

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE RAPID CITY AREA, SOUTH DAKOTA

LOCATION: South Dakota's second largest city (after Sioux Falls) and the center of its tourism industry, Rapid City is located in the southwestern corner of the state. The city is situated on the banks of Rapid Creek in the Great Plains, at the foot of the Black Hills. Except for those forested hills to the west, the surrounding landscape is one of rolling prairie. Elevations are close to 3,200 feet above sea level. Rapid City is an excellent base of operations for visits to both the northern and southern sections of the Black Hills, as well as to Badlands National Park.

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| HOURS OF DAYLIGHT | 9:18 | 10:27 | 11:54 | 13:26 | 14:44 | 15:26 | 15:09 | 14:01 | 12:34 | 11:03 | 9:42 | 8:58 |
| HOURS OF SUNSHINE | 5:20 | 6:25 | 7:26 | 8:14 | 8:57 | 10:04 | 11:05 | 10:23 | 8:38 | 7:12 | 5:26 | 4:50 |
| AREA OF BLUE SKY | 40% | 39% | 36% | 36% | 38% | 46% | 57% | 58% | 56% | 51% | 41% | 41% |
| LOW FOR MONTH | -13 ° | -8 ° | 0 ° | 17 ° | 30 ° | 40 ° | 49 ° | 46 ° | 31 ° | 20 ° | 3 ° | -8 ° |
| SUNRISE TEMPERATURE | 11 ° | 14 ° | 22 ° | 33 ° | 43 ° | 53 ° | 59 ° | 57 ° | 47 ° | 36 ° | 24 ° | 15 ° |
| AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE | 34 ° | 36 ° | 44 ° | 57 ° | 66 ° | 76 ° | 85 ° | 84 ° | 74 ° | 62 ° | 47 ° | 38 ° |
| HIGH FOR MONTH | 60 ° | 63 ° | 71 ° | 82 ° | 88 ° | 95 ° | 101 ° | 100 ° | 95 ° | 85 ° | 71 ° | 63 ° |
| FROSTY MORNINGS | 96% | 95% | 86% | 45% | 8% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 4% | 31% | 80% | 95% |
| AFTERNOONS OVER 90 ° | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 9% | 31% | 31% | 10% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| AFTERNOON HUMIDITY | 57% | 57% | 52% | 44% | 46% | 48% | 39% | 36% | 37% | 41% | 52% | 58% |
| DRY DAYS | 80% | 77% | 71% | 70% | 60% | 58% | 70% | 73% | 79% | 83% | 82% | 81% |
| REASONABLY DRY DAYS | 97% | 93% | 91% | 84% | 79% | 78% | 85% | 87% | 91% | 93% | 94% | 97% |
| 5-DAY PRECIPITATION | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.16 | 0.32 | 0.52 | 0.55 | 0.37 | 0.26 | 0.21 | 0.16 | 0.10 | 0.08 |
| LIKELY SNOWFALL | 4.7" | 5.6" | 8.5" | 5.8" | 1.0" | 0.1" | 0.0" | 0.0" | 0.1" | 1.7" | 4.5" | 4.5" |
| DAYS WITH SOME SNOW | 20% | 23% | 23% | 14% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 6% | 14% | 17% |
| DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER | 0% | 0% | 0% | 4% | 18% | 35% | 35% | 27% | 11% | 2% | 0% | 0% |
| DAYS WITH SOME FOG | 5% | 7% | 7% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 6% | 6% |

COMMENTS: : Bright sunshine is likely on 64% 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 -18°, and the highest should be near 103°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be essentially the same as actual ones for most of the year, and up to 4° cooler than actual ones from late spring through early autumn. The *chinook* (from a Salish Indian word, meaning "snow eater") is a strong, warm, dry, downslope wind common to the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains. It often sets in following a winter storm. During the *chinook*, temperatures will rise many tens of degrees in as many minutes. The combination of increasing temperatures, high winds, and very low humidities tends to both melt and evaporate large quantities of snow--sometimes as much as a foot or more per hour.