Welcome to Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone is a place like no other. Preserved within its boundaries are Old Faithful and the majority of the world's geysers and hot springs. An outstanding mountain wildland with clean water and air, Yellowstone is home of the grizzly bear and wolf and free-ranging herds of bison and elk. Centuries-old sites and historic buildings that reflect the unique heritage of America's first national park are also protected. Protect Yellowstone by following park rules.

Yellowstone can also be a dangerous place, with boiling hot, acidic thermal features; cold lakes and swift waters; wild animals; and unpredictable mountain weather. Protect yourself by following park rules.

Most park lodging and camping is reserved and full. If you don't already have a reservation, you are extremely unlikely to find overnight accommodations in the park or nearby. No camping or overnight vehicle parking is allowed in pullouts, parking areas, picnic grounds, or any place other than a designated campground. For more information, visit go.nps.gov/YELLcampgrounds and go.nps.gov/YELLlodging.

COVID-19 Safety Alert

The National Park Service follows CDC guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Check locally, on the park website, and in the park apps for updates and changes in park operations. Thank you for helping to keep yourself and others safe and healthy.

If you are not yet fully vaccinated, wearing a mask is required in all common areas in buildings owned, rented, or leased by the National Park Service, including, but not limited to, park visitor centers, administrative offices, lodges, gift shops, and restaurants; and outdoors where physical distancing cannot reasonably be maintained. You should practice physical distancing by maintaining at least 6 feet (1.8 m) of distance between you and others. Masks are not required for those under the age of two or when actively eating or drinking.

If you are fully vaccinated, wearing a mask and physically distancing are not required indoors or outdoors unless otherwise posted.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. If you feel sick, do not visit the park.

Keep Wildlife Wild

Yellowstone is an incredible place to view wildlife. All the large mammals present when Yellowstone became a park in 1872 are here today: grizzly and black bears, wolves, mountain lions, elk, bison, pronghorn, moose, and bighorn sheep.

• Wildlife are dangerous.
• Do not approach, encircle, follow, or feed any animal.
• Bison, bears, and elk injure and kill people.
• Stay at least 100 yards (91 m) from bears and wolves.
• Stay at least 25 yards (23 m) from all other animals, including bison and elk.
• If an animal moves closer to you, move away to maintain the appropriate distance.
• Do not stop on or block a road.
• Use pullouts; stay in your car to watch animals.
• Store food and trash securely. Backpacks are not secure.
• Do not feed any animals, even birds and squirrels.
## Lodging, Dining, and Tours

As one of Yellowstone’s official concession companies, Yellowstone National Park Lodges offers lodging, dining, camping, and a variety of tours and activities.

Visit YellowstoneNationalParkLodges.com for the most up-to-date information, which may change due to COVID-19.

For reservations and information, ask at park hotels, or contact Yellowstone National Park Lodges:
- Phone: 307-344-7311, 866-439-7375
- TDD: 307-344-5395
- Online: YellowstoneNationalParkLodges.com
- Email: Reserve-YNP@Xanterra.com

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## Facilities and Services

### Medical Services

Yellowstone emergency response and ambulance service
- Call 911
- Text 911 is not available in Yellowstone.

Medcor provides medical care, from emergencies to minor needs, at:
- **Mammoth Clinic**
  - 6/4–9/24 8:30a–5p daily
  - 1/1–6/3, 9/25–12/31 8:30a–5p M–F
  - (closed Fridays 1p)
  - closed 5/31, 11/25–27, 12/24–25, 31, 1/1
  - 307-344-7965
- **Lake Clinic**
  - 5/28–9/14   8:30a–8:30p daily
  - 9/15–9/19   10a–6:30p daily
  - 307-242-7241
- **Old Faithful Clinic**
  - 5/14–9/14   7a–7p daily
  - 9/15–10/1   8:30a–5p daily
  - 307-545-7325

### Accessibility

A printed guide with accessibility information is available at visitor centers. Info is also available on the park website (go.nps.gov/YELLaccess) and in the park apps (see left).

Qualified service animals are welcome throughout the park and in all park facilities. However, they must be leashed and under your control at all times.

### Cell Service

Cell phone service is very limited in the park and surrounding areas. General cell coverage areas are shown on the map on the back page of this guide.

Emergency 911 service by cell phone is only available in coverage areas. Text 911 is not available in Yellowstone.

During peak hours and periods of heavy visitation, the cellular network may be very slow. Your provider may or may not roam on networks in Yellowstone.

As a courtesy to others, silence your mobile device while enjoying Yellowstone.

### Wi-Fi

Available for free:
- Albright Visitor Center in Mammoth Hot Springs

Data speeds are very limited outside of Mammoth Hot Springs.

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Grizzly bear (Ursus arctos) near Obsidian Creek in late April.
Safety and Regulations

Watch Wildlife Safely

Looking for Wildlife?
• To conserve energy, most wildlife are active in the cool of dawn or dusk.
• Animals are everywhere in the park, but it is easier to see them in open meadows and sagebrush than in dense forest.
• Find a place with a broad view for your binoculars or spotting scope, and be prepared to wait.

Protect Yourself and the Animals. Obey Park Rules.
• Spotlighting—viewing animals with artificial light—is illegal.
• Calling to attract wildlife is illegal. You may not bugle to elk, howl at wolves, or make bird calls of any kind.
• Tracking wildlife with electronic equipment is not permitted.

Store Food Securely

Do not feed any wildlife, including small mammals and birds. Eating human food is unhealthy and encourages aggressive behavior.

All food, trash, and scented items must be kept inaccessible to bears at all times. Tents, truck beds, and picnic tables are not secure. In some areas, ravens have learned to unzip packs and scatter the contents.

None of these items, even if clean and empty, may be left unattended at any time:
- Water and beverage containers
- Cooking or eating utensils
- Stoves and grills
- Coolers and ice chests
- Garbage, bagged or not
- Food, including condiments, even if in containers
- Cosmetics and toiletries
- Pet food and bowls
- Pails, buckets, wash basins

Park Safely

Stopping, parking, or standing in the road is dangerous. Large vehicles have limited visibility. Other drivers may be distracted by wildlife and scenery.

Stay aware of traffic at all times.
• Use pullouts to stop.
• Park with all four tires fully to the right of the white line.
• When your vehicle is moving, keep doors closed and arms, cameras, and children inside.
• Do not stop your vehicle in the road or block traffic in any way.
• Do not stand in the road or block it with tripods, chairs, or other objects.
• If wildlife are nearby, stay inside your vehicle.

Enjoy watching Yellowstone’s animals but STAY SAFE. They are WILD and DANGEROUS.

Other people 2 yards (2 m)
Bison, elk, and all other wildlife 25 yards (23 m)
Bears and wolves 100 yards (91 m)

Drones

Launching, landing, or operating unmanned aircraft (drones) on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service is prohibited.

Lost and Found

Call 307-344-5387 to report or retrieve items lost in lodging facilities. In other parts of the park, call 307-344-2109 or look online: go.nps.gov/lost-and-found.

Firearms

Firearms are allowed in national parks pursuant to state and federal regulations. They are prohibited in facilities where signs are posted, such as visitor centers, government offices, and some concession operations. Discharge of firearms is prohibited. Possession and use of weapons, such as air guns, bows and arrows, spears, and slingshots, is also prohibited. Details are available at go.nps.gov/yell-laws.

Pets

Pets are not allowed on trails or boardwalks, in the backcountry, or in hydrothermal basins. Where allowed, pets must be leashed and remain within 100 feet (30.5 m) of a road or parking area.

Do not leave a pet unattended, tied to an object, or without adequate food, water, shade, ventilation, or other basic needs. Owners must bag and dispose of pet waste. We recommend that someone in your group remain with your pet at all times to personally ensure their well being.
Camping

Yellowstone offers 12 campgrounds with over 2,000 sites.

During the park's busy season, from the beginning of May through the fall, many campsites can be reserved ahead of time. Due to high demand, reservations are highly recommended.

First-come, first-served sites are available during the busy season at Indian Creek, Lewis Lake, and Pebble Creek campgrounds.

No Overflow Camping
There are no overflow camping areas available in Yellowstone. No camping or overnight vehicle parking is allowed in pullouts, parking areas, picnic grounds, or any place other than a designated campground. Additional camping may be available in neighboring communities.

Check-In and Check-Out
Yellowstone National Park Lodges campgrounds: check-in at 1pm, check-out at 11am.

National Park Service campgrounds: check-out at 10am.

Length of Stay
Camping is limited to 14 days from July 1 through Labor Day (first Monday in September) and to 30 days the rest of the year.

Discounts
Holders of Senior and Access passes receive a 50 percent discount on camping fees.

Quiet Hours
From 10 pm to 6 am, no loud audio devices or other noise disturbances are allowed.

Group Camping
Group camping (tents only) is available at Bridge Bay, Grant, and Madison for organized groups with a designated leader. Fees range from $139 to $409 plus tax and utility fee per night, depending on group size. Advance reservations are required at 307-344-5437 or ynpa@xanterra.com.

Food Storage Boxes (see right)
Available at each campsite at Indian Creek, Lewis Lake, Mammoth, Pebble Creek, and Slough Creek campgrounds. Many campsites in other campgrounds are also equipped with bear-proof storage boxes.

Campground Features

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Campfires
are allowed only in designated grills or rings in park campgrounds, some picnic areas, and specific backcountry campsites. Fully extinguish all campfires—they should be cool to the touch—before leaving them.
**Things to Do**

### Backcountry Camping

Overnight backcountry camping is only allowed in designated sites and requires a permit. Detailed information on backcountry permits, fees, and advanced reservations is available online: go.nps.gov/YELLbackcountry.

From Memorial Day through September 10, a per-person, per-night fee applies:
- **Backpackers and boaters:** $3 per person per night
- **Group maximum:** $15 per night
- **Groups with stock animals:** $5 per person per night

For current trail conditions visit: go.nps.gov/YELLbackcountryreport.

### Fishing

General fishing season opens May 29 and closes November 7, 2021. Some areas remain closed until June 15. **Fishing permits are required in Yellowstone; state-issued fishing permits are not valid within the park.** Anglers 16 years or older need a permit; younger children can fish for free with a permitted adult. You can purchase a fishing permit in the park, in local gateway communities, or online via www.recreation.gov.

Fishing regulations in Yellowstone protect the unique values of the park ecosystem and conserve native fish species. Copies of the complete park regulations are available wherever permits are sold and online at go.nps.gov/fish.

Possession limits and closures vary. Anglers are responsible for knowing the regulations in the area they are fishing and knowing how to tell the difference between species. **Native fish must be released unharmed back into the water immediately.** These include:
- Arctic grayling
- Cutthroat trout
- Mountain whitefish

**These tackle and gear restrictions apply:**
- Hooks must be barbless.
- Tackle and lures must be non-toxic. Lead tackle is not allowed.
- Bait is prohibited.
- Felt-soled footwear is not permitted.

### Boating

The boating season opens May 29 and closes November 7, 2021. All watercraft (motorized boats, non-motorized boats, and float tubes) must have a permit and be inspected for aquatic invasive species by park staff. Any watercraft suspected of harboring AIS will be subject to a non-chemical decontamination treatment.

Aquatic Invasive Species are nonnative plants and animals that can cause irreversible harm to the ecosystem. New Zealand mudsnails, whirling disease, and lake trout have already resulted in loss of native fish or closure of some park areas.

Watercraft users and anglers are asked to inspect all items that may come in contact with park waters, ensuring that they are clean, drained, and dry.

Motorized boating is allowed on Lewis Lake and most of Yellowstone Lake. Only non-motorized boating is allowed on most other lakes. Only one river is open to non-motorized boating; the Lewis River channel between Lewis and Shoshone lakes.

If you plan to boat in the park, familiarize yourself with Yellowstone National Park boating regulations and information about inspections and permits, available online at go.nps.gov/YELLboating.

**BOAT PERMIT AND AIS INSPECTION LOCATIONS**

**Motorized and non-motorized watercraft (including angler float tubes):**
- Bridge Bay Ranger Station 8a–4:30p
- Grant Village Backcountry Office 8a–4:30p
- Lewis Lake Ranger Station 8a–4:30p

**Angler float tubes only**
- Locations listed above
- Bechler Ranger Station (hours vary)
- North Entrance Station (hours vary)
- Northeast Entrance Station (hours vary)
- West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center (hours vary)

For more information, visit go.nps.gov/YELLboating or call 406-581-9040 (Grant AIS inspector) or 406-823-9006 (Lake AIS inspector).

#### Certain Boats Banned

Boats with sealed internal water ballast tanks are temporarily banned in the park to minimize the risk of introducing aquatic invasive species.
Things to Do

Day Hiking

More than 1,000 miles of hiking trails wind through Yellowstone National Park. Whether you hike for half a mile or more than 10, the backcountry can be an escape from the crowds and a chance to get in touch with the wilderness that Yellowstone preserves.

Find hikes using the free park apps (see page 2) or at go.nps.gov/YELLdayhikes. go.nps.gov/YELLbackcountryreport has information on seasonal closures and trail conditions. Be prepared for wildlife encounters, hike in groups of three or more, and carry bear spray on all hikes.

Hiking in Bear Country

Hiking in bear habitat has inherent risks. You are likely to be safer if you stay on roads and official trails, but your safety cannot be guaranteed. Federal regulations require you to stay at least 100 yards (91 m) away from bears. Learn more; go.nps.gov/bearspray.

You can buy bear spray in Yellowstone where stores are open.

Bear spray cannot be taken on airplanes or thrown in the trash. Canisters can be recycled in the park. Check locally or online for locations.

You can rent bear spray from: Bear Aware LLC North end of the Canyon Visitor Education Center parking area May 22–September 25 8a–5:30p

Rentals include holster and belt, hiking safety information, and instructions on proper use. The cost is $9.25 per day or $28 per week (3–7 days) plus tax. For more information, visit bearaware.com.

Return items to the Canyon kiosk, Madison Campground, park gas stations, or the Cooke City Visitor Center.

Photography

Yellowstone is one of the best places in the world to photograph wildlife.

The Name of the Game is Patience
To get the best shot, you will spend more time waiting and observing than taking photos. Look for patterns in animal behavior that can help you get a great shot. You may have to wait a while, so be ready.

Know Your Camera’s Limits
A cell phone camera will not be able to capture the same resolution and detail as a more advanced standalone camera with large lenses. Good photography isn’t about getting close to the animal for a close-up. It’s about having the right equipment for the job.

Stay Safe Behind and in Front of the Camera
An unusual vantage point can add drama to your image, but you don’t want to add the drama of a hospital visit to your trip. Never sacrifice safety for a photograph.

• Be Aware of Your Surroundings
Stay behind fences and guard rails. Never turn your back on wild animals.
• Keep Children Close to You at All Times
Never try to pose them with wildlife.
• Stay Out of the Road
Do not stop your vehicle in the road or stand in the roadway. Do not block any portion of the road with tripods, chairs, or other objects. Do not block the free flow of traffic.

Bicycling

Bicycling, including the use of e-bikes, is permitted on established public roads, parking areas, and designated routes. Bicycles are subject to the same traffic rules as automobiles and are prohibited on trails and boardwalks.

Park roads are narrow and winding with few shoulders, so regulations require cyclists to ride single file, and we strongly recommend wearing a helmet and high visibility clothing and using flashing lights on both the front and rear of the bicycle.

Road elevations range from 5,300 to 8,860 ft (1,615 to 2,700 m), and services and facilities are far apart—typically 20 to 30 miles (37 to 56 km). During April, May, and June, high snowbanks may make travel more dangerous.

Find information on the park website at go.nps.gov/YELlbicycling.

Smoking is Prohibited
In geyser basins, on trails and boardwalks, in buildings, or within 25 feet (7.6 m) of building entrances.

Take Only Pictures
Removing or possessing natural or cultural resources (like wildflowers, antlers, rocks, and arrowheads) is strictly prohibited.
**Things to Do**

**Become a Junior Ranger**

*If you’re age 4 or older, you can become a Yellowstone Junior Ranger!* This program is a way to introduce children—and those young at heart—to the natural wonders of the park as well as their own role in preserving these wonders for the future.

For more information, talk to a ranger at Albright Visitor Center, Canyon Visitor Education Center, and Old Faithful Visitor Education Center.

**Explore Park Heritage**

*Opportunities to connect to the past are everywhere in Yellowstone.* Visit Mammoth Hot Springs to walk the self-guiding trail around Fort Yellowstone, which chronicles the US Army’s role in protecting the park. Other historic sites include the Norris Museum, Obsidian Cliff, and the Old Faithful Inn and Historic District.

The Heritage and Research Center (above) is located just beyond the North Entrance in Gardiner, Montana. This facility is home to Yellowstone’s museum collection, archives, research library, archeology lab, and herbarium. Open by appointment only. To contact, email YELL_Heritage_Center@nps.gov.

**Support Your Park**

*Yellowstone Forever is the official nonprofit partner of Yellowstone National Park.* Their mission of engagement and support through philanthropy and education for the park will ensure Yellowstone remains for generations to come. Programs about wildlife, plants, geology, and history are perfect for curious adults and families who want to spend a day or more exploring the park with a knowledgeable guide. To learn more, visit Yellowstone.org.

**Authorized Guides**

*Many authorized guides and outfitters are ready to show you the wonders of Yellowstone,* and each has a unique approach. Make sure that your guide, tour company, or other commercial service is fully authorized by the park. Authorized providers are listed on the park website at go.nps.gov/YELLtours.

Report unauthorized operators to a park ranger, or contact Concessions Management at 307-344-2271.

**Make the Most of Your Visit**

Yellowstone encompasses more than 2.2 million acres, most of it beyond the reach of roads. One could dedicate their entire life to experiencing the park and still never see it all. Here are suggestions for making the most of the time you do have.

**Tour early in the day to avoid crowds.**

Most people tour the park from 10 am to 6 pm. Wildlife are most active at sunrise and sunset; arriving before 8 am improves your chances of observing animals during their active periods. Park entrance gates are open 24 hours a day.

**Visit a hidden gem.**

Take a day hike, or stroll one of our historic walking tours at Fort Yellowstone or Old Faithful. Explore nearby national park units, national forests, state forests, and state parks. The region offers a variety of public lands for recreation and enjoyment.

**Only one day here?**

- Drive to the Old Faithful area and walk around the Upper Geyser Basin.
- Visit Old Faithful and one other hydrothermal area, like Norris, West Thumb, or Fountain Paint Pots. Follow boardwalks and maintained trails to witness hot springs, mudpots, fumaroles, and geysers.
- Begin in Hayden or Lamar valleys to look for some of the park’s large animals. Bring binoculars or a spotting scope, and enjoy animals from a safe distance.
- For a break from the road, consider one or two moderate day hikes. Always carry rain gear, extra food and water, bear spray, and other emergency equipment when venturing into the backcountry.
- Have a picnic. Unpack your basket at any of the many picnic areas throughout the park.

**Two or more days?**

- Explore one theme, such as geology, in depth. For example, visit Mammoth Hot Springs to see travertine formations and view the sedimentary layers of Mount Everts, then drive through terrain shaped by glaciers to the Tower-Roosevelt area.
- Visit Yellowstone Lake, the largest high-elevation lake in the lower 48 states. Take in the spectacular views of West Thumb and the Absaroka Mountains from its shores. Explore the hot springs, mud pots, and geysers of West Thumb Geyser Basin. Hike one of the local trails, such as the Scenic Lake Overlook near West Thumb.
- Slow down and try your hand at capturing the beauty of Yellowstone through journaling, painting, or simply observing.
Famously Hot Features

Yellowstone was established in 1872 as the world’s first national park primarily because of its unparalleled collection of geysers, hot springs, mudpots, and steam vents.

Fumaroles, or steam vents, are the hottest hydrothermal features in the park, with temperatures well above that of boiling water. They are easier to see in cool weather.

Geysers erupt with steaming hot water. Variations in each geyser’s underground reservoir determine whether it is regular and predictable—like Great Fountain Geyser in the Lower Geyser Basin—or irregular like Giant Geyser in the Upper Geyser Basin.

Hot springs are the most common hydrothermal features in the park. They vary from frothing mocha-like boiling water to clear and calm pools of tremendous depth.

Mudpots are acidic features with a limited water supply. Their consistency and activity vary with the seasons and precipitation.

Travertine terraces are found at Mammoth Hot Springs, where the interactions of hot water and limestone deep underground create chalk-white travertine terraces at the surface.

Wild Fire

Fires are a natural part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Research shows that large fires have been occurring in Yellowstone since forests became established following the last glacial retreat 14,000 years ago.

Yellowstone’s fire season typically lasts from July to the end of September. Lightning may ignite dozens of forest fires during a single summer. Most of them go out naturally after burning less than half an acre. Others torch isolated or small groups of trees, become smoldering ground fires, and eventually go out on their own. On rare occasions, wind-driven fires have burned through large areas of forest, as in 1988, when multiple fires crossed more than one million acres in Yellowstone and on surrounding federal lands despite massive efforts to extinguish them.

The National Park Service allows lightning-ignited fires to burn in Yellowstone provided they are not a threat to human life and property. The park is required to protect human life as well as the approximately 2% of Yellowstone’s 2.2 million acres that are considered developed (roads, buildings, other infrastructure) while at the same time letting wildfire carry out its ecological role in the landscape as much as possible.

How does fire benefit Yellowstone?

• Some plants have adapted to fire. In some cases, they depend on it.
• Fire promotes habitat diversity by removing the forest overstory, allowing different plant communities to become established and preventing trees from growing in meadows.
• Fire increases the rate nutrients become available to plants by rapidly releasing them from wood and forest litter and by making soil minerals weather faster. This is especially important in a cold, dry climate like Yellowstone’s, where decomposition happens slower than in more hot and humid areas.
• Natural fires provide an opportunity for scientists to study the effects of fire on an ecosystem.

Why aren’t burned trees removed?

Burned and dead trees contribute to the ecosystem. Dead standing trees provide nesting cavities for many types of animals. Fallen trees provide food and shelter for animals and nutrients for the soil. However, park managers will remove dead or burned trees that pose safety hazards along roads or in developed areas.
Wild Lands and Wildlife

Wolves in Yellowstone

Yellowstone is the site of one of the most ambitious and controversial wildlife restoration projects in the world. Although wolves once roamed from the Arctic tundra to Mexico, loss of habitat and extermination programs led to their demise throughout most of the United States by the early 1900s. In 1973, the US Fish and Wildlife Service listed the gray wolf (Canis lupus) as an endangered species and designated the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem as one of three recovery areas. From 1995 to 1997, 41 wild wolves were released in Yellowstone.

Keep Wolves and Bears Wild
If you see wolves or bears on or near the roadway:
1. Slow down and move to the side of the road farthest from the animal(s). Continue slowly moving as they pass by.
2. Do not stop within 100 yards (91 m) of the animal(s). If conditions force you to stop, continue slowly moving within 10–15 seconds.
3. If a wolf or bear begins moving toward you, leave the area immediately, but don’t run.

Never feed a wild animal. Wolves and bears that eat human food even once will try to get food again. These animals then have to be lethally removed.

If a wolf or bear approaches closely, report the sighting to park rangers.

Bringing Up Bear Cubs

Both grizzly and black bear cubs are born in the deep winter months while their mother hibernates. In April and May, they begin to venture out with their mother as she digs for roots, insects, and squirrels. Black bear cubs stay with their mother 1.5 years, grizzly cubs for 1.5–3.5 years (with 2.5 years most common).

Look for black bears along the edges of wooded areas in the Lamar and Hayden valleys or among the trees near Mammoth and Tower. Grizzly bears are usually seen in open areas.

See page 6 for information about safely recreating in bear country.

Within the Herd

Yellowstone is the only place in the United States where bison have lived continuously since prehistoric times. Bison here are special: they’re America’s largest bison population on public land that can still migrate and adapt to diseases and predators.

Bison mainly eat grasses and sedges and are well-suited to both prairies and forests. With adult males weighing up to 2,000 pounds (900 kg), the bison is the largest land mammal in North America.

The herd is made up of cows, calves, and some younger bulls. During the rut in July and August, mature bulls display their dominance by bellowing, wallowing, and fighting with other bulls to earn the right to mate with receptive females. After 9 to 9.5 months, calves are born in late April and May. Their orange fur makes them easy to see and has earned them the nickname "red dogs."

Look for bison in open country along the Lamar, Yellowstone, Firehole, and Madison rivers.

Enjoy watching Yellowstone’s animals but STAY SAFE. They are WILD and DANGEROUS.

Other people
2 yards (2 m)

Bison, elk, and all other wildlife
25 yards (23 m)

Bears and wolves
100 yards (91 m)

Signs of Change

The National Park Service anticipates that climate change will create significant challenges to the preservation of park resources, infrastructure, and visitor experience. Within Yellowstone, scientists expect ecosystems to change due to increasing temperature, decreasing snowpack, earlier runoff, and a longer growing season. Some observed and expected effects of climate change are:

• Alpine habitats will decrease in area, negatively affecting species that depend on them.
• The number and intensity of wildfires is expected to increase in Yellowstone and across the Western US, resulting in more area burned over time. This will have a big impact on vegetation and vulnerable buildings.
• Mountain pine beetle infestations may increase, driven by milder winters and a longer season for more reproductive cycles, causing more mortality in certain forest types.
• Hotter, drier summers will drive a decline in wetland areas, reducing essential habitat for frogs, salamanders, and many bird and insect species.
• Grizzly bears may have fewer whitebark pine nuts, a nutritious, high-calorie food source the bears depend on as they prepare for winter hibernation.
• Non-native, invasive plants, able to take advantage of early spring moisture and drier summers, are starting to outcompete native vegetation within the park’s lower elevation grasslands.

Bison or Buffalo?

In North America, both “bison” and “buffalo” refer to the American bison (Bison bison). Generally, “buffalo” is used informally, while “bison” is preferred for formal or scientific purposes.

Early European explorers called this animal by many names. Historians believe that the term “buffalo” grew from the French word for beef, boeuf.
The Upper Geyser Basin, home of Old Faithful, hosts the greatest concentration of active geysers on Earth. They provide ample evidence of the active volcano below your feet.

Yellowstone Volcano’s reservoir of partially molten rock (magma) is ~5 miles (8 km) below the surface here. This magma provides the first ingredient needed to create the area’s hydrothermal features: heat! Rain and snow provide the second ingredient: water, which percolates ~0.5 miles (0.8 km) through hot, fractured rocks heated by the underlying magma reservoir. These hot, fractured rocks provide the third ingredient: the mineral silica. The extremely hot water below dissolves silica in the rocks. As the superheated water works its way back to the surface, it carries this silica and deposits it when it cools at the surface. In fact, Old Faithful geyser is a mound of silica that is growing ever so slowly after every eruption.

It’s not the largest or most regular geyser eruption, but Old Faithful’s eruptions are more frequent than the other big geysers in the park. During summer, rangers forecast eruption times for Old Faithful and five other big geysers. However, a geyser’s pattern of eruptions may change at any time.

To view forecasted eruption times:
- Use the NPS Yellowstone app (see page 2)
- Call 307-344-2751 (option 2)
- Check the @GeyserNPS Twitter feed
- Check at the Visitor Education Center and many of the area facilities

Yellowstone Visitor Guide
The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River illustrates the park’s complex geologic history in dramatic colors and shapes. The Upper and Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River add to it’s grandeur.

The canyon formed when the Yellowstone River cut through rhyolite lava flows previously weakened by hydrothermal activity. Hot water heated by the underlying volcanic system altered the composition of the rock from resistant rhyolite to minerals susceptible to the river’s erosional power.

The 308-foot (93 m) Lower Falls marks where the volcanic bedrock beneath the river changes from hard, resistant rock to the hydrothermally altered rocks common downstream. The 109-foot (33 m) Upper Falls marks a similar shift. The multi-hued layers of the canyon result from the varying extent of hydrothermal alteration of the rhyolite flows. Look closely at dark orange, brown, and green areas near the river for still-active hydrothermal features. Their activity—and that of water, wind, and earthquakes—continue to sculpt the canyon today.

Automated Shuttle Pilot
This summer, the park is testing low-speed, automated vehicle (AV) shuttles in the Canyon Village campground, visitor services, and visitor lodging area. The goal is to understand how AV shuttle technology can be used in parks and how visitors perceive and engage these services. Capacity is very limited, and masks are required on board. For details, check locally or visit go.nps.gov/ShuttlePilot.
Lake Village, Fishing Bridge, and Bridge Bay

Yellowstone Lake, at 286 miles² (740 km²), is the largest high-elevation lake (above 7,000 ft / 2,130 m) in North America. The only outlet, the Yellowstone River, is at Fishing Bridge. The lake is covered by ice from December to May or June.

Powerful geologic processes shaped the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake, which overlies the edge of the Yellowstone Caldera. Glaciers carved and lava flows filled the central lake basin. 147,000 years ago, an explosive eruption left behind West Thumb basin. Many of the 1,000 to 3,000 yearly earthquakes in Yellowstone occur under the lake because of the movement of magmatic fluids below. These forces continue to reshape the lake’s shoreline.

Yellowstone Lake is also the site of one of the most extensive conservation efforts in the National Park Service. Park staff work to reduce the impact of invasive lake trout (Salvelinus namaycush) on the survival of the native population of cutthroat trout (Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri).

Yellowstone Lake

- **Fishing Bridge Museum and Visitor Center**
  - Closed

- **Lodging**
  - Lake Yellowstone Hotel 5/28–10/3
  - Lake Yellowstone Cottages 5/28–10/3
  - Lake Lodge Cabins 6/10–9/26

- **Campground**
  - Bridge Bay Campground 6/11–9/6
  - Fishing Bridge RV CLOSED

- **Food**
  - Lake Yellowstone Hotel
    - Lake Hotel Deli 5/28–10/3
    - Lake Hotel Dining Room 5/28–10/3

  - Lake Lodge Cabins
    - Wylie’s Canteen 6/10–9/26

  - Fishing Bridge General Store 5/21–10/10

- **Fuel (Fishing Bridge Station)** 5/21–9/26
  - Credit card fueling available 24 hours.
  - Liquid propane gas bottle exchange available.
  - Repairs 5/28–9/6
  - Wrecker 5/28–9/6
  - 406-848-7548

- **Shopping**
  - Fishing Bridge General Store 5/21–10/10
    - Groceries, ice cream, souvenirs, apparel.
  - Lake General Store 6/11–10/3
    - Groceries, snack bar, souvenirs, apparel.
  - Bridge Bay Marina Store 6/18–9/5
    - Camping and outdoor gear, snacks, fishing supplies.
  - Lake Hotel Gift Shop 5/28–10/3
  - Lake Lodge Gift Shop 6/10–9/26

- **Bridge Bay Marina**
  - Backcountry Office
  - Boat launch ramp, dock rentals 6/4–9/12
  - Motor boat rentals 6/11–9/5
  - One-hour scenic cruise boat tours of Yellowstone Lake 6/11–9/11

- **US Post Office**
  - Opens 5/11

- **West Thumb Information Station**
  - Pique your curiosity before exploring the boiling springs in the adjacent geyser basin on the shore of Yellowstone Lake.
  - 307-344-7690
  - Check locally for hours.

- **Self-guiding Trail Booklet**
  - Available for the area.

- **Park Waters Are Swift and Cold**
  - Swimming is recommended.

- **All Watercraft Must Be Inspected and Permitted**

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Yellowstone Lake is also the site of one of the most extensive conservation efforts in the National Park Service. Park staff work to reduce the impact of invasive lake trout (Salvelinus namaycush) on the survival of the native population of cutthroat trout (Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri).
Mammoth Hot Springs terraces are like living sculptures, shaped by the volume of the water, slope of the ground, and objects in the water’s path. Travertine builds up rapidly here and causes the features to change quickly and constantly. Some vents may clog completely, new vents may form, and old vents may reopen. Sometimes the water is concentrated in a few springs; other times, it spreads across many outlets.

Water follows the path of least resistance, whether above- or underground. Scientists estimate that, at any given time, only about 10 percent of the water in the Mammoth Hot Springs system is on the surface. The features are always changing, but the overall activity of the entire area and the volume of water discharge remain relatively constant.

Not all services available

Medcor Medical Clinic (see page 2 for details)
Every day 6/4–9/24; Weekdays only rest of year
Emergency: Dial 911

Horace M. Albright Visitor Center
Get immersed in the history of Yellowstone and the National Park Service and the wildlife of Yellowstone’s Northern Range. 307-344-2263
6/6–11/7 9a–5p (subject to change)

Yellowstone Forever Bookstore

Lodging
Mammoth Hotel 4/30–11/28
Mammoth Cabins 5/7–10/11

Campground
Mammoth Campground Year-round

Food limited indoor dining
Mammoth Dining Room 5/21–11/28
Mammoth Hotel Map Room and Bar 5/21–11/28
Terrace Grill 4/30–10/11

Fuel 5/7–10/3
Credit card fueling available 24 hours.
Liquid propane gas bottle exchange available.

Shopping
Mammoth General Store Year-round
Groceries, ice cream, souvenirs, apparel.
Public water bottle filling station.
Mammoth Gift Shop 4/30–11/28

US Post Office Year-round

Self-guiding Trail Booklets
Available for the Mammoth Terraces and Fort Yellowstone.

Public Restrooms
In stores, restaurants, hotels, gas stations, and near terraces trailheads.

Recycling Bins
Located near the General Store, the visitor center, the Mammoth restrooms, and at the campground.

Fort Yellowstone

For the decade after Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872, the park was under serious threat from those who would exploit, rather than protect, its resources. In 1886, the US Army stepped in to help.

The buildings of Fort Yellowstone are a testament to the long history of our first national park and of the important role the army played in preserving it for the future. They remind us that the resources we find within Yellowstone’s boundaries are not only natural ones, but cultural as well. Our interactions with Yellowstone continue to shape our idea of what a national park should be, just as they did during the days of Fort Yellowstone.
Norris

Park in This Area at Your Own Risk
When Steamboat Geyser erupts, dissolved minerals in the spray can damage glass and metal surfaces on vehicles.

- Norris Geyser Basin Museum
  307-344-2812
  Opens May 30 9a–5p
- Yellowstone Forever Bookstore
- Museum of the National Park Ranger
  CLOSED
- Campground
  Norris Campground CLOSED
- Self-guiding Trail Booklet
  Available for the area.

Grant Village

Visitor Information Center
Inside the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce. Trip planning information and fishing permits.
307-344-2876
Chamber of Commerce 8a–8p
NPS Desk Check locally

Lodging
Grant Village 6/18–10/3
Campground
Grant Village Campground 6/18–9/12
Laundry
Food
Grant Village 6/18–10/3
- Grant Village Dining Room
Lake House at Grant Check locally

Fuel
5/28–9/19 (5/28–9/6 for repairs/wrecker)
Credit card fueling available 24 hours.
RV liquid propane tanks filled.
- Repairs Wrecker 406-848-7548
- Shopping
  Grant General Store 6/18–9/26
  Groceries, snack bar, souvenirs, apparel.
  Grant Mini Store 5/28–10/3
  Camping and outdoor gear, footwear, fishing supplies.
  Grant Village Gift Shop 6/18–10/3
- US Post Office
  Opens 5/12
- Public Restrooms
  In stores, restaurants, hotels, gas stations, and at or near all picnic areas.
- Recycling Bins
  Located in the campground and near trash bins at the General Store.
Yellowstone National Park was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978 because it protects significant geological phenomena and processes. It is also a unique manifestation of geothermal forces, natural beauty, and wild ecosystems where rare and endangered species can thrive. As one of the few remaining intact large ecosystems in the northern temperate zone, Yellowstone’s ecological communities provide unparalleled opportunities for conservation, study, and enjoyment of large-scale wildland ecosystem processes.

Der Yellowstone-Park ist gefährlich

Halten Sie sich von Tieren fern
• Nähern Sie sich keinen Tieren an und füttern Sie sie nicht.
• Bisons, Bären und Elche haben in der Vergangenheit Menschen verletzt und getötet.
• Bleiben Sie 100 Yard (91 m) von Bären und Wölfen entfernt.
• Bleiben Sie 25 Yard (23 m) von allen anderen Tieren entfernt.
• Laufen Sie niemals von einem Bären weg.
• Wandern Sie in einer Gruppe, machen Sie Lärm und tragen Sie ein Bärenspray bei sich.

Nationaley park Йеллоустон опасен.

• Перемещайтесь только по дощатым настилам и оборудованным тропам.
• Не бросайте в гидротермальные объекты предметы, в том числе монеты и мелкие камни.
• Не курите в зданиях и гейзеровых бассейнах.
• Не прикармливайте диких животных и птиц.
• В соответствии с законом все посетители должны держаться на расстоянии не менее 91 м (100 ярдов) от медведей и волков и не менее 23 метров (25 ярдов) от других животных, включая бизонов, вапити и койотов.

Yellowstone è pericolosa

• Percorrere la passerelle e i sentieri.
• Non lanciate oggetti, come monet e sassolini, nelle formazioni idrotermali.
• È vietato fumare nei bacini dei geyser o negli edifici.
• Non date da mangiare agli animali selvatici, compresi gli uccelli.
• La legge richiede che tutti i visitatori restino ad almeno 91 metri (100 iarde) da orsi e lupi, e ad almeno 23 metri (25 iarde) da tutti gli altri animali, inclusi bisonti, renne e coyote.

Vous êtes responsable de votre sécurité.

In Yellowstone, you are yourself responsible for your safety.
**Park Roads**

**Tower-Roosevelt to Canyon Village**
- Closed
No access between Tower-Roosevelt and Canyon. Trails to the top of Mount Washburn are also closed.

**North Entrance**
- Expect delays and traffic pattern changes.
- The entrance station is open.

**Old Faithful**
- Expect delays up to 15 minutes due to bridge repairs.

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**Drive Cautiously**
- The park speed limit is 45 mph (72 kph) unless posted slower. Icy and wet roads require extra attention.
- Watch for wildlife on or near roadways.
- Keep the road clear at all times, even when watching wildlife. Don’t stop, stand, or walk in the road. Use a pullout if you need to stop for any reason.

**Separate Fee for Grand Teton**
- Visit [nps.gov/GRTET](http://nps.gov/GRTET) for more information.

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**Travel Alerts**

1. **Tower-Roosevelt to Canyon Village**
   - Closed

2. **North Entrance**
   - Expect delays and traffic pattern changes.
   - The entrance station is open.

3. **Old Faithful**
   - Expect delays up to 15 minutes due to bridge repairs.

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**Road Schedule**

Weather permitting, roads open/close at 8 am on the day listed. Changes and delays are possible.

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**Roads Open Year-Round**

- Gardiner, MT
- North Entrance
- Northeast Entrance
- West Entrance

**Roads Open April 16–November 8**

- North Entrance
- Northeast Entrance
- West Entrance

**Roads Open May 7–November 8**

- North Entrance
- Northeast Entrance
- West Entrance

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**Road Status Updates**

Hotline 307-344-2117
Online go.nps.gov/YELLroads
Mobile alerts text 82190 to 888-777