

PIKES PEAK PLAYBOOK · AREA ANALYSIS

Altitude & Climate Guide

The Playbook areas span more than 4,000 feet of elevation — from the high plains near Fountain to over 9,000 feet in Divide and Cripple Creek. Elevation shapes snow, wind, heating bills, roofs, gardens and even how long your pasta takes to cook.

This guide compares elevation and climate across all fifteen areas using NOAA 1991–2020 normals from three reference stations, plus the physics of living higher up.

1,000 FEET CHANGES THE HOUSE

Each step up the mountain adds snow load, heating demand and wildfire rules, and shortens the growing season. When comparing two homes at different elevations, compare the operating costs, not just the price.

4,000+ ft

ELEVATION RANGE
Fountain to Victor

111"

SNOW / YR ON THE PALMER
DIVIDE
Monument, NOAA 1991–2020

~250

FREEZING NIGHTS / YR
Florissant Fossil Beds

70%

SEA-LEVEL AIR PRESSURE
at 9,494 ft (Cripple Creek)

ELEVATION BY AREA (FEET)

Fountain		5,546 ft
Security-Widefield		5,700 ft
Colorado Springs		6,035 ft
Manitou Springs		6,412 ft
Calhan & Ellicott		6,508 ft
Peyton		6,800 ft
Falcon		6,900 ft
Monument		6,975 ft
Palmer Lake		7,225 ft
Black Forest		7,400 ft
Cascade · GMF · Chipita Park		7,400 ft
Florissant		8,200 ft
Woodland Park		8,465 ft
Divide		9,165 ft
Cripple Creek & Victor		9,494 ft

AREA BY AREA

What elevation means where you live.

Air pressure is a percentage of sea level from the standard-atmosphere formula; it's a rough guide to how much thinner the air feels. Water's boiling point drops about 1°F per 500 feet.

AREA	ELEVATION (FT)	CLIMATE SETTING	AIR PRESSURE VS. SEA LEVEL	WATER BOILS AT	REFERENCE NOAA STATION
Fountain	5,546	South plains edge	82%	~201°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Security-Widefield	~5,700	South plains edge	81%	~201°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Colorado Springs	6,035	Foothills city	80%	~200°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Manitou Springs	6,412	Foothills canyon	79%	~199°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Calhan & Ellicott	6,508	High plains	79%	~199°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Peyton	~6,800	High plains	78%	~198°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Falcon	~6,900	High plains	77%	~198°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Monument	6,975	Palmer Divide	77%	~198°F	Monument (6,975 ft)
Palmer Lake	7,225	Palmer Divide foothills	77%	~198°F	Monument (6,975 ft)
Black Forest	~7,400	Palmer Divide forest	76%	~197°F	Monument (6,975 ft)
Cascade · GMF · Chipita Park	~7,400–7,800	Ute Pass canyon	76%	~197°F	Colorado Springs (6,035 ft)
Florissant	~8,200	High mountain valley	74%	~196°F	Florissant Fossil Beds (8,402 ft)
Woodland Park	8,465	Mountain town	73%	~195°F	Florissant Fossil Beds (8,402 ft)
Divide	9,165	High mountain	71%	~194°F	Florissant Fossil Beds (8,402 ft)
Cripple Creek & Victor	9,494	High mountain	70%	~193°F	Florissant Fossil Beds (8,402 ft)

Sources: Elevations: published figures (~ = approximate area average). Air pressure: U.S. Standard Atmosphere. Boiling point: approximate rule of thumb.

 THREE CLIMATES

Plains, divide and mountains.

NOAA 1991–2020 normals from the three reference stations used across the Playbook.

	COLORADO SPRINGS (6,035 FT)	MONUMENT (6,975 FT)	FLORISSANT FOSSIL BEDS (8,402 FT)
January avg high / low	43° / 18°	41° / 16°	39° / 5°
July avg high / low	85° / 57°	82° / 53°	79° / 42°
Snowfall per year	39"	111"	59"
Precipitation per year	16.5"	22.0"	15.0"
Snowiest months	March–April	March–April	March
Nights at or below freezing	—	—	About 250 per year

SNOW

- The Palmer Divide (Monument, Palmer Lake, Black Forest) is the snowiest part of the region by far
- Spring storms in March and April often bring the heaviest snow
- City snow usually melts within days; north-facing mountain driveways hold ice for weeks

WIND

- Spring is the windiest season region-wide
- The open plains east of Colorado Springs (Falcon, Peyton, Calhan) feel steadier wind and drifting snow
- Foothill neighborhoods can see strong downslope gusts during winter wind events

COLD & SUN

- Mountain nights are cold year-round: Florissant averages a 42° July low
- Clear, dry air means big swings between day and night
- Sun at altitude is intense, even in winter

Sources: NOAA NCEI 1991–2020 Monthly Normals (station USC00052965, Florissant Fossil Beds); Colorado Springs and Monument normals via usclimatedata.com. Wind and snow patterns: general regional climatology.

 LIVING AT ALTITUDE

What changes for you and your house.

YOUR BODY

- Drink more water, especially in your first weeks
- Use sunscreen year-round — UV increases with elevation (roughly 10% per 1,000 meters, per the WHO)
- Altitude illness becomes more common above about 8,000 feet; take it easy the first few days
- Alcohol hits harder at altitude

YOUR KITCHEN & GARDEN

- Baking needs high-altitude adjustments; water boils at about 200°F in Colorado Springs and 195°F in Woodland Park
- Mountain growing seasons are short — frost is possible in any month above 8,000 feet
- Native, drought-tolerant plants and xeriscaping thrive; lawns need more water

YOUR HOUSE COLORADO

- Higher snow-load and wind design requirements as you climb
- Bigger heating bills and longer heating seasons
- UV fades paint, decks and roofs faster — budget for maintenance
- Dry air: humidifiers help, and wood floors and trim can shrink

YOUR CAR & COMMUTE

- All-wheel drive and good snow tires make a real difference above the city
- Monument Hill and Ute Pass can close briefly in storms
- Engines make less power at altitude — expect slower climbs when loaded

COMPARE LIKE WITH LIKE

When you look at homes at different elevations, ask the sellers for a year of heating bills and how they handle snow. Two homes at the same price can cost very different amounts to live in.


 STRATEGY OVER SCRIPT

Wondering how a home at 6,000 feet compares to one at 9,000? Let's walk through it.

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