

SAN DIEGO ZOO®

SAFARI PARK

Accessibility Guide



Giraffe 1

SAN DIEGO ZOO®
SAFARI PARK
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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do you rent wheelchairs?

A: Yes. We have manual and electric wheelchairs available to be rented for the day. Please refer to page 7 for more details.

Q: What is the cost for wheelchair rental?

A: Prices are subject to change and discounts. Prices are posted on-site at the rental facility.

Q: Can a wheelchair (manual or electric) be reserved ahead of time?

A: No. Wheelchairs are rented on a first-come, first-served basis. Please refer to page 7 for more details.

Q: What is the minimum age to operate an electric wheelchair?

A: 16 years old. Please refer to page 7 for more details.

Q: If a person with a disability brings an attendant, does the attendant get into the Safari Park free of charge?

A: Yes. For your convenience, complimentary passes for attendants may be obtained at any of the ticket windows at the entrance to the Safari Park. Please refer to page 7 for more details.

Q: Is there a shuttle service for guests with disabilities?

A: Yes. Please refer to page 5 for more details.

Q: Where does the shuttle service go?

A: Please download and refer to the Accessibility Map, which shows our Shuttle stops in the Safari Park.

Q: Do you provide assistance for guests that need American Sign Language interpretation?

A: Yes. We request that arrangements be made at least 7 days in advance of your visit. Please call (760) 796-5621 to arrange for an interpreter. Please refer to page 4 for more detail.

Q: Do you provide assistance for guests who are blind or have Low Vision?

A: Yes. We request that arrangements be made at least 72 hours in advance of your visit. Please call (760) 796-5621 to arrange for an interpreter. Please refer to page 4 for more detail.

Q: Do you allow service animals?

A: Yes. We welcome guests with disabilities that choose to bring their **trained service animal** into the Safari Park. Animals "in training" are not allowed in the Safari Park. Please download Service Animal map which shows the restricted and sensitive areas for service animals. Please refer to page 8 for more details.

Q: Are service animals allowed on safaris?

A: Service animals are permitted on the Africa Tram. All other Safaris require the animal to be kenneled. Please refer to page 8 for more details.

Q: Can a staff member assist guests in the restroom?

A: No. Safari Park employees are neither trained nor permitted to lift a guest or help them inside a restroom. Should it be required, guests needing this assistance should plan to visit the Safari Park with someone who can physically help them.

Welcome!

We strive to maintain a safe, pedestrian-friendly environment where visitors of all ages and physical abilities can enjoy the benefits of the San Diego Zoo Safari Park.

This guide addresses many issues about accessibility. However, if you have other needs or questions, please contact us at (760) 796-5621. We encourage you to call at least one week before your trip for the best possible assistance. Once on grounds, please feel free to discuss any special needs you have with Safari Park employees.

In light of changing needs of our guests and other developments, we reserve the right to modify this guide and our accessibility policies as appropriate.

Assistance for Guests who are Blind or have Low Vision

With an advance reservation, an Access Ambassador will be provided for guests who are blind and visiting the Safari Park. A staff member will assist guests who are blind, they will read informational signs or map information, read menus and pricing signs, describe the exhibit habitat and the animals that live there, describe the current activity of the animals in the exhibit, and provide any additional information requested that can be made available. Our Access Ambassador will also accompany you on our Africa Tram; and they will describe the details of what other guests are viewing on the tour. Please call our Access Coordinator at (760) 796-5621 to make arrangements for an Access Ambassador. Specialized tours will be made available for our guests who are blind or who have low vision with advance notice to our coordinator. We appreciate as much advance notice as possible, 72 hour minimum. Additional advance notice will help to schedule the best tours and experiences for you.

Assistance for Guests who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

We have a helpful packet available to download which includes our Africa Tram Species Guide, our Frequent Flyers and Cheetah Run show script. For those guests who are deaf or hard of hearing, the Africa Tram, the Frequent Flyer show and Cheetah Run show can be interpreted into American Sign Language. We request that arrangements for an ASL Interpreter be made at least 7 days in advance of your visit. Please call (760) 796-5621 to arrange for an interpreter

Assistance for Guests with Limited Mobility

Please note: The Safari Park is an expansive, walking theme park. We recommend that guests with limited mobility/stamina bring or rent a mobility assistive device.

Please keep in mind that Park employees are neither trained nor permitted to lift guests. A guest requiring such physical assistance should plan to visit the Safari Park with an attendant.

Guests with Limited Mobility (continued)

Africa Tram

Guests may park or store their strollers, wheelchairs, or Other Power Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs, formerly known as electric scooters or ECVs) at the loading dock. Please utilize the accessible line if you require assistance loading onto the tram, or if you cannot transfer from your device. An employee will assist with the loading process. The tour is round trip, therefore, you will return to the same location as departure.

Easy Access Pass

Guests who have difficulty standing in line or who have limited mobility may request an “Easy Access Pass” at any ticket window at the entrance to the Safari Park, Ranger Base, or at the Africa Tram ticket window. This pass may be utilized in any areas where waiting lines exist. The attendant on duty will direct the guests to a designated boarding area. Three additional members of the guest’s party may accompany the guest with a disability. If there are more than three guests in your party, you may request to be seated at the loading facility to wait until other members of your party progress through the line to the loading area.

Parking

Accessible parking is available in our parking lot on a first-come, first-served basis. A valid disability parking placard or license plate is required. Please note that the San Diego Police Department enforces the Safari Park’s disabled parking spaces. If designated disabled spots are all taken, complimentary parking is provided in our Preferred Parking Lot. Be sure to display your placard issued by an appropriate government Motor Vehicle agency.

Shows

Wheelchair seating is available at the front of each amphitheater and on the road above Tembo Stadium. Please look for the accessible areas of the amphitheaters that are designated by the wheelchair access symbol. Please ask any employee for assistance if it is needed.

Shuttle Service

Shuttle service is available for access to different locations around the Safari Park. Please download and refer to the Map for Guests with Disabilities, which shows the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Shuttle stops in the Safari Park. The shuttle service runs on a continuous route throughout the day.

Wheelchairs

The Safari Park is widely accessible to guests using both manual and electric wheelchairs. Consistent with federal guidelines, we define “wheelchairs” as devices designed primarily for use by individuals with mobility disabilities.

- We also accommodate the use of certain nontraditional wheelchairs (e.g. steerable knee walkers).
- We reserve the right to inspect devices to determine whether they are safe enough to qualify as “wheelchairs”.

Guests with Limited Mobility (continued)

Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs)

The Safari Park accommodates the use of some Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs), which are vehicles that are not wheelchairs, but rather are electric devices designed primarily for use by individuals with mobility limitations.

- In the interest of maintaining a safe and pedestrian friendly environment while at the same time ensuring that everyone has a positive experience at the Safari Park, we regulate the operation of mobility devices.
- Guests with disabilities using mobility devices may ask employees at any ticket window at the entrance to the Safari Park or at Ranger Base for a “wheelchair tag”. These tags make it easier for employees to assist guests with mobility disabilities and they ensure that guests will not have to explain their way through the facility.

Acceptable OPDMDs

Permitted mobility devices include the following for guests with disabilities:

- Electric OPDMDs and other single-seat electric scooters with three or more wheels that cannot exceed more than 6 miles per hour.
- Segways® are permitted but must operate only in “turtle” mode.
- It is prohibited to operate a mobility device at a speed significantly greater than the flow of the surrounding pedestrian traffic.

Prohibited OPDMDs

Prohibited OPDMDs include the following:

- Any device that has or should have a registered license plate
- Any device that has only one wheel
- Any device that has two tandem wheels (e.g. two-wheeled electric or motorized scooters)
- Any OPDMD that has been structurally or mechanically altered
- Any OPDMD that is not listed as acceptable (above)
- Any gas powered vehicle

Notwithstanding the above lists, we reserve the right to inspect any mobility device to determine whether it appears safe enough to permit on the grounds. During such an inspection, we will consider various factors, included but not limited to the following:

- The type, size, weight, dimensions, minimum speed, and maximum speed of the device.
- The high volume of pedestrian traffic the Safari Park receives.
- The Park’s unique natural and architectural characteristics (e.g. hills, pathways).
- The potential harm the device might cause to its operator, other guests, and the environment.
- Whether the device appears stable and can balance on its own without the use of a kickstand.
- Federal, state, and municipal regulations (e.g. whether the device is permitted on sidewalks).
- Other information the Park might find in the device’s use manual or through other investigation

Guests with Limited Mobility (continued)

The Operation of Wheelchairs and OPDMDs

Please consult both the standard Safari Park map and the Accessibility Map before operating a wheelchair or OPDMD on the grounds. Familiarity with the areas of the park that have steep slopes and other limitations will ensure a safe and enjoyable visit.

- We recommend guests consider only operating their wheelchairs and OPDMDs on mild slopes.
- It is also required that guests operate their wheelchairs and OPDMDs within the applicable manufacturer guidelines.
- Operation of wheelchairs and OPDMDs is restricted to those for whom the devices have been fitted.
- Before operating an OPDMD, please read the device's manufacturer guidelines to determine whether the vehicle is susceptible to electromagnetic interference. The Safari Park has areas with steep grades that limit accessibility. In the interest of safety, we recommend that guests in manual wheelchairs avoid these areas. All guests using these routes should use caution to avoid serious injury.

Wheelchair Rentals – available on a first-come, first-served basis

Manual wheelchairs and electric scooters (an OPDMD), are available for rent just inside the main entrance to the Zoo. Rentals require a picture ID and the age requirement to operate an electric OPDMD is 16 years old. Rental Prices are subject to change; please call for pricing.

Admission

All guests with disabilities must have a valid form of admission to the Safari Park. However, an attendant who is needed to assist a person with a disability will be admitted at no charge. If a guest with a disability purchases tickets for a safari or other program the attendant will be provided admission at no charge to the same event.

- For your convenience, complimentary passes for attendants may be obtained at any ticket window at the entrance to the Park.

Drinking Fountains

Drinking fountains accessible to guests are located throughout the facility. Cups of water may also be requested at any food stand or restaurant.

First Aid – Refrigeration for Medication

Our first aid station is located in the Ranger Base. If at any time you need immediate assistance, please ask any Safari Park employee.

- If you have special medical needs, please consult with our health service personnel at this location.
- Refrigeration for medication is available at this location.

Restrooms

Please refer to your guide map for restroom locations.

- All restrooms in the Park are accessible.
- Family restrooms are located near Ranger Base.
- Safari Park employees are neither trained nor permitted to lift a guest or help them inside a restroom. Should it be required, guests needing this assistance should plan to visit the Safari Park with someone who can physically help them.

Service Animals

We welcome guests with disabilities that choose to bring their trained service animal into the Park. Pet and animals "in training" will not be allowed entry.

- Service animals permitted to the Safari Park are dogs and miniature horses.
- Service animals must remain on a leash or a harness, be under control of its handler at all times, and be house broken. Leash cannot exceed 6 feet in length.
- If, at any time your service animal's behavior is out of control, you will be asked to remove your service animal from the premises.
- You may temporarily house your service animal in our kennel while visiting the Safari Park. Please inquire with the attendant at the turnstiles at the entrance to the park, or at Ranger Base for assistance.
- For your convenience, any accessible planter may be used as a 'relief area'; please pickup after your animal.
- As noted in the **Safari Park's Service Animal Map**, the use of service animals may be restricted or limited in certain areas due to the sensitivity of the Park's animal collection.
- Please visit an attendant at the turnstiles at the entrance to the Safari Park to check-in your service animal, and receive a service dog bandana.

Special Experiences

Caravan Safaris

Each Caravan vehicle can accommodate up to two wheelchairs. Both the person with a disability and the wheelchair itself must be able to withstand the movements of the truck.

Roar & Snore

The Roar & Snore campground is wheelchair accessible, with partial access to behind-the-scenes areas. An ADA restroom is provided at the campsite. For more information please contact the Reservations Office at (619) 718-3000.

Contact Us

Safari Park Accessibility Questions
(760) 796-5621

Customer Service
(Comments, suggestions, and questions about the Safari Park)
(760) 747-8702