.6"	4.7"
SNOWY DAYS	19%	22%	21%	12%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	14%	17%
THUNDER DAYS	0%	0%	0%	4%	18%	34%	34%	27%	11%	2%	0%	0%
FOGGY DAYS	5%	7%	7%	5%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	6%	6%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 64% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 55% in December, to a high of 75% in July. The year's lowest temperature should be close to -20°, and the highest should be near 104°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be a couple of degrees cooler than actual ones during the summer, more during the spring and autumn.. The Park is open all year around. There are two Visitor's Centers. The most popular one is at Cedar Pass, near the junction of SD-240 and SD-377, a spur off of SD-40. The second one is down at the end of the Stronghold Unit, on Reservation Road 27. The Park is home to bison, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep (rare), and prairie dogs (common). The barren slopes have a beauty all their own. A summer thunderstorm in the badlands is an experience to remember.