

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE DONNER PASS RECREATION AREA, CALIFORNIA

LOCATION: Donner Pass is located in Placer County in east-central California. The Pass was the last obstacle on the California Overland Trail, and proved a deadly one to the Donner Party in the winter of 1846-47. *Donner Memorial State Park* commemorates this tragedy. Despite the grisly history, the Pass is a pleasant, relatively inexpensive, family-oriented alternative to the glitz and glamour of the Lake Tahoe area less than fifteen miles to the southeast. Elevations in the area average between 6,000 and 7,000 feet above sea level for most of the facilities. *Tahoe National Forest* surrounds the Pass, and the area contains a significant number of both summer resorts and winter sports areas.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:45	10:42	11:56	13:13	14:19	14:54	14:39	13:43	12:30	11:13	10:05	9:28
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	4:56	6:03	7:13	8:48	10:09	11:56	13:18	12:15	10:49	8:22	5:51	4:47
AREA OF BLUE SKY	37%	38%	40%	44%	53%	67%	82%	80%	77%	62%	45%	39%
LOW FOR MONTH	-5 °	-1 °	7 °	13 °	18 °	24 °	29 °	28 °	22 °	14 °	9 °	0 °
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	14 °	16 °	21 °	25 °	31 °	37 °	41 °	40 °	35 °	28 °	22 °	16 °
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	40 °	43 °	47 °	54 °	63 °	73 °	81 °	81 °	74 °	63 °	49 °	41 °
HIGH FOR MONTH	57 °	60 °	62 °	68 °	80 °	89 °	91 °	91 °	88 °	79 °	63 °	57 °
FROSTY MORNINGS	98%	98%	95%	91%	61%	23%	6%	9%	35%	80%	93%	96%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90 °	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	9%	8%	1%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	61%	52%	44%	37%	32%	27%	24%	24%	27%	34%	49%	60%
DRY DAYS	65%	64%	65%	73%	79%	87%	94%	94%	90%	84%	73%	68%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	73%	73%	76%	83%	87%	93%	97%	97%	93%	90%	78%	76%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	1.07	0.99	0.77	0.40	0.23	0.13	0.06	0.08	0.14	0.29	0.73	0.95
LIKELY SNOWFALL	42.9"	39.7"	35.5"	17.2"	4.2"	0.5"	0.0"	0.0"	0.3"	2.3"	16.7"	35.2"
DAYS WITH SOME SNOW	23%	26%	26%	19%	6%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	10%	19%
DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER	0%	0%	2%	2%	8%	8%	8%	7%	4%	2%	0%	0%
DAYS WITH SOME FOG	17%	15%	16%	11%	9%	3%	0%	0%	2%	8%	11%	18%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 70% of the daylight hours of the year. This might range from a “low” of 51% in December and January, to a high of 91% in sunny July. The lowest temperature of the year should be close to -7 ° at some calm and clear winter sunrise, and the highest should be near 93 ° on some equally clear and windless summer afternoon. Clear skies and calm airs tend to make the high temperatures higher and the low ones lower. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you feel) will be up to 4 ° cooler than actual ones during the warmer months. Snowfall amounts are for the valley floors. The ski slopes will have greater amounts. They will also get snow earlier and keep it later. 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.