



Dallas Zoo “Lights Out Overnight”

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Light’s Out Overnight?

A Lights Out Overnight at the Dallas Zoo is a special experience for kids ages 7 and up. Children learn about wildlife, nature, conservation and science in a fun, educational, exciting and ZOO-rific way! This program includes an evening tour through ZooNorth (think Birds of Prey, small cats, and the Reptile Building along with a few other surprises!), live animal presentations, and a morning Monorail Safari ride as well as giraffe feeding coupons. Zoo instructors provide guided tours, facilitate fun activities, present live animals, and spend the night in the same spaces that you sleep in.

Who can sign up for this program?

This program is available to any organized group with children ages 7 and up. The majority of our overnights are booked by scouting groups. Private groups or individuals may be interested in our special Mother’s or Father’s Day Overnights.

How do I register my group?

Download our registration form from the website then print it, complete it and send it to us via fax, mail, or scanned and emailed with your payment. Payment for your group is required with your registration in order for us to hold your spot. If you are unsure of your final number, please pay for the minimum 15 people and put an estimate of your overall total on the form. Since we book multiple groups into one evening, it is very important for us to have a general idea of how many people will be coming so we do not overbook.

What should we bring?

Everyone should bring their flashlights! Also, each person (children and chaperones) should bring a sleeping bag, toothbrush and toothpaste, and jammies if you do not wish to sleep in your clothes. Air mattresses are allowed if they are single size OR if children or adults are willing to double up on double sized mattresses. **Queen or King sized air mattresses are not allowed.** If you bring them, you will be asked to put them away and sleep on the floor. Wear comfortable shoes and we recommend dressing in layers as evenings may start warm and end cool, or start cool and you may get warm as we walk around the zoo. Participants should also bring a water bottle.

What are we not allowed to bring?

Eat dinner before arriving at the Zoo. We provide an evening snack and a light continental breakfast in the morning. We do not allow outside food or beverages (except water) on our program, unless you are bringing dinner to eat before your overnight begins OR if you or a child in your group has dietary restrictions. Water bottles are encouraged and allowed (please no glass bottles.) Electronic equipment is not allowed, and while we do allow adults to carry cell phones we ask that you refrain from using them unless it is an emergency. Smoking and alcohol consumption are not allowed during our programs. **We reserve the right to search any coolers you bring into the zoo, and if you are found with alcohol, you may be asked to leave the program with your group, and your overnight will NOT be refunded.**

What are Lights Out Overnight Hours?

Check-in is 6:30-7:00 p.m. Scheduled activities begin as early as 7:00 p.m. and end at 10:30 a.m. the next day. Groups are welcome to stay and explore Zoo after the overnight program ends in the morning. Some participants like to arrive before 6:30 p.m. and bring a picnic dinner to eat out of their cars or on our grassy areas by the parking lot, if you choose to do this please note that staff will not be present until 6:30PM. Also note that you may not enter the actual zoo until you have checked in with staff (this means no restrooms until our zoo staff greet your group!).

What about parking and admission to the zoo?

Admission and parking are included in the price of the overnight. If you arrive before 5:00 p.m. on the date of your overnight, you will be charged for parking and admission for that day. Your confirmation letter will provide you admission to the zoo for the following day, after your official program ends.

Where do we go when we get to the Zoo?

Participants will arrive through the main Zoo entrance and park in the lower parking lot, by the front ticket booths.

We're on a bus; do we park in the same area as cars?

Buses will also come in the main entrance to the Zoo, but will park in the lot on the left side of the parking lot booth. Gather your gear and walk to the main entrance of the zoo (buses may also pull into the lower parking lot to unload their gear and students, but MUST park in the upper parking lot due to our parking restrictions.)

Can we take DART?

Yes, the Dallas Zoo is on the Red Line of the DART. If you wish to take public transit, you will cross Clarendon and enter through the Zoo's DART gate entrance.

Do we earn any scout badges?

Our overnight programs are not geared towards a specific badge, but we do cover many topics in our program that are related to several Wildlife, Nature and Conservation themed badges. All participants will receive a special, Dallas Zoo Lights Out Patch. You also may combine your overnight experience with a special morning badge program for an additional fee. Details can be found on the Dallas Zoo's education website.

Where do we sleep?

Participants sleep on the floors of our exhibits, classrooms, event spaces and can even camp out on our grassy areas. All sleeping spaces are listed on the Dallas Zoo's education website on the Night Programs page.

When is lights out? Does it get dark?

Lights Out is at 11:00 PM. There will be some streetlights that stay on that might shine a little through the windows, but for the most part it does get pretty dark.

What if I am cold or hot at night?

If you are a person that tends to always be cold/hot we ask that you dress accordingly as the entire group may not share your temperature zones! Some of our rooms we are able to control how hot or cold it is, and some we are not as that will affect the health and well being of our animal collections.

Will the Zoo's gift shop be open?

Yes, our gift shop will be open the following day. Many groups like to stop there in the morning before they leave the zoo.