



Frequently Asked Questions

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When does summer camp go on sale?

Summer camp goes on sale February 17, 2026, for Museum members and February 23, 2026, for non-members.

When does summer camp start?

Camps run weekly (Monday through Friday) starting June 8 and continuing through August 7. No camps are being offered the week of June 29.

What are the camp hours?

We offer full-day camps for incoming grades 1-8. These camps run from 9 AM-3 PM.

Do you have camps for grades 9-12?

We do not offer camps for grades 9–12. Our summer camp volunteer program begins at 16 years old. If your child is interested in volunteering for summer camp, please apply [here](#).

How much do camps cost?

Camp is \$450 for all grades. [Annual memberships](#) to the Museum at the Dual level and above will guarantee \$25 off your camper's registration! **Individual memberships ineligible for presale and discount*

Are there scholarships?

Yes. The Nat is pleased to offer scholarship opportunities for grades 1-8 thanks to a generous donation from the Robert and Helen E. Grant Foundation. The application can be found on [our website](#) when registration opens.

What is the scholarship application process?

We will begin accepting applications on Tuesday, February 17. We encourage families to submit their application as soon as possible. Once all available scholarships are awarded, new applicants will be placed on a waitlist. Submission of an application does not guarantee receipt of a scholarship or attendance at a particular camp. All families will be notified whether they have been awarded a scholarship within three weeks of submission of an application.

What does the scholarship cover?

Each scholarship covers the camp in full but does require a \$25 non-refundable registration fee to cover administration costs. It will also cover snacks and lunch for your camper. Transportation is not included.

How old do you have to be to attend camp at The Nat?

Campers must be between 6 and 13 years old to attend camp.

What grade-level camp should I enroll my child in?

Children should enroll in camp with their upcoming grade level (the grade they will be in during the 2026-2027 school year). To ensure a high-quality experience, it is important participants are with their same-aged peers.

Tell me more about the summer camp T-shirts.

Summer camp T-shirts are included with each camp registration. T-shirts are distributed during pick-up on the first day of camp each week. The shirts come in Youth sizes S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16), and XL (18-20), as well as Adult sizes Small and Medium. Our T-shirts are a souvenir and not a requirement to wear at camp, but we hope you will!

What is a nut-free camp?

Summer Camp at The Nat is nut-free. All campers are required to bring lunches and snacks that are nut-free (*this includes all tree nuts and products such as Nutella, granola bars, etc.*).

Why is camp nut-free?

We have experienced a continual rise in moderate to severe nut allergies. We decided to institute a nut-free policy for the safety and well-being of all campers and staff. We appreciate your attention to providing nut-free alternatives.

My child has an allergy/medical condition. How does The Nat handle medical issues?

First and foremost, **let us know**. Please note all allergies, intolerances, and medical issues upon registration. If medication is necessary at camp, please indicate the directions on your form. If medication can be administered before or after camp, please do so. Provide any medication in a bag with directions for the week of camp. We will contact you before your child's camp to confirm permissions and directions. We've had many cases of nut allergies, dairy allergies, asthma, etc., over the years, and we have First Aid/CPR-certified staff. As noted above, we have instituted a nut-free policy for camp. However, with other food allergies, we will keep the children separate and wash hands if snacks may pose an issue (e.g., John is allergic to dairy, and Susie brought yogurt). If your child's allergy is not limited to ingestion, please let us know as well in case a craft or art project may require a volunteer's assistance (e.g., gluten in a dough).

Is there a lunch or snack provided?

Lunches and snacks are not provided. Please send your child to camp with a snack, lunch, and beverage each day. Water will be available. Please label your camper's lunch and drink containers.

Where do I register my child for camp?

Register in person, [online](#), or by calling 619.255.0349. **Register soon; camps fill up quickly!**

What information do I need to register my child for camp?

You will need to complete all registration information at the time of purchase for each camp, including medical information like the date of last tetanus shot and emergency contact phone numbers.

How do I register online?

Click 'Register' underneath the camp description, then click 'Register' after you've selected your quantity. Please use your camper's information under "Camper: Youth." Uncheck the box that says, "Use this as my billing information" under "Camper: Youth." After completing the registration information, add your camp to

the cart. At this point, you can add additional camps for the same child or for a different child to your basket by clicking "Camps" at the top of the cart page. For more tips on registering for multiple camps or campers, please download our [registration instructions](#).

How do I receive my Membership discount online?

Please click "**Sign In**" at the top of the order screen to log into your San Diego Natural History Museum member account. The discount will not apply until you've signed in and added the "MEMBER – Youth" item to your cart after completing the registration questions. To become a Museum member, click the "Membership" link at the top of the page. New members will receive benefits when both items are in the cart.

NOTE: Existing members must have an account with the Museum's ticketing system to receive their benefits. If you have not registered, click Create Account in the top right corner to create your account.

What does my child need to bring?

Please send your child to camp with a snack, drink and/or water bottle, and lunch each day. Each camp takes a snack break. Campers should wear comfortable play clothes that can get dirty and closed-toe shoes (NO sandals). We recommend sending campers with a hat for outdoor adventures and a jacket or sweatshirt, as our classrooms can sometimes be chilly. We highly recommend that sunscreen be applied each day before you arrive at the Museum.

How can I ensure my child is in camp with a friend/sibling who is also attending?

If these children are in the same grade range, they will be in camp together if they are signed up for *the same camp during the same week*. Check with each other before registering ("Which camp and week are you attending?"). You can also let us know by authorizing the other camper's parent(s) for pick-up or letting us know when you register in person/by phone or by replying to your confirmation email when registering online. If the children are in different grade ranges, they will need to be in separate camps.

Will my child meet a real scientist?

As our scientists are often in the field, any visits are pending availability and are not guaranteed. Scientists enjoy spending time with the campers and make every effort to work visits into their schedule.

Will my child have time to play and explore outside?

All camps will spend some time outside during the day.

What is the instructor-to-camper ratio?

The instructor-to-camper ratio is approximately 1:4. Each camp has one adult instructor, one camp teaching assistant, and two camp aides. Our camp teaching assistants are college-age, and our camp aides are 11th and 12th-grade high school students. The Museum's Education staff provides additional supervision and support when the camps leave the classroom and visit the Museum, explore Balboa Park, or take a nature hike.

Is camp staff required to have a background check?

Yes, all staff, instructors, and volunteers working with children at the San Diego Natural History Museum have completed a background check.

What if we need to cancel our camp?

There is a \$10 cancellation fee per camper per camp. Cancellations must be made with at least five business days' notice prior to the start of camp. Please contact the Museum at 619.255.0349 or reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org to cancel your camp. Please provide your name, your child's name, the name and date of the camp, and the reason for your cancellation.

A full refund will be given for any camp canceled by the Museum. Please allow up to 30 days for processing.

What if my child is sick or can't make it to camp?

If you know in advance that your child will be missing a day of camp later in the week, please contact our Reservation Coordinator by phone at 619.255.0349 or by email at reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org as soon as possible. You can also let us know in person at drop-off or pick-up.

Does my child (or other children) need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 for summer camp?

We are not requiring proof of vaccination against COVID-19. We do require that all campers follow the safety protocols we have established based upon federal, state, and county guidelines. All staff and volunteers are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

What are your COVID-19 guidelines?

The San Diego Natural History Museum follows the San Diego County, State of California Social Services Department, Department of Public Health, San Diego Unified School District, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Our guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Campers are welcome to bring and wear a mask; the San Diego Natural History Museum will inform guardians if masks or social distancing are required based on SDUSD policies.
- We recommend a minimum of 3 feet social distancing while eating and drinking
- Providing individual supplies for each camper
- Keeping all personal belongings separate
- Increasing hand washing/hand sanitizing and cleaning of surfaces and supplies
- Limiting non-essential visitors and volunteers
- Campers should stay home and notify reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org if they:
 - Have COVID-19 symptoms
 - Have been diagnosed with COVID-19
 - Are awaiting COVID-19 test results
 - Have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case

What if I am running late to pick up or drop off my camper?

Please notify our Reservation Coordinator by phone at 619.255.0349 as soon as you can do so. If you arrive later than 10 minutes after the program starts/ends, please report to the North Entrance (near the fig tree) to pick up/drop off your child. During drop-off, the doors to the Museum will be locked. Please call to let us know you've arrived.

NOTE: If you are more than 15 minutes late, a \$10 late drop-off or pick-up fee will be assessed.

What if I need to pick up my child early from camp?

Please contact our Reservation Coordinator by phone at 619.255.0349 or by email at reservationcoordinator@sdnhm.org. You may also let your child's instructor know during drop-off and plan for your early pick-up.

What if I need someone else to pick up my child?

You may authorize any adult (aged 18+) to pick up your child during registration. Please be sure to add the person's name as listed on their ID and the phone number they can be reached at during camp hours. A photo ID will be requested upon pick-up every day. If your camper is carpooling with another camper, please make sure to add that camper's guardian(s) when registering. If your plans change during the week, please authorize the new person at drop-off with your instructor or call our Reservation Coordinator at 619.255.0349 to notify us of who will be picking up your child that day. We will not release a child to someone who is not listed (**this includes parents**).

Can my high schooler sign in/out my younger camper?

All campers must be signed in and signed out by an adult (aged 18+) each day. As a reminder, those signing out will need to be authorized in advance and will need to present a valid ID at pick-up.

Where do I park?

San Diego is implementing [paid parking in Balboa Park](#) starting January 5, 2026. Please visit their website to learn about rates. You will only need to park on the first day of camp for check-in. For the remainder of camp, you will drop off and pick up your child at the turnaround at the south end of the lot on the east side of the Museum.

Do you have a photo policy?

The San Diego Natural History Museum reserves the right to photograph program participants for publicity purposes. By entering the Museum facility and/or participating in a Museum activity or event, you consent and authorize without restriction or compensation the possible use of you and your accompanying group's image for future media or marketing. You will be asked for your agreement to this policy upon registration. You may opt out of this policy by selecting no.

Do you have an electronics policy?

The San Diego Natural History Museum has a no cell phone and no electronics use policy while campers are engaged in our camp program. We believe that their usage can interfere with and disrupt the campers' overall experience of our program.

Electronics include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smart watches, laptops, tablets, hand-held game devices, e-readers, and iPods/MP3 players. We appreciate the desire for parents and guardians to be in contact with their camper, but we will not allow the use of personal electronics while camp is in session. Cell phones and other electronics are expensive and can get stolen or lost. We recommend leaving these devices at home. **The Nat is not responsible for the loss or damage to your camper's electronic equipment.**

Some camps, primarily grades 6-8, will incorporate electronics into the curriculum. Museum-issued electronics will be utilized for these activities under staff supervision.