



Frequently Asked ?'s

FIELD TRIP EDITION



CAVE OF THE MOUNDS[®]
National Natural Landmark

You've got questions and we have answers. Here are some of the most common questions we get about field trips. Always feel free to contact us with any questions that you do not see here. You can reach us at groups@caveofthemounds.com or (608) 437-3038 x 103.

Can I get an itinerary for our field trip?

Decades of being Wisconsin's Oldest Classroom have taught us that flexibility ensures success when dealing with construction, weather, and late arrivals due to traffic or busing issues. When you arrive, our Education Team will lead you from start to finish through the activities to best suit your group's needs. Sit back and enjoy - we will take good care of you!

If you provide an itinerary for your chaperones, then we recommend that your itinerary say:

X:XX am/pm: [15 mins prior to reserved start time]-Arrive and check in

X:XX am/pm:[start time] Underground FUN and more led by COTM educators, including picnic break [if applicable]

X:XX am/pm:[when done/or if a specific departure time necessary] Board buses to go home

Where can we lunch?

We have a wonderful FREE outdoor picnic area with lots of space for the children to run around. In the event of inclement weather, Brigham County Park is 1.5 miles away with a free shelter for your use on a first come, first serve basis. Also, some schools choose to eat their lunches on the bus. The option is up to you.

What is a Self-Paced Cave Tour?

A Self-Paced Cave Tour allows you and your group to experience the cave at your own pace, tailor your learning goals to your specific learners and ask questions of our Cave Educators as needed. Interpretive signs and Cave Educators are posted in various spots throughout the cave.

How can I make a payment?

That's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1) Call with a credit card and pay over the phone, OR

2) Send us a check.

Cave of the Mounds

ATTN: Groups Department

PO Box 148, Blue Mounds, WI 53517

3) Once you have made a payment, we will send you an updated invoice within 2-4 business days.

How do wristbands work?

A recommended but optional step is our process of colored wristbands. Prepaying and receiving wristbands allows YOU more control when deciding how your group is divided during our smaller group tour times. Additionally, each wristband may be used as a coupon for a FREE child's admission or HALF OFF an adult ticket to come back and visit the cave in the future!

Wristbands are sent via US Mail as soon as possible after we have received full payment for your upcoming visit.

It is best if your students and chaperones are wearing these wristbands ON THE BUS before they arrive at the cave.

Everyone must have a wristband on, including teachers and chaperones (and bus drivers, if applicable).

You can purchase additional wristbands upon check-in, if needed.

If there is not enough time to mail you the wristbands, we will hold them for you at the check-in desk in the Visitor Center. We will send you an email notifying you to pick them up there upon arrival. You will have advanced notice of how many students & chaperones should be in each group.

If I prepay and receive wristbands, what happens if I bring fewer people?

Our policy on the wristbands was sent to the teacher with their invoice, and it states: 'Once we have received your final payment, a confirmation packet that includes your program tickets [wristbands] will be sent. Once wristbands have been sent, refunds will not be issued.' While wristbands are non-refundable, they are good for a child's ticket [or \$10 off an adult ticket] to visit another time. Wristbands can be redeemed anytime someone comes with that wristband in hand. If the student had already submitted the money for the tickets but could not attend, they are able to come on their own with that wristband at no charge. Another idea would be to use left-over wristbands in a student rewards program or a PTO fund-raiser for a raffle or silent auction prize.

Can parent chaperones pay on their own?

Whenever possible, teachers should report and pay for the chaperones in advance. We love it when parents come along on your trip - the more the merrier!!! However, keep in mind that chaperones coming without notice to us - or you - could affect group sizes and actual time your field trip activities get started. This can result in your check in process being less efficient and your start and end times to vary from what you originally anticipated. The best way to GUARANTEE that all of your teachers and chaperones are included in your group is to reserve and pay for them in advance. If extra staff or parent chaperones arise at the last minute, we understand, and here is what you can expect:

- Please collect their money and be prepared to make one payment so one person is handling the check-in process. This not only confirms these adults are approved to be with students, but it also allows us to offer the discounted and tax exempt [if applicable] rates for these guests.
- ****PLEASE NOTE:** We cannot guarantee that last minute additions will get to be in the wristband color group of their child, but we will try our best.
- If parent chaperones show up and pay separately, they will be charged full price cave admission plus taxes and all applicable program fees. In these cases, we will try to place them with your group, if possible, but there is no guarantee.

How accessible is the cave for students in wheelchairs or who have special needs?

We have had many schools come to Cave of the Mounds with a student in a wheelchair. We strive to make our experience as accessible as possible to all guests whenever possible. The grounds, educational program spaces, portions of the Nature Trail and restrooms are all wheelchair accessible. Although our Cave has many stairs and is not fully wheelchair accessible, there are several accommodations we can make:

- If the child is able to walk supported or with a cane or crutch(es) they are welcomed to use them for the tour. There are sturdy handrails through ramp areas of the Cave and on all stairs. Though we travel back and forth over several staircases, the trails in the Cave are paved, mostly flat, and well lit.
- If the child has a parent chaperone or aide that can piggy-back or carry them through, that is also welcomed. This has proven successful for many wheelchair-bound children touring the Cave. Pre-approved backpack carriers are sometimes allowed in the cave, however, we must always consider the protection of the natural cave environment.
- If the child cannot be removed from the wheelchair, they are welcomed to watch the video preview, look into the South Cave and hear the brief introduction of the Cave from the viewing platform. After the rest of the group descends the stairs deeper into the Cave, we offer an Accessible Learning Backpack filled with a photo tour of the cave, books about caves, rocks or fossils, some hands-on specimens to explore, as well as a bag of mining rough [gems or fossils] to discover using our mining sluice while the group finishes the tour of the Cave [about 35-40 minutes].
- We also have a link to a 3-D virtual tour of the Cave, and a written tour is available upon request.