

## Have a Great Experience and Be a Good Zoo Guest

### *Top 10 Zoo Visit Tips*

1. Visit their website for information about the zoo you are visiting.
  - What are their hours?
  - Do they allow you to bring beverages and food?
  - Do they rent strollers?
  - Do they have electric wheel chairs available?
  - Do they have scheduled public feeding times?
  - Do they have daily scheduled shows?
  - What are the entrance and parking fees?
  - Can you buy tickets online?
  - Do they have a capacity limit? If so, at what time of the day is it normally reached?
  - Are there extra charges for different areas?
  - Are there public feed stations? If so, how much does it cost?
  - Should you buy a family membership?
2. Check for hotel partnerships. Many zoos have partnered with local hotels and offer family package plans. Even if you live in town, an overnight stay at a hotel can add some extra fun.
3. Plan your parking. This is very important when visiting zoos in major metro areas. Know if they have a drop off and how far it is to the closest parking area.
4. Check the day before for the weather forecast. A rain or snow day can result in a great trip if you are prepared. Many of the animals will be active and there will be fewer visitors.
5. Plan what to wear.
  - Shoes. This will be the most important apparel item of the day. A couple of hours walking in flip-flops and some sandals will quickly tire the ankles, leg joints, and muscles. Do not wear new shoes for the visit, you may develop blisters.
  - Clothing. The biggest consideration will be degree of warmth and protection from the sun.
  - Rain jacket or poncho if inclement weather is on the horizon. Some animals have been upset with seeing umbrellas. In the past they have been banned in at least one zoo.
  - Hat
  - Sunglasses
6. Plan what to take.
  - Binoculars
  - Cameras
  - Comfortable purse and/or backpack. Expect to have them searched at the entrance.
  - Wipes and anti-bacterial hand cream.
  - Money. Take enough for small gifts, snacks and any unexpected expenditures. Remember cash machines are not always up and running.
  - Sunscreen.
  - Required Medicines, plus any "as needed" medications for pain, allergies, and asthma, also band aids.
7. Upon arrival discuss where to meet if you get separated. Most zoos do not have public address systems to make in-park announcements.
8. Know where all of the rest rooms are located.
9. Follow the basic rules that apply for any zoo visit.
  - Do not tease or feed animals. This includes throwing any food or non-food items into enclosures, or chasing free roaming species such as peacocks. Not only will you irritate the animals, but other guests as well. In most parks you will not be warned, you will be asked to leave.
  - Do not climb barriers for a better photo, or to touch the animals.
  - Stay on the footpaths.
  - Do not pick the flowers, shrubs, or trees.
  - Supervise your children at all times, including in the restrooms. Do not allow them to spoil another visitor's experience.
  - Tobacco products and gum are prohibited at all zoos.
  - No pets allowed.
10. Plan to take a break. Children bore easily when just looking at exhibits, they need to be engaged with questions. Time your visit and tour to catch a show or feeding.