



Accessibility

The Academy is committed to accessibility and inclusion. We strive to make our building, exhibits, programs, and services accessible to everyone, regardless of physical or developmental ability.

Please review the following accessibility resources and policies and let us know if there's anything else we can do to ensure your Academy visit is a success.

Caregivers and Companions

- » Any interpreter accompanying and assisting a visitor who is deaf, hearing-impaired, blind, or partially sighted is admitted free of charge.

Entering the Building

- » The Academy's entrance at **55 Music Concourse Dr.** is fully wheelchair-accessible.
- » Guests may enter at street level or via elevator from the underground parking garage.

Exhibit Access and Seating

- » We provide ADA-compliant ramps and alternate entrances to all of our exhibits, including the rainforest and planetarium.
- » When picking up your planetarium pass at the planetarium pass pick-up, simply ask a staff person to escort you to the third floor accessibility entrance. Both the planetarium and the Forum Theater have reserved seating for visitors with disabilities.

Food Allergies

- » Please note: Food served in the Academy Cafe and The Terrace restaurant is not prepared in an allergen-free kitchen.
- » For allergen information or questions about our menu, please contact our dining team at **(415) 876-6128** or **academycatering@calacademy.org** at least one week in advance of your visit.
- » All guests—especially those with dietary sensitivities or severe food allergies—are welcome to bring outside food to the Academy.

Guests Who Are Blind or Partially Sighted

- » All exhibits feature built-in detection points and, wherever possible, tactile components for an enhanced experience.
- » All elevators are equipped with auditory signals.
- » Any interpreter accompanying a visitor who is blind or partially sighted is admitted free of charge.
- » Readers and specially-trained tour guides are available with two weeks advance notice.

Guests Who Are Deaf or Hearing-Impaired

- » Assistive listening transmitters are positioned in the planetarium.
- » Any interpreter accompanying a visitor who is deaf or hearing-impaired is admitted free of charge.
- » Sign-language interpretation for planetarium and Forum Theater shows, exhibit tours, and museum visits up to one hour are available with two weeks advance notice.

Guests With Other Sensory Needs

The Academy is a busy and bustling place, full of a variety of sights, sounds, and smells. The following tips and resources are designed to help guests of all ages with a variety of autism spectrum disorders or sensory sensitivities feel safe, comfortable, and welcome at the Academy.

- » **Visit in the afternoon:** 1-2 hours before closing is usually when the Academy is quietest, especially in fall and winter. We're typically busier with school groups until 2 pm on weekdays, especially in the spring.

- » **Be thoughtful of transitions:** Moving between exhibits can be difficult for children with sensory needs. Please be aware that there are noise, temperature, and lighting changes when going from the main floor to the aquarium, rainforest to the aquarium, or planetarium to the Naturalist Center.
- » **Get comfortable in advance:** Review our developmentally appropriate Exhibit Guides to familiarize your child with the Academy before your visit.
- » **Take frequent breaks:** Take advantage of the Academy's in-and-out privileges by getting your hand stamped as you exit. You can step out and enjoy Golden Gate Park and re-enter the same day as often as you like.
- » **Check out a Sensory Kit:** The Academy now offers sensory kits to any visitor in need of extra sensory support during their visit. Kits include sensory-friendly backpacks, adjustable earmuffs, a pair of sunglasses, and an assortment of tactile and fidget toys. Additional items for specific sensory needs are available upon request. Available for checkout on a first-come, first-served basis at coat check.

- » **Curate your visit with our new Sensory Guide:**
Our interactive visitor map now features a Sensory Guide, which rates most areas of the museum on the strength of four kinds of stimuli: noise, visual, touch, and smell. Have questions about other areas of the museum? Feel free to contact us before your visit or ask any Guest Experience team member during your visit.
- » **Consider a Community Value membership:**
Interested in visiting the museum often during quieter, less crowded times? A Community Value membership offers unlimited admission for families during lower volume periods 230+ days a year.

Parking

- » Accessible parking is available on the B1 level of the underground Music Concourse Garage. Enter Golden Gate Park from 9TH Avenue and then take a right on Music Concourse Drive to enter the garage.
- » Visit our Getting Here page for more transportation resources.

Restrooms

- » Accessible restrooms are located on every floor of the Academy.
- » The largest restrooms are on Level One (next to the Swamp) and in the aquarium.
- » The quietest restrooms are on Level Two.

Service Animals

- » Service dogs are welcome at the Academy if providing assistance to individuals with disabilities, but a small number of areas, including the rainforest, Curiosity Grove, research collections, and back-of-house, do remain off-limits.
- » While we understand that animals other than dogs may provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, dogs (and under certain circumstances, miniature horses) are the only animals legally regarded as service animals and thus permitted at the Academy.
- » Service dogs must be under the control of their handler at all times during their visit. Leash control is preferred, but under certain circumstances voice or signal control is acceptable.

*If you plan on bringing your service dog to the Academy or would like additional information, please call our Contact Center at **(415) 379-8000** and **press 0** to speak with a representative.*

Wheelchairs and OPDMDs

- » **Wheelchairs:** The Academy is fully wheelchair accessible, welcoming manual and electric wheelchairs. Manual wheelchairs are available to borrow free of charge at coat check on a first-come, first-served basis. To borrow one, visitors are asked to leave their photo ID for the duration of their visit.
- » **Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs):** The recreational use of Segways, golf carts, hoverboards, skateboards, etc., is strictly prohibited in the Academy. The Academy is fully wheelchair accessible, welcoming manual and electric wheelchairs, electric mobility scooters, and other power-driven mobility devices (OPDMDs) such as Segways, subject to reasonable restrictions in certain areas of the Academy.
- » Users must remain in control of their device, operate at the lowest speed (turtle mode) consistent with walking pace, yield to children, seniors, and other walking patrons as well as exercise caution turning corners, entering and exiting exhibit areas, and obey all reasonable safety instructions given by staff. Subject to the specific device's dimensions, users may need to dismount and walk through certain thresholds, when entering and exiting elevators, or in the vicinity of railings around open exhibits and raised walkways.

- » Academy staff may monitor (to the extent practical) the safe and responsible operation of OPDMDs. Staff reserve the right to prohibit the use of OPDMDs during certain times and events with high attendance or restrict its use in certain areas. In such cases, storage of the device may be provided onsite along with the use of a manual wheelchair free of charge if requested.

*If you plan on using an OPDMD during your visit, please check in with Academy staff upon arrival. If possible, please call our Contact Center in advance at **(415) 379-8000** and **press 0** to speak with a representative.*