

TORNADO AWARENESS

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air that extends down from a thunderstorm to the ground. A tornado's extreme winds make it destructive and often deadly to anything and anyone in its path.



Fast Facts

- The strongest tornado wind speed on record is 318 mph (511 km/h), (with a 20 mph margin of error) at a height of 105 feet above the ground, according to The Weather Channel.*
- The fastest forward speed of a tornado officially recorded is 73 mph (117 km/h), according to The Weather Channel.*
- Tornadoes are measured using the Fujita scale (F-scale), with F5 being the strongest.
- Tornadoes may not be visible until they start carrying dust and debris.
- Tornadoes can move in any direction, although most move from southwest to northeast.
- Tornadoes can emit sounds that range from a dull roar to a hiss, whoosh, rumble or train-like blast.
- Tornadoes usually last less than 15 minutes.
- Tornadoes that form over water are called waterspouts.

Tornado Watch vs Tornado Warning

Prepare for a possible tornado:

- Check for forecast updates and monitor sky conditions.
- Determine where to take shelter. If you live in a mobile home or home without a basement, identify a safe building you can reach quickly.
- Review your emergency plan and check supplies

Take immediate action for an imminent tornado:

- Move to the basement, an interior room or closet away from windows and outside walls, or the lowest floor of a sturdy building.
- If you are in a vehicle, mobile home or outdoors, move to the closest substantial shelter.
- Check for wireless emergency alerts on your mobile phone, forecast updates and further information.

Source: National Weather Service

Debris Is Deadly.

Flying and falling debris from a tornado often cause serious injuries and death. Keep pillows, sleeping bags, blankets or even a helmet on hand to protect yourself.

Top Tip:

If you cannot get to a basement, choose an interior room with the greatest number of walls between you and the outside.

MYTH: The bathroom tub is the safest place during a tornado.

FACT: If your bathroom is located on an exterior wall, it is NOT the safest location. An interior room, closet or hallway is safer.

Source: Florida Division of Emergency Management

Stranded Outside?

Highway underpasses are not safe shelters in a tornado, nor are sheds or vehicles. If you are stranded outside and cannot get to a safe shelter, lie flat and face-down in a ditch or low-lying area, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Move as far away as possible from trees and cars.

Source: NOAA

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