

COMO PARK ZOO & CONSERVATORY

Social Narrative

What I can expect on my visit to
Como Park Zoo & Conservatory.



COMO PARK
ZOO & CONSERVATORY



Here I will find

- **Output** Which types of animals live in each building or area in the zoo.
- Expectations and rules I should follow in each area.
- Sensory information that I might find important before entering each area.
- A bulleted format like this on each slide will help to understand each area of the zoo.
- Additional slides for certain buildings will provide other important information as needed.
- If I follow the rules and understand the expectations, I will have a great visit!

Overall Expectations

A polar bear is shown in a snowy environment, sitting and looking upwards with its mouth open, as if howling or calling. The bear's fur is a mix of white and light brown. The background is a soft-focus snowy landscape with some wooden structures visible in the distance.

I am going to Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, and while I am there, I will:

- Keep my hands and feet to myself
- Understand that only the zookeepers can touch and feed the animals
- Understand that animals stay in enclosures and people stay on walking paths
- Keep a quiet and calm body near windows and exhibits
- Understand that some buildings and exhibits are only open during certain times and months out of the year
- Use a quiet voice so I don't scare the animals
- Stay with my group while exploring
- Understand that by following the rules, I will have a safe and great day!

Additional Information

- Como Park Zoo & Conservatory opens at 10:00am every day.
- The zoo's website is www.comozooconservatory.org
- If I need help, have a question or get separated from my group, I need to locate a staff member who is wearing a Como Park Zoo and Conservatory name tag. They will help me.



Map of Como Park Zoo and Conservatory





Main Entrance

- I will be visiting Como Park Zoo and Conservatory.
- When I arrive I will see the Visitor Center and a big glass building called the Conservatory.
- The Conservatory is where plants from all over the world are kept and taken care of.



Visitor Center

- The Visitor Center is where visitors can enter the zoo. Inside the Visitor Center there is a gift shop, cafe, Tropical Encounters rainforest exhibit, as well as restrooms.
- When I enter the Visitor Center there will be a box and a kiosk to make a donation. The zoo is free, but people can choose to donate money with cash or a credit card. All of the money goes to helping the plants and animals.
- There will be a staff member that will greet me and I can ask them questions about my visit.
- The visitor center lobby can sometimes be loud and echoey. During the day the sun can make it very bright.
- I may also be able to smell the food cooking at the Café.

Children's Gallery and RibbitZibit

- The Children's Gallery is a place where there are interactive activities for small children.
- In this same space, there is also the RibbitZibit which are terrariums of frogs.
- There are also some carnivorous plants in this area.
- This area may be crowded and loud.
- I may have to wait in line before I can play with an activity.



Garden Safari Gifts

- Garden Safari Gifts is a gift shop in the Visitor Center where I can purchase items such as stuffed animals, clothing, or toys.
- To make sure I stay safe and do not damage anything, I will need to make sure I am using a calm body.
- This area may be crowded and loud.
- I may have to wait in line to pay for an item.



Zobota Café

- The Zobota Café is a restaurant in the Visitor Center.
- I can purchase food and beverages here.
- I can sit at one of the tables in the cafe to take a break.
- I may have to wait in line to pay for an item.
- Depending on the time of day, this area may be crowded and loud.
- There are usually smells of different food items being cooked and prepared.



Tropical Encounters Exhibit

- Tropical Encounters is an open rainforest exhibit.
- Some animals in this exhibit are in an enclosure, but some are moving around freely, such as birds and frogs.
- It may be noisy in this exhibit due to people and animals.
- This area has many different water sources in it, including pools, fish tanks, and some mist that may spray on the plants every so often.
- I may feel the water from the mist.
- I should use caution when walking in this exhibit as the floor can sometimes be wet or uneven.
- I should always stay on the walking path and not touch any of the animals.





Lower
Path



Upper
Path

Primate Building

- The primate building is where Como's monkeys and apes live.
- I will keep a quiet and calm body near windows so I don't scare the animals.
- Sometimes the primate building can be very warm.
- It is dark in some areas of the primate building.
- It can sometimes be crowded.
- The primate building has fake plants on the ceiling.
- It can be smelly in the primate building.
- Sometimes music is playing on a speaker in this area.



Gorilla Forest

- Gorilla forest is another area where I can see Como's gorillas in their indoor or outdoor enclosures.
- There is a blue machine called the mold machine that makes small toys as souvenirs. When it's being used, it can be noisy. It costs money to make a small mold machine toy. I can find more of these machines in other exhibits around the zoo. If I choose to make a toy, I may have to wait in line.
- Gorilla Forest is somewhat dark. It has fake netting and plants on the ceiling for decoration.
- It can be smelly in here.
- Sometimes music is playing on a speaker in this area.



Indoor Hoofstock Exhibit

- The hoofstock animals are animals that have hooves for feet. African hoofstock animals have two indoor buildings for the cold winter months.
- The giraffe, zebra, ostrich, and crowned crane are animals that need to be indoors in the winter.
- I should make sure to have a quiet voice and calm body around these animals because they can get scared very easily. I will keep my feet on the floor.
- These exhibits have strong smells.
- These exhibits can be warm.



Outdoor Hoofstock Exhibit

- Some hoofstock animals can be outdoors all year long in Minnesota. These animals include bison, Dall's sheep, and one type without hooves - arctic foxes.
- The outdoor hoofstock animals have two fences protecting them and me. My feet will stay on the sidewalk. This will keep me and the animals safe.
- When approaching the animals, it is important that I keep a calm body and quiet voice so the animals feel safe and don't get scared.
- Some of these animals can be smelly, like the bison and the arctic fox. I can sometimes smell them as I approach their habitats.

Wolf Woods

- Wolf Woods is home to Como's two gray wolves.
- Sometimes it is hard to see the wolves since their exhibit is so big. Their exhibit has two fences to protect me and the animals. The fence closest to the path will not hurt me if I touch it
- I will keep my feet on the walking path.
- Sometimes I will hear the wolves barking or howling. It can be loud.



Large Cat Building

- In this building, you will find Como's large cats such as cougars, tigers, lions, and snow leopards. Como has two places to view the cats. I can see them by walking through the indoor exhibit or by crossing the outdoor cat bridges.
- I might not be able to see all of the cats. Some cats might hide in their exhibits, making it hard to find them, or they might be in their indoor enclosure. Sometimes I will hear the lion roar. This can be loud.
- If I choose to see the cats from the inside, it may be crowded and loud.
- There are fake leaves on the ceiling and a pretend wooden path on the ground. Sometimes I will see reflections of lights in the exhibit windows.



Large Cat Building, continued

- It can be bright in this building on a sunny day.
- Sometimes there is music playing on a speaker in here.
- The indoor cat exhibit will have a Jeep that I can sit in and pretend that I am on a safari. The Jeep can make loud noises if I push certain buttons. I might have to wait my turn so others can have a chance to sit in the pretend Jeep.
- There is a blue machine called the mold machine that makes small toys as souvenirs. When it's being used, it can be noisy. It costs money to make a small mold machine toy. I can find more of these machines in other exhibits around the zoo. If I choose to make a toy, I may have to wait in line.





Polar Bear Odyssey

- Polar Bear Odyssey is where Como's polar bears live. There are indoor and outdoor areas to view the bears.
- There are two entrances to Polar Bear Odyssey. Both entrances have a long path that takes me to the door. The entrance looks like a cave made of rocks.
- Polar Bear Odyssey can be bright when the sun is shining.
- It can sometimes be noisy and crowded when lots of visitors are in here.
- Polar Bear Odyssey has a pretend seal home that I can crawl through. I will climb inside the seal home when it is my turn. If there are already people inside, I may need to wait my turn.



Polar Bear Odyssey, continued

- Sometimes the polar bears have a special training session in this area called the training vestibule.
- This is where the zookeepers work with the bears to help make sure they are healthy. They can weigh the bears and look closely at their bodies.
- Sometimes it can be hard to spot the bears. There are several places to look. I can look for the bears indoors or outdoors.
- Sometimes the bears are swimming, sometimes they are back in their bedroom areas.
- Sometimes they are walking around in their outdoor exhibit area.
- If I am patient and look close, I might see a bear.



Aquatic Animals Building

- The Aquatic Animals Building is home to many different animals that depend on water to live. These animals include: seals, sea lions, puffins, penguins, and fish.
- This building has a very strong, fishy smell.
- Sometimes the floor of the Aquatic Animals Building is wet. I should pay attention to where I am walking and take careful steps so I do not slip.
- There are two machines called the mold machine that makes small toys as souvenirs. When it's being used, it can be noisy. It costs money to make a small mold machine toy. I can find more of these machines in other exhibits around the zoo. If I choose to make a toy, I may have to wait in line.



Ecolab Underwater Viewing

- The Ecolab Underwater Viewing will let me see the seals and sea lions swimming underwater.
- The seals and sea lions have a large pool to swim in, so I might not be able to see them at all times.
- This area may be crowded and loud.
- I may have to wait my turn to get close to the glass.
- This area is outside, so depending on the season, it may be hot or cold.





KSTP Amphitheater & Sparky Show

- The KSTP Amphitheater is a large space with seating.
- I can sit and take a break in this space.
- Sometimes there is a seal and sea lion training demonstration here called the Sparky Show.
- During Sparky Shows, the amphitheater may have a lot of people in it. It may be loud, especially when the zookeepers are talking on the microphone.
- I will need to watch my step when I am on the stairs or walking to my seat.
- I may be able to smell food being made at the Pier 56 Cafe (seasonal), where I can also purchase food or beverages.



Fern Room

- The first garden I will see when I visit the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory is the Fern Room.
- This garden is filled with many varieties of ferns as well as other plants called epiphytes that grow on the wall.
- This garden has many different water sources in it, including a pool, a waterfall, and some mist that may spray on the plants every so often.
- I should use caution when walking in this garden as the floor can sometimes be wet or uneven.
- I may feel the water from the plants being misted.
- I may feel plants as I walk by them.
- If the garden is crowded, it may be noisy.





Palm Dome

- The Palm Dome is the tallest part of the Conservatory.
- This garden is filled with many varieties of plants including large palm trees.
- This garden has a fountain in the middle of it that will make the sound of running water.
- I should use caution when walking in this garden as the floor can sometimes be wet or uneven.
- If the garden is crowded, it may be noisy.

Sunken Garden

- The Sunken Garden is a garden with rotating shows so the flowers may be different each time I visit.
- Depending on the types of flowers planted here, there may be strong smells.
- This garden has a fountain that sounds like running water and a long pool in the middle of it.
- I should use caution when walking in this garden as the floor can sometimes be wet or uneven. The walkway has a ramp that gradually slopes down into the Sunken Garden.
- If the garden is crowded, it may be noisy.



North Garden

- The North Garden has many plants that provide us with food, medicine, and building materials. I may smell a variety of smells as I walk through.
- Although this garden has plants that we eat, I should not eat the plants in this garden.
- This garden has fountain that will make the sound of running water, and a long pool in the middle of it.
- If I look closely in the pool, I may see koi fish. I should look at the koi fish with my eyes, but not touch with my hands.
- I may feel plants as I walk by them.
- I should use caution when walking in this garden as the floor can sometimes be wet or uneven.
- If the garden is crowded, it may be noisy.



Bonsai Pavilion

- The Bonsai Pavilion will have many different types of bonsai trees.
- These trees may be all inside if it is cold out. In the warmer months, there will also be trees outside.
- I will also see a Zen Garden in the Bonsai Pavilion. This garden will be made of sand and rocks. I should not walk through this garden, but can enjoy it with my eyes.
- If the garden is crowded, it may be noisy.



Japanese Garden

- The Japanese Garden is an outdoor garden.
- This garden is only open when it is warmer outside and there is no snow.
- When I walk in the garden, I will want to make sure I stay on the path.
- In some parts of this garden, I can walk onto large rocks out into the water.
- I will want to be careful and watch my step.

Thank You for Reading

We look forward to seeing you soon at Como Park Zoo and Conservatory!



ausm
autism society of minnesota

