

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO LEAD AND THE NORTHERN BLACK HILLS AREA, SOUTH DAKOTA

LOCATION: The Black Hills rise from the high plains of southwestern South Dakota and spill over the state border into Wyoming. This guide covers the northern section around Lead and Deadwood. This section's highest elevations are just under 7,000 feet above sea level. Deadwood sits some 4,700 feet in elevation, while Lead is some 700 feet higher.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:16	10:26	11:54	13:26	14:46	15:29	15:11	14:03	12:35	11:03	9:41	8:56
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:17	6:20	7:23	8:16	8:56	9:46	10:56	10:24	8:44	7:17	5:27	4:49
AREA OF BLUE SKY	40%	39%	36%	36%	38%	46%	57%	58%	56%	51%	41%	41%
LOW FOR MONTH	-10°	-6°	-2°	12°	20°	35°	42°	39°	29°	17°	3°	-7°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	11°	13°	18°	28°	38°	47°	53°	51°	41°	32°	21°	15°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	34°	37°	42°	53°	63°	74°	82°	81°	70°	59°	44°	37°
HIGH FOR MONTH	48°	53°	60°	72°	79°	87°	92°	92°	86°	74°	61°	51°
FROSTY MORNINGS	94%	95%	87%	65%	21%	3%	0%	0%	12%	42%	82%	92%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	13%	10%	2%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	60%	59%	53%	45%	47%	47%	39%	36%	38%	43%	54%	60%
DRY DAYS	73%	72%	69%	66%	63%	59%	71%	75%	78%	81%	78%	76%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	87%	86%	84%	77%	74%	72%	84%	85%	87%	89%	87%	87%
WET DAY PRECIPITATION	1.20	1.29	2.16	3.45	4.62	4.19	3.04	2.16	1.99	1.74	1.56	1.34
LIKELY SNOWFALL	13.0"	15.4"	20.1"	19.5"	5.3"	0.5"	0.0"	0.0"	0.9"	6.6"	13.0"	15.1"
DAYS WITH SOME SNOW	23%	26%	26%	17%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	6%	17%	21%
DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER	0%	0%	0%	4%	18%	35%	36%	28%	11%	1%	0%	0%
DAYS WITH SOME FOG	5%	7%	7%	5%	3%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	6%	6%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 63% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 54% in December, to a high of 74% in August. The year's lowest temperature should be close to -20°, and the highest should be near 98°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be essentially the same as actual ones during most of the year, but will range up to 4° cooler than actual ones during most of the summer months. Winds tend to blow strongly down the slopes at night, and rather weakly up the slopes during the daylight hours. Passing storm systems can easily override both of these local winds. 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.