

## School Programs Frequently Asked Questions

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## Before You Apply

### What field trips are available?

The Nat offers field trips to the Museum and classes available to come to your school. These are available for formal, teacher-led school classes during the school calendar year. Please review available **Field Trips** and **Classes at Your School** online. The Nat also offers **Guided Nature Hikes** at locations throughout San Diego County.

If you are a summer camp, afterschool program, church, and/or club, you may qualify for discounted rates offered for **Group Visits**.

### How far in advance should I submit my booking request?

All visits must be booked at least 2-weeks in advance. Guided Nature Hikes must be booked at least 4-weeks in advance. **Requesting a booking** early in the year gives you the best selection of possible dates and programs.

Field trips are not guaranteed until you receive a field trip confirmation email. Once the field trip is confirmed the visit is subject to cancellation fees. Please be sure that your field trip has been approved by your school and/or district prior to submitting a booking request.

### What will I need to submit a booking request?

You will need to know what field trip you'd like, the number of classes/students participating, your first and second choice dates and times, and film preference (if visiting the Museum). We also recommend checking your school's calendar for assemblies, parent-teacher conferences, holidays, or other potential conflicts.

If visiting the Museum, we also recommend checking bus availability prior to submitting a request.

### What days are available for field trips?

Field trips to the Museum are available Monday–Friday, except for holidays and **Residents Free Days**, and availability varies based on field trip type. All dates are booked on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Classes at Your School are available Tuesday–Thursday for Kindergarten through 5th grade and Fridays for Pre-Kindergarten classes based on availability.

Guided Nature Hikes are available Monday–Friday for 2nd through 12th grade, limited to one booking per week, based on availability.

### How much does it cost?

Prices vary based on the field trip type. Field trips to the Museum start at \$8 per student. It is an additional \$1 per student for an exhibition tour and an additional \$2 per student for a facilitated science class. Access to all general exhibitions and films are included.

Classes at Your School are \$125 for the first class per day and \$75 for the second class per day.

Guided Nature Hikes are currently offered for free on a first-come, first-serve basis sponsored by generous funding from Subaru of America and the Canyoneers.

Museum memberships and other discounts or admission passes will not be accepted as payment for field trips.

### Do you offer funding for Title 1 schools?

Yes. Our Museum Access Funds are available to qualifying Title I schools for formal, teacher-led school classes during the school calendar year and booked by the teacher. Funding is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is limited for the year. Funding **must** be requested at the time of booking. Please email [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) or call 619.255.0349 for availability.

### How many students can visit on the same day?

There is no student limit for self-guided visits as long as the date is available. Exhibition tours, facilitated science classes, Classes at Your School, and Guided Nature Hikes are limited at up to two classes per day. You may need to book multiple dates to accommodate all classes; classes cannot be combined.

### How many chaperones should I bring?

Please refer to the following chaperone requirements for field trips to the Museum and for Guided Nature Hikes. Entrance to the Museum is contingent upon meeting the required chaperone ratio. If your class requires 1:1 aides, please let us know at booking.

**Pre-K to 8th Grade:** 1 adult per 8 students required, 1 adult per 3 students allowed at no charge

**9th–12th Grade:** 1 adult per 12 students required, 1 adult per 3 students allowed at no charge

**College:** 1 faculty per 20 students required, 1 faculty per 12 students allowed at no charge

Teachers do count as adults. Chaperones are expected to follow the Chaperone Guidelines provided in the confirmation materials. We do not allow there to be more adults than students on a field trip and siblings or other children not in the class visiting for the field trip are not permitted.

All chaperone ratios will be recalculated at check in based on the final number of students and adults in attendance.

**NOTE:** All facilitated science classes require 4 adults. *Water and Human Impact* classes require 5 adults. Classes at Your School do not require additional adult volunteers.

### Can I bring additional chaperones?

Yes. However, any additional adults must pay the additional chaperone rate. Please email [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) or call 619.255.0349 to inquire about additional chaperones rates.

All chaperone ratios will be recalculated at check in based on the final number of students and adults in attendance and may be subject to additional chaperone fees. Museum memberships and other discounts or admission passes will not be accepted as payment for field trips.

**NOTE:** We do not allow there to be more adults than students on a field trip and siblings or other children not in the class visiting for the field trip are not permitted.

### My student and chaperone numbers are an estimate; will I be able to change them?

Yes. You can adjust your numbers at any time including the day of your field trip.

In advance, email [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) or call 619.255.0349 with your adjusted numbers. When you arrive, we will expect the final number of students and adults in attendance to calculate the final balance due. All chaperone ratios will be recalculated at check in based on the final number of students and adults in attendance and may be subject to additional chaperone fees.

### What if I need to reschedule or cancel a field trip?

Please let us know as soon as possible if you need to reschedule or cancel a visit. A field trip will be rescheduled if possible and may be subject to cancellation fees.

Once a field trip has been confirmed, there is a \$25 cancellation fee for visits cancelled with more than one week's notice prior to the visit date. Schools cancelling late, after Museum business hours on the 7th day before the visit, or not arriving for their visit will be invoiced for the full amount of the balance due that is noted on the booking confirmation.

Cancellations are not official until you receive written confirmation by email from the Education Department.

## In Preparation of Visit

### I can't find my confirmation packet, what do I do?

To receive a copy of your confirmation packet, email [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) or call 619.255.0349.

### What kind of payment do you accept? What if our visit numbers have changed?

The Museum accepts cash, credit cards, and checks. Checks should be made payable to San Diego Natural History Museum.

For visits to the Museum, full payment is due upon arrival in a single transaction for all adults and students. We will calculate the final balance due on arrival based on the actual number of students and adults in attendance.

For Classes at Your School, full payment is due one week prior to the program date. Educators cannot accept payments on the day of the program.

If you've booked multiple field trip types or dates, each field trip **must** be paid separately.

**NOTE:** Museum memberships and other discounts or admission passes will not be accepted. Member benefits apply to individuals and families, but as the field trip is on behalf of the school itself, the benefits do not extend to field trips or group entry.

### **Can I pay for my visit in advance?**

Yes. Advance payments may be done over the phone by credit card or by mail with a check.

**NOTE:** If you'd like to pay in advance for a field trip to the Museum, there are no refunds for absent students or chaperones.

### **Can my school and/or district send a purchase order?**

Yes. Purchase orders may be emailed to [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) with the school name, program title, and date of the program. The Nat is unable to accept purchase orders through fax.

As each field trip order must be paid separately, we recommend creating separate POs for each visit date.

**NOTE:** For groups with POs, we will send the invoice to the booking teacher for payment after your visit. Payment must be made within 30 days of your visit.

### **Can we bring our own lunches to the Museum?**

Yes. There are cubbies available to store lunches, however, school groups must take lunch outside the Museum. We recommend you picnic on the lawn where you entered, but you are welcome to picnic anywhere in the Park. In the event of rain, there are covered walkways on El Prado, the main walkway of the Park, and next to the Jr. Theatre.

The Flying Squirrel café tables are reserved for café patrons only and cannot accommodate school groups.

**NOTE:** The lunch cubbies are not secured or locked. We do not recommend leaving valuables in the cubbies. The Nat is not responsible for lost or damaged property.

### **Something has come up, can I reschedule my visit?**

Yes. Please let us know as soon as possible. A field trip will be rescheduled if possible and may be subject to cancellation fees.

We cannot reschedule with less than a week's notice, you will need to cancel the visit and re-book. There is a \$25 cancellation fee for visits cancelled with more than one week's notice prior to the visit date. Schools cancelling late, after Museum business hours on the 7th day before the visit, or not arriving for their visit will be invoiced for the full amount of the balance due that is noted on the booking confirmation.

Cancellations are not official until you receive written confirmation by email from the Education Department.

### **Can I visit the Museum for free to prepare?**

Yes. Bring your teacher ID to an admission desk to receive a complimentary admission ticket for a teacher preview visit. The ticket provides access to all general exhibits and access to the films can be purchased for \$5.

**NOTE:** This discount is available for the teacher only.

### **Do you have educational resources available?**

Yes. For additional Education Resources, please visit <http://www.sdnhm.org/education/education-resources/>.

## **FAQs for Your Visit to the Museum**

### **What do I need to know about check in?**

When you arrive, plan to send the booking/lead teacher into the Museum to check in and pay for your group. Have the rest of the group stay outside and break into their individual chaperone groups.

Bring a copy of your confirmation packet to your assigned entrance point, know the exact number of adults and students, and have your payment ready. To complete check in, you'll provide the final numbers, pay, sign a check in confirmation, and receive chaperone admission stickers.

### **What if we're running late?**

Please plan to arrive at your assigned arrival time and plan extra time for traffic and/or finding parking in the park. If you have booked an exhibition tour or facilitated science class, your first class session may be shortened to compensate for the delay. If you have booked a film time, late entry may not be possible. Please be sure that your entire group is present at check in.

If you know that you'll be late, please call 877.946.7797 to let us know.

### **Where can we eat lunch?**

We recommend you picnic on the lawn where you entered, but you are welcome to picnic anywhere in the Park. While The Nat does not have lunch tables available, there are cubbies available to store lunches.

The Flying Squirrel café tables are reserved for café patrons only and cannot accommodate school groups.

**NOTE:** The lunch cubbies are not secured or locked. We do not recommend leaving valuables in the cubbies. The Nat is not responsible for lost or damaged property.

### **Are there any exhibitions that we won't be able to see?**

Yes. School groups are not permitted in *The Backyard*. This space is designed for children five and under and limited to a 25 person capacity.

School groups are welcome to view all other permanent exhibitions in the Museum.

### **Can we take photographs?**

Yes. There are no restrictions on photography in the Atrium, *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*, *Fossil Mysteries*, *Skulls*, or *Water: A California Story*.

Flash photography is prohibited inside *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science* and *Unshelved: Cool Stuff from Storage*.

Photography is prohibited in the Photo Gallery.

### Can we see a film in the Giant-Screen Theater?

All films are included with your admission to the Museum. However, we ask that all films are booked in advance. If a film is not listed on your itinerary, please email [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) or call 619.255.0349 to add a film.

The teacher's choice 10 AM film plays only when it is requested during registration and it is scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### Can we exit and re-enter the Museum on the day of the visit?

Yes. You are welcome to come and go from the general Museum after you check in for breaks, lunch, or visits to multiple museums. Please be sure that all chaperones are wearing their chaperone stickers and that all students remain with their assigned chaperone.

## FAQs for Classes at Your School

### Should I tell the front office that you're coming?

Yes. Please provide the date, time, and location of your program to your school office.

Have them direct the Museum Educator to the proper parking location and presentation location. A flatbed cart will be helpful for transporting exhibits.

### Does the room need to be set up in a specific way?

Yes. All programs must take place in a designated, uninterrupted indoor space. A classroom is preferred. Each class on the same day **must** take place in the same room.

Please arrange your room based on the guidelines detailed in your confirmation materials.

### Do I need additional adults/parent volunteers?

No. Additional adult volunteers are not required for Classes at Your School. We do require that a school employee remains in the room at all times.

### Can I change the program times?

No. The classes are available from 9:30–10:30 AM and 10:45–11:45 AM. Please arrange lunches and recesses around those times.

If you would like to inquire about a change of time, it **must** be requested in advance at the time of booking. We cannot change the times once the visit has been confirmed or on the date of the visit.

### How far away can our school be from the Museum?

An additional mileage fee will be added to schools more than 25 miles from the Museum. The Nat will not travel more than 40 miles away from the Museum.

## FAQs for Guided Nature Hikes

### Are Guided Nature Hikes available all year?

No. Guided Nature Hikes are available October–May and must be booked at least 4 weeks' in advance.

Guided Nature Hikes are available Monday–Friday at 10 AM and/or 11:15 AM and are limited to one booking per week.

### **How many students can participate in hikes?**

We require a minimum of 15 students per 60-minute hike and a maximum of 32 students per 60-minute hike. Students in grades 2nd–12th may participate in hikes.

### **How much does it cost?**

Guided Nature Hikes are currently offered for free on a first-come, first-serve basis sponsored by generous funding from Subaru of America and the Canyoneers. Funding is limited for the year.

**NOTE:** Once the hike is confirmed, the booking is subject to cancellation fees.

### **What locations are available for hikes? Can I ask about a different location?**

Hikes are available in multiple **locations** throughout the county.

If you don't see a hike listed near your school, contact the Education Department directly at [reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org) or call 619.255.0349 to inquire about your preferred location.

### **Can I change the hike times?**

No. The hikes are available from 10–11 AM and 11:15 AM–12:15 PM. Please plan to lunch around those hike times.

If you request a change of time, it **must** be requested in advance at the time of booking. We cannot change the times once the hike has been confirmed or on the date of the visit.

## **Contact us**

### **Have a question not addressed above?**

Contact us at:

[reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org](mailto:reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org)

619.255.0349

### **Ready to book?**

Fill out an online request form: <https://www.sdnhm.org/education/school-programs/registration/>