

# **Gabriel David Fahrenheit Encyclopedia Article**

## **Gabriel David Fahrenheit**

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# Gabriel David Fahrenheit

**1686-1736**

German physicist and instrument maker who invented the mercury thermometer (in 1714) and developed the Fahrenheit temperature scale. The thermometer, however, was not generally adopted as a clinical instrument until the 1860s. Because the zero point on Fahrenheit's original scale was the temperature of an ice-salt mixture, the freezing point of water on his scale is  $32^{\circ}$ , normal body temperature is  $98.6^{\circ}$ , and the boiling point of water is  $212^{\circ}$ . Although the Fahrenheit scale is still commonly used in the United States, scientists and most other nations have adopted the Celsius scale.