

Summer Camp

Parent Handbook





Registration:

My camper has friends who are attending Summer Zoo Camp. Is it possible to group them together?

On both the main camp page and in your confirmation email, you will find the link to our buddy request form. If you would like to group campers together, please make sure this form is filled out by each parent/guardian.

- This form must be completed at least two weeks prior to the start date of your camp. Late requests will not be honored.
- Half-day campers cannot be buddied with full-day campers.
- Only one buddy request per camper will be honored if reciprocated by the buddy.
- Buddies cannot be in different grade groups.

NEW! For 2018 Summer Zoo Camp: Due to the high volume of requests received in the past, a \$15 convenience fee will be charged per buddy request.

It is not necessary to buddy siblings who share the same last name and will attend the same Summer Zoo Camp age/grade group.

May I sign up my camper for a grade level different than the one they are currently in?

All camp curriculums are planned with certain age and grade levels in mind.

Summer Zoo Camp age and grade divisions are:

- 3 or 4 years old (campers in this division must be either 3 or 4 years of age by the start date of camp and must be toilet-trained).
- Entering kindergarten or first grade for the 2018-2019 school year.
- Entering second or third grade for the 2018-2019 school year.
- Entering fourth or fifth grade for the 2018-2019 school year.

*3- or 4-year-old campers will attend camp from 9 a.m. until noon.

Campers entering kindergarten through fifth grade in the upcoming school year will attend camp from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. All campers attend camp Monday through Friday.

*Campers who will enter sixth grade in the upcoming school year are eligible for our Middle School Camps. Please visit the [Middle School Camp](#) page for more information.

Please note: Waitlists are also age- and grade-specific. Please ensure that your camper is registered for the waitlist that corresponds to the appropriate age or grade level.

My camper has friends who are older/younger. Is it possible to buddy them?

No. Camp curriculums are planned with age and grade levels in mind. Please register your camper for the appropriate age or grade divisions. We cannot buddy campers who are registered for two different grade divisions.

I am having trouble registering online.

If you experience registration issues while using the web browser Safari or are attempting to register on your phone or tablet, please try another browser (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Google Chrome) on a desktop or laptop computer.

The camp I am interested in is full. How do waitlists work?

If your preferred week is full, you may register for a waitlist. There is a \$5, non-refundable waitlist fee. Campers are placed on first-come, first-served waitlists for your selected camp and age group. Please ensure that your camper is registered for the appropriate age or grade level waitlist.

How do I update my registration information?

If you need to update any registration information (approved pick-up lists, extended care, etc.) just log into your account or email details to education@fortworthzoo.org.

How do I change my registration to a different week of camp?

To change to a different week of camp, please submit your request via the Change of Weeks form found on the main camp page. We will not process emailed requests or requests made over the phone. If there is space available, a \$25 processing fee will be charged to the card on your account and your camper(s) will be changed to the new week of camp.

The Zoo's education department cannot guarantee that there will be space available in your requested week. You will be notified via email if space is not available.

How do I cancel a registration?

Cancellations can only be made by filling out the Cancellation Request form found on the main camp page. We will not process emailed requests or requests made over the phone.

If you need to cancel more than one week of camp, please fill out one form for each week you would like to cancel. If you need to cancel more than one camper, please fill out one form for each camper. You will be notified when your cancellation is complete.

Will I receive a refund for any canceled camps?

You will receive a full refund, with the exception of the \$25 processing fee, for any cancellation made outside of 30 days from the start date of your selected camp. **No refunds will be given for cancellations made 30 days or less from the start date of your selected camp.**

Before Camp:

What should my camper bring to camp?

If your camper is staying for a full day of camp, please have him/her bring a **non-refrigerated lunch** each day.

It is extremely important for each camper to bring a reusable water bottle **every day!** For the safety of your camper, if a water bottle is not brought to camp,





we will provide them with a Fort Worth Zoo water bottle and the price of \$3 per bottle will be charged to the credit card on your account.

Cell phones and other electronic devices are **NOT PERMITTED** during the duration of camp. The Fort Worth Zoo's education department, believes in creating an environment that encourages community building, bonding and the forging of friendships. We are confident that "unplugging" will result in more time learning together, enhanced interaction between campers and more overall fun. When campers bring electronic devices to camp, not only does it remove them from the camp experience, but those devices always seem to have a way of getting lost, broken, or sometimes even stolen. The education department cannot take responsibility for their loss or damage, nor does our insurance policy cover their replacement.

In the event of an emergency, you may call the education department front desk 817-759-7200.

Please note: Your camper will be responsible for all items brought to Summer Zoo Camp. Please ensure that all items are marked with your camper's first and last name.

Are there any items that my camper does NOT need to bring?

Campers do not need to bring money, as all camp activities are included in the total price. Visits to any food service areas or to any gift shops are prohibited during the camp day, though we invite you to visit these locations at other times. **NO electronic devices (phones, iPads, gaming devices etc.) are permitted.**

What does my camper need to wear each day?

Campers should dress in sturdy clothing that is appropriate for the weather. We recommend that campers wear clothing that can get wet or dirty. Campers should also wear closed-toe shoes that are comfortable for walking. We ask that all campers come to camp with sunscreen and bug spray already applied.

Campers **MUST** wear their Summer Zoo Camp shirt each day. One camp T-shirt is included in the cost of camp and we require each camper to wear the shirt as it assists our staff with safety and security. Additional shirts may be pre-purchased for \$10 per shirt. Additional shirts may also be purchased during the camp week, while supplies last.

If your camper arrives at Summer Zoo Camp without their camp shirt, we will give them another and the T-shirt price of \$10 will be charged to the credit card on your account.





When will I receive camp information, T-shirts, carpool passes, etc.?

An email containing procedural information will be sent out one week prior to the start date of your camp. Please take note of this information as it will help ensure an efficient and enjoyable week of camp.



Camp T-shirts, and carpool passes will be distributed on the Monday of your camp at our outdoor check-in stations. If you arrive late or if Monday is not your first day of camp, please pick up all necessary items from the front desk in the Education building.

Am I able to stay with my camper for the duration of the camp day/week?

For the safety and security of all campers, our facility remains secure at all times. For this reason, we cannot allow parents or guardians to stay with campers during the camp day.



Will I be able to see the camp classrooms and meet the camp staff?

On the Monday of your camp ONLY, your camper needs to be checked into his or her classroom. Please escort your camper to the classroom on this day by following the grade-level directional signs. At this time, you will have an opportunity to see the camp facilities and meet your camper's teacher and other camp staff. On all other camp days, please see the pickup and drop off instructions below.



What qualifications are required for Fort Worth Zoo teachers and other staff?

All Fort Worth Zoo teachers must possess a current state teaching certificate. All employees undergo a rigorous application process, including a criminal background check.



What is a Summer Zoo Camp “volunteer?”

Summer Zoo Camp volunteers are high school students who volunteer at least one week of their summer with the Fort Worth Zoo education department. These students come from public, private or home schools and must apply and interview with members of Fort Worth Zoo staff.

What precautions will you take for extreme heat?

Each week of summer in Texas is generally very hot; consequently, we are used to working with children in this extreme weather.

All camp staff is trained to make sure campers are drinking water throughout the day. Please make sure your child brings a filled reusable water bottle every day of the week.

Additionally, campers spend time both indoors and outdoors. Zoo grounds are well-shaded and misters are located throughout the property.

I overlooked the Buddy Request portion of registration. Can I change my camper to a different group on Monday morning?

Because classes are formed with the maximum number of campers, switching your camper on Monday morning is not

possible. Class rosters are put together prior to the camp start date. If you would like to make a buddy request, please do so ahead of time by filling out the Buddy Request form found on the camp webpage, or in your confirmation email.

Where do I park or drop off my camper?

Monday, 8:50 to 9:15 a.m.

Please park and walk up to our outdoor check-in stations to check in your camper and receive carpool passes, T-shirts, and any pre-purchased items.

Tuesday through Friday:

Please refer to the carpool line graphic for drop-off instructions. A staff member will greet you at your vehicle along the full length of the sidewalk and will escort your camper to the appropriate location. (Half-day campers will go straight to their camp teacher. Full-day campers will be ushered into their camp classrooms.) Please make sure that campers are ready to go when a staff member comes to your vehicle.

Where do I pick up my camper?

Carpool pickup begins at noon for half-day campers and at 4 p.m. for full-day campers. Please refer to the carpool line graphic for pickup instructions.





A staff member will greet you at your vehicle and ask for your carpool pass(es). They will take your pass and collect your camper from their class. As you wait, please pull forward with the line as it moves. Our camp staff will only load campers along the upper edge of the sidewalk. Though the carpool line may appear long, we usually complete carpool in 15 minutes or less.

Completed carpool passes are necessary when picking up your camper. For security reasons, campers will only be released to someone with a carpool pass valid for the correct week of camp or to someone who is both listed on the approved pickup list and presents a valid form of photo ID (driver's license, military ID, etc.).

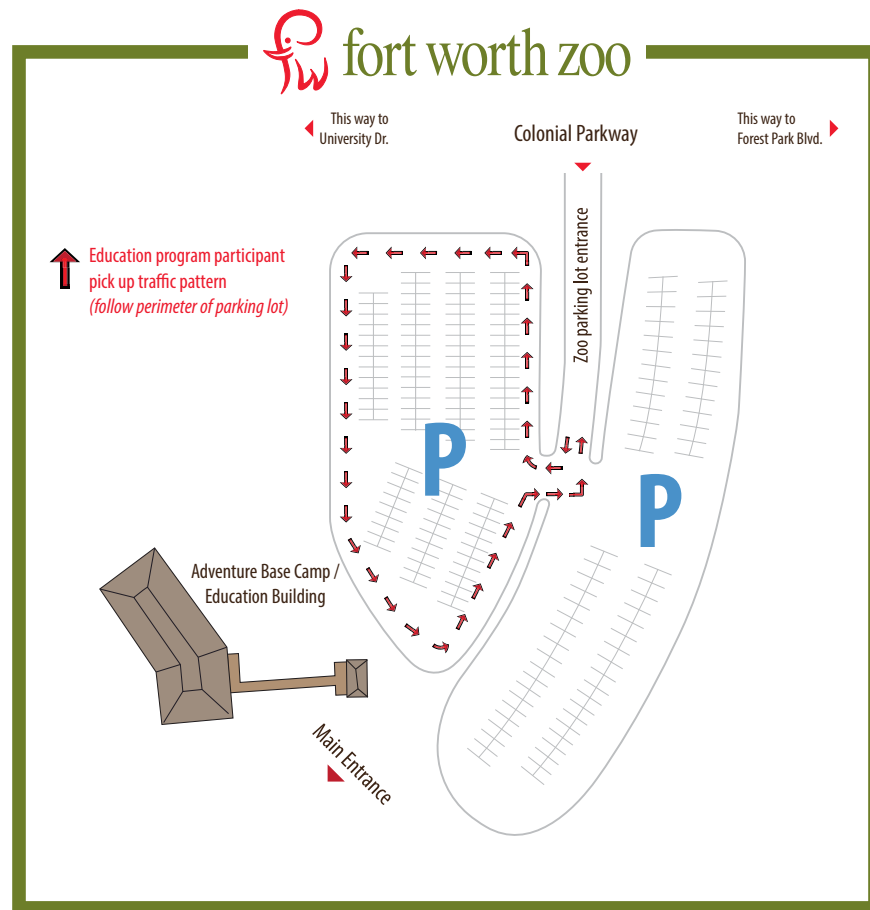
We do thank you for your patience as we strive to have a safe, efficient car line.

Can I walk up to the education cabana to pick up my camper?

Adults with the appropriate carpool pass may pick up their camper outside of the carpool line. However, we ask that all walk-ups wait in the designated walk-up area. A staff member will greet you there and return your camper to you.

For the safety of all our campers, we ask that only Fort Worth Zoo staff members enter the cabana or corral areas during carpool.

***INCLEMENT WEATHER:** We will conduct drop off and pickup in the carpool line unless the weather is severe (e.g., thunder, lightning, heavy rain, etc.). If there is severe weather, please park your vehicle and walk up to the education center to pick up your camper(s) directly from their classroom. Please have your carpool pass or photo ID ready.



During Camp:

How can I contact the education department in the event that I am running late, have questions, concerns, etc.?

If you need to contact the education department for any reason, please call 817-759-7200 or email education@fortworthzoo.org. Our office staff communicates directly with our classroom staff and will address any questions or concerns.

Does my camper need to attend camp each day?

Each camp takes place Monday through Friday with different activities each day. Although your camper is not required to attend each day, missing a day may mean missing particular activities. There will be no discounts off the weekly fee if your camper misses one or more days.

Can camp staff distribute medications to my camper?

All medicine must be dropped off by a parent or guardian at the front desk. Medications must be in the original prescription container with the dosage, the child's name and the prescribing physician's name clearly marked on the container. Medications will only be given as directed on the prescription. Medication will be given by the education director, assistant director or by a member of the Fort Worth Zoo security team.

Will my camper get to ride the train, feed the birds, etc.?

Camp activities include, but are not limited to, riding the Yellow Rose Express train, feeding the birds at Parrot Paradise, taking in a live Animal Outreach show, visiting Texas Nature Traders and visiting the Play Barn and Petting Corral.

What is Texas Nature Traders (TNT)?

All full-day (kindergarten through fifth grade) camp classes will visit TNT at least once during the camp week and will have the opportunity to become registered traders, as well as make trades. Please refer to the [Texas Nature Traders page](#) for more information.

What snacks are served?

Campers will receive a variety of snacks including, but not limited to: animal crackers, goldfish, fruit snacks, popcorn or popsicles. Campers are more than welcome to bring their own snack from home if needed for dietary reasons or personal preference. **It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to discuss any allergy or dietary concerns with the teacher on the first day of camp.**

May I bring birthday treats for my camper?

Due to allergy and dietary restrictions, we cannot allow birthday treats to be provided for any camp class.

Will my camper bring anything home?

Campers will work on craft projects and activities throughout the week. The size and number of crafts may vary, depending on the week of camp. Regardless of the number of crafts, **campers will bring all projects home on Friday** unless other arrangements are made.

Where can I view and purchase photos of my camper during their week(s) at the Fort Worth Zoo?

The Fort Worth Zoo education department utilizes the photo website Smugmug. You will receive an email prior to the start of camp with a link and password for each individual week of camp.

Please note: Pictures are uploaded to the appropriate album of each week. Albums for each week of camp will remain active through the end of August, at which point access to the photos will be closed.

