

## Lesson 9

# Weather

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### What are tornadoes?

Tornadoes come from powerful thunderstorms and appear as rotating, funnel-shaped clouds with winds reaching up to 300 miles per hour. This is about five times as fast as a car driving on a highway!

Tornadoes cause damage when they touch down on the ground, and they can cause damage in areas one mile wide and 50 miles long. Severe weather can be very scary, and tornadoes are one of nature's most violent storms.

### Am I at risk from tornadoes?

Every state is at some risk for tornado damage, but states in "Tornado Alley" (Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas) have the highest risk. Tornadoes can form any time of the year, but the typical season runs from March to August.



### What should I do if a tornado is coming my way?

Tornadoes are hard to predict. Most of the time you will only have a few minutes of warning. The most important thing to do is **TAKE COVER** when a tornado is nearby. It is also important to know the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning. A tornado watch is when tornadoes are possible in your area. No tornado has been spotted, but it could happen. A tornado warning is when a tornado has been seen, and you should take shelter immediately in a place without windows, such as your bathroom or your basement.

### What can I do?

There are important things you can do to protect you and your home before a tornado strikes -- while the sun is shining. Take the following prevention measures before a tornado strikes:

- Buy a NOAA weather radio, which broadcasts weather alerts.
- Know where to go! When a tornado warning is issued, go at once to a windowless, interior room such as a bathroom, storm cellar, basement or lowest level of the building.
- Make a list of items to bring inside in the event a tornado watch is issued. Don't forget your pet.
- Trim diseased or damaged limbs from trees and shrubs and remove debris from your yard.

Source: [http://www.fema.gov/kids/tor\\_guide.htm](http://www.fema.gov/kids/tor_guide.htm)