

Colorado is ranked 9th in the country for tornadoes. Tornadoes may come with warning or no warning. Most Front Range communities have warning sirens, but it is important to stay alert when a tornado watch is issued, this means that conditions exist for a tornado to occur. If the Weather Service issues a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately!

Signs of a Tornado

- Strong, persistent rotation in the cloud base.
- Whirling dust or debris on the ground under a cloud base -- tornadoes sometimes [have no funnel!](#)
- Hail or heavy rain followed by either dead calm or a fast, intense wind shift. Many tornadoes are wrapped in heavy precipitation and can't be seen.
- Day or night - Loud, continuous roar or rumble, which doesn't fade in a few seconds like thunder?
- Night - Small, bright, blue-green to white [flashes at ground level](#) near a thunderstorm (as opposed to silvery lightning up in the clouds). These mean power lines are being snapped by very strong wind, maybe a tornado.
- Night - Persistent lowering from the cloud base, illuminated or silhouetted by lightning -- especially if it is [on the ground](#) or there is a blue-green-white power flash underneath.

If a tornado warning is issued:

If you are at home:

- Go to your basement. If you have no basement, go to an interior hallway or small interior room on the lowest floor. Crouch as low to the floor as possible, facing down and cover your head with your hands. You should also, cover yourself with blankets, a mattress or sleeping bag to protect yourself from flying debris.
- Avoid windows.
- Do not remain in a trailer or mobile home if a tornado is approaching. Take cover elsewhere.

If you are at work:

- Go to an interior hallway on the lowest floor, or a designated shelter.
- Avoid windows.

If you are at school:

- Follow instructions of authorities/teachers.
- Stay out of structures with wide free-span roofs like auditoriums and gyms.
- If you are in a car or outside:
- Seek cover in a nearby building, or lie flat in a ditch or ravine. Find something to hang onto. Do not hide under overpasses, they provide no shelter and increases your danger.

AFTER THE TORNADO

Keep your family together and wait for emergency personnel to arrive. Stay away from power lines and puddles with wires in them; they may still be carrying electricity! Watch your step to avoid broken glass, nails, and other sharp objects. Stay out of any heavily damaged houses or buildings; they could collapse at any time. Do not use matches or lighters, in case of leaking natural gas pipes or fuel tanks nearby. Remain calm and alert, and listen for information and instructions from emergency crews or local officials.

Information gathered from NOAA and the Colorado Department of Emergency Management