

Preparing for a visit to the Dallas Zoo

Sensory Friendly Morning
Success Story

Updated Spring 2026



Planning a trip to the Zoo is fun. There are some things I need to do to prepare.



There is a lot of walking at the Zoo. I will make sure I wear comfortable clothing and shoes.

I will spend a lot of time outside. I will make sure we check the weather before going to the Zoo.



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I can bring food and water for when I get hungry and thirsty. We can also buy snacks and drinks at the Zoo if my parents decide to do that.



Each person going to the Zoo needs a ticket. We will buy our tickets online ahead of time. A Zoo helper will scan our tickets to let us in.

We might have to wait in line for a few minutes until it's our turn. This is okay.



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There are many noises at the Zoo. My parent can ask to borrow a KultureCity™ backpack from the Information Booth that includes silencing headphones.

I can also cover my ears if I don't like to hear the loud noises.



When I visit this time, I will see many animal lanterns throughout the Zoo. These are not real and cannot hurt me.



The cement paths take me to the animal exhibits. I walk safely everywhere I go.



Inside the Zoo there are a lot of things to see. I can look at a map and signs to help me find my way.



If I am not sure where to go, I can ask someone with a name tag. They will help me find my way.



There are special activities just for me. I will wait in line if I want a turn.



If I need a break, I can stop at one of the Sensory Havens.



The animals I want to see will
be behind a fence or glass.
This is their home.



If I want to talk to an animal, I can wave, smile, or speak softly. The animal may get scared if I climb on the fence or tap on the glass.



Sometimes the animals are playing where I can't see them. It is okay if I don't see every animal at the Zoo.



I can visit the Zoo's I Spy Butterflies exhibit. A friendly staff person will let me inside. I will wait for them to close the first door before I enter the exhibit.



There are lots of butterflies inside flying around. I will look with my eyes and keep my hands to myself.



Sometimes, butterflies will land on the path. I need to watch where I put my feet, so I don't step on them.



Educators wear a Zoo shirt and a nametag. I can talk to an educator if I want to learn more about an animal. I will try to wait until they are not talking to someone. Waiting my turn to talk makes everyone happy.



When I am ready to leave, I will wait for a Zoo helper to help me with the door.

They may ask me to spin in a slow circle to make sure no butterflies leave the exhibit with me.



I can climb in the nature play space. There are some instruments I can play. I can put my headphones on if I don't like the noise.



When I go to the Children's
Zoo, I can do many things.

I can visit the birds.

Help the brush the goats.

Play on the playground.



I can visit Birds Landing.

If I am still, a bird might land on me. It may feel like a little tickle.

If I don't want a bird to land on me, I can tell the Zoo Educator.



I can visit the Goat Yard. I can help brush the goats if I want.

I will brush the goats on the sides of their belly and their back.

I will use my walking feet so I don't scare the goats.



I will ask my parent if I can play in the play area or in the play stream. There might be other children. I can share the area.



If I want to see more animals, I will need to go through the tunnel. I can choose to go down the sloping walkway or use the stairs.



The tunnel is dark and long.
I may want to put on my
headphones if I don't like
the noise.

I can hold someone's hand
if I need to.



There may be strong smells near some of the animals. If I don't like it, I can move on.



I may see statues near some of the animals. I can touch them if I want to.



When it is time to leave the Zoo, the exit signs show me the way out.

I can always come back to the Zoo on another day.

