

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK  
PLAN YOUR VISIT  
[www.yosemitechic.com](http://www.yosemitechic.com)

Not just a great valley, but a shrine to human foresight, the strength of granite, the power of glaciers, the persistence of life, and the tranquility of the High Sierra. Top Things to Know

*Tunnel View off Hwy 41*



1. Pack your patience: **millions of people** visit Yosemite from April through October. Yosemite Valley is the main destination for most visitors but there are **many places to go** in the park.
2. Early birds avoid traffic! From spring through fall, arrive in the park before or after peak hours (before 9 am and after 5 pm) to avoid delays and **traffic congestion**.
3. Plan ahead: reservations are not required to enter Yosemite, but we strongly recommend that you make **reservations for lodging, camping, and backpacking**.

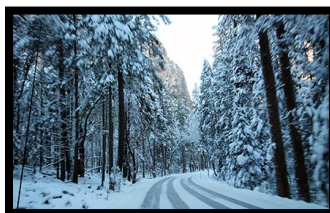


4. Keep wildlife wild: do not approach or feed animals.
5. Drive responsibly: observe posted speed limits and use pullouts to take pictures and let other cars pass.
6. Protect Yosemite's bears: always practice **proper food storage** and **follow speed limits**.
7. Staying connected: **cellular service is limited**. Don't be surprised if you can't receive calls or texts in the park.

How can you help four million people? Learn how to visit Yosemite in a way that is **fun, memorable, and safe**.

You can drive into Yosemite all year and enter via Highways 41, 140, and 120 from the west, IF WEATHER PERMITS!

*This is Highway 41 (Wawona Road)*



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Tioga Pass Entrance (via Highway 120 from the east) is closed from around November through late May or June. Hetch Hetchy is open all year but may close intermittently due to snow. Please note that GPS units do not always provide accurate directions to or within Yosemite.

1. Sturdy Water Shoes for Playing in Rivers and Waterfalls

If you plan on river rafting, canoeing, kayaking or just playing in the Merced River, or rivers near the park, you will want a good pair of water shoes. Flip-flops are not recommended for water activities as they will get stuck in the mud and either break or get swallowed down river. A covered rubber-toed shoe can help you avoid getting bruised toes from river rocks or cuts from stray logs. (Read more about water safety in Yosemite)

2. Binoculars to Watch Climbers and Bears

Don't miss seeing the rock climbers on Half Dome and El Capitan or one of the park's 500 bears tromping through a meadow. Bring along a good pair of binoculars to see it all. It's worth talking to your local camp store employee about the different types of binoculars for sale as not all are created equal. You don't want to end up with an extraordinarily weak pair, nor a pair too heavy to hike with. The Nikon Monarch series offers some great features.



*Hanging Bridge in Yosemite Valley*

3. Sturdy Boots for Hiking on Granite

Yosemite's domes and peaks are made of granite. Many of the popular trails scramble around granite rockfall and waterfalls which can be hard on the feet and tricky to maneuver. To make the most out of your trip, pack a pair of hard-soled, waterproof and breathable hiking boots. These will allow you to navigate wet and dry trails with ease and enable you to explore farther than you maybe would have. To get you started on your research, one of our staff members raves about his Sportiva Synthesis Mid GTX. Our friends at Backpacker magazine really liked the 2016 Vasque Skywalks GTS.

4. A Rain Jacket

Who brings rain jacket to dry California? We do. Every time we visit. In summer, afternoon rainstorms can roll in, wrecking a perfectly beautiful day. The good news is they pass quickly. The bad news is the temperature drops dramatically when it rains, turning a warm day into one that feels freezing. When it rains and temperatures plummet, you want a jacket that can keep you warm and dry.

5. A Couple Water Bottles or a Hydration System

The valley of Yosemite National Park sits at 4,000 feet. Combat the effects of elevation and sun by drinking water almost constantly. Because the air is dry, your sweat quickly evaporates. Often, you won't know you are sweating. Drinking water ensures you won't get dehydrated, which can lead to headaches and more serious conditions like heat cramps and heat stroke. Plan to drink .5 -1 liter per hour of hiking.

Even when you are not recreating, be sure to keep drinking. If your urine is clear, you are hydrated. We love bringing along our CamelBak, which allows us to keep sipping even as we are on the move.

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#### 6. A Sun Hat, Sunglasses and Sunscreen

You only need to have experienced the sun in the West one time before you realize how strong it really is, especially since the Yosemite Valley sits at an average elevation of 4,000. Bring a wide-brimmed hat, which is preferable over a baseball cap, to cover your entire face.

Then, apply sunscreen over all exposed skin, including the back of your neck. Sunglasses will protect your eyes from being burned and polarized lens will help you see views more clearly. Don't forget you are 4,000 feet closer to the sun than at sea level. Purchase sunglass straps if you plan to be on the water- it can be frustrating watching your new sunglasses float down the Merced River without you.



*Mirror Lake in Yosemite Valley*

#### 7. Warm and Cold Clothing Layers

When you are sitting in sweltering heat in Chicago, it may seem totally ridiculous to pack a winter hat and warm layers for your Yosemite trip. Ignore your inner cynic. At 4,000 feet in the Yosemite Valley, park temperatures can fluctuate 30 degrees in one day, going from 51 F during the night to 87 F during the day. Be sure to pack light layers for daytime and others that will keep you warm in the evenings, including a winter hat, when the sun sets and cooler air moves in. You will be surprised at how quickly temperatures drop as the sun sets.

#### 8. A Star Chart or Star App

You'll find some dark skies in Yosemite, which is hundreds of miles from major cities. Get up high at Glacier Point or Olmsted Point for the best views. With a star chart, you'll be able to identify some of the formations you may never have seen before, specially if you are coming from an urban environment. Or use technology and download the SkyView® Free app for iPhone or Android, which enables you to identify stars and so on by pointing your phone at them. You may be able to see up to 15,000 stars in the park's sky in comparison to 500 in an urban sky. It's far out!

#### 9. A Tablecloth

It's the little things that make a big difference. When you stop at the roadside weathered picnic table to eat lunch, pull out your tablecloth to go from downhome to gourmet in a matter of seconds. You'll also avoid getting hard-to-remove splinters when you lean against the table.

#### 10. Bug Spray

Spend more time enjoying the scenery instead of swatting bugs. If you don't want to use traditional formulas that do or do not include strong chemicals, there are plenty of bug sprays available these days that are made from natural ingredients and are safer for use by children.

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*Yosemite Falls*

#### 11. Daypack

Make going for a stroll to the Lower Fall of Yosemite Falls or a more strenuous hike to the Cathedral Lakes much more comfortable with a daypack. Place all your (and your family's essentials) like extra layers, extra snacks, a flashlight, binoculars and simple first-aid kit in it.

#### 12. Headlamp

Read at night in your tent comfortably with your headlamp or use this great lighting device to safely walk to and from evening ranger talks.

#### 13. Plastic bags

Plastic bags come in handy, as well to pack out used toilet paper if nature calls while you are hiking. It's a big no-no to try to bury toilet paper in the back country. It has to be packed out.

If you plan on taking pictures near waterfalls, you may also want to invest in a waterproof cover or water bag for your camera.

#### 14. Bear Proof Your Car When You Pack It

Pack any scented items in your car for easy removal once you arrive at Yosemite. Why? Bears in Yosemite are attracted to virtually everything with a scent from baby wipes to canned food. Never underestimate their sense of smell or creative ability to access scented items.

According to park rules, you may store food inside your car (out of sight, with windows completely closed) only during daylight hours. You may not leave food in a pickup truck bed or strapped to the outside of a vehicle at any time. Do not store food in your car after dark: use a food locker that is supplied at almost all trailhead parking areas and lodges.

Remember to remove all scented items from your car, including food wrappers, crumbs in baby seats, baby wipes and unopened bottled drinks. Everything must go in a locked food locker as bears will break into cars and tented cabins and regular cabins (through unlocked windows) if they smell something alluring.

Leave the Bear Spray at Home! It is prohibited in Yosemite. To scare a bear in a developed area, make a lot of noise, form a close group with the people you are with and never approach the bear or surround it. In the backcountry, keep your distance. In any case, always let a ranger know or leave a message at 209/372-0322.





*Wapama Falls, Hetch Hetchy Area*

FEES:

**Entrance Fees**

Seven-day pass if entering via...

Non-commercial car, pickup truck, RV, or van with 15 or fewer passenger seats

\$30 per vehicle (no per-person fee)

Motorcycle

\$20 per motorcycle (no per-person fee)

Foot, bicycle, horse, or non-commercial bus or van with more than 15 passenger seats:

\$15 per person aged 16 and older

[\(fee waivers\)](#) may be available for curriculum-based educational trips)

**Other Passes**

These passes admit the pass owner and any accompanying passengers in a private car.

Yosemite Pass: \$60

*Annual pass providing free entrance to Yosemite for 12 months from the date of purchase*

America the Beautiful—National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass: \$80

*Annual pass covering entrance and standard amenity fees for national parks and other federal fee areas.*

*This replaces the National Parks Pass and Golden Eagle Pass.*

Annual 4th Grade Pass: Free

*Annual pass covering entrance fees for 4th grade students for 2016-2017 school year.*

Annual Pass for US Military: Free

*Annual pass covering entrance and standard amenity fees for all active military personnel and their dependents. (For active duty military personnel and dependents with proper identification (CAC Card or DD Form 1173).)*

Access Pass: Free

*Lifetime admission and discount pass for US citizens or permanent residents with permanent disabilities.*

*(You can also [get this pass by mail](#) for \$10.)*

Senior Pass: \$10\

*Lifetime admission and discount pass for US citizens or permanent residents who are age 62 or older. (You can also [get this pass by mail](#) for an additional \$10.)*

[Find more information about passes](#)



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**Payment Methods and Locations**

We accept cash, checks, traveler's checks, and credit/debit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover).

You may pay entrance fees at any park entrance (pay on the way out if the entrance station is unstaffed when you arrive). Additionally, you may pay the entrance fee or purchase a pass at the visitor centers in [Oakhurst](#), [Mariposa](#), [Groveland](#), and [Lee Vining](#) from about Memorial Day (late May) through Columbus Day (early October).

**Free Entrance Days**

In 2017, entrance fees will be waived on:

January 16 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

February 20 (Washington's Birthday)

April 15-16 (National Park Weekend)

April 22-23 (National Park Weekend)

August 25 (National Park Service's birthday)

September 30 (National Public Lands Day)

November 11-12 (Veterans Day weekend)

If your visit during a free day extends beyond the free day(s) and you re-enter the park after the free day, you will be required to pay the regular entrance fee.

**Maps, links, downloads, camping, lodging and more are available on my**

**Yosemite Chic Website, [yosemitechic.com](http://yosemitechic.com)**

