



What Is Kelvin?

Astronomers generally adopt the Kelvin temperature scale, named after Lord (William Thompson) Kelvin, a 19th century Scottish physicist and mathematician. A difference of one degree on the Kelvin (K) scale is the same as for the Celsius (or centigrade) scale. However, the zero-point is defined to be absolute zero, the coldest possible temperature and the point where atomic and molecular motion ceases. [There are no negative temperatures, or readings "below zero," on the Kelvin scale.] Note that no degree symbol (°) is used for the Kelvin scale.

	Kelvin (K)	Celsius (°C)	Fahrenheit (°F)
Boiling Point of Water	373	100	212
Healthy Human Body	310	37	99
Room Temperature	295	22	72
Freezing Point of Water & Melting Point of Ice	273	0	32
Deep Space	35	-238	-396
Spitzer operating temperature	5	-268	-450
Absolute Zero	0	-273	-460