



Welcome Guide



Welcome to Zoo Camp!

The following information will help you and your child prepare for and enjoy their Zoo Camp experience.

The San Francisco Zoo & Gardens is committed to providing a camp where children can connect to animals and nature by engaging in fun activities, crafts, and tours.



Zoo Camp Contact Information

Phone:	(415) 753-8135
Email:	zoocamp@sfbayarea.com
Website:	http://www.sfbayarea.com/learn/zoo-camp.html
Education Office:	(415) 753-7073
Fax:	(415) 566-6379
Tax ID/EIN:	94-1429538

Accessibility

Zoo Camp is inclusive; our lessons and activities are age-appropriate and designed for multiple learning styles. While we encourage campers to participate in all activities as designed, we are able to provide modified activities and some accommodations for campers with special needs. The Zoo is wheelchair accessible and a limited number of wheelchairs are available for Zoo Camp's use. Please call (415) 753-8135 to speak with the camp manager about your child's needs prior to attending camp.

Aides

If your child requires one-on-one supervision or needs assistance, they are still welcome to attend camp, but are expected to attend with an aide, caregiver, or respite provider who will submit to a background check and will attend camp at no additional charge. Please contact the camp manager with the aide's information prior to the camp start date. Refer to **Camper Requirements** for more information.

Allergies

We do our best to accommodate the needs of campers with allergies. We are a peanut-free camp – please do not send your child with lunch or snacks containing nuts.

If your camper carries an Epi Pen, please give the Epi Pen to Zoo Camp Staff at check-in. Their instructor will carry the medication and help facilitate the administration of the medication if an emergency arises. A guardian will also be required to fill out an Epi Pen Release Form during the check-in process. If you have any concerns, please contact the camp manager.



Animal Close Encounters

Each week the camp group will experience a close encounter with an educational animal (like a tortoise, snake, guinea pig, or ferret) from our Koret Animal Resource Center. There may be other times in which they will be able to see an animal up close or have a unique opportunity to talk with an animal keeper. Campers will not be allowed to hold animals, but may have the chance to touch them. All presentations are done by trained animal handlers.

Arriving Late and Leaving Early

Please try to avoid late drop-offs and early pick-ups. Your child may miss tours, animal encounters, or other activities. If you do need to arrive late or leave early, please check-in with the Education Office and camp management will contact the class. If you're planning on leaving camp early, please arrive at the Education Office 10-15 minutes prior to when you actually need your camper. **There are no early pick-ups after 3:30pm.**

Bathroom Policy

All campers must be fully toilet-trained and completely independent when using the restroom or come to camp with an aide. Bathroom and water breaks are taken frequently throughout the day. Our policy is to guide the campers to the bathrooms and wait for them outside, continuing vocal contact with the camper. Many of our bathrooms are public and we cannot empty out the bathrooms for our groups, but we do maintain a safe environment for campers. If your child has a bathroom accident, we can provide most campers with a change of clothes or we may call you to provide clothes.

Camper Requirements

To provide a safe and fun experience at Zoo Camp, we require that all campers be able to do the following:

1. They are predominantly independent meaning they must be able to eat, toilet, and dress themselves.
2. They have an effective communication system that they can use independently or with minimal assistance.
3. They are able to participate in a group setting by following instructions, staying with the group, communicating their interests and needs, respecting resident plants and animals, and respecting each other (this includes campers, staff, parents, and guests). Respect at Zoo Camp means keeping your hands and feet to yourself, using kind words and actions.
4. Administer any personal medication without assistance from camp staff.
5. If the camper does not want to participate in an activity, they are not required to, but are asked to do an alternative activity in the same space as the campers participating.



Cancellation Policy

- Cancellations must be received in writing by email or fax.
- A 75% refund will be issued for cancellations received more than 7 days in advance of the event. The non-refundable 25% will be forfeited completely and is non-transferable.
- No refunds will be issued within 7 days of the event. No refunds or transfers will be issued for missed days.
- These policies hold for instances of illness and family emergencies.
- If you register for more than 1 session of Zoo Camp, the Zoo has the right to cancel those additional sessions at any time without advanced notice.
- If Zoo Camp is required to close due to a health order before a session begins, we will issue a refund minus a \$150 administrative fee. If Zoo Camp is required to close due to a new health order during a session, we will issue a refund minus a \$50 administrative fee per week missed.



Check-In/Check-Out

Check-In begins at 8:45am at Gate E - the black gate just to the left of the Zoo's main entrance. Look for the "Zoo Camp" sign on the gate. Please stay in your car until this time and do not congregate at the gate.

At 8:45am, Gate E will open and you and your camper will be guided to a socially distanced, pre-marked line snaking around the Education Building. The line will end at three check-in tables divided alphabetically by the **camper's** last name.

It is required for an adult to check-in and out their child each day. Every morning, Zoo Camp Staff will ask you who will be picking up your camper that day. If this changes during the day, please call the Zoo Camp number to update your pick-up person.

Check-out is at the same location. At 3:45pm Gate E will open and you will again file through the pre-marked line to your check-in table. The adult picking up your child **must** be the one designated at check-in – if the names do not match, we will call the child's guardian to confirm.

If you are running late to pick-up your camper, please call the Zoo Camp or Education Office and let us know your ETA. There is a charge of \$5 for every 5 minutes your child is picked up after 4:15pm.

Please refer to the **Parking** section for parking instructions.

Discipline

Your camper's safety and experience at camp is important to camp staff. If any behavior is deemed unsafe, staff may use some of the following methods to manage behavior issues: verbal reminder of rules and expectations, supervised break from activity, break in the office with camp management. If a problem repeats, parents/guardians will be contacted to provide guidance and set mutually agreeable solutions for their child's behavior; this could be in the form of a behavior contact with camp management, child, and parents/guardians. If the child repeatedly exhibits inappropriate behavior or the child's actions pose a threat to the safety of others or themselves, the parents/guardians will be contacted to pick-up their child immediately and there is potential for removal from the remaining days of the program. Please review the **Rules & Expectations of Zoo Camp** section with your child prior to arriving to your first day of camp.

Electronics & Toys

To ensure the best experience for all campers, we ask to not bring cell phones, electronic tablets, iPods/MP3 players and any other electronic devices to camp. In addition, we do not encourage bringing any toys from home. They may get lost while at camp and we are not responsible for replacing lost items. If a camper does bring a toy to camp, their instructors will ask the camper to put their toys in their backpack and to not take it out until they go home. No skateboards, rollerblades skate-shoes are allowed at Zoo Camp.



Emergency Contact Number

If you have any emergency where you will be late or need to pick up your child early, first call the Zoo Camp line: (415) 753-8135. If you are unable to reach us then call the Main Education Office: (415) 753-7073.

Extended Care

Due to space, staffing limitations, and safety recommendations we are not offering before- or after-care this summer.

Illness

If your child becomes sick while at camp, we will provide a quiet space for them to rest. If they do not feel better after resting or show outward signs of illness, camp management will notify parents/guardians that your child is sick and you will need to pick them up as soon as possible. For COVID-19-specific concerns, please see the **COVID-19** section.

Injuries

Zoo Campers often participate in running games throughout their session and while they are supervised at all times we cannot always prevent the occasional trip or stumble. If your child gets a minor injury like a scraped knee we will apply first aid (typically a band aid and an ice pack). If your child needs a little time to rest, we will provide them with a quiet, safe space. Guardians will be notified by their child's instructor during check-out about minor injuries.

Lost and Found

The San Francisco Zoological Society and its agents are not responsible for lost, stolen, or misplaced items brought to Zoo Camp. We do have a lost and found for Zoo Camp in the Education Office. You can also check the Zoo's main lost and found in the Membership Office. You may ask camp staff about lost items during check-in and out.



Lunches and Snacks

Please make sure to pack a low-waste **lunch, two snacks, and a water bottle** for your child everyday. As a COVID-19 precaution, this year we are asking families to provide snacks as well as lunch. We will have some extra snacks on hand if this is a hardship for your family.

Medications

We cannot administer medication of any kind for campers during Zoo Camp. We are allowed to remind campers to take their medication and hold their medication for them in the Education Office. Any necessary medication needs to be given to the group instructor and a guardian will be required to fill out a Medication Form at the check-in process. If a camper has a medical emergency of any kind, Zoo Camp staff will contact emergency services and the camper's family. Please contact Zoo Camp if you have any further questions in regards to medication.

Parents

Parents and guardians are required to meet with Zoo Camp Staff during check-in and check-out each day. We ask that once your child is checked in, for you to leave the immediate area to help avoid confusion and allow your child time to start bonding with their fellow campers.

If you would like to visit the zoo while your child is at camp, the zoo is open to the general public starting at 10am. If you are a member, you can gain admittance into the zoo using your membership card. Please see the [Zoo's website](#) for up-to-date information about tickets and reservations. We ask that you visit the zoo on your own separate from the camp classes because you may distract your child from their class.

Parking

You can park in the main Zoo lot during drop-off and pick-up. You will receive a free parking pass to exit the parking lot during pick-up on a daily basis. **Disregard posted signs, as the lot is available for Zoo Camp families drop-off and pick-up.** If it is a busy day at the Zoo, the parking lot may become full. Just proceed to the Great Highway entrance and let the security guard know that you are here to pick-up a Zoo Camper.



Rules & Expectations of Zoo Camp

- Be respectful and kind to everyone including humans, animals, and plants
- Stay with your camp group at all times
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Keep your feet on the ground
- Quiet voices when visiting animal habitats, during keeper talks and close encounters

Expectations: If your camper follows the rules, they will be able to participate in all activities. Refer to **Discipline** section for more information.

Schedule

Zoo Camp starts at **9am** and **ends at 4pm**.

General Camp Day Schedule

9 – 9:15am	Check-In
9:15 – 9:30am	Intro, camp expectations, daily theme
9:30 – 12/12:30pm	Camp Activities (zoo tours, snack, art, games, animal encounters, nature play, lessons, etc.)
12-1pm OR 12:30-1:30pm	Lunch
1/1:30pm – 3:30pm	Camp Activities
3 – 3:45pm	Journal/Wrap-Up
3:45 – 4pm	Check-Out

Shopping

Children do not need to bring money to Zoo Camp. Money is easily lost and loose coins are a danger to our animals. If they would like to purchase anything from the food stands or gift shop they may do so after camp with their guardian.

Staff and Class Ratio Information

In each class, there are approximately 25 children with two staff members. Our staff are all background checked, have gone through training and are all either CPR or First Aid trained.

Train and Carousel

On the last day of camp, all camp groups will get a chance to ride the train or the carousel!

T-Shirts

Campers are **required** to wear their Zoo Camp T-Shirt at all times. This is a safety concern as the t-shirts identify Zoo Campers to Zoo staff and guests. Additional t-shirts are available for purchase for \$10. T-shirts are given to campers on their first day.



Weather and What To Wear

Zoo Camp is an outdoor camp that runs rain or shine. In case of rain, please dress your child in a raincoat and rain boots. Umbrellas are not advised since they tend to get in the way and can cause injuries.

The Zoo is along the coast and can get cold, we recommend wearing layers; jackets and sweaters are great, just be sure they have your child's name in them!

We recommend that sunscreen is used EVERY day. Please apply it in the morning before you come to camp. Zoo Camp staff will not be able to apply sunscreen to your child, but they can re-apply it themselves.

Please make sure that your child is wearing their **Zoo Camp T-shirt** and closed-toe shoes for walking and running. Zoo Campers often participate in running games throughout the week and while they are supervised at all times, we cannot always prevent the occasional trip or stumble.

What To Pack

Campers will carry their own backpacks throughout the day, so please do not pack more than necessary.

- Lunch, snacks, and water bottle
- Extra face mask
- Jacket
- Sunscreen

COVID-19

San Francisco Zoo Camp is committed to providing a safe atmosphere for your child to learn and grow. We have adapted to meet SF Department of Public Health directives and will continue to modify protocols as recommendations evolve. Below are a few examples of what to expect:

- Families are asked to conduct a daily health check before arriving to camp.
- All Zoo Camp Staff are fully vaccinated.
- Camp groups are stable throughout the 3-week session.
- **Face coverings** are required for all campers and staff.
- Campers and staff practice social distancing and frequent hand washing.
- Camp takes place exclusively outdoors, including lunch.
- Campers may depart sessions early but cannot join late. They must remain in the same cohort the entire three weeks.
- Families are asked to **provide snacks and water bottles**, as well as lunch.

Please refer to the Department of Public Health's most recent [directive](#) for camp programs for more information.



Questions?

Contact us via the
Zoo Camp Contact Information
found on the second page.

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