

Lightning: What Should You Do?

Cricketers may take a cavalier attitude to thunder and lightning, possibly because the game is usually suspended as soon as it rains and the thunder might come later. This is not a good idea for a number of reasons some of which are:

- Lightning can kill or seriously injure.
- Blue skies overhead do not guarantee protection from lightning strikes. Lightning can strike far from where it is raining and it may come literally out of the blue, with no cloud in the sky and not a drop of rain.
- It can strike even when the storm is as much as 10 miles away, though 6 miles or so is usually quoted as being a range at which risk really escalates.
- Any exposed open area can be at risk if there's thunder about
- Lightning won't necessarily go for the tallest nearby tree; it could jump sideways from another object to hit you or strike the ground and travel through it hitting you on the way.
- It is likely to seek metal objects
- It can travel from person to person if you're close together

Go Indoors Immediately if:

- There is sudden thunder without lightning
- You see lightning in the clouds
- Flash to bang time is 40 seconds or less *
- You see lightning strike the ground or building etc. nearby

Do Not:

- Waste time covering the pitch
- Go near or move metal-framed pitch covers or machinery
- Bunch together – spread out as you move indoors
- Shelter under a tree especially a single tall tree
- Stay outside if you can get into a building (or a car)
- Sheltering inside a permanent metal-skinned or -roofed building is usually OK but avoid small sheds etc.

When to Resume:

- Keep watching and listening - 30 minutes after the last thunder it should be safe to go out * – but: if in doubt – stay indoors!!

Danger Signs:

There is imminent danger of a lightning strike if:

- You feel your hair standing on end
- There is crackling in the air
- There is sudden thunder without lightning

Remember - There is no safe place outside in a thunder storm

Never lie flat on the ground during a lightning storm. Although the 'Lightning Squat' (crouching low with hands over head and ears and elbows on knees) has been mentioned by some as a last resort it doesn't work. If you can get into a sturdy building or a car do this at once.

** the '40/30 Rule' – by no means infallible but a good guideline. Get indoors when thunder is audible within 40 seconds after you see the associated flash (the 'flash to bang time') and don't venture out until thunder has not been heard for 30 minutes*