



Field Trips: Know Before You Go

Thank you for your interest in visiting San Antonio Zoo and joining us in securing a future for wildlife! Field Trips to San Antonio Zoo can inspire a student's love of nature for a lifetime and are a wonderful way to take learning outside of the classroom.

This document is intended to answer frequently asked questions about the day of your visit to the zoo. Field trips must be registered at least 10 days in advance to secure the school discounted rate. If you have not yet registered, please visit our website: <https://sazoo.org/education-programs/field-trips/>.

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School Group Expectations

- Students must stay with chaperones.
- Stay on designated paths, never cross barriers.
- Walk instead of run.
- Place trash and recycling in the appropriate bins. Conservation is a group effort.
- Show respect for the animals. Do not yell, tap, hit, or kick animal habitats.
- Keep your hands, body, and objects away from animals and their habitats.
- Notify zoo staff if you accidentally drop any items in a habitat.
- Notify a zoo staff member if you get separated from your group.

Chaperones: Teachers and Parent Volunteers

How many chaperones do I need?

- Please plan for 1 chaperone for every 10 students.
- Chaperones are expected to model and encourage good behavior as listed above.

Can chaperones buy tickets separately from my group?

- Chaperones may purchase admission at the same discounted rate as your students and teachers. They must enter the zoo with your group to receive the discounted admission rate.
- Chaperones that arrive after your group has entered the zoo must purchase full price zoo admission.
- *Please note: Title I Funding covers admission for students and school staff only. Parent volunteers may purchase discounted admission tickets on the day of your visit and must enter the zoo with your group.*

Where do chaperones park if they are not arriving on a bus?

- Chaperones who are driving their personal vehicles may park in the Train Depot parking lot, near Starbucks.

Can chaperones use Memberships to cover admission for the field trip?

- San Antonio Zoo Memberships may be used for zoo admission for Self-Guided Tours but do not cover the cost of staff-led Education Programs, such as Zoo Connection Classes and Wild Walks.

What if my chaperones are late?

- Chaperones that are not able to enter with the group must purchase full price admission at the zoo's main entrance.
- The zoo is not able to hold tickets for chaperones that are late.

Arrival and Check-in

Due to upcoming improvement projects, arrival and check-in procedures are subject to change. Please refer to our website <https://sazoo.org/> for the most up-to-date information. We appreciate your flexibility and patience!

Where will the buses unload?

- Arrive at the traffic circle near the front of the zoo. Please be prepared to unload the buses quickly. On busy field trip days, staff will provide direction to groups and buses.
- The address of the zoo is: 3903 N St Mary's St, San Antonio, TX 78212
- Please do not block entrances, driveways, roads, VIA bus stops, or pedestrian paths.

Where will the buses park?

- Bus parking is available on Tuleta Dr. (under Highway-281) and on N. St. Mary's Street, between Sunken Gardens and Augies BBQ restaurant.

Who needs to check-in?

- One lead teacher/coordinator needs to check-in with staff inside the Education Center. They will need:
 1. **Final count of students**
 2. **Final count of adults** included on the school invoice
 3. **Final payment** if payment was not made in advance

Where will we enter the zoo?

- Once the lead teacher/coordinator has checked in, your group will enter the zoo at the Education Center gate.
- Your group is welcome to enter once your group has checked in and everyone is ready.

Should we bring our lunches with us into the zoo?

- Yes, please bring your lunches when you unload buses and enter the zoo.

School Lunches

Can we bring our own lunches?

- Schools may bring sack lunches into the zoo in ice chests, boxes, or student backpacks.
 - o Please label all items with the school or group name.
- Prepared or catered food is **not** permitted, including pizza and fast food.
 - o Starbucks food and drinks are permitted.

Where do we store our lunches when we enter the zoo?

- Lunches in labelled coolers or boxes can be stored around (*not on top of*) picnic tables located throughout the zoo.
 - o All picnic areas are first come-first served, please be prepared to share spaces.

Will the zoo transport our lunches for us?

- No. Your group is responsible for transporting lunches.
 - o Arrange to bring wagons or rolling coolers to make transport easier, if desired.

Where do we eat lunch?

- Your group may eat lunch at any outdoor picnic area in the zoo.
- Please do not place coolers on tables to reserve them.
- Help the zoo stay clean by placing recycling and trash in the appropriate receptacles.

Can we purchase lunch from the zoo?

- Yes, individuals can get lunch from any open dining location.
- School group catering options are available with 2 weeks of notice. Please contact the Education Center, education@sazoo.org, for more information and a menu of options.

Exploring the Zoo

How long does it take to explore the zoo?

- It takes approximately 2.5 to 3 hours to walk the entire zoo.
 - o Download a map to plan which areas to explore here: <https://sazoo.org/map/>

Where are the animals?

- Animals may have access to both their indoor and outdoor areas, and they might not always be visible.
- We strive to provide our animals with naturalistic habitats that allow them to behave as they would in their natural habitats. Encourage your students to look closely for animals that might be resting and using their camouflage to blend in.
- Upcoming construction projects may impact the visibility of some of our animal habitats. We appreciate your flexibility and patience as we make improvements!

Can students bring items like backpacks?

- Backpacks are permitted inside the zoo.

Can students explore the zoo on their own?

- All students under the age of 16 must be always accompanied by an adult.

Exiting the Zoo

Where will we exit the zoo?

- All school groups will exit through the Education Center gate.
- Please ensure that your *entire group* is gathered and ready to exit before approaching the exit gate. If zoo staff is not at the gate, please ring the Education Center doorbell for assistance.
- You may wish to ask your group to meet at the Great Lawn before exiting the zoo together.

If parents are checking out their students from my group, where will they exit?

- If you are checking students out to their parents from the zoo, and your entire group is not ready to leave, please instruct them to leave through the zoo's main exit.
- Those wishing to return to the zoo the same day must get a hand stamp at the main exit and *re-enter the zoo at the zoo's main entrance*.

When should we call our buses for pickup?

- Call your buses when your *entire group* is ready to immediately board your buses.
- Buses at the traffic circle *must* be actively loading.
- On busy field trip days, zoo staff may assist with school group departures.

Gift Shops, Concessions, and Additional Attractions

When are gift shops, concession, and additional attractions open?

- The hours of operation for gift shops, concessions, and additional attractions vary; please refer to the zoo's hours of operation for more information <https://sazoo.org/hours/>.
- If your visit is outside of the zoo's regular operating hours - such as during School Safari Days - gift shops, concessions, and other attractions will not be open until the zoo opens.

Do students need to be chaperoned inside gift shops, concessions areas, and additional attractions?

- Yes, an adult must always accompany students.

Where can I find more information about additional attractions?

- Find more information about the Project Selva 4-D Theater, Zoo Train, Zootenial Carousel, Giraffe Feeding, Lory Landing and all other attractions here: <https://sazoo.org/behind-the-scenes-experiences/>

What if I need to rent a wheelchair, stroller, or electric scooter?

- Wheelchair, stroller, and electric scooter rentals are available at Safari Gear at the zoo's main entrance. Learn more about rentals here: <https://sazoo.org/guest-info/>
- Due to upcoming construction projects where rentals are available is subject to change. Please refer to our website for the most up-to-date information.