

Each state's low temperature record

As you would expect, the coldest temperature ever officially recorded in the USA was in Alaska.

It was -79.8°F - rounded off to -80°F - observed at Prospect Creek Camp in the Endicott Mountains of northern Alaska on Jan. 23, 1971. The Prospect Creek Camp is along the Alaska pipeline about 20 miles north of the Arctic Circle. (**Related:** [The Arctic Circle](#))

The record came during an unusually cold month in Alaska, notes the *Weather and Climate Extremes* booklet published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Fairbanks, Alaska, recorded its coldest January on record with a mean temperature of -31.7°F . (The monthly mean is the average of all of the daily highs and lows for the month.)

This is not the North American low record. The North American low of -81.4°F . was recorded at Snag in Canada's Yukon Territory, on Feb. 3, 1947.

A USATODAY.com answer to a question about [why Siberia is so cold](#) - the Northern Hemisphere's record low of -90°F was set there - discusses the conditions needed for such extreme cold and also why the coldest parts of the Northern Hemisphere are far south of the North Pole.

The University of Alaska at Fairbanks Alaska Science Forum has various articles about the coldest parts of North America, including:

- [The coldest place in North America](#)
- [How Alaska Pipeline oil flows in such cold](#)
- [The Physics of Life at Forty Below](#)
- [Recipe for a cold snap](#)

The lowest ever recorded in the contiguous 48 States, was -69.7°F (rounded off to -70°F) at Rogers Pass, in Lewis and Clark County, Mont., on Jan. 20, 1954. Rogers Pass is on State Highway 200 about 40 miles northwest of Helena. It is in mountainous and heavily forested terrain about one-half mile east of and 140 feet below the summit of the Continental Divide.

The coldest temperature ever recorded east of the Mississippi River was -60°F in Tower, Minn., on Feb. 2, 1996.

Hawaii is the only state that's never recorded a below-zero temperature.

Many are surprised at Hawaii's 12°F reading. But that was measured at the observatory on Mauna Kea, which is 13,770 feet above sea level. Snow falls there from time to time. (**Related:** [Each state's high temperature record](#))

State by state low temperature records

State	Temp. F	Date	Station	Elevation Feet
Alabama	-27	Jan. 30, 1966	New Market	760
Alaska	-80	Jan. 23, 1971	Prospect Creek	1,100
Arizona	-40	Jan. 7, 1971	Hawley Lake	8,180
Arkansas	-29	Feb. 13, 1905	Pond	1,250
California	-45	Jan. 20, 1937	Boca	5,532
Colorado	-61	Feb. 1, 1985	Maybell	5,920
Connecticut	-32	Feb. 16, 1943	Falls Village	585
Delaware	-17	Jan. 17, 1893	Millsboro	20
Florida	- 2	Feb. 13, 1899	Tallahassee	193
Georgia	-17	Jan. 27, 1940	N. Floyd County	1,000

State	Temp. F	Date	Station	Elevation Feet
Hawaii	12	May 17, 1979	Mauna Kea	13,770
Idaho	-60	Jan. 18, 1943	Island Park Dam	6,285
Illinois	-36	Jan. 5, 1999	Congerville	722
Indiana	-36	Jan. 19, 1994	New Whiteland	785
Iowa	-47	Feb. 3, 1996*	Elkader	770
Kansas	-40	Feb. 13, 1905	Lebanon	1,812
Kentucky	-37	Jan. 19, 1994	Shelbyville	730
Louisiana	-16	Feb. 13, 1899	Minden	194
Maine	-48	Jan. 19, 1925	Van Buren	458
Maryland	-40	Jan. 13, 1912	Oakland	2,461
Massachusetts	-35	Jan. 12, 1981	Chester	640

State	Temp. F	Date	Station	Elevation Feet
Michigan	-51	Feb. 9, 1934	Vanderbilt	785
Minnesota	-60	Feb. 2, 1996	Tower	1,430
Mississippi	-19	Jan. 30, 1966	Corinth	420
Missouri	-40	Feb. 13, 1905	Warsaw	700
Montana	-70	Jan. 20, 1954	Rogers Pass	5,470
Nebraska	-47	Feb. 12, 1899	Camp Clarke	3,700
Nevada	-50	Jan. 8, 1937	San Jacinto	5,200
New Hampshire	-47	Jan. 29, 1934	Mt. Washington	6,288
New Jersey	-34	Jan. 5, 1904	River Vale	70
New Mexico	-50	Feb. 1, 1951	Gavilan	7,350
New York	-52	Feb. 18, 1979*	Old Forge	1,720

State	Temp. F	Date	Station	Elevation Feet
North Carolina	-34	Jan. 21, 1985	Mt. Mitchell	6,525
North Dakota	-60	Feb. 15, 1936	Parshall	1,929
Ohio	-39	Feb. 10, 1899	Milligan	800
Oklahoma	-31	Feb. 9, 2011	Nowata	709
Oregon	-54	Feb. 10, 1933*	Seneca	4,700
Pennsylvania	-42	Jan. 5, 1904	Smethport	est. 1,500
Rhode Island	-25	Feb. 5, 1996	Greene	425
South Carolina	-19	Jan. 21, 1985	Caesars Head	3,100
South Dakota	-58	Feb. 17, 1936	McIntosh	2,277
Tennessee	-32	Dec. 30, 1917	Mountain City	2,471
Texas	-23	Feb. 8, 1933*	Seminole	3,275

State	Temp. F	Date	Station	Elevation Feet
Utah	-69	Feb. 1, 1985	Peter's Sink	8,092
Vermont	-50	Dec. 30, 1933	Bloomfield	915
Virginia	-30	Jan. 22, 1985	Mountain Lake	3,870
Washington	-48	Dec. 30, 1968	Mazama	2,120
West Virginia	-37	Dec. 30, 1917	Lewisburg	2,200
Wisconsin	-55	Feb. 4, 1996	Couderay	1,300
Wyoming	-66	Feb. 9, 1933	Riverside	6,650

*Also on earlier dates at the same or other places.

Source: U.S. National Climatic Data Center

(Last updated August 2006)