

Water Activities

Swimming

Besides the outdoor pools available to the public during summer at [Half Dome Village \(formerly Curry Village\)](#) and [Yosemite Valley Lodge \(formerly Yosemite Lodge\)](#), swimming is generally permitted in all bodies of water in the park. There are some exceptions, however, where swimming is prohibited:

- Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, and within one mile upstream along any tributary (e.g., Rancheria Falls).
- Dana Fork of the Tuolumne River
- Emerald Pool and Silver Apron (above Vernal Fall)
- Lake Eleanor Reservoir (when posted)
- Wawona Domestic Water Intake (and 100 yards upstream)

Swimming in the Merced River is a popular way to cool off--but help protect the river by entering and exiting only on sandy beaches. Swimming in rivers is not without hazards, including swift currents, cold water, and hazards within the river (e.g., trees). See [Water Safety](#) for more information.

Boating and Rafting

Rafting along the Merced River is popular during summer. You can [rent a raft](#) (typically in June and July, but it varies from year to year, depending on water level) or bring your own. (Other nonmotorized vessels, such as kayaks, are also permitted.)

Most people put in along the Merced River at Stoneman Bridge (near Half Dome Village, formerly Curry Village) and take out at Sentinel Beach Picnic Area. You may not take out your raft between Stoneman Bridge and Sentinel Beach and you must have a personal flotation device immediately available for each occupant of the raft (and children under age 13 must be wearing one). This section of river is open to boating and rafting each day when the [gauge height at Pohono Bridge](#) is below 7 feet at 8 am.

Rafting is also allowed on the South Fork of the Merced River below Swinging Bridge (in Wawona).

Kayaking is a popular way to enjoy the calm waters of Tenaya Lake.

More [experienced boaters](#) with appropriate equipment have additional opportunities along the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers.

Fishing Regulations

Fishing regulations for Yosemite National Park follow those set by the state of California, including the requirement that people 16 or older have a valid California fishing license.

The season for stream and river fishing begins on the last Saturday in April and continues through November 15. All lakes and reservoirs are open to fishing year-round.

There are some special regulations that apply within the park:

- No live or dead minnows or other bait fish, amphibians, non-preserved fish eggs, or roe may be used or possessed.
- Fishing from bridges and docks is prohibited.
- In Yosemite Valley and El Portal (Happy Isles to Foresta Bridge):
 - Rainbow trout are catch-and-release only.
 - Brown trout limit is five per day or ten in possession.
 - Only artificial lures or flies with barbless hooks may be used; bait fishing is prohibited.
 - Mirror Lake is considered a stream and is only open during stream fishing season.
- In the Tuolumne River from the O'Shaughnessy Dam downstream to Early Intake Diversion Dam
 - Maximum size limit of 12 inches in total length.
 - Trout limit is two per day or two in possession.
 - Only artificial lures or flies with barbless hooks may be used; bait fishing is prohibited.

Fishing supplies

Check to see where fishing supplies and licenses are available in Yosemite National Park.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife website lists **current sport fishing license fees** and **regulations**.