

Frequently Asked Questions

What will the field trip cost?

The admission charge is \$3 for students and \$3 for teachers and designated chaperones; \$7 for additional adults. We request 1 chaperone for every 6 elementary students; every 8 middle school students; or every 10 high school students.

Can you bill us?

We accept cash, check or credit card payment, but we do not accept purchase orders; and we cannot invoice. We require a single payment for the entire group upon arrival. We will refund any overpayment.

Are scholarships available?

We have two funds that operate on a first-come, first-served basis for eligible applicants. One fund helps defray transportation costs; the other assists with admission charges. Applicants must qualify under Title I guidelines.

How large of a group can you accommodate?

Self-guided groups may be any size. We can tour up to 60 students at one time.

Is a deposit required?

A \$50 deposit is required for groups of 100 or more, or when scheduling a teacher-led program. The deposit is non-refundable, and will be applied toward the balance due.

How much time should I allow for our tour?

The tour will last one hour. Your tickets, however, are good for all day, so if time permits, you may stay and enjoy other aspects of the Gardens.

FAQ about eating options for field trips

Where can we eat outdoors?

- Sack lunches may be eaten at three outdoor picnic pavilions, located near the parking lot. Picnic areas are clearly marked on map. Please ask admissions or your greeter for assistance if you are unsure of location. Sack lunches **are not permitted in any other outdoor area**.
- The pavilions operate on a first-come, first-served basis, and **may not be reserved**.
- Each pavilion has three eight-foot picnic tables. Two pavilions have large grassy areas adjacent to the building; students may sit and eat in the grass as long as trash is disposed of properly.
- The amphitheater pavilion is located near the designated bus-parking area. If you plan to access this pavilion, please leave your lunches on the bus.
- For your convenience, your lunches may be unloaded and left near the front entrance. Please package your lunches in large containers labeled with the name of the school as well as the teacher. A greeter will be available to help unload your lunches.
- Snacks, but not lunches, may be eaten on the back patio of the Children's Garden.

Can we eat indoors?

- If space is available, a classroom may be reserved for your use.
- The rental fee is \$25 per ½ hour. No deposit is necessary. You may pay for the room upon arrival.
- The classroom seats approximately 100. Groups are requested to leave the room in a tidy condition.
- Because Meijer Gardens is a popular corporate meeting site, it is recommended that you reserve your room in advance.
- There is public seating for approximately 20 people in the downstairs lobby. These tables operate on a first-come, first-served basis, and may not be reserved.

Can we eat at Taste of the Gardens Café?

- The café does not take reservations.
- Because of Health Department regulations, food from home cannot be brought into the café.
- Hot food and daily specials are served until 3:00 pm; cold foods are served until closing.
- Boxed lunches are available. A menu and order form are available online.
- If ordering lunches from the cafe, fax the request 10 days prior to the field trip.
- The outdoor patio is for café customers only.

Are there any other eating options nearby?

- The Township Park is located on the East Beltline, about one mile north of Meijer Gardens, on the same side of the road. The park is located behind the Township Offices.
- The Township Park has eating pavilions and a full playground area with recreational equipment. Please call in advance, 616-361-7391.
- **It is required that visitors bag their trash and take the bags to the park's dumpster.** Bags may be obtained from the park's office. Bags are also available at Meijer Gardens.

What happens in the event of inclement weather?

- **Check with the Indoor Education Manager for your options.**
- You may rent a classroom on the day of your visit if one is available. If needed, we can invoice you the cost of a room. If you cannot afford a classroom, we will try to find an area where you may eat your lunches though it may be in an unfurnished room. Sitting in the hallways is not permitted.
- Some bus drivers will permit you to eat on the bus. Please check with your bus driver.
- Some groups decide to shorten their field trip, and return to school to eat lunch.

QUESTIONS? Call Suzie Doten, 616-974-5239.