



# Tornadoes

If you ever see a big, black cloud with a funnel shaped cloud beneath it, watch out. It could be a tornado.

A tornado looks like a funnel with the fat part at the top. Inside winds may swirl up to 200 miles an hour.

If it goes through a town, the tornado could flatten homes and buildings, throw cars and trucks through the air and shatter mobile homes into splinters.

It could just hit your home and leave your neighbor's home alone or could destroy an entire town.

Sometimes you don't see the funnel first. It may be raining too hard. Or the tornado may come at night. Listen for the tornado's roar—it sounds like 1,000 trains coming!


## Tornado Watch

The National Weather Service forecasts that a tornado **MAY** develop later. The sky may be clear at the time you hear the Watch. Don't be fooled. Listen to the radio for the latest news and get to safety.


## Tornado Warning

When someone has seen a tornado or radar detects one, the NWS issues a **Warning**. The tornado may be moving toward you! Dark clouds swirl in the sky. There may be thunder, lightning, heavy rain or hail. When you see large hail, you may be close to a tornado. Power may go off. You should already be inside!

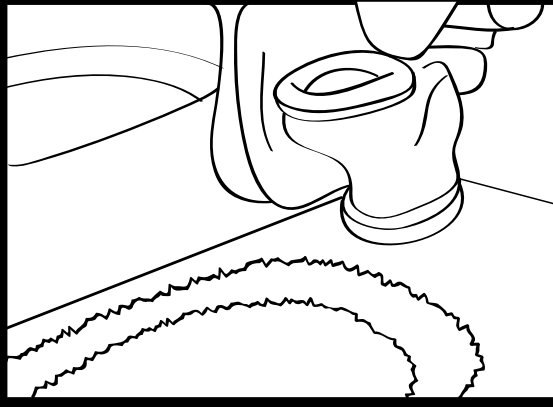
# What to do In Your Home ...



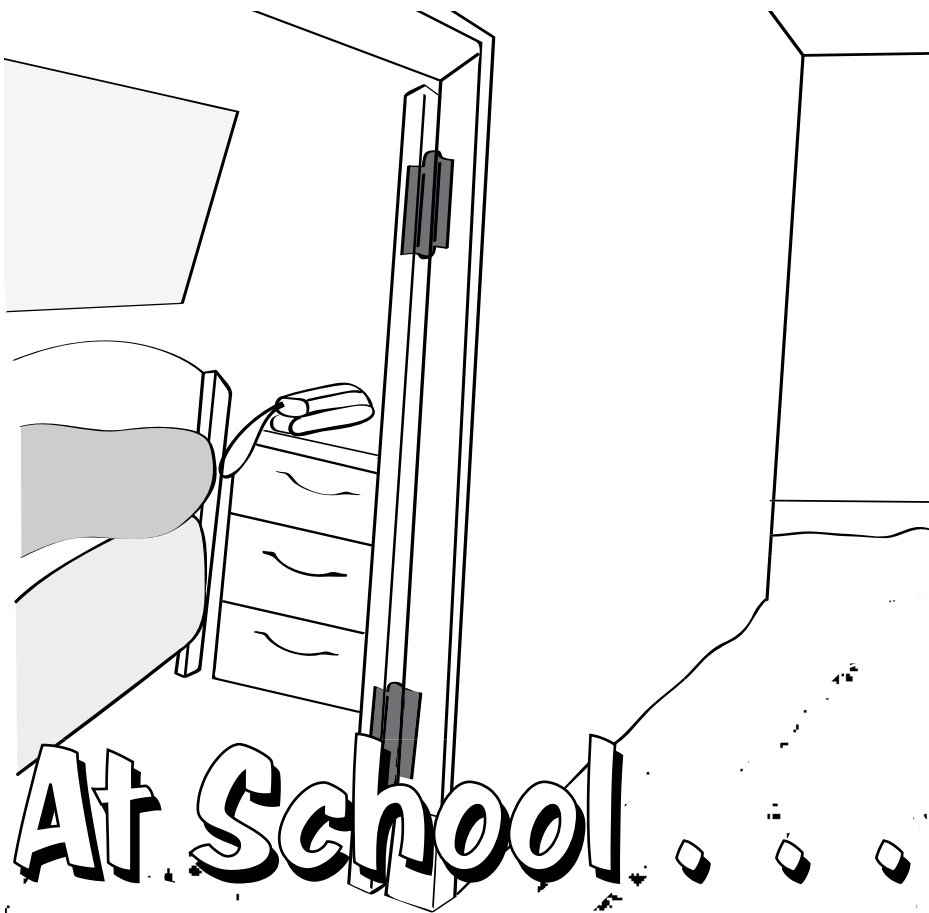
When you hear the Tornado **Watch**, keep your eye on the sky for signs of a possible tornado and listen to the radio for the latest weather news from the National Weather Service.



Go to the basement or shelter if you have one. Get under a heavy workbench or the stairs.



If there is no basement, go to a closet on an inside wall, a bathroom, or hallway on the lowest level of the house.

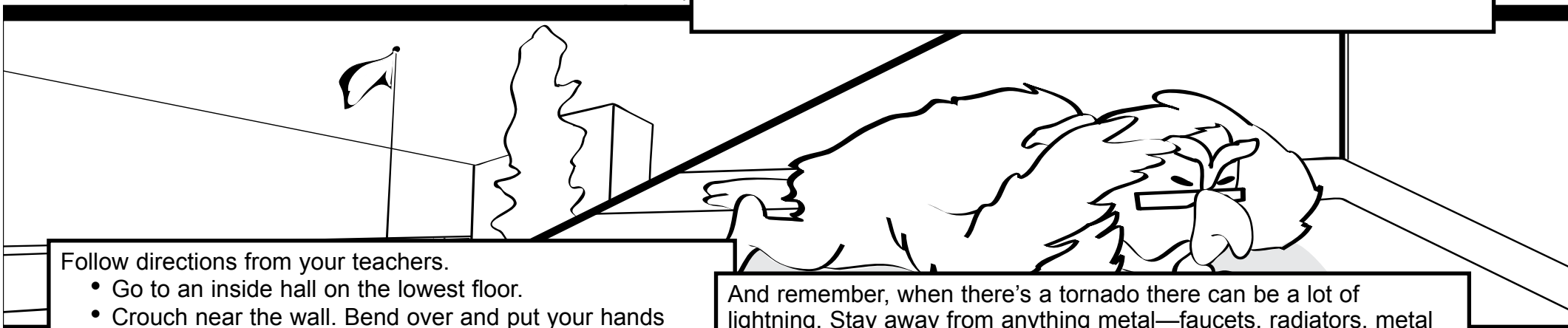


## Outside . . .

- Immediately seek shelter in a nearby sturdy building, shelter or basement.
- If you're caught outside, crouch low in a ditch or crouch near a strong building.
- Cover your head with your hands.

## In a car or truck...

- Immediately go to a nearby sturdy building, shelter or basement.
- If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have the following options as a last resort:
  - Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
  - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car, and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.
  - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car, and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.
- Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances.



Follow directions from your teachers.

- Go to an inside hall on the lowest floor.
- Crouch near the wall. Bend over and put your hands on the back of your head.
- Keep away from glass windows and stay out of big rooms like the gym, cafeteria or auditorium.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or a battery powered radio for warnings.

And remember, when there's a tornado there can be a lot of lightning. Stay away from anything metal—faucets, radiators, metal sinks and tubs.

Tornadoes are scary. They pack a lot of energy, enough to blow down a whole town! But you can live through a tornado. Be smart. Know what to do and do it!

# Owlie's True Tornado Facts

In Texas, a mother huddled in an inside closet with six children. A tornado ripped off the roof of their house, tore down one wall and destroyed their garage. But all seven people in the closet weren't even scratched.

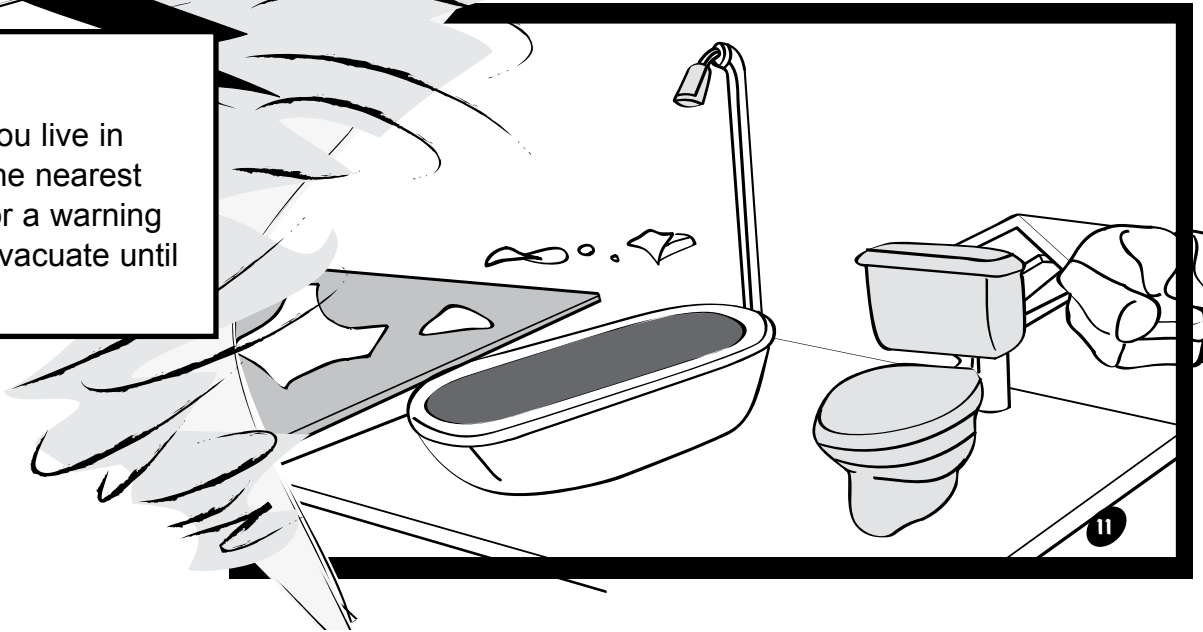
In 1931, a tornado in Minnesota lifted an 83-ton railroad train with 117 passengers and carried it for 80 feet.

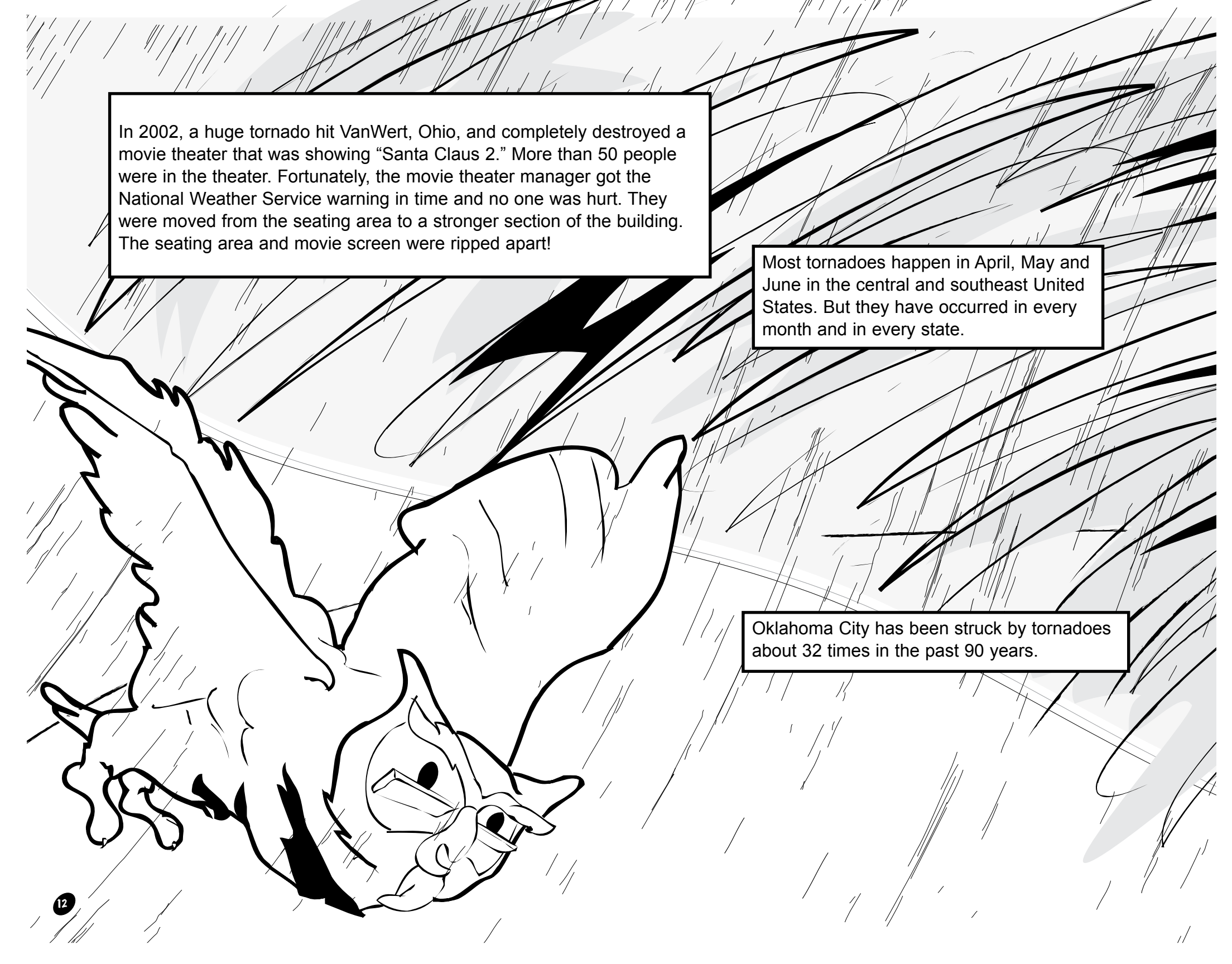
Tornadoes are rare in many parts of the United States, but they have occurred in all 50 states.

## In a Mobile Home or Trailer

Mobile homes and trailers are not safe during tornadoes. If you live in a mobile home or trailer you should plan in advance where the nearest shelter or sturdy structure is located. If a tornado is spotted or a warning issued for your area, GET OUT! Act on your plan to safely evacuate until the danger passes.

In Mississippi, a mother and her daughter sought shelter in their bathtub. After the tornado hit, the only room left was the bathroom.

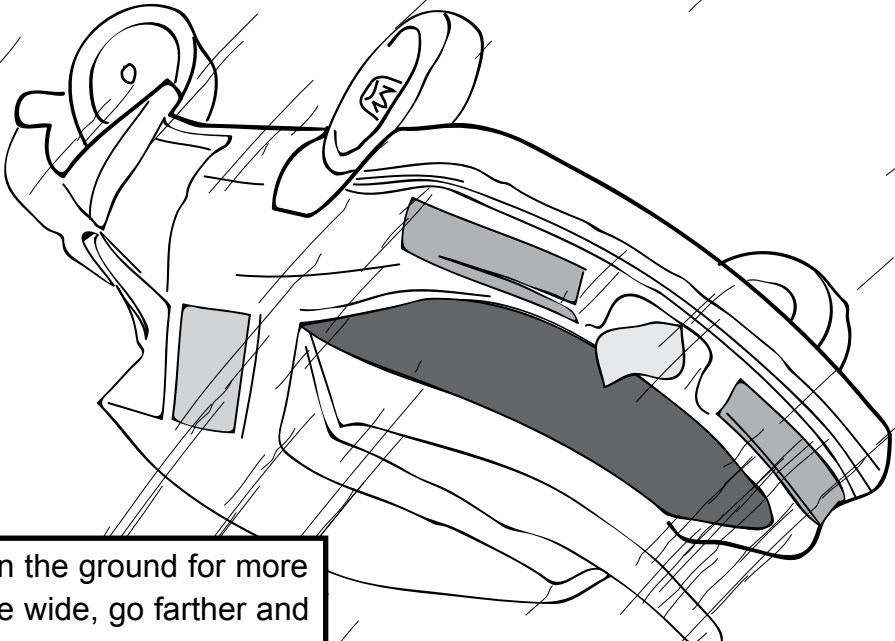




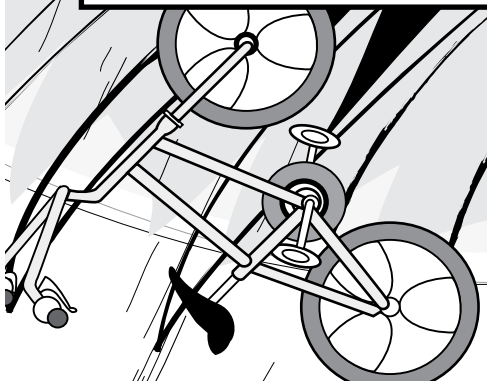
In 2002, a huge tornado hit VanWert, Ohio, and completely destroyed a movie theater that was showing "Santa Claus 2." More than 50 people were in the theater. Fortunately, the movie theater manager got the National Weather Service warning in time and no one was hurt. They were moved from the seating area to a stronger section of the building. The seating area and movie screen were ripped apart!

Most tornadoes happen in April, May and June in the central and southeast United States. But they have occurred in every month and in every state.

Oklahoma City has been struck by tornadoes about 32 times in the past 90 years.



Most tornadoes are narrow and seldom stay on the ground for more than 15 miles. But the wider ones, up to a mile wide, go farther and are the biggest killers.



One town, Codell, Kansas, was struck three times: In 1916, 1917 and 1918—each time on May 20.

In 2011, an EF5 tornado, with winds over 200 mph, the most dangerous kind, struck Joplin, MO, with winds more than 200 miles per hour. The tornado killed more than 140 people and destroyed more than 8,000 homes as well as 300 businesses, including a hospital.