

Weather for February 7, Here and There

By Kay Brickley

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February 7 falls in the middle of winter.

1 Winter is cold, right? It depends on the year and where you live. Let's take a look at two cities in the United States. In Columbus, Ohio, the coldest it ever got on February 7 was -1 degree. One year it **rose** all the way to 51 degrees. Compare that to Houston, Texas. The lowest temperature ever measured there on February 7 was 24 degrees. The hottest temperature for that date in Houston was a warm 81 degrees. Today is February 7. What is the weather in those two cities? How will it affect what people do?

2 In Columbus, Ohio, the weather forecaster predicted 6 inches of snow overnight. He was right. The outside world is a **magnificent sea of white**. The wind is blowing hard, and snowdrifts are forming into puffy waves. The outside thermometer reads 21 degrees. Today the forecast calls for clouds and a high temperature of 26 degrees. "The snow won't be melting anytime soon," says the forecaster. However, in Houston, Texas, the rain overnight has stopped. As the forecaster predicted, 1 inch of rain has fallen. Puddles are already beginning to dry up on the sidewalk and the street. According to the thermometer outside, the day is beginning at 58 degrees. The forecaster predicts a warm, sunny day. It will be slightly humid, with a high of 74 degrees. "It will feel like spring today," he says, "not like winter at all!"

3 In Columbus, Ohio, a warm jacket and hat and gloves are necessary. Boots are a good idea to keep your feet warm and dry. But the forecast in Houston may inspire someone to wear jeans and a T-shirt, maybe even **sandals**. Some may want to change into shorts when they get home from school or work.

Back in Ohio, many schools and some work places are delaying their starting times for two hours. Why? **Snowplows** must **clear** the roads. Families are using that time to shovel snow off their front sidewalks. They have to make a path to their cars. Snow has buried cars parked outside, too. The cars will have to be dug out. Drivers get in their cars and turn both the defroster and heat on high. They scrape off the car windows in order to see out. However, everyone in Houston, Texas, is waking up ready to travel. There is no need to prepare cars on this sunny day. The sun has already dried the wet windows from last night's rain. There is no need for the heaters here. Instead, drivers may **crank** on the air conditioning a bit to get the humidity out of the air.



Photograph courtesy of Tim Brickley

This photograph shows a newly shoveled sidewalk after a winter storm in Ohio. The narrow path can be slippery.

Weather history. (n.d.). From *Weather.org*. Accessed February 25, 2011.
Retrieved from http://weather.org/weatherorg_records_and_averages.htm

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5 The roads in Columbus are almost empty this morning. Many people are staying home today because of the big snow. Those who are on the roads are going slower than usual. Drivers listen to the radio. They need to find out which roads have been cleared by the snowplows. Sometimes snowdrifts are blown back across the road even after they have been cleared. It may take twice as long to get to school or work. Compared to Ohio, the Houston traffic is already very busy, but the cars and trucks are moving quickly. Drivers listen to the radio. They need to find the best route to travel. The traffic report tells them where the traffic is slower because of roadwork or accidents. Everyone tries to **avoid** those roads in order to get to their destinations on time.

6 After work, most people hurry back home to warm indoor activities in Columbus, Ohio. Some people do not **mind** the cold. They may choose to make a snowman or have a snowball fight. One favorite outdoor winter activity is ice skating on the nearby lake. By contrast, many people in Houston, Texas seek to be outside after school or work. They want to enjoy the spring-like weather. It is a perfect day to throw a Frisbee or fly a kite. A few may still want to ice skate on February 7. How? Instead of going to a frozen lake they will **head** to a mall with a large indoor ice-skating rink.

7 What is the weather like on February 7 where you live? Is it cool or cold? Is it warm or hot? My grandfather likes to say, "If you don't like the weather, just wait, and it will change."

Glossary

Rose—to move up

Magnificent—great

Sea of White—all white

Sandals—shoes with straps

Snowplows—machines that move snow

Clear—to move out of the way

Crank—to turn something on

Avoid—to get around

Mind—to agree or disagree with a situation

Head—to move in a certain direction