

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO

LOCATION: Mesa Verde National Park is located in the southwestern corner of Colorado. The Park sits in high, canyon-cut, plateau country. It covers some eighty-one square miles of very rough country, and includes more than five-hundred distinct ruins. Elevations range from just under 7,000 feet near the Park entrance to over 8,500 feet on the higher plateaus.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:56	10:48	11:56	13:08	14:09	14:41	14:28	13:36	12:28	11:17	10:14	9:40
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	6:30	7:15	8:12	9:28	10:42	11:52	11:04	10:12	9:43	8:33	7:10	6:17
AREA OF BLUE SKY	48%	46%	47%	48%	53%	64%	57%	58%	65%	64%	57%	51%
LOW FOR MONTH	-1°	3°	14°	21°	31°	42°	50°	48°	38°	25°	12°	7°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	19°	22°	26°	34°	42°	52°	58°	56°	50°	39°	28°	21°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	40°	44°	50°	61°	71°	82°	87°	85°	78°	66°	51°	42°
HIGH FOR MONTH	51°	56°	62°	78°	81°	92°	95°	93°	86°	76°	63°	55°
FROSTY MORNINGS	97%	93%	81%	47%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%	70%	94%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%	39%	17%	1%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	56%	44%	33%	25%	22%	18%	24%	27%	28%	33%	43%	54%
DRY DAYS	79%	76%	77%	77%	82%	87%	66%	69%	74%	82%	83%	81%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	85%	86%	87%	89%	93%	93%	82%	81%	89%	88%	90%	85%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.29	0.30	0.27	0.22	0.17	0.11	0.30	0.33	0.24	0.26	0.19	0.27
LIKELY SNOWFALL	15.7"	13.2"	14.2"	6.1"	0.4"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.1"	1.3"	6.6"	18.5"
SNOWY DAYS	15%	12%	9%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	6%	13%
THUNDER DAYS	0%	1%	3%	6%	14%	16%	33%	32%	16%	6%	1%	1%
FOGGY DAYS	6%	4%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	5%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is probable on 73% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 65% in December and January, to a high of 81% in June. The year's lowest temperature should be close to -3°, and the highest might well be near 97°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be up to five degrees cooler than actual ones. The Visitor's Center, up on the high plateau, is open all year—weather permitting. Both the campground and the lodge are closed from November through April. Roads may be closed for various periods in winter due to snow and ice. The same snow and ice may make some of the ruins inaccessible. All ruins may *only* be visited on a ranger-guided tour or when a ranger is in attendance. Off-trail excursions and back-country camping are not permitted. Cliff-dwellings were built for protection from enemies, and were designed to be difficult to get into. They still are. Most access requires strenuous climbs and the use of crude ladders. If this is not your style, many of the best ruins can be seen from one or more of the loop drives.