



## Field Trips Frequently Asked Questions

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?

- Yes! Before your scheduled trip, teachers will receive a link for parents to use to purchase discounted admission to accompany your group on your field trip. Discounted admission for parents is only available through the link provided to teachers and can only be used on the date of the field trip.
- *Please note: Title I Funding covers admission for students and school staff only. Parent volunteers may purchase discounted admission tickets ahead of their visit using a link provided to teachers.*

#### 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.

### Arrival and Check-in

#### Where will the buses unload?

- By default, please plan to arrive and unload at the zoo's Group Entrance. On busy days, drop-off may also take place at the Train Depot parking lot, located next to Starbucks. Zoo staff will confirm your drop off location one to two weeks in advance of your visit. Please be prepared to unload buses quickly.

- 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, or accessible walkways.

#### **Where will the buses park?**

- Bus parking is available on Tuleta Dr. (under Highway-281), across from the Group Entrance.

#### **Who needs to check-in?**

- One lead teacher/coordinator needs to check-in with zoo staff.

They will need:

1. Actual count of students
2. Actual count of adults the school is paying for
3. # of buses
4. Estimated departure time

#### **Where will we enter the zoo?**

- Once the lead teacher/coordinator has checked in, your group will enter the zoo at either the Group Entrance or the Education Center, depending on total attendance for the day. Zoo staff will confirm your entry location one to two weeks in advance of your visit.
- Please bring your lunches when you unload buses and enter the zoo.
  - The zoo does not provide assistance or wagons for transporting lunches.

### **School Lunches**

#### **Can we bring our own lunches?**

- Schools may bring sack lunches into the zoo in ice chests, boxes, or student backpacks.
  - Please label all items with the school or group name.
- Prepared or catered food is **not** permitted, including pizza and fast food.
  - 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.
  - Saving or reserving picnic tables is not allowed.
  - 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.
  - 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](mailto: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.
  - 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 and ongoing 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 same place that the group entered the zoo. Zoo staff will confirm your exit and pickup location one to two weeks in advance of your visit.
- Please ensure that your *entire group* is gathered and ready to exit before approaching the exit gate.

### **When should we call our buses for pickup?**

- Call your buses when your *entire group* is ready to immediately board your buses.
- Buses at pick up locations 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, concessions, 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/zoo-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/experiences/explore/>

### **Are discounted rates available for any additional attractions?**

- Yes, discounted rates are available for the Project Selva 4-D Theater, Zoo Train, Zootenial Carousel, and the Butterfly Rainforest. Please contact the Education Center for more information.

Email [education@sazoo.org](mailto:education@sazoo.org)

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

- Wheelchair, stroller, and electric scooter rentals are available at the zoo entrance. Learn more about rentals here: <https://sazoo.org/zoo-faqs/>