



Weather and Climate of Valley of Fire State Park

Valley of Fire State Park is located in northeast Clark County and is Nevada's oldest and largest state park. Unique rock formations dot much of the park shaped vastly by the wind, precipitation and temperature. Most of the park ranges from 2,000 to 3,000 feet in elevation. Weather conditions can vary greatly in the park depending on elevation, orientation of terrain and location. Temperatures can vary by 3°F to 5°F for each thousand feet (1°C to 3°C for every 304 meters).

Storms passing through southern Nevada originating from the Pacific tend to lose most of their moisture as it is blocked by taller mountain ranges to the west in California as well as the Spring Mountains in Nevada. Most cold season storms exit the area within a day or two. During the summer, pushes of monsoon moisture into the area will result in a few days with thunderstorms developing. Some of these storms can unleash heavy rain in a short period. Strong winds are also common in this area during the cool season when cold fronts pass through as winds get enhanced by the terrain. Although temperatures frequently reach into the triple digits from the late spring into the early fall, the park does experience a significantly cooler period during the winter. Most of the year is dominated by sunshine and low humidity.

Temperatures, Precipitation and Snowfall

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year
Avg. High	58.0°F 14.0°C	62.4°F 16.9°C	70.5°F 21.4°C	79.3°F 26.3°C	89.9°F 32.2°C	100.0°F 37.8°C	105.4°F 40.8°C	103.3°F 39.6°C	95.8°F 35.4°C	81.9°F 27.7°C	67.2°F 19.6°C	57.0°F 13.9°C	81.0°F 27.2°C
Avg. Low	38.9°F 3.9°C	42.9°F 6.1°C	48.4°F 9.1°C	55.1°F 12.8°C	64.8°F 18.2°C	74.2°F 23.4°C	80.8°F 27.1°C	78.8°F 26.0°C	71.0°F 21.7°C	58.7°F 14.8°C	46.7°F 8.2°C	38.3°F 3.5°C	58.3°F 14.6°C
Record High and Year	75°F 24°C 2015	87°F 31°C 1986	93°F 34°C 2004	100°F 38°C 2012*	111°F 44°C 2003	119°F 48°C 2013	119°F 48°C 2013	115°F 46°C 1981*	110°F 43°C 1996	102°F 39°C 1980	87°F 31°C 2010*	74°F 23°C 1977	119°F 48°C 2013
Record Low and Year	19°F -7°C 1979*	18°F -8°C 1989	29°F -2°C 1985	29°F -2°C 1973	42°F 6°C 1975	48°F 9°C 1976	60°F 16°C 1991	61°F 16°C 2005	49°F 9°C 1982	38°F 3°C 1996	19°F -7°C 1973	12°F -11°C 1990	12°F -11°C 1990
Normal Precip.	0.83 in 2.10cm	1.05 in 2.70cm	0.81 in 2.10cm	0.24 in 0.60cm	0.10 in 0.30cm	0.10 in 0.30cm	0.62 in 1.60cm	0.64 in 2.50cm	0.34 in 0.90cm	0.52 in 1.30cm	0.49 in 1.20cm	0.76 in 1.90cm	6.50 in 16.5 cm
Wettest Amount and Year	3.17 in 8.10cm 1978	4.04 in 10.3cm 1980	3.82 in 9.70cm 1978	1.15 in 2.90cm 1983	1.08 in 2.70cm 1977	0.96 in 2.40cm 1990	3.96 in 10.10cm 1998	3.13 in 8.00cm 1981	1.75 in 4.40cm 1976	2.58 in 6.60cm 2004	2.67 in 6.80cm 2004	4.12 in 10.50cm 2010	16.90in 6.70cm 1978
Driest Amount and Year	0.00 in 0.00cm 1976	0.00 in 0.00cm 1977	0.00 in 0.00cm 2008*	0.00 in 0.00cm 2008*	0.00 in 0.00cm 2009*	0.00 in 0.00cm 2014*	0.00 in 0.00cm 2004*	0.00 in 0.00cm 2002*	0.00 in 0.00cm 1997*	0.00 in 0.00cm 2014*	0.00 in 0.00cm 1999*	0.00in 0.00cm 2005*	1.16 in 0.50cm 2002
Normal Snow	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.2 in 0.5 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.0 in 0.0 cm	0.2 in 0.5 cm	0.4 in 1.0 cm
Snowiest Ever and Year	6.8 in 17.3cm 1974	3.0 in 7.6 cm 1987*	Trace Trace 1991*	0.5 in 1.3 cm 2011	0.0 in 0.0 cm 2015*	0.5 in 1.3 cm 1994	3.0 in 7.6 cm 2008*	13.1 in 33.3 cm 1987					

*Indicates a record was also set in previous years.

All weather statistics shown above are for the official weather station located at Valley of Fire State Park located at an elevation of 2000 feet. Averages and normals are based on the period from 1981 to 2010 and are provided by NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI).



Always be weather-ready before you venture out! You can get the latest weather for Valley of Fire State Park at: <http://www.weather.gov/lasvegas/>



Carved By Weather



Seasons In The Sun

Sunny and dry weather dominates throughout the year in southern Nevada, but contrary to common belief hot weather does not. Valley of Fire State Park experiences four distinct seasons. Winter storms usually arrive from the Pacific and bring with them most of the area's yearly precipitation. Most will bring rain but every other winter or two colder storms will bring light amounts of snow to the park. Heavier snow amounts of 3 inches or more are rare.

The transition seasons of spring and fall often see a mix of several warm and several cooler days. Cold fronts in these seasons usually pass through with more limited moisture. The summer months are dry most of the time, but pushes of monsoon moisture into the area will result in increased clouds and scattered thunderstorms. Sometimes more rain may fall with one thunderstorm than from several winter storms. Low humidity, bright sunshine and hot afternoons are common though and require keeping hydrated and being aware of your health to avoid succumbing to the desert elements.

Winds

Prevailing winds in southern Nevada are from the west. From October through May when strong cold fronts approach the area, they are usually accompanied by a belt of powerful winds aloft. As these winds get mixed down to the surface they can become even more potent. Narrow canyons help to funnel the air through and further accelerate it, essentially a squeezing process. This results in wind speeds that can easily exceed 40 mph and in many instances, 60 mph. Sometimes the wind will be strong enough to create areas of blowing dust that reduce visibility for brief periods.

These winds can make travel in the area difficult, especially for high profile vehicles and also can make outdoor adventures in the area more difficult.

Although not as common, gusty winds can also be found in the summer months in and near showers and thunderstorms.



Rocks and Weather

Weather plays a role in the scenery of Valley of Fire. Wind and rain help to carve rocks over time. Winter's chill can lead to water freezing and thawing on rocks which can help to further enhance formations.

Summer Storms

Several days each summer, typically between July and September, the monsoon will result in thunderstorms developing. These storms can unleash heavy rain in a short time period, resulting in flash flooding. Slot canyons can easily see water sweep through them and dry washes and low spots can quickly fill with water. Roads in and around Valley of Fire State Park drop through natural washes. These washes can carry water and debris onto roads making them dangerous to cross. In addition, some trails and campgrounds could also flood. Lightning will also pose a hazard.

Weather Timeline

- **1972** Official weather station is established at Valley of Fire State Park.
- **1975 Coolest year ever** with an average temperature of 67.1°F (19.5°C).
- **1976** Tropical Storm Kathleen drops 1.55 inches (3.9 cm) of rain on September 10th and 11th resulting in a number of roads washing out and being damaged in the park.
- **1978 Wettest year ever** with 16.90 inches (6.70 cm) of precipitation recorded.
- **1979** A cold storm system brings 5 inches (12.7 cm) of snow to the park from January 30th-February 1st.
- **1981** Record 24 hour rainfall of 3.05 inches (7.7 cm) from August 10th-11th resulting in extensive road damage.
- **1987** A cold storm system drops 3 inches (7.6 cm) of snow on February 24th-25th at the weather station with parts of the park receiving up to 5 inches (12.7 cm).
- **1990 Coldest temperature ever**, of 12°F (-11°C) is set on December 23rd.
- **1998** Thunderstorms from July 19th through the 24th dropped 2.97 inches (7.5 cm) of rain flooding out roads and pushed mounds of debris across them. Campground roads and facilities were washed out and closed for a month.
- **2002 Driest year ever** with 1.16 inches (0.50 cm) of precipitation measured.
- **2010** A prolonged plume of Pacific moisture accompanied by several storm drops 3.90 inches (9.9 cm) in the park in a 7 day period just before Christmas. Nearly every wash flooded roads, the Petroglyphs Trail flooded and the park was closed for a day due to the debris on roads.
- **2012 Warmest year ever** with an average temperature of 72.1°F (22.3°C).
- **2013 Hottest temperature ever**, of 119°F (48°C) is first reached on June 30th and tied on July 1st.