



Safari Camp: Summer Safari & Safari Mini-Camp

Policies and Procedures

Denver Zoo Safari Camps include the following types of activities: up-close animal encounters, zoo exploration, engineering-build challenges, games, experiences such as train and carousel rides, City Park field trips, group gatherings of multiple camp classes with songs, skits, or science experiences, behind-the-scenes tours, encounters with zookeepers and other zoo staff, and more!

Our Camp informal education philosophy is based on best practices in education, including a focus on inquiry-based learning and opportunities to connect with animals and nature. That means guiding questions that campers will try to solve throughout the day, a section after lunch for more self-directed learning, and time for “further exploration.” (This time is something that is determined more by the students as they decide how they would like to expand upon what they’ve done that day. This may include exploring more of the zoo, playing an outdoor game, exploring animal pelts and skulls [“biofacts”], or testing prototypes of projects they’ve been building). Computers or tablets in classrooms allow instructors to access additional information, photos or videos on the fly, and to help kids discover answers on their own to questions that arise throughout the course of a day.

RESERVATION POLICIES

Ages and Abilities Accepted

Campers of **all ability levels** are welcome to register for Safari Camp. We work with parents to make camp accessible to children with varying needs, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and provide reasonable accommodations to our programs to make them accessible.

Summer Safari

Full-Day camps are offered to children entering Kindergarten - 8th Grade the following Fall school year.

Half-Day camps are offered to children entering Preschool - Kindergarten the following Fall school year (*campers must turn 4 on or before their start date*).

Fall, Winter, and Spring Mini-Camps

Full-Day camps are offered to children Preschool – 3rd Grade of the current school year (*campers must turn 4 on or before their start date*).

Procedure for Registration

Parents/Guardians must register their own child to participate in Safari Camp. Parents/Guardians must use their own Denver Zoo Membership Account to receive the Safari Camp Membership Discount. At the time of registration, parents/guardians must provide the following for their child:

- Child’s full name, birth month/year, and grade
- Registering parent/guardian’s full name, email address, home address, and phone number
- Any additional authorized pick-ups’ names, relationship to child, and phone numbers
- Child’s history of drug reactions and allergies, special diets needed, current medications, and any special considerations/accommodations for special needs

Campers are **not allowed** to attend more than one camp with the **same title**. This prevents children from attending camp where they repeat the same curriculum and activities. If campers register for a duplicate class, they are subject to a \$50 cancellation or transfer fee for Summer Safari Camp (\$10 fee for Mini-Camp). Note: The only exceptions to this rule are multi-day series of Mini-Camps, such as Happy, Healthy Zoo, Days 1, 2, and 3.

Fees and Cancellation Policy

Full payment is due at time of registration. A full refund is given if Denver Zoo cancels a camp for any reason.

Summer Safari

Cancellations and transfers must be requested via email to guestcare@denverzoo.org at least 15 business days before the start of your child’s camp date, and do incur accommodation fees of \$50 each. Within 14 business days, all sales are final.

Fall, Winter, and Spring Safari Mini-Camp

Cancellations and transfers must be requested via email to guestcare@denverzoo.org at least 5 business days before the start of your child’s camp date, and do incur accommodation fees of \$10 each. Within 4 business days, all sales are final.

Medication Administration Permission Form

If your child requires emergency, prescription, or over-the-counter medication during camp, a parent/guardian and the child’s physician must complete and submit a **Medication Administration Permission Form two weeks** prior to the start of the child’s camp session. Any medication for a chronic illness such as asthma, allergies, or diabetes must be accompanied by a Care Plan written and signed by the child’s physician. **Your camper(s) will not be permitted into camp until all information is filled out correctly and completely.** Upon review of your camper’s forms, it may be necessary to meet with the parent/guardian to develop a Health Plan.



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Summer Safari Camps are five-day/week-long camps offered June through August (*a shorter four-day camp week is offered the week of July 4th, in recognition of Independence Day*). Safari Mini-Camps are single-day camps offered during Fall, Winter, and Spring breaks. See full schedule on our [website](#). Full-Day camps run from 9:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M. Half-day morning camps run from 9:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M. Half-day afternoon camps run from 1:00 P.M.–4:00 P.M.

Please arrive on time for your child's camp. Arriving after camp begins could result in missed tours, animal encounters, or other missed activities as well as late arrival fees. Please plan ahead, as all parents/guardians must sign their child in and out of the camp program **in person**.

Daily Participant Drop-off

Drop-off is at 9:00 A.M. for full-day and half-day morning camps (1:00 P.M. for half-day afternoon camps). Drop-off is in your child's classroom in the Gates Education Center (or in the tents just outside the Gates Center) through the Special Programs Entrance, Gate 1. This entrance is located directly up the steps from the elevators on the second level (P2) of the parking garage. Drop-off ends, and the Special Programs Entrance closes, at 9:15 A.M. (or 1:15 P.M.). Any late arrivals will need to go through the Zoo's Main Entrance and a late arrival accommodation fee will be collected for each child. **Please plan for drop-off on the first day taking a few extra minutes** as instructors need to verify medical info, authorized pick-ups, special instructions, etc.

Daily Participant Pick-up

Pick-up is at 4:00 P.M. for full-day and half-day afternoon camps (12:00 P.M. for half-day morning camps). Pick-up is in your child's classroom in the Gates Education Center (or in the tents just outside the Gates Center) through the Special Programs Entrance, Gate 1. Pick-up ends, and the Special Programs Entrance closes, at 4:15 P.M. (or 12:15 P.M.). Unless a child is registered for Late Care, he/she must be picked up by 4:15 P.M. If he/she is not picked up by 4:15 P.M., Camp Staff will attempt to reach parents/guardians/authorized pick-ups at the numbers provided. A Camp Staff member will supervise the camper until an authorized pick-up person arrives, or if there is availability in Late Care, the camper will be automatically moved to Late Care, and the parent/guardian will be charged \$10 per instance.

Campers will only be released to those persons whom parents/guardians have identified by name (at registration, in person, or over-the-phone to a Camp staff member or the Denver Zoo Guest Care Center) and added to the authorized pick-up list. **Photo ID is REQUIRED EVERY DAY at pick-up.** If a non-authorized person attempts to pick-up a camper, Camp staff will attempt to contact parents at all numbers provided. If no contact is made, the person will be asked to wait until confirmation is secured from parents/guardians. In circumstances where the person attempting to have the child released is behaving aggressively or inappropriately, he/she will be referred to Denver Zoo security, and/or police will be called.

Camper Absences

As Safari Camp programs are a recreational and elective activity, parents/guardians may choose to stop sending their child to camp at any time. Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with camp instructors and administrators about planned or unplanned absences, but it is not required.

Early and Late Care

Your child **MUST be pre-registered** to attend Early and/or Late Care. **Early and Late Care are NOT extensions of camp**; all camp activities take place 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Participants in Early and Late Care will have free time, play games, do crafts, build with reusable materials, and may periodically watch movies. All movies are MPAA rated G or PG.

- **If your child is registered for Early Care**, you and your child may enter through the Zoo's Main Entrance between 7:30 A.M. and 8:45 A.M. Guest Services or Security staff will direct you to the Grasslands Studio in the Gates Education Center to complete the drop-off process.
- **If your child is registered for Late Care**, you may enter through the Zoo's Main Entrance between 4:15 and 5:00pm. Guest Services or Security staff will direct you to the Grasslands Studio in the Gates Education Center to complete the pick-up process.

It is mandatory that all children be picked up by 5:00 P.M. Parents/guardians are asked to notify Camp Staff if they are running late. After 5:00 P.M., parents/guardians, emergency contacts, and authorized pick-ups will be notified that the child needs to be picked up as soon as possible, and an accommodation fee of \$10 for every 15 minutes will be charged. If no one can be contacted by 6:00 P.M., the Denver Police Department will be contacted and custody of the child will move to the Denver Police Department.



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Late Arrival/Early Pick-up

With advance notice, children may be dropped off or picked up during lunch time (12:00–1:00 P.M.) at no charge, as campers are always in a pre-defined area during the lunch hour. At other times of the day, campers may be anywhere within the 80 acre Zoo property (or on a field trip to City Park), making late arrivals and early departures more complicated and resulting in an accommodation fee.

Accommodation Fees:

- Dropping off after camp start time (after 9:15 A.M) \$5 /instance/camper
- Picking up before camp end time (before 4:00 P.M.) \$5 /instance/camper
- Children not picked by 5:00 P.M. \$10 /every 15 minutes late

If a camper arrives late and their group is out within the Zoo or in City Park, Camp Administrative Staff will check the camper in, supervise them, and take them to meet their group. If a camper needs to leave early while their group is out within the Zoo or in City Park, an Administrative Staff Member will pick the camper up from their group, supervise them, and check the camper out to their parent/guardian/authorized pick-up. Authorized pick-ups will **not be allowed** to drop off late campers **directly** to their rooms, nor pick up campers early **directly** from their rooms.

What to Bring

- Lunch for full-day campers
- Water bottle
- Apply sunscreen and dress for the weather and lots of walking: a hat and athletic shoes are encouraged (*no flip-flops!*)
- Summer only: City Park Fountain Gear on designated day (*check your camper's Daily Schedule, or ask their instructor, for specific details*)
- Summer only: Safari camp T-Shirt EVERYDAY (*issued first day of camp*)

What NOT to Bring

Money, jewelry, toys, stuffed animals, games, collectables, and electronic devices not limited to mp3 players, tablets, video games, GoPro's, etc. Denver Zoo is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. Should a child bring a valuable item with them to camp, they will be told to keep it in their backpack and Camp staff will connect with the parent/guardian to request that the child not bring it to camp again. Please note that valuables lost in the Zoo can be harmful to our animals, or even destroyed by animals or water exhibits, or otherwise lost **permanently**. Balloons and plastic straws are **not allowed** in the Zoo due to harm they may cause to animals.

Meals and Snacks

Full-day campers require a packed lunch every day. Heating and refrigeration are not available. Peanut-free lunches are encouraged, and sharing food is not allowed. Campers eat lunch in their designated classrooms, supervised by their instructors. We provide campers a morning and afternoon snack (*snack schedules & ingredients are posted on our [website](#)*). While we try to provide nut-free snacks, they may be made in a facility that contains nuts. If your camper has special dietary needs, restrictions, or food allergies, **please send them with** a morning and afternoon snack each day.

Inclement Weather

Many of the Zoo's exhibits are outside. Planned outdoor activities will still occur in light rain/snow, heat, and cold so please send campers with appropriate clothing and gear. In extreme weather conditions (hail, lightning, tornado watch/warning, excessive heat/cold), instructors will substitute indoor activities for outdoor activities.

In the rare event that severe weather is expected to interfere with scheduled programming, Denver Zoo will contact the registering parent/guardian via email regarding delayed starts, early closures, and/or full day closures. Winter weather closures will also be noted on the Denver Zoo [homepage](#).

Technology Usage during Camp

Campers, especially those in 4th-8th grade camps, may be encouraged to use technology to assist in their exploration of the Zoo, curricula topics, or Questions of the Day. This may include video or picture-taking, looking up animal photos or facts online, visiting animal-information websites, virtual or augmented reality, citizen science websites or applications, and/or the use of laptops, smartphones, or tablets. Through registration for Safari Camp, parents/guardians authorize and affirm permission for their child's technology usage during camp, as well as other camp activities.



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Campers may not view or show media containing explicit language or topics. Though limited in scope, occasional short videos or other media may be used during camp to help campers explore a topic related to camp curricula. Screen time introduced by instructors or administrators will be kept to a minimum. Usage of internet or media by campers will be strictly monitored by instructors, and may be disallowed or restricted at any time, including the possibility of instructors taking away phones, tablets, or other personal devices until the end of the camp day. Campers are expected to use online media for the purposes of exploring camp topics only. Campers will be expected **not to use** media during snack or meal times, unless during a planned activity or special occasion. Children using personal adaptive equipment or assistive technology will be exempt from this rule, and will have no restrictions on usage times.

Summer Safari Field Trips to City Park

During Summer Safari most camp groups have a designated day and time to take a field trip to the City Park fountains and/or the City Park box canyon and meadow (*please see your camper's Daily Schedule for more information*). These are walking field trips outside of the Zoo, and do not require transportation by car or bus. Through registration for Safari Camp, parents/guardians authorize and affirm permission for their child's participation in these field trips, as well as other camp activities. Camp Instructors are responsible for the safety of each camper in their group, and we designate Camp Support Staff to oversee all field trips to City Park. Camp Support Staff pay close attention to the weather prior to each group departing, and if extreme weather conditions are expected, field trips will be cancelled or rescheduled.

Lost and Found

Lost items will be held in the Safari Camp Lost and Found (*located in the Gates Center Lobby*) until the end of the camp week. After that, items will be taken to the Zoo's main Lost and Found and you will need to contact the Zoo Lost and Found directly at **303-376-4805**, or on the Denver Zoo website's [Lost and Found page](#).

Health Care at Safari Camp

Storing and Administering Medications

A contracted Child Care Health Consultant Nurse oversees health care policies and procedures, as well as training and delegation of all medication on site for Safari Camp. When the consulting nurse is not on site to administer medication, a trained and delegated Denver Zoo staff administers medications. We do not stock any over-the-counter medication like Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benadryl, etc.

In order to store and administer ANY medication (emergency, prescription, or over-the-counter) to campers, we must receive a **Medication Administration Permission Form** completed by a parent/guardian and the child's physician two weeks prior to the start of the child's camp session. Any medication for a chronic illness such as asthma, allergies, or diabetes must be accompanied by a Care Plan written and signed by the child's physician. **Medication must be provided in the original labeled bottle or container.** Prescription medicine containers must bear the original pharmacy label that shows the prescription number, date filled, name of medication, dosage, physician's name, child's name, and directions for administering. Over-the-counter medication must be clearly labeled with child's first and last name. All medications (*with the exception of emergency medication like Epi-Pens, Inhalers, etc.*) will be locked and dispensed at the appropriate time, according to instructions written and signed by the Health Care Provider.

Illness, Accidents, and Injuries

Camp Instructors and Administrative Staff, as well as Denver Zoo Security staff, are certified in First Aid and CPR and are able to address emergencies as they occur. Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately of any accident or injury requiring medical treatment beyond a Band-Aid/Ice Pack. If needed, 911 will be called and paramedics will determine if transport to a hospital is necessary. If so, a Denver Zoo staff member will go to the hospital until a parent arrives.

If a child becomes ill while at camp, they will be allowed to rest away from their camp group, under the supervision of Administrative Staff, and parents/guardians will be notified. If the child does not feel well enough to take part in normal activities, or has a fever of 100°F or above, parents/guardians will be asked to leave home or work immediately to pick-up the child. Denver Zoo recommends parents refer to the Illness Policy developed by Children's Hospital Colorado – How Sick is Too Sick? (found on our [website](#)) to assist in determining when it is appropriate to keep a child home from camp.

If a camper is diagnosed with a communicable disease (*including, but not limited to: hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, giardia, or shigella*) while attending or soon-after attending, we ask that parents notify us immediately. If further action is necessary, the Camp Coordinator will notify the local Health Department, staff members, and all parents of the participants enrolled at the site. The camper's confidentiality will be maintained.



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Accommodations for Special Needs

If your child has any special needs we should be aware of, please contact us. We are more than happy to discuss all options available to you and your child. If your child needs to attend camp with their full-time care provider, special arrangements can be made, but **must be scheduled in advance** for security purposes. After undergoing a background check, the adult caregiver may attend at no charge. A background check can take up to 30 days to process, so please give us as much advance notice as possible.

Sunscreen

We provide Rocky Mountain Sunscreen: SPF 30, Oxybenzone-Free, Water Resistant, and Fragrance-Free. You are welcome to pack an alternative, if desired (*please label with first and last name*). There is a sunscreen station within the Gates Education Center (*as well as the Primate Panorama Classrooms during Summer Safari*), for you to apply to your camper(s) prior to drop-off, and for campers to re-apply during the day. During Summer Safari, there is also a Sunscreen Station set up outside the Special Programs Entrance. We do not directly apply sunscreen to any camper, but help them by guiding them to apply it themselves.

Camper Personal Hygiene

Each child is instructed to wash their hands with soap and water before snacks/lunch, and after using toilet facilities. Participants must be toilet trained prior to attending. We stock extra shorts/pants/shirts/underwear in case a child needs to change due to soiled clothes.

Safety at Safari Camp

Supervision

There is a maximum staff to child ratio of 1 to 10. Experienced, trained adult instructors and volunteers will lead the group in activities, games, and tours. Teen volunteers also assist as classroom/tour aides. All staff and adult volunteers have undergone extensive background checks and are highly trained in Safari Camp programs and working with children. They are here to ensure a safe, fun, educational experience for your child.

A roster is generated for each camp group containing each camper's name, grade, parent/guardian names, and authorized pick-ups. Campers are checked in/out daily via this roster by Camp Instructors and Administrative Staff. Instructors keep a head count of campers in their groups constantly. Classroom doors are secured at all times. Each camp has a daily schedule they follow, so that Administrative Staff know the Zoo areas where camp groups are expected to be at all times. During the busy summer season, Summer Safari T-Shirts are required for each camper, as they aid in keeping groups together while out in the Zoo.

In the rare event of a separated or lost camper, the instructor will call and alert security and a Camp Administrator immediately, with the name and description of the camper. Security will dispatch available personnel to assist, monitor the Zoo entrance/exit, and initiate a Zoo wide all-call. The missing camper's group will remain in place in the Zoo with their instructor until the missing camper is located. The Learning & Engagement Department and other Administrative Staff will be notified and dispatched to assist, where needed. The Camp Coordinator will contact the missing camper's parents, and Security will contact the Denver Police Department if needed. After the child is located, they will be reunited with their camp group, and the instructor will recount the situation to Camp Administrators for assessment of why the situation occurred.

Visitor Policy

For security and safety purposes, we do not allow visitors. Only adults that have passed a Denver Zoo background check can be with camp groups. If you are planning to spend the day at the Zoo, we have several restaurant/food stations located throughout the Zoo, as well as a large gift shop and coffee bar. If you decide to tour the Zoo, we ask that you tour different areas than your child's camp group. This is to ensure that your participant can fully enjoy the benefits and social development of interacting with the other children in their camp. The added benefit for your child is learning to remain with their instructors and tour guides, which aids with our security precautions, in addition to helping your child learn important group skills. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

Suspected Child Abuse

Any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported immediately to the Colorado Department of Social Services, local authorities, and to the Denver Zoo Board of Directors.

Additional questions, concerns, or suggestions?

Please contact the Guest Care Center at 720-337-1400 or guestcare@denverzoo.org.



Camper Behavior Policy

Policies and Procedures

Denver Zoo Safari Camp's goal is to provide all campers with a safe, fun, and educational experience.

Expectation of behavior – Rules and expectations of behaviors will be discussed with your camper on a daily basis.

Expectations include, but are not limited to:

- Respect for zoo animals (no chasing geese or peafowl, no climbing on enclosures or tapping on glass)
- Respect for fellow campers (keeping hands to themselves, no name calling or aggressive behavior)
- Respect for instructors (listening to directions, staying with the group at all times, staying positive)
- Respect for themselves (telling the instructor if they are experiencing problems with another camper, having fun!)
- All campers should feel safe both emotionally and physically. Physical, verbal, and relational bullying is not tolerated, and will be addressed immediately. Supervising staff will be informed, and each camper's parents/caregivers will be contacted.

Discipline procedure – We will take the following steps to help resolve any issues:

- Instructor will speak to the camper about their behavior and remind them of our expectations.
- If the behavior continues, the child may be asked to sit out of activities or take quiet time until they can rejoin.
- At this time, if the behavior continues to be a problem or depending on the severity of the behavior, the instructor will refer the child to a Camp Administrator.
- Parents will receive written documentation of the behavior and depending on the severity of the behavior, receive a phone call from the Camp Coordinator to discuss a behavior plan.
- After these steps are taken, unresolved behavioral issues may lead to a caretaker being contacted and asked to pick-up the child.

Behavior management used – All Camp staff go through a variety of trainings and practice sessions to ensure that campers are safe, having fun, and learning.

- Expectations are reviewed with our campers and reinforced on a daily basis in a positive tone, and framed in a positive way.
- Positive behavior and attitudes are rewarded.
- Redirection of negative behaviors is used to prevent escalation.
- Campers are empowered to make good choices and problem solve so they can be successful.
- Physical or verbal punishment, or isolation will never be used. Withholding snacks or treats is not permitted.