



Quick Facts

Tornadoes

- Every year, an average of 1,200 tornadoes kill about 60 Americans, injure 1,500 people and cause more than \$400 million in damage.
- About 100,000 storms affect the U.S. each year, but only 1% produce a tornado.
- In comparison with other states, Iowa ranks 6th in tornado occurrences, Illinois ranks 7th, and Missouri ranks 8th. (The top 5 are Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Florida, and Nebraska, in that order.)
- Iowa averages 37 tornadoes annually while Illinois averages 35. Missouri averages 30 tornadoes per year.
- Record tornado years: U.S.: 1,717 in 2004. Iowa: 120 in 2004. Illinois: 124 in 2006. Missouri: 102 in 2006.

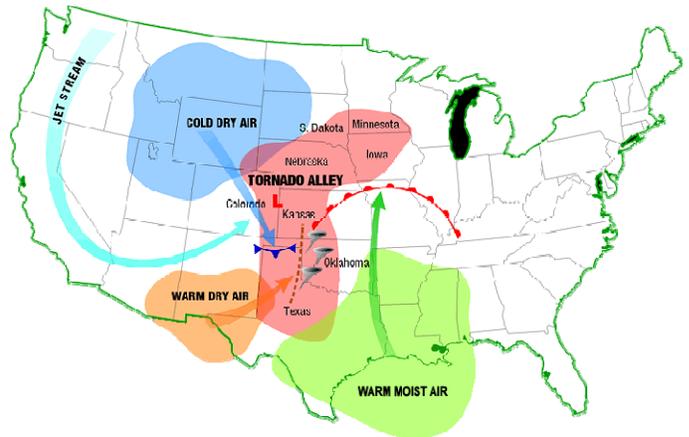


Biggest, fastest, deadliest, etc.:

- Widest damage path..... 2 ½ miles wide (Hallam, Nebraska; F4; May 22, 2004)
- Longest single tornado track.....219 miles (Tri-state tornado – MO, IL, IN; F5; March 18, 1925)
- Fastest ground speed..... 73 mph (Tri-state tornado – MO, IL, IN; F5; March 18, 1925)
- Slowest ground speed less than 10 mph (Jarrell, Texas; F5; May 27, 1997)
- Deadliest in U.S. history695 dead (Tri-State Tornado – MO, IL, IN; F5; March 18, 1925)
- Costliest tornado\$1.6 billion in 2007 dollars (Topeka, Kansas; ; June 8, 1966)
- Highest winds318 mph measured by Doppler radar (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; F5; May 3, 1999)
- Biggest outbreak 148 tornadoes affected 13 states in the eastern U.S. (Super Outbreak; April 3 and 4, 1974)
- Most tornadoes spawned from a hurricane 117 (Hurricane Frances in Florida; September 2004)
- First confirmed tornado in the U.S. Cambridge, Massachusetts (1 fatality; July 8, 1680)
- Last EF5 Tornado in the U.S. Parkersburg, Iowa (9 fatalities, 50 injuries; May 25, 2008)
- Last EF5 Tornado in Illinois..... Plainfield, Illinois (29 fatalities, 350 injuries; August 28, 1990)
- Last EF5 Tornado in Iowa Parkersburg, Iowa (9 fatalities, 63 injuries; May 25, 2008)
- Last EF5 Tornado in Missouri..... Ruskin Heights, Missouri (37 fatalities, 176 injuries; May 20, 1957)
- Last Tornado Fatality in Illinois Fairview Heights, Illinois (1 fatality; EF2; April 2, 2006)
- Last Tornado Fatality in Iowa Blencoe, Iowa (4 fatalities; EF3; June 11, 2008)
- Last Tornado Fatality in Missouri Pioneer, Missouri (1 fatality; EF2; May 10, 2008)
- Codell, KS was hit by a tornado on the same exact day three years straight. A tornado hit on May 20, 1916, 1917, and 1918.
- One third (33%) of all tornado fatalities occur in mobile homes.
- People in mobile homes are 23 times more likely to be killed by a tornado than those in permanent housing.
- 13% of tornado fatalities occur in vehicles. 25% occur in permanent homes.

Tornadoes (continued)

- Tornado damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long.
- The average tornado moves from southwest to northeast, but tornadoes have been known to move in every direction.
- Tornadoes are most likely between 3 and 9 p.m. but have been known to occur at all hours of the day or night.
- Tornadoes can occur at any time of the year, with a peak in the U.S. from March to July.
- “Tornado Alley” refers to a broad swath of relatively high tornado occurrence in the central U.S.
- A *tornado watch* is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for storms to produce tornadoes.
- A *tornado warning* is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by Doppler radar.
- Average lead time for a Tornado Warning in the U.S. is 11 minutes.
- Tornadoes are classified by their damage according to the Enhanced Fujita (EF) scale, which incorporates engineering principles into the damage rating. (The EF scale replaced the former F scale in February 2007.)



Weak Tornadoes

- EF0: 65-85 mph – light damage
- EF1: 86-110 mph – moderate damage

- 69% of all tornadoes
- Less than 5% of tornado deaths
- Lifetime 1-10+ minutes

Strong Tornadoes

- EF2: 111-135 mph - considerable damage
- EF3: 136-165 mph – severe damage

- 29% of all tornadoes
- Nearly 30% of all tornado deaths
- May last 20 minutes or longer

Violent Tornadoes

- EF4: 166-200 mph – devastating damage
- EF5: 201+ mph – incredible damage

- Only 2% of all tornadoes
- 70% of all tornado deaths
- Lifetime can exceed 1 hour

On the Web:

Storm Prediction Center	www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado
Tri-State Tornado	www.weather.gov/pah/1925
U.S. Tornado Climatology	lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/severeweather/tornadoes.html
National Severe Storms Laboratory	www.nssl.noaa.gov
National Weather Service.....	www.weather.gov