



Thank you so much for registering for our Seasonal Camps!

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

- ✓ **Fill out Health History Form:** https://phoenixzoo.formstack.com/forms/seasonal_camps_2023_24
- ✓ **Pick up Apparel Early:** October 1-8, Guest Services Lobby, anytime between 8am-5:30pm
- ✓ **Watch Orientation Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-JhldTqw38>

Health History forms are due the Thursday before camp! Campers are not able to attend until the form is filled out.

Apparel will be available to pick up at the guest services lobby October 1-8, while supplies last. Early apparel pickup will ensure a faster check-in on your first day of camp! If you do not pick up apparel in advance, you will be able to collect all your materials during check-in. Additional Purchases will be available during your week of camp.

For additional questions, see our **FAQ** and **Camp Policies** below. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Camp Leadership Team:

The best way to contact the Camp Leadership Team is via email.

Camp Supervisors: Katie Mather-Charles, Yasmine Youssefi

Formal Learning and Engagement Manager: Leslie Bell

E-mail: camps@phoenixzoo.org

Camp Zoo Emergency Line: 602.574.2253

Camp Zoo Frequently Asked Questions

Note: These FAQs apply to all Day Camps. Please read carefully for information specific to your camp. For full details on Camp Operations, please see our policies and procedures.

1. What time is check-in?

Check-in will run from **7:45 AM to 8:00 AM** every day of camp.

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

If you are running slightly late, some staff stay behind to facilitate a late check-in from 8:00-8:15. Campers that arrive late for check-in will be asked to wait with staff until 8:15 and will then be taken to their camp group.

2. What time is check-out?

Check-out begins at **2:45 pm and runs until 3:00 PM**. Please make arrangements to pick up your camper in this window.

All Kindergarten Camps are half day. Check-out begins at 11:30 and runs until 11:45.

3. 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

For urgent/time-sensitive assistance during your camper's week, you may call our Camp Emergency line at (602)574-2253. **Please only reach out to this number during your campers' week.** All non-urgent calls for general assistance will be directed to email us instead.

To reschedule, cancel, or update your camper's registration, please reach out to our Reservations department at (602)914-4333

4. My camper needs to arrive late or leave early, what should I do?

If you are running slightly late, some staff stay behind to facilitate a late check-in from 8:00-8:15. Campers at late check-in will be asked to wait with staff until 8:15 and will then be taken to their camp group.

Please communicate early pickups at check-in with the expected time you will be picking up. Then, call us on the camp phone at (602)574-2253 when you are 10 minutes away from pick-up. Additional staff and time are needed to escort early departures from the Zoo. We will do our best to facilitate timely pickups. Thank you for being patient and allowing yourself a time buffer.

We cannot facilitate timely departures during lunchtime (12:00-12:30) and up to 30 minutes before dismissal (2:15-2:45). If you need to pick up your camper during these windows, we recommend picking them up prior to then. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

If arriving late, please tell us on the camp phone at (602)574-2253 at least 30 minutes before your arrival, and then again when you are 10 minutes away so we can arrange for staff to check in your camper.

5. 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).

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

6. 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. Families may opt in to have their camper's photo taken during camp. If so, then their child's image may be used for marketing purposes at the Phoenix Zoo, except for one whole-group photo to be taken each week.

Camp Zoo takes family privacy and security seriously. Please 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 patience, and we are continually working to find new ways to capture moments at camp.

7. 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.

To best prioritize sun and heat safety, expect that campers will have activities indoors, regardless of time of year. All Summer Camps are required to spend at least 1/2 day (if not more) indoors.

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

8. 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.

9. Can my camper bring a phone with them?

Camp Zoo focuses campers on being present in the experiences we offer. Cell phones 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 have a circumstance that requires you to contact your camper during the camp day, please contact camp supervisors on the camp zoo emergency phone number 602-574-2253.

10. How are campers grouped?

Campers are grouped by grade level: Kindergarten, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8

NOTE: When registering for Summer Camps, please enroll your camper in the grade level they are entering in the fall.

11. What do Group A and Group B mean?

Due to increased demand, some grade levels are offering two groups! These groups will have identical curriculum and activities throughout the week (although daily schedule may vary). Groups can be selected when registering your camper and will be labeled as “Group A” and “Group B.”

If you have family/friends in the same grade level coming to camp, the best way to guarantee you are in a group together is to place a request in the corresponding field provided at registration. Requests can also be made by emailing camps@phoenixzoo.org, but we ask that they are done as far in advance as possible. We will do our best to accommodate requests, but we cannot guarantee them. We will not be able to accommodate group requests while camp is in session.

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

Campers enrolled in the incorrect group can only move if the desired grade is available. Please contact our Reservations Department at (602)914-4333 to check capacity and switch groups.

Every group is set to a 20-camper capacity to ensure a 10:1 instructor-camper ratio. If a session is sold out, we cannot move your camper from one group into another, **no exceptions.**

13. 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 lunch room, so we recommend storing your food in a structured lunch box labeled with your camper's name.

All Kindergarten Camps are half-day. Kindergarteners do not need lunch but are welcome to bring an additional snack!

14. Do you provide snacks?

We provide a light snack in the mornings and afternoons for all campers. However, campers are more than welcome to bring additional snacks from home. We just ask that they are **nut-free and stored outside of their lunchbox as lunch boxes will be stored in a separate location.**

15. Why does my camper need close-toed shoes?

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.**

16. 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.

17. I missed the window for early apparel pickup. How do I get my camp shirt?

Every camp will have a window for families to pick up their apparel early, to ensure a smooth check-in process. If you miss our early pickup window, rest assured that all apparel will be available on the first day of your session, and we start check in at 7:30 that day to accommodate for 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.**

18. 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.

19. Is there an aftercare program where I can pick up my camper later?

Unfortunately, we are no longer able to offer any after-care services. Please pick up your camper by 3:00 PM.

Camp Zoo Policies and Procedures

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 filing out their camper’s Health History form.

Communication:

All our communication is currently via email. Please expect to receive updates from us through the email provided at registration. Any questions or updates may be directed to camps@phoenixzoo.org. Emails are typically responded to within a 48-hour time; however, anticipate some delay when camp is in session.

The Camp Zoo emergency line is 602.574.2253. You may use this number during your camper’s week to communicate urgent/time-sensitive information (pickups, drop-offs, late arrivals, etc.). This emergency line is NOT monitored when camp is out of session. To ensure the quickest response to calls, the emergency line is handled by a staff member who is supervising the camp. To ensure our staff can be as present with campers as possible, we ask that all administrative questions are directed to camps@phoenixzoo.org. Any calls asking for administrative assistance will be asked to send in an email with the request. Thank you for your cooperation.

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 instructors know of issues as soon as they occur.

Camp Times:

Camp starts at 8:00 am with the check-in beginning at 7:45. Monday check-in will begin 15 minutes early, at 7:30.

Camp ends and check-out begins at **2:45**. All campers must be picked up by 3:00. We do **NOT** offer aftercare.

Kindergarten Camps are half day, ending at 11:30. All campers must be picked up by 11:45.

Late Arrivals:

Each day we have a late check-in from 8:00-8:15. During this time, campers may be signed in, but will stay with camp staff and join camp when Late-Check in ends.

If campers are arriving later than 8:15, we ask that caregivers call 10 minutes in advance so we can arrange for staff to facilitate a late arrival.

Departure:

Campers will only be released to individuals identified as a designated pick-up person for the camper. Anyone picking up a camper must show a photo ID to confirm they are designated for pickup. We will email additional details about the check-in/check-out process about one week before camp.

Camp Zoo makes child safety their top priority. To avoid elevated temperatures and interference with the public, Campers remain in classrooms with staff for pickup. Pick up personnel are expected to park and walk up to our classrooms to pick up their camper. Please reach out to us at camps@phoenixzoo.org if you would like to request assistance going up to our classrooms.

When picking up your camper, instructors will share the highlights of your camper's day, and communicate any other relevant information.

Early Departures:

Early departures may be accommodated with advanced notice. Early Departures should be communicated to staff no later than day-of, at check in. We will then ask that you call us 10 minutes prior to arriving so we can ensure your camper is ready in a timely manner.

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.

We cannot facilitate timely departures during lunchtime (12:00-12:30) and up to 30 minutes before dismissal (2:15-2:45). If you need to pick up your camper during these windows, you may need to budget extra time, or just pick them up prior to then. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

If a camper must be picked up early without notice due to an unforeseen emergency, please call the **Camp Zoo emergency line 602.574.2253**. Please be aware that the Zoo spans over 120 acres and may take time to transport campers to the gate.

Camp Registration:

Due to the increased demand for Camp Zoo, campers may only register for one week of camp over the summer.

If campers are in the same grade level as a friend/family member also attending camp, and you would like the campers in the same group, please make this request known through registration or by emailing camps@phoenixzoo.org as far in advance as possible. If requests are not brought to our attention prior to the beginning of our camp season, we cannot guarantee that your campers will be in the same group. We will do our best to accommodate requests, but we cannot guarantee them. **We will not be able to accommodate any group requests once Camp is in session.**

Campers must be registered for their current grade level. We will not honor requests to be in a grade above or below.

NOTE: In Summer Months, Campers should register for the grade they will be ENTERING in the fall. It is the family's responsibility to register their camper for the appropriate grade level group. Campers enrolled in the incorrect grade will only be able to move if there is availability in the desired grade. Please contact our reservations department at (602)914-4333 to check capacity and switch groups.

Every group is set to a 20-camper capacity to ensure a 10:1 instructor-camper ratio. If a session is sold out, we cannot move your camper from one group into another, **no exceptions.**

Refunds:

Refunds can be obtained up to 14 days (2 weeks) before your camp begins. Cancellations made within 14 days (2 weeks) of the camp session will be subject to a \$100 cancellation fee (per camper per session) unless they are missing due to illness, and you notify us before the start of camp.

Sessions can be rescheduled. However, if you reschedule within 14 days (2 weeks) prior to the original session, a \$50 rescheduling fee (per camper) will be added to your bill.

There is no refund 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.

Please Note - Camp fees may not qualify for dependent care credits or dependent care reimbursement plans.

Animals:

Camp Zoo works year-round to organize meaningful animal encounters for our campers. We evaluate our experiences every year and work to continually improve on our programming. 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.

Every camper is welcome at Camp Zoo! 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 on your camper's health history form. We take these requests seriously and will take the necessary steps to accommodate.

At Camp Zoo, you can expect that campers will meet animals both big and small! 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 allow campers a "chill out zone" 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 be respectful if they are in the presence of an animal they do not like. To ensure the best experience possible, Camp Zoo is unable to remove animals from our programming due to fear or dislike.

Weather:

Camp Zoo is a rain or shine event. In case of unexpected weather, we will implement a modified schedule that provides greater time inside. Rainy day schedules will vary from program to program; however, campers will still go outside if the rain is light, and no thunder is present. Rain boots, and raincoats are welcome on those days. Campers may have an umbrella, but it is their responsibility to handle and care for the umbrella in a safe manner.

Sun safety is a high priority for Camp Zoo, especially in the summer. **All summer programs spend at least ½ the day inside (or longer), with all outside activities occurring in the early morning.** Like a rainy-day schedule, we modify activities in instances of elevated temperatures. Campers will not spend more than 45 minutes outside (cumulatively-including breaks and going from one building to another) during times of high heat. All outdoor activities are accompanied by water play to cool campers down, and a water break to provide all campers with ice and cold water. Campers are more than welcome to come with additional tools to keep them cool (cooling towel, spray bottle, etc.), but it is their responsibility to handle and care for the items in a safe manner.

Camper Materials:

Campers will come to camp every day with the following materials:

1. Camp t-shirt, worn each day
2. Closed toe shoes
3. Water bottle
4. Packed lunch (Full day camps only)

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

Footwear must be closed toe, covering the full foot, comfortable for walking, and able to get dirty/wet. For sanitary purposes, **we ask that shoes do not have holes or gaps** (crocs, keens, etc.). “Heelys” and other rolling shoes are not permitted at the Phoenix Zoo. Campers who arrive at camp wearing improper shoes (including flip-flops) may not be able to participate in outdoor/behind-the-scenes activities until proper shoes are brought to camp.

It is best to apply sunscreen and bug repellent before camp. If it needs to be reapplied throughout the day, **campers will need to be able to apply sunscreen and bug repellent themselves.**

Campers may bring a backpack to carry the materials mentioned above, as well as any additional items they may need (sunscreen, bug spray, etc.). 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.

If your camper is missing an item mentioned above, the item can be dropped off at the guest services lobby.

Drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind are prohibited. Camp Zoo reserves the right to confiscate any inappropriate, dangerous, or harmful items found in camper possession.

Cell Phones and Electronics:

Camp Zoo focuses campers on being present in the experiences we offer. Cell phones 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 have a circumstance that requires you to contact your camper during the camp day, please contact camp supervisors on the camp zoo emergency phone number 602-574-2253.

Lost and Found:

Please label all items brought to camp with your camper’s first and last name and grade level. The Phoenix Zoo cannot assume responsibility for anything brought to camp, however, staff will do their best to help locate missing items. A Lost & Found box is kept in the Neely Center. Items not claimed at the end of the week are taken to the Ranger Station. Clothing and other unclaimed items are donated to charity if they are not collected within 1 month of your camp.

Snacks:

A light snack will be provided each morning and afternoon. Snacks will be pre-packaged. Snacks may include pretzels, goldfish crackers, applesauce, raisins, granola bars, carrots, and apples. As a special treat, we occasionally (no more than once a week) offer campers cookies or popsicles. Please **communicate any allergies** on your health history form as well as with instructors at check-in. All snacks are nut-free.

Campers are more than welcome to bring extra snacks with them. We ask that snacks are carried **outside** of their lunchbox for easy access, and that additional snacks are nut free. (Lunch items are okay to contain nuts).

Lunch:

Full day campers will have lunch from 12:00-12:30. Lunchboxes are dropped off at check in and then stored in our lunchroom to keep cool.

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. Camp Zoo is unable to provide lunches for campers. If your camper arrives without lunch, lunch must be brought to us by 11:00. Lunches can be dropped off at the guest services lobby. If a camper does not receive lunch, then they will not be permitted to participate in afternoon activities until they have received lunch.

Photography:

Families may opt in to have their camper's photo taken during camp. If a family member opts in, then their child's image may be used for marketing purposes at the Phoenix Zoo, except for one whole-group photo to be taken each week. Campers who do not opt in for photos will be asked to wear a wrist band to help our photographers identify photo exemptions. All photos will be made available through a photo sharing website. All participants of that week will have access to the photos.

Camp Zoo takes family privacy and security seriously. Please 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 absolute 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 patience, and we are continually working to find new ways to capture moments at camp.

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 to discuss whether leaving camp is necessary.

To allow our rangers to have the highest possible response times, instructors may provide support (snack, ice pack, etc.) to campers with minor discomforts unrelated to specific accommodations. If after a staff intervention a camper can rejoin the group quickly and is not showing nor communicating discomfort, then the camp day will continue without a call to rangers. We will do our best to communicate if this occurs; however, we cannot guarantee that every minor discomfort is communicated. Should your camper come home reporting an issue that was not discussed with your instructor at camp, you are more than welcome to connect with us the following morning, or by email at camps@phoenixzoo.org

Camp Accommodations:

All children are welcome at Phoenix Zoo programs. Upon filling out the health history form, please provide us with the tools necessary to give your child the best possible experience at Camp Zoo by informing us of all special considerations - this may include information on allergies, accessibility concerns, behavioral, psychological, or emotional conditions or other special needs. Details of any Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or Behavior Plans used with your child at school can often be helpful.

To best enable our staff to provide your child with a valuable experience, the information you provide will be shared with Camp Zoo staff & volunteers unless you request otherwise. Details will not be shared with other Camp Zoo participants without your permission. While we will make every effort to accommodate all considerations, it is not possible for us to offer 1:1 attention. If your child requires an aide at school or a PASS worker, he/she may not attend Camp Zoo without a non-parent aide.

Camp Zoo is happy to allow a non-parent aide to join the camp to better support your camper. Please contact us regarding this accommodation as soon as possible by sending an email to camps@phoenixzoo.org. Upon checking in the first day, the aide will be asked to sign our employee manual, to confirm they agree to camp policies. Aides are not allowed to manage campers outside of their purview, and the camper they are supporting must always be in view of camp staff.

Camper Behavior:

Camp Zoo's discipline policy is based on a system of Rights, Privileges and Expectations.

- **Rights:** All campers have the right to respectful, considerate treatment, meeting physical needs, and an atmosphere of accountability.

- **Privileges:** All campers have the privilege to fully participate in the camp program and activities. This privilege is offered uniformly, and portions are withdrawn only for deviation from acceptable behavior.
- **Expectations:** At Camp Zoo, our expectations are **safety + respect = fun!** Camp Zoo staff are trained to make expectations age-appropriate and accessible for all campers.

Campers will make choices that ensure **safety**. Campers must stay with their designated group(s) and be visible by two (2) instructors, or one (1) supervisor while at the Zoo. Campers cannot navigate Zoo grounds unattended. Campers will listen carefully to instructors, zookeepers, and staff regarding safety precautions that maintain the safety of themselves, fellow campers, staff, and animals.

Physical violence of any kind is not allowed. Campers who engage in physical violence will be removed from activities and camp supervisors will determine if the camper may resume their camp day. Any physical violence directed towards a staff member will immediately result in the camper being sent home from camp.

Campers will make choices that ensure **respect**. Campers will use language that is age appropriate and respectful towards their peers, staff, and animals. Campers will listen and follow the directions of their instructors and Zoo staff. Campers will be considerate when interacting with Camp Zoo property and the Zoo's facilities.

Every camper is welcomed at the Phoenix Zoo and is invited to have **fun!** However, this is unable to happen if safety or respect is compromised. Campers who are not following expectations will collaborate with their instructors on ways to ensure a fun, successful day. If unsafe or inappropriate behavior persists, campers may be asked to sit out of activities. Caregivers will be notified of instances regarding behavior either by phone or in person at check-out. Should a situation arise in which Camp Zoo is no longer able to guarantee the safety of a camper, staff, or animal, Camp Zoo reserves the right to call parents 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.

We look forward to seeing your camper at Camp Zoo! Should you have questions about any of the above information, please contact the Camp Leadership Team. The best form of contact is email. Email: camps@phoenixzoo.org