



Preparing for your Ranger-led Field Trip: Ranger Talk

The Ranger Talk is a less formal education program compared to a guided hike (Tower Walk and Tower Adventure programs). Because of this, expectations are more relaxed. However, there are still preparations which the education staff expects you to make. Please review the following information carefully, and contact your ranger if you have any questions or concerns.

Typically, groups coming for a Ranger Talk will stay in the park for a teacher-led trip. While you should set your own rules and expectations for that portion of your field trip, please respect the ranger's time and expectations during your education program. Students should be empty-handed during the presentation and associated activities.

Before Your Visit

Students:

- Review behavioral expectations with students
- Remind parents to prepare their children with adequate clothing
- Introduce Devils Tower to your students—use your own lessons or the education resources found on our website to teach your students about the park before your visit
- Nametags: create prior to trip for all students and adults; use masking tape and a permanent marker (stickers or other nametags will fall off)

Chaperons:

- We recommend 1 adult per 10 students; chaperon limits are not imposed for Ranger Talk programs, but your fee waiver allows for a maximum of 1 adult per 5 students
- Review behavioral expectations with adults (they are responsible role models)

What to Bring:

- One fee waiver per vehicle
- We strongly recommend all participants wear long pants and closed-toed shoes
- Dress appropriate for the weather (raincoats, jackets, hats, gloves, etc. may be necessary)
- One liter of water per person
- Bag/Sack lunches (labeled and packed for easy transport)
- Necessary medications

What Not to Bring (applies to students only):

- Electronics (smartphones, cameras, tablets, etc.)
- Money (visiting the bookstore is not included in your trip)
- Extra gear (back packs, binoculars, notebooks, etc.)

Arriving to the Park:

- **At the entrance station:** Present your fee waiver(s) to the ranger on duty.
- **Where to go:** If meeting at the **Visitor Center**, proceed ~3 miles up the park road; a ranger will greet you at the stop sign and hop on the bus to direct the bus driver.
If meeting at the **Amphitheater/Picnic Area**, proceed ~1 mile to the Administration building; turn left and follow the road left to the picnic area where you will see the ranger.
- **Restrooms:** Chaperons should deboard first, and assist by moving students through the restrooms as fast as possible. **At the Visitor Center:** there are restrooms behind the building (where you will unload) and next to the Ranger Office (50 yards to the right). Half of your group should go to each restroom. **At the Picnic Area:** only one restroom is available.
- **Introduction:** As students finish at the restrooms, extra chaperons can guide them to the area directed by the ranger for a formal introduction.
- **Bus parking:** Parking is very limited at the monument. Most days the bus may park in the RV parking on the exit lane at the top of the hill. Some days the bus must return to the base of the hill to long vehicle parking (near the picnic area).

During Your Visit:

- Teachers and chaperons are expected to help enforce park rules
- Rangers rely on teachers and chaperons for behavior management
- Communicate with the ranger any logistical or safety concerns

Student Behavior Guidelines:

- **Respect wildlife:** we are visiting their home; do not feed, approach or harass wildlife
- **Respect plants:** leave plants where you find them; do not pick grass, flowers, tree bark, etc.
- **Respect other visitors:** students are representing their school and teachers; stay to the right while walking the trail and keep your voices low; classroom rules are in effect
- **Respect the park:** all items in the park are protected; removing rocks, pine cones, artifacts or anything from the park is prohibited; keep your feet on the trail
- **Respect each other:** listen while others are talking, keep your hands to yourself

Lunches:

The following guidelines are suggested for your convenience:

- Gather and pack all lunches in boxes for easy distribution
- All lunches should have the student's name
- Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves (adults should direct, not clean)
- Establish a time frame for eating (e.g. 30 minutes), and give students notice as time expires
- Reduce, Reuse and Recycle!