

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, WEATHER BUREAU
In Cooperation with the UNM Bureau of Business Research

LATITUDE: 36° 25' N
LONGITUDE: 105° 37' W
ELEV. (GROUND): 6965 Ft.

CLIMATOLOGICAL SUMMARY

STATION: TAOS
NEW MEXICO

MEANS AND EXTREMES FOR PERIOD OF RECORD: 1931 - 1960

Month	Temperature (°F)								** Mean degree days	Precipitation Totals (Inches)							Mean number of days					Month
	Means			Extremes						Mean	Greatest daily	Year	Snow, Sleet				Precip. .10 inch or more	Temperatures				
	Daily maximum	Daily minimum	Monthly	Record highest	Year	Record lowest	Year	Mean					Maximum monthly	Year	Greatest daily	Year		90° and above	32° and below	32° and below	0° and below	
(a)	30	30	30	30	--	30	--	30	30	30	--	30	30	--	30	--	30	30	30	30	30	(a)
Jan.	40.3	9.6	24.9	62	1931	-24	1949	1240	0.83	0.93	1957	9.1	20.0	1957	10.0	1957+	3	0	4	30	5	Jan.
Feb.	45.4	15.3	30.4	73	1932	-27	1933	970	0.72	1.10	1955	6.2	21.1	1948	7.0	1945	2	0	2	28	3	Feb.
Mar.	52.9	21.2	37.1	72	1938	-11	1929	860	0.79	0.95	1941	6.4	20.0	1941	8.0	1946	3	0	*	29	*	Mar.
Apr.	63.7	28.8	46.2	80	1960+	0	1933	560	0.92	1.00	1942	2.9	19.0	1944	8.0	1944	3	0	0	21	*	Apr.
May	72.7	36.8	54.7	91	1934	20	1953+	320	1.21	2.90	1955	1.7	17.0	1936	14.0	1936	3	*	0	6	0	May
June	83.1	44.4	63.8	97	1936	28	1954	60	0.75	1.40	1937	0	0	--	0	--	2	4	0	*	0	June
July	86.6	49.8	68.2	98	1960+	36	1937	10	1.58	1.19	1956	0	0	--	0	--	5	8	0	0	0	July
Aug.	84.9	49.6	67.3	99	1938	38	1956+	30	1.77	1.23	1943	0	0	--	0	--	5	6	0	0	0	Aug.
Sept.	78.9	42.0	60.2	94	1960	22	1936	170	1.11	1.25	1942	0.1	2.0	1936	2.0	1936	3	1	0	1	0	Sept.
Oct.	66.9	31.6	49.3	84	1950+	11	1945	490	1.13	1.43	1944	0.1	1.3	1941	1.3	1941	3	0	0	16	0	Oct.
Nov.	52.3	18.3	35.4	83	1931	-16	1931	890	0.71	1.40	1953	3.2	21.0	1931	10.5	1931	2	0	1	29	1	Nov.
Dec.	42.8	12.1	27.4	63	1942	-17	1949	1170	0.57	0.63	1942	4.7	13.0	1951	6.5	1951	2	0	3	31	2	Dec.
Year	64.2	30.0	47.1	99	Aug. 1938	-27	Feb. 1933	6770	12.09	2.90	May 1955	34.4	21.1	Feb. 1948	14.0	May 1936	36	19	10	191	11	Year

* Less than one half.

** Base 65° F (estimated).

(a) Average length of record, years.

† Trace, an amount too small to measure.

+ Also on earlier dates, months, or years.

φ Partial year's record considered.

CLIMATE OF TAOS, NEW MEXICO

Taos is the county seat of Taos County and is located in the Rio Grande valley in the north-central part of the State. The city stands on a rolling mesa at the foot of the rugged and wooded Sangre de Cristo mountains, which rise to peaks well above 10,000 feet and form the eastern border of the valley, protecting the city from much of the cold arctic air which occasionally invades the eastern plains area of the State in winter. The rolling mesa extends westward to the Rio Grande about 10 miles away. Across the river the mesa continues several miles to the Conejos mountain range. The city is convenient to a large mountain area attracting many summer sportsmen, vacationers, and tourists, and many winter sports enthusiasts. Ancient Indian pueblos nearby and the majestic mountain scenery draw numerous artists to the city. Ranching is the principal agricultural activity in the area; also, some small grains and feed crops are grown.

Weather records began in Taos in March 1889; and, except for a break from March 1896 to November 1901, they have been continuous since then. Only the most recent 30 years of record have been summarized in this publication.

Taos has a semiarid continental climate. Summers at this elevation are cool. Daytime readings during the warmest month average in the 80s, and no more than 19 days in an average summer have readings above 90°. No official reading of 100° has been recorded in Taos in the last 60 years. Summer nights are cool, for the temperature normally drops below 50° even in midsummer, and freezing temperatures have been recorded in every month except July and August. Brief summer thundershowers, normally occurring in the afternoon or early evening, account for almost half of the yearly precipitation. Severe storms are unlikely. Occasionally, some light hail falls, but tornadoes have never been reported from this area.

Winters are moderately cold, although the prevalent winter sunshine results in considerable daytime warming. In an average winter only 10 days are so cold that the temperature fails to go above the freezing mark some time during the day. Winter nights are quite cold, the low reading averaging near 10° in midwinter. Freezing temperatures can be expected at night from mid-October until late April, and there are normally 11 winter days when the minimum reading drops to zero or below. Winter is the driest season: normally, there are only two or three days a month when a tenth of an inch or more of moisture falls. Much of this winter moisture comes as snow, which seldom lies on the ground for more than a few days. Most winter storms deposit less than six inches in the valley, although deep snow in the mountains is normal.

Wind, relative-humidity, and sunshine records are not available for Taos. Winds probably average around 10 miles per hour for the year, with somewhat higher averages in late winter and spring. Most of the stronger winds blow from a westerly direction. Relative humidity is somewhat higher than at lower elevations because of the cool temperatures, but during the drier periods of the year it ranges from about 75 per cent in the cool morning hours to about 30 per cent in the afternoons. Hot, humid weather is unknown at this elevation. Sunshine can be expected about 70 per cent of the possible hours throughout the year. The growing season averages 141 days--from May 16, the average date of the last spring freeze, to October 4, the average date of the first temperature of 32° in the fall.

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Average Temperature (°F)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann'l
1931	24.9	35.4	35.8	48.1	54.6	66.8	70.6	67.9	62.6	53.8	37.1	19.4	48.2
1932	18.6	37.2	37.2	47.0	52.8	62.2	68.4	67.3	57.4	44.4	35.5	21.6	46.0
1933	20.6	18.7	38.1	41.7	50.2	65.0	69.7	69.0	62.0	49.6	36.0	29.4	46.0
1934	24.2	35.2	41.8	50.1	60.1	64.1	70.3	69.0	57.4	48.5	35.0	25.9	48.5
1935	28.8	30.4	36.1	45.8	50.8	64.5	68.6	67.4	57.8	47.4	31.7	22.2	46.0
1936	24.3	31.5	38.6	47.0	57.4	66.0	67.0	66.2	57.6	47.6	35.6	28.7	47.3
1937	18.8	31.8	40.0	48.2	58.2	63.9	67.1	70.5	63.4	52.0	41.4	33.2	48.0
1938	28.7	34.4	39.6	46.6	53.8	64.9	67.8	69.0	60.8	51.2	32.9	31.0	48.4
1939	26.3	22.2	38.6	47.5	56.4	63.8	68.3	66.5	61.2	47.6	38.4	25.6	46.9
1940	24.1	27.4	37.6	44.5	56.2	64.6	68.3	65.2	59.9	50.6	34.9	30.2	47.0
1941	22.3	31.0	37.2	42.4	54.6	59.2	64.7	64.0	56.7	47.2	34.8	29.4	45.3
1942	24.7	26.0	33.8	45.0	51.7	61.5	66.0	66.4	51.0	43.8	33.0	32.1	46.4
1943	28.8	32.7	37.2	49.7	53.8	61.7	67.2	68.2	59.8	48.1	36.8	23.8	47.3
1944	22.2	29.4	36.2	43.2	53.2	62.0	66.6	67.2	59.4	51.1	35.7	29.4	46.2
1945	25.0	33.9	35.8	42.0	54.7	60.0	69.4	68.2	59.2	49.8	37.9	24.4	46.7
1946	24.2	28.4	37.4	51.0	53.2	65.8	72.6	69.0	63.2	48.0	34.6	30.6	48.2
1947	21.9	35.8	38.0	45.0	56.7	60.7	68.4	67.4	60.7	50.0	30.5	24.9	46.8
1948	22.7	26.4	31.3	47.8	55.4	62.4	67.9	64.9	59.2	46.7	29.6	27.3	45.1
1949	19.9	22.8	36.5	44.3	53.4	59.9	65.8	65.3	60.7	47.0	40.3	24.1	45.0
1950	25.7	32.2	34.6	46.7	52.7	63.8	65.1	65.4	56.6	55.1	38.9	31.3	47.3
1951	27.4	28.6	36.8	43.9	53.2	60.7	70.3	67.8	60.1	49.2	33.2	26.4	46.5
1952	30.8	30.8	32.9	46.8	54.8	67.0	66.7	69.2	61.3	50.9	30.5	22.4	47.0
1953	29.6	29.2	39.8	45.1	49.7	65.6	69.0	66.5	60.6	49.0	37.3	23.1	47.1
1954	28.3	37.9	36.7	50.0	56.0	64.1	69.2	65.8	61.2	51.8	39.9	27.5	49.0
1955	22.6	25.5	38.0	43.7	51.1	61.2	67.3	66.7	60.7	49.5	35.3	30.6	46.0
1956	31.9	25.5	37.4	44.5	56.3	67.2	67.4	64.5	63.2	51.3	31.3	28.5	47.5
1957	28.8	37.8	37.8	43.5	52.1	64.3	68.9	66.6	59.7	49.7	31.5	28.4	47.4
1958	25.6	35.0	35.6	48.5	58.9	67.3	69.0	68.3	60.5	48.5	33.8	31.5	48.4
1959	28.0	31.1	38.0	47.9	56.2	67.4	70.0	68.6	60.1	48.6	35.8	31.9	48.6
1960	18.8	24.7	33.9	43.8	56.6	65.3	68.5	70.4	63.1	46.9	35.3	26.4	47.0

Total Precipitation (inches)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann'l
1931	1.13	.84	.82	1.05	.37	1.13	1.79	1.79	3.39	1.01	1.69	.44	13.47
1932	1.06	.87	1.13	.68	1.12	2.89	1.05	.84	.76	.84	.76	.19	11.07
1933	.72	.34	.16	.68	.88	2.44	2.04	1.33	.78	.52	.59	.29	10.78
1934	.68	.52	.01	.30	2.94	.77	1.49	1.70	2.02	.20	.70	.21	10.94
1935	.42	.57	.23	1.04	4.45	.23	1.19	1.86	1.86	1.86	.45	.20	13.39
1936	.34	.64	.67	.26	1.32	.53	1.65	4.18	1.72	1.49	.25	.48	13.53
1937	.80	.39	.45	0	.84	1.85	1.46	2.23	1.15	.82	0	T	9.99
1938	.40	.75	.58	.22	.75	1.21	.30	.64	1.70	.95	.90	.24	8.64
1939	.87	.69	.27	.78	T	.63	.74	1.21	1.21	.47	.40	.33	6.39
1940	.77	.82	.12	.13	.72	.08	1.23	.86	1.91	.37	1.30	1.42	10.35
1941	.83	.90	2.10	1.27	1.10	2.45	2.04	.73	2.25	2.30	.98	.74	17.69
1942	.84	.61	.92	4.33	.27	1.06	2.5	1.72	2.44	.79	.08	1.39	14.20
1943	.70	.49	1.24	1.11	1.18	1.65	.49	2.15	.21	1.84	1.02	.59	11.17
1944	1.35	.67	.64	2.32	1.77	.64	.17	1.44	1.77	.94	.84	1.37	14.33
1945	1.07	.60	1.47	2.04	.17	T	.97	2.04	.85	1.16	T	.62	10.99
1946	.57	.28	1.12	.45	.13	0	.95	2.78	.21	2.15	1.66	.44	10.74
1947	.37	1.08	.38	.64	1.45	.28	1.13	1.90	.53	.56	.93	1.30	10.55
1948	.44	1.65	.86	.72	1.55	1.43	.94	1.46	.10	.84	.38	.19	10.71
1949	1.29	1.11	.79	1.05	1.12	1.28	2.49	1.23	1.02	1.73	.27	.38	13.76
1950	1.27	.23	.63	.61	.08	1.58	3.05	.42	1.63	.42	T	T	9.62
1951	1.42	.96	1.08	1.87	1.39	.02	2.05	2.32	.11	.81	.53	1.57	13.67
1952	1.42	.28	1.47	.92	.55	.14	1.94	1.68	.71	0	2.13	.31	11.55
1953	.24	.77	.58	.73	1.62	.33	2.95	.31	.11	1.97	2.57	.56	12.74
1954	.91	.41	1.44	T	1.41	.27	1.76	1.48	.61	.48	.15	T	8.92
1955	.98	1.70	.43	1.24	4.42	.15	1.54	2.63	.80	T	.79	.79	14.83
1956	1.30	.72	.28	.21	.61	.41	2.59	1.17	T	.72	.56	.26	8.83
1957	2.66	.65	1.41	1.13	2.84	.12	3.39	5.13	T	4.69	1.49	.07	23.38
1958	.28	.92	1.05	1.08	.69	.08	.63	2.41	2.72	.67	.87	0	11.40
1959	.37	.45	.60	.95	1.74	1.40	.81	3.09	.24	1.40	.33	1.96	13.34
1960	1.37	.80	.76	.61	.76	1.32	1.93	.30	1.57	1.11	.07	.76	11.36

STATION HISTORY

The first weather station was established in Taos on March 1, 1889. From March 1895 to April 1896 the station was located about three and one-half miles south-south-west of Taos and was known as Ranchos de Taos. The station was reactivated near the Taos Post Office in November 1901 and has continued in the city since that time. Since January 1937 the U. S. Forest Service has maintained the weather record. The equipment was on the roof of a garage 15 feet above the ground until July 1957, when it was moved to a ground exposure. There have been no significant changes in elevation at the various exposures.