



National Weather Service

Lightning Safety

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Top 9 Tips for Lightning Safety

1. No Place Outside Is Safe Near Thunderstorms!
2. Use The '30-30 Rule!'
 - If the time between lightning and thunder is 30 seconds or less, go to a safer location
 - If the lightning can't be seen, just hearing thunder means you should go to a safer location
 - Wait at least 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder before leaving the safer location
3. The Best Safer Location From Lightning Is A Typical House, Or Other Fully Enclosed Substantially Constructed Building With Plumbing And Wiring.
4. You can be injured by lightning inside a house. Stay away from corded telephones, plumbing, electrical appliances, wires, TV cables, metal doors or metal window frames, or any electrical conducting path leading outside. Don't watch lightning through a window or open doorway. An inside room is generally best. The Second Best Safer Location From Lightning Is A Vehicle With A Solid Metal Roof And Metal Sides.
 - But close the windows, and don't touch any conducting path leading outside
 - Convertibles, motorcycles, bicycles, open shelled outdoor recreational vehicles, and cars with plastic or fiberglass roofs and sides offer no lightning protection. A common lightning myth is that the rubber tires protect you in a car by insulating you from the ground.

Wrong: lightning laughs at 2 inches of rubber! It's the metal that protects you.
5. The top activities for lightning casualties in the U.S. are:
 1. Open Fields and Elevated Places
 2. Under Trees (or other tall isolated object)
 3. Water Related Activities (swimming, boating, fishing, etc.)
 4. Golfing
 5. Open Vehicles (farm, construction, etc.)
 6. Telephone
 7. Radio and Radio Equipment
6. Outdoor Sports Have The Fastest Rising Lightning Casualty Rate! Coaches, referees, parents, and children PLEASE have a lightning safety plan!
7. Open picnic pavilions and rain shelters offer absolutely no protection from lightning!
8. When outside, appoint someone to be the lightning monitor. Their job is to use the '30-30 rule', weather radio, radio/TV, and observe the weather to tell the group when to seek proper shelter.
9. Lightning First-Aid:
 - Call 911
 - Lightning deaths are from cardiac arrest/stopped breathing. Perform CPR or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation if possible.
 - Don't worry about touching a lightning victim. They cannot electrocute you!

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