



Thank you so much for registering for Camp Zoo!

We are excited to have your camper(s) join us! Now that you're all signed up, here are your next steps:

- Add camps@phoenixzoo.org to your contact list!
- Read the Caregiver Guide and FAQs included in this packet.
- Watch our Orientation Video.
- Pick up apparel early on May 2 or May 16.

Want to pick up your apparel before Camp Zoo? Join us for our Early Apparel Pickup Day!

- When: Saturday, May 2 or May 16 from 9 a.m. to Noon.
- Where: Nina Pulliam Children's Gate, located outside the Zoo's main entrance.
- What: Pick up your camp apparel, make additional purchases and meet some of the Camp Zoo Team!
- Can't make it? That's okay! While we will not have other options to pick up apparel early, we will open early check-in at 7:30 a.m. on Monday so you have plenty of time to pick up your gear before the camp day begins.

Camp Times:

Check in: 7:45 – 8 a.m. (7:30-8 a.m. on Monday).

Check out for Half-Day Kindergarten: 11:45 a.m. - Noon

Check out for Full-Day Kindergarten and grades 1 - 8: 2:45 p.m. – 3 p.m. (*No aftercare available*)

To add pickup personnel, change your reservation or edit your information, log into the registration portal:

<https://www.ultracamp.com/clientlogin.aspx?idCamp=1332&campCode=PZO>

See below for our FAQ and Policies! For questions not found in our FAQ, contact camps@phoenixzoo.org.



Camp Zoo Caregiver's Guide to Camp

Thank you so much for registering for Camp Zoo. Before your camper arrives, all families are asked to read and acknowledge our terms and conditions. Families will sign off on these terms when registering for camp.

Communication

All our communication is currently via email. Please expect to receive updates from us through the email provided at registration. Please monitor your email for the following information as we get closer to the start of camp:

- Reminders about Early Apparel Pick Up.
- A reminder email the week before your camp date to help you prepare.
- Pick-up directions for your camp week.
- A post-camp email with directions to access photos and a post-camp survey.

Any questions or updates may be directed to camps@phoenixzoo.org; communication sent through Ultracamp (our registration software) will also be automatically directed to camps@phoenixzoo.org. Emails are typically responded to within 1-2 business days; however, anticipate delays when camp is in session.

The Camp Zoo emergency line is 602.574.2253 and is exclusively monitored when camp is in session.

You may use this number during your camper's week to communicate urgent/time-sensitive information (pick-ups, drop-offs, late arrivals, etc.). All other communication should be directed to camps@phoenixzoo.org.

Communication is key to a successful week of camp. Please reach out to us should you encounter any issues. Additionally, many campers in a new setting can find communicating problems intimidating. We encourage families to have regular conversations with their child about letting camp staff know of issues as soon as they occur.

What to Bring

Each day of camp, your camper will need:

- A Camp Zoo shirt.
- Shoes that cover the whole foot (no holes).
- A water bottle.
- Two peanut-free snacks that can be carried separately from your camper's lunch.
- A packed lunch (full-day campers only).
- Optional items for managing heat during camp: A spray bottle and a washcloth.

Horse Hands Camp Zoo participants will also need:

- Sturdy shoes that cover the whole foot.
- Pants to wear while riding horses (campers can choose to bring shorts to wear during other activities).

A Camp shirt, a water bottle and a hat are included in your camp registration. Additional items will be available for purchase during apparel pick-up days and check-in. Please dress each day in comfortable "play clothes" that can get dirty/wet.

Campers are responsible for all of their belongings and will be expected to use their items independently and appropriately. Please ensure that your camper can independently apply sunscreen and bug repellent and change their own shoes and clothing before sending them to camp with those items. The Phoenix Zoo reserves the right to confiscate any item that is being used in a way that is harmful or disruptive to camp.

The Phoenix Zoo is not liable for any lost, stolen or broken items brought to camp.

Check In Procedure

Camp check in takes place from 7:45 - 8 a.m. each day at the Nina Mason Pulliam South Gate

Entrance, located south of the main entrance outside of the Zoo. Check in on Monday begins at 7:30 a.m. to account for apparel pick-ups.

1. Park in designated spaces and walk your child to the check-in tables. Please do not park at the curb.
2. On Monday, if you need camp apparel, proceed to apparel pickup first! Apparel pick-ups and additional purchases are available (card purchases only).
3. Staff can help you find your table for check in. Your camper's counselors will sign them in each day, please feel free to ask them questions! Counselors may also ask you questions to ensure a successful day of camp!
4. Pickup passes are available at check in and will also be emailed to you on the first day of camp with your Camp Snapshot. You will need to have your pick-up pass when you pick up your camper at the end of the day.
5. If your camper has medications, your counselor will direct you to our rangers to sign them in!
6. Once campers are signed in, they will drop off their lunch box in their wagon. Camper lunches will be stored in a bin that is kept in a separate space to keep cool.
7. Once their lunch is dropped off, your camper will enter the Zoo through the South Gate. Parents are not allowed past the gate.
8. Check-in closes at 8 am. Late check-in is available until 8:15 a.m., late check-ins will join their group at that time.
9. If you arrive after late check in, please call the Camp Phone at (602) 574-2253 for directions. Please be prepared for a wait time of up to 10 minutes once you arrive. To reduce wait times, call Camp Phone 10 minutes before you arrive.

Check-Out Procedure

Check out for all full-day campers is from 2:45 – 3 p.m. at the same gate as check in (Nina Mason Pullium South Gate). Half-Day Kindergarten Campers will be checked out between 11:45 a.m. - Noon at the Neely Center, accessible via the main entrance. Follow these steps to pick up your camper:

1. Make sure you have your ID and pickup pass with you when you park and walk up.
2. Present the ranger at the gate with your pick-up pass. Half-Day Kindergarten caregivers will present the pick-up pass at turnstiles.
3. Follow the signs up to the classrooms to sign out your camper. We will be checking IDs at the classroom, so make sure you have your ID before you go up the hill!
4. Please anticipate a brief wait outside and a walk uphill to the camp classrooms to ensure camper safety during check out. If you need any accommodation, let the staff at check-out know and we can arrange a cart to take you to the classrooms.
5. Staff will direct you to your classroom to sign out your camper. Caregivers are to wait for campers outside the classroom.
6. Your counselor will sign out your camper and check your ID based on the "Authorized Pickups" listed in your account.
7. Counselors may speak with you about your camper's day. Anyone responsible for picking up campers should be prepared to have conversations with staff, even if they aren't the direct caregiver.
8. All pickup personnel must be listed in the authorized pickup section in your account. Please make sure their name matches their government-issued photo ID.
9. Exit the Zoo through the same gate. (Kindergarten will exit through the main exit).

Late Arrivals and Early Pick-ups

Camp Zoo is happy to accommodate late arrivals and early pickups!

1. When possible, please notify your camp counselor or email camps@phoenixzoo.org in advance!
2. Call the Camp Phone at (602) 574-2253 when you are 10 minutes away from the Zoo.
3. Park and walk to the Nina Mason Pullium South Gate (same gate as check in). Wait for Zoo staff to arrive.
4. Our team will sign in/out your camper at the gate. Be sure to have your ID with you if signing out!

We cannot facilitate timely departures during lunchtime (Noon - 12:30 p.m.) and up to 30 minutes before dismissal (2:15 - 2:45 p.m.). If you need to pick up your camper during these windows, be prepared to wait longer than normal for staff, or pick up your camper outside of these times. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

We will do our best to accommodate these requests according to the time you have specified, but please know that additional staff and time are needed to escort early departures within the Zoo. Thank you for being patient and allowing yourself a time buffer.

First Aid

Camper health and safety is our highest priority at Camp Zoo. We take matters of first aid very seriously. Should a camper need first aid, our Park Rangers are on call to support campers at a moment's notice. All matters of first aid will be documented and communicated to caregivers at checkout. Any urgent matters or symptoms of illness will result in a phone call home via the emergency line to discuss whether leaving camp is necessary.

Caregiver Conduct

At Camp Zoo, we seek to develop partnerships with the caregivers of our campers. We strive to establish a safe

environment and do our best to keep processes efficient. Our camp operates with the following expectations:

- Camp readiness materials are utilized, and caregivers will reach out if they have questions or concerns.
- Camper needs and accommodations are communicated in advance according to the directions in the Caregiver Guide to Accommodation Requests located on the Camp Zoo webpage.
- All policies and procedures are agreed to during camp registration.
- During check-in and check-out, any caregivers picking up campers should be prepared to speak to counselors about their camper's day, even if they are not the camper's primary caregiver.
- Camp supervisors, staff and caregivers will be respectful of one another and work collaboratively. Should disagreements occur, feedback will be presented respectfully, assuming the best intentions of all parties involved.
- Should any concerns surrounding health, safety, or behavior arise at camp, Camp supervisors and staff will proactively communicate regarding concerns via the Camp Phone or at check out.
- Camp Zoo does not tolerate disrespect, hateful language or aggression towards staff. Camp Zoo reserves the right to ask for an alternative drop off/pick up person if a caregiver engages in disrespectful behavior.

At Camp Zoo, we greatly value transparency with caregivers and forming a partnership to help campers grow. Because our time with your camper is limited, we rely on caregiver input and involvement in supporting camper's needs. Caregivers should expect to talk with staff during their week. If staff does seek to discuss specific behavior with you, our intention is always to identify ways in which we can ensure the best possible experience for your camper.

Camper Behavior

Camp Zoo creates a safe, energetic and fun learning environment. Camp Zoo is not a daycare facility and does not

follow a traditional school structure. Campers will spend their day moving throughout the Zoo, interacting with and observing animals, playing games, singing songs, collaborating, using their creativity and learning new things! We ask caregivers to prepare their child for some of the changes they may encounter at camp and away from parental or caregiver guidance. Our program operates with the expectation that campers can:

- Follow directions from adults other than their caregiver.
- Show respect to staff, fellow campers, animals and Zoo property.
- Transition between activities and locations with their group.
- Communicate personal needs such as needing to use the restroom or feeling discomfort.
- Express feelings verbally and seek out help from adults.
- Refrain from physical violence.

When expectations are not met, the camp day may be impacted in the following ways (including but not limited to):

- Other campers' ability to experience and enjoy camp activities may be negatively impacted.
- Staff attention becomes focused on supporting a single camper instead of supporting their full group or completing tasks needed to support camp functions.
- Other campers may choose to mimic the behavior, further disrupting camp activities and increasing the risk of physical or emotional harm.
- Unsafe choices could result in harm to your camper or others.

Campers that make choices causing a distraction, negative experience or a safety concern in camp, regardless of ability, will step away from the current activity and work collaboratively with staff to ensure expectations are met. When this occurs, we notify caregivers of the instance either by phone or at dismissal to seek partnership on how to best support the camper. Camp Zoo utilizes empathy-driven and researched behavior management practices that establish boundaries and support based on child brain development. Often, behavior is a result of environmental factors that can be modified or addressed. When camper misconduct persists after instructor intervention, Camp Zoo will respond accordingly based on our Action Plan for Misconduct (located in our policies and procedures). Depending on the severity of the action, Camp Zoo reserves the right to call caregivers and ask that a camper be picked up early from their day of camp or be dismissed from their week early. Refunds will not be given to campers dismissed from camp.

Accommodations

We want every camper to have what they need to fully and safely participate in our program. If there are any strategies, resources or support that would help your camper meet our expectations for behavior, please provide detailed information in your registration documents and email the Camp Leadership Team at camps@phoenixzoo.org so that we can understand how to best support your camper and make the necessary arrangements. To better understand when and how to request an accommodation and how our team processes those requests, please refer to the Caregiver Guide to Accommodation Requests document located at the bottom of the Camp Zoo webpage.

Feedback

We welcome feedback from families, as it helps improve our programs and advocate for changes! Let us know about your camp experience by either filling out our anonymous post-camp survey, or by emailing the camps team at camps@phoenixzoo.org.

Camp Zoo Frequently Asked Questions

What is the best way to contact you?

For questions regarding your upcoming camp, the best way to connect with Camps is through our email, camps@phoenixzoo.org. You can also reply to your confirmation email, and any emails we send you regarding camp!

For urgent/time-sensitive assistance during your camper's week, you may call (do not text) our Camp Emergency Line at (602) 574-2253. **This phone line is NOT monitored outside the hours of camp. Please only call this number during your camper's week.** All non-urgent calls for general assistance will be directed to email us instead.

Registration & Reservation Changes

I need to cancel my registration; can I do that online?

You can cancel your registration online up to seven days prior to your camp. Log back into the registration portal and click "My Reservations." Then you will select your session and cancel it on the next page. When you cancel, your payment will be listed as an account credit, and once we are informed of the cancellation, we will process a refund to the card on file. See below for our refund policy.

Can I switch to another week?

You can switch sessions up to seven days prior to your camp. To switch your session, you will cancel your current session, then re-register for the correct one. When you cancel, your payment will be listed as an account credit, which will then be applied to the other session.

How can I add my child to the waitlist?

You can add your participant to any waitlists for sessions. To add to the waitlist, make an account on UltraCamp, and a profile for your participant. Then, proceed as if you are registering your participant for a session. When you arrive at the list of sessions, the full sessions will have a “waitlist” button instead of a register button. Click this button and you will be added.

How does the waitlist work?

Waitlists are formed in order of when participants are added. For the waitlist to move, someone currently registered for the session will need to cancel their reservation to make a spot. Once a cancellation occurs, the first person on the waitlist will be notified via email and have 48 hours to register. Once 48 hours have passed, the spot will move to the next participant on the waitlist.

If you have multiple participants on the waitlist, complete registration when you receive notice of one spot being open. Waitlists only run one spot at a time, and if you wait for more than one spot to open, you may risk losing your spot on the waitlist altogether.

What is your refund policy?

You can cancel or move your session online through our registration portal up to one week before your camp begins. The cancellation will be sent to our team to process your refund. Please allow 1-2 business days for your refund to be processed.

Refunds can be obtained up to seven days (one week) before your camp begins. Please email camps@phoenixzoo.org if you need to cancel less than one week before camp. Refunds made within seven days (one week) of the camp session will be subject to a \$50 cancellation fee (per camper per session). Caregivers can also elect to receive credit towards a future session instead of a refund.

There are no refunds for no-shows or missed days. If your camper's week begins and you decide to no longer attend camp, you will not be able to receive a refund.

We reserve the right to cancel any camp session. In such cases, you will be notified, and we will reschedule you or a full refund will be made.

I registered my camper for the wrong grade. Can I switch groups?

Campers enrolled in the incorrect group can only move if the desired grade is available. You may edit your camper's information online through our registration portal and cancel/switch sessions up until 14 days (two weeks) prior to your camp start date.

To login to the registration portal, [click here!](#)

Every group is set to a specific capacity to ensure instructor-camper ratios that align with the standards of the American Camp Association. If a session is sold out, we cannot move your camper from one group into another, **no exceptions**.

Can I sign my camper up for a different grade level?

Camp Zoo specifically designs each grade level's program to match the developmental needs for each age range. Campers are not permitted to join groups outside of their grade level, **no exceptions**.

I missed the window for early apparel pick up. How do I get my camp shirt?

If you miss our early pickup window, rest assured that all apparel will be available on the first day of your session. We start check in at 7:30 a.m. on the first day of each session to accommodate apparel pickups. Early apparel pick-ups vary from session to session, based on camp capacity and timing. **We will not facilitate early apparel pick-up while camps are in session, no exceptions.**

Check In/Check Out

What time is check-in?

Check-in will run from **7:45 - 8 a.m.** every day of camp.

On **Mondays, we will begin check-in at 7:30 a.m.** Please allow at least 30 minutes for check in on the first day of camp to allow for material collection, group organization and paperwork collection.

What do I do if I am running late?

Please call the camp emergency line at (602) 574-2253 to let us know you are running behind.

If you are running slightly late, some staff stay behind to facilitate a late check in from 8 - 8:15 a.m. Campers that arrive late for check-in will be asked to wait with staff until 8:15 a.m. and will then be taken to their camp group.

What time is check-out?

Check-out for full-day campers begins at **2:45 p.m. and runs until 3 p.m.**

Check-out for Half-Day Kindergarten begins at **11:45 a.m. and runs until Noon.**

Is there an aftercare program that would allow me to pick up my camper later?

Unfortunately, we do not offer any after-care services. All campers must be picked up before check-out ends.

Can other people pick up my child?

Yes, but they need to be on your Authorized Pickup List! You can add additional pickup personnel online via our registration portal. Log into your account, then scroll down the "My Account" page to select the grey tab labeled "pickup authorization."

Please make sure the names provided match the personnel's government-issued photo ID. We will not release campers if the names do not match, no exceptions.

To login to the registration portal, [click here!](#)

What to Bring

Can my camper bring extra items with them to Camp?

Campers are more than welcome to bring an extra item that will support their day at camp (sunscreen, cooling towel, shoes for water play, a backpack, etc.). All items are the camper's responsibility to handle and care for in a safe manner.

We ask that toys, cell phones and electronic devices stay at home. The Phoenix Zoo is not liable for any lost, stolen or broken items brought to camp.

Any items that could be used or mistaken as a weapon are prohibited and will be confiscated. Items subject to confiscation include any item that has a blade, can fire a projectile or is used to cause or threaten harm. Any confiscated items will be returned to the adult picking up the camper.

Can my camper bring a phone with them?

Camp Zoo focuses campers on being present in the experiences we offer. Cell phones, smartwatches and other entertainment-based electronics are not allowed to be used during Camp hours. If found, these items will be confiscated from campers and returned to the adult picking up at the end of the day. If you need to contact your camper during the camp day, please contact camp supervisors using the Camp Zoo Emergency Line at (602) 574-2253.

Can my camper wear a smart watch?

Watches are permitted at Camp Zoo; however, they must only be used as a watch. If a watch is used as a phone or entertainment-based electronic during camp hours, the camper will be asked to put the watch away. If the watch continues to distract, the item will be confiscated from campers and returned to the adult picking up at the end of the day.

Why can't my camper wear shoes with holes in them?

Our programs may involve behind the scenes elements where fecal matter may be present. For this reason, we ask that campers wear enclosed shoes to keep fecal matter from entering their shoes. **Shoes must be enclosed with no holes in them. Enclosed sandals with holes (e.g., Keens, Crocs) will not be allowed.**

Can my camper bring shoes for water play?

Yes! Campers are more than welcome to bring extra shoes/socks with them. We ask that campers change their shoes and socks independently. Camp runs on a tight schedule, and we may not be able to provide extra time for campers to change shoes. Please practice changing shoes at home for a successful transition!

Do we need to bring a snack?

Camp Zoo is no longer providing snacks with Camp and asks families to bring two additional nut-free snacks along with their camper's lunch. Campers will have access to their lunch box during snack time.

Does my camper need to bring lunch?

Yes, all **full-day** campers are required to bring their own lunch from home. Please note that lunches will be stored together in the lunchroom, so we recommend storing your food in a structured lunch box labeled with your camper's name.

Kindergarteners that are registered for half-day Camp do not need lunch but are asked to bring one nut-free snack!

Does my camper need to wear their Camp shirt every day?

Yes, we ask that campers wear their camp shirt each day. This aids in the identification of participants in our program. Additional shirts will also be available for purchase for \$10.

Camp Day

What will my camper do in a day?

Campers participate in indoor and outdoor activities including games, crafts, learning activities, stories, songs, hikes, animal demonstrations and special behind-the-scenes animal encounters/experiences.

For specific information about your camper's curriculum, a newsletter will be provided describing your camper's week! Keep an eye out for it in your email one week before camp!

How do you accommodate high temperatures?

Camper health and safety is our highest priority at Camp Zoo. All year long, we prioritize heat safety by limiting time outside and providing campers with regular cool downs and water breaks. Like a “rainy day schedule.” Camp Zoo implements a high temperature schedule to keep campers safe. Our schedule will vary from program to program. When temperatures reach 110 or higher, campers will spend no more than 45 minutes outside **cumulatively** (not all at once, including water breaks outside and going from one room to another).

We recommend campers bring a washcloth and a spray bottle to help cool down throughout the day!

All summer programs spend at least ½ the day inside (or longer), with all outside activities occurring in the early morning.

Do you take pictures of the campers throughout the day?

We take photos of campers at select times throughout camp, which vary from program to program. All photos will be shared on SmugMug at the end of your week! Be on the lookout for an email on the last day of camp with instructions!

Camp Zoo takes family privacy and security seriously. Please request a media release at check in or email camps@phoenixzoo.org if your camper cannot be present in any photos.

Camp Zoo places priority on camper, animal and staff safety, and the quality of lived experiences over opportunities to document activities. We will do our best to take as many photos as we can; however, we do not guarantee a set number of photos for any given week. Photos may be taken by a variety of staff and over different devices, so quality may vary. Due to elevated temperatures, we often experience devices overheating. Thank you so much for your understanding, and we are continually working to find new ways to capture moments at camp.

What animals will my camper see at camp?

Campers will see animals big and small during their week at Camp Zoo! Each day of camp, campers will have the opportunity to see animals throughout the Zoo and meet some of our ambassador animals.

To best prioritize the safety of campers, staff and animals at the Zoo, Camp Zoo is unable to guarantee the presence of any animals both on and off exhibit. We cannot accept any animal requests for our camp programming, and we are unable to remove animals from our programming due to fear or dislike.

Our staff is trained to support campers that may be afraid of a particular animal, and we teach the campers hand signals to indicate to a handler if they don't want an animal near them. We also provide a “chill out zone” to allow campers to step away if they do not want to engage with a particular animal encounter. Camp Zoo staff will never force campers to view or touch animals that they are afraid of; however, we do ask that campers continue to remain safe and respectful if they are in the presence of an animal they do not like.

If your camper is unable to view or be in the presence of a specific animal due to their cultural practice, please let us know as soon as possible either via email or in your registration forms. We take these requests seriously and will take the necessary steps to accommodate.

My camper has food allergies, is there a safe space for them to eat?

We offer a communal lunchroom and a separate “nut-free” area in which lunch boxes are checked to ensure they do not contain any products with nuts. Please be sure to communicate all your campers' allergies on their health history form.

All snack times are nut free. Snacks with nuts eaten outside of lunchtime will not be permitted.