

*What happens if the bus arrives late in dropping us off?*

Unfortunately, situations occur which may cause a bus to arrive late. We will adjust the class schedule to try to accommodate the time to fit in classes. In extremely late arrivals, there may be the possibility of eliminating a class.

*What can we do if the buses are late in picking us up?*

Sometimes groups must wait for pick up after their classes are finished. We do have a TV/DVD/VCR available for use as well as some educational videos. Most groups come prepared with seat-work or sit-down activities (puzzles, games, journals) to keep kids occupied while waiting.

*I have made arrangements for a "full day." Does this mean I can get more than 5 classes if there's time?*

If you book for a full day, it means that you have reserved the facility until 4:30pm. (Half days, 12:30pm) There are five classes total taught in a full day, or three total for a half day. If classes finish earlier than 4:30pm, you should plan to bring some additional activities for your students to do or arrange to have buses arrive earlier for pick up.

*Can individuals, such as parents or principals, come in during the day while their students are in classes?*

Yes. However, for your student's safety, individuals should make sure the gate closes completely behind them and not let the general public follow your vehicle in. Call the office at 602-372-7470, ext. 200 for the gate code. Individuals should also check in at the office upon arrival.

*Is there a gift shop?*

Yes. We have a gift shop that offers a variety of souvenirs, beverages, snacks and desert-themed items. Teachers should arrange to have the gift shop open at the end of classes if they are interested in having their students shop. Only five students are allowed at a time and must be accompanied by an adult.

More questions? Please visit our website at [www.maricopa.gov/parks/doc](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/doc) or call us at 602-372-7470, x200.

Please review the following rules with your students prior to arrival:

1. Children must stay with an adult at all times.
2. Walk, walk, walk. Just like school or home, inside is not a place for running or horseplay. When outside, stay on the trails.
3. Do not pick up or throw anything. Leave rocks, sticks, plants, animals and other objects where you find them.
4. Be on your best behavior. No pushing or shoving. No water fights or food fights in the hallways or restrooms.
5. Pick up after yourself. Throw trash in trash cans. Put soda cans in the recycle bin.
6. Do not shout. Use your inside voices. Raise your hand in class if have question/comment.
7. Please do not touch any of the displays or tap on the glass of the animal exhibits.
8. Respect wildlife. Do not disturb or feed wild animals. Watch out for snakes and scorpions!
9. Close doors behind you when you enter/exit the building.

Have FUN!!!

We reserve the right to ask children to "sit out" for part of their visit if they are not following the rules. Groups who do not adhere to the rules will be asked to leave early without a refund. Chaperones must stay with their assigned children and are responsible for their safety and discipline.

Overnight rules:

- Stay with your group at all times. Do not wander off alone or without an adult.
- Keep doors to dorms closed at all times. It keeps animals and bugs outside where they belong.
- Leave animals alone at night. Do not pet or feed any animals.
- Use ladder to climb into top bunk. Do not climb on side of bunk bed or on the shelving.
- No jumping on or off of bunk beds.

# Your Visit to the Desert Outdoor Center



Answers to Frequently Asked Questions



Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant

41402 N. 87th Ave.

Peoria, AZ 85383

[www.maricopa.gov/parks/doc](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/doc)



Tel: 602-372-7470 Fax: 602-372-7475

**For Teachers and Students**

## FAQ's

This guide is designed to answer many of the frequently asked questions from visitors to the Desert Outdoor Center. We hope you find it useful.

### *Where are you located?*

We are located 30 miles north of Phoenix about 7 miles west of I-17 on Pleasant Harbor Boulevard past the Pleasant Harbor Marina entrance. The Desert Outdoor Center sits on the east side of Lake Pleasant.

### *Will any or all of the classes be outdoors?*

It depends on the class you take. Some classes are held completely outdoors, while others might include a short activity outdoors. Other classes are held entirely indoors.

### *What should I bring?*

You should be sure to bring your class roster and emergency contact lists for your students, any necessary student medications (such as inhalers, etc.), your payment or purchase order, your final attendance count, hat, water, sun block, sunglasses, and any other personal items you feel are necessary.

### *What should my students bring?*

Students should definitely bring water, sun block, hat, and wear closed toed shoes. (For overnight groups, a suggested list of overnight items to bring is available on our website or upon request).

### *How long are the classes?*

The classes are approximately 45- 50 minutes long.

### *Where do we eat lunch?*

Most groups eat lunch in our multi-purpose room which serves as a meeting area and dining hall. Other groups prefer to take advantage of the scenery and eat outside in our amphitheater. We ask that you do not bring any glass containers and be sure to pick up any trash from your lunch.

### *Where can we store cold food or drinks for our lunch?*

Many groups bring in large coolers and ice chests for this purpose. However, we do have a refrigerator available to keep food and drinks cold, if requested.

### *Can we cook our food there?*

If you need to use the kitchen, there is a separate kitchen reservation fee. Any group that reserves the kitchen must have at least one member that holds a current food handlers card. Our propane grill is available free of charge. You must bring your own grilling tools.

### *Where do we bring the students when we first arrive?*

When you first arrive, our camp hosts or receptionist will show you to our multi-purpose room. There the students can assemble and wait for their program to begin. Students should also use the restroom at this time before classes begin.

### *Do we need chaperones? If so, how many?*

It is recommended to have chaperones, but not required, as long as there is one other adult present with the class besides the ranger. If you choose to bring chaperones, you may bring as many as you like for your group.

### *What do we do for 'check-in' if we are an overnight group?*

Our camp hosts and/or receptionist will direct you where to put your gear and food after which they will also go over the dormitory and/or kitchen check-in with you.

### *How many people can your facility accommodate?*

The Desert Outdoor Center can accommodate overnight groups up to 150 people. The Fire Marshall prohibits numbers exceeding this limit.

### *I understand that there is a gate at the entrance. What is my gate code to get in?*

There is a gate for security purposes at our entrance since we are a by-reservation only facility. Your gate code should be given to all bus drivers and parent drivers in your group. The gate code for your visit is found in the upper left column of your Field Trip Schedule. If you have lost your gate code, please call our office at 602-372-7470 ext. 200.

### *How long is the hiking trail?*

The hiking trail is a 2.2 mile loop. For the average hiker, it takes approximately an hour to complete. Our guided interpretive hikes (ranger-led) do not encompass the full trail. Depending on our talks, expect to cover a little under a mile going and coming back.

### *Are we allowed to take students on a hike by ourselves?*

If you elect, you may go on a self-guided hike with your students. There are self-guide booklets to make your hike more interesting and informative available at the front office.

### *Will we be able to go down to the lake?*

Our loop trail does NOT go down to the lake. However, you will be afforded many picturesque views of the lake from various points along the trail.

### *What about dangerous animals?*

Since the Desert Outdoor Center is located in a rural setting, there are wild animals that are occasionally encountered. We stress that visitors keep their distance and not try to approach, feed, or handle any wild animal. If there is a potential hazard, please see any ranger for assistance.

### *Do you have a first aid office?*

Yes. We do have a first aid office, but there is not a nurse present. Our staff is current in first aid and CPR training.

### *What forms of payment do you accept?*

We accept cash, credit cards, debit cards, purchase orders and checks made out to the Desert Outdoor Center, or any combination of the above.

### *How soon do I have to have the money in?*

Reservation fee is due 30 days upon receipt of the invoice. Reservation fees are nontransferable, nonrefundable and cannot be used towards your visit. Payment for your visit is due in 30 days or can be paid up to the date of your visit.

### *Why do teachers and chaperones have to pay?*

All Maricopa County parks charge a fee for admittance. Although we are an educational facility, we are still a county park.

### *Are there "real" restrooms or only outhouses?*

We are a full service, modern facility with indoor restrooms and drinking fountains. Our dormitories are equipped with showers. And yes, we have air condition too!