

Educator Field Trip Guide: 2026–2027

Welcome

This educator's guide is meant to help you understand what is available to you and your students, and assist you with the reservation process. We hope to make your time at the George Eastman Museum an enjoyable and educational experience!

Table of Contents

What is the George Eastman Museum?

What Can I Do There?

Gallery Descriptions

Planning Your Visit

- Docent Led tours
- Self-guided tours

Now What?

Planning Checklist

Tour Scheduling Policies

Before Your Visit

Day of your Visit

What is the George Eastman Museum?

We welcome you and your students to the George Eastman Museum. As the world's oldest photography museum, we are honored to offer field trips for students in Pre-K through 12th grades to explore the art, science, and history of photography. We trust your students will become inspired by our wide-ranging exhibitions, collection of cameras and related technology, and George Eastman's life.

What Can I Do There?

Museum Galleries Descriptions

Museum—Historic Mansion and Gardens

- **Historic Mansion and Gardens:** Restored home of George Eastman, built in 1905. Provides a glimpse into the life of the twentieth century pioneer of popular photography and cinema.
 - Each academic year during the holiday season, the museum hosts *Sweet Creations*, which includes gingerbread creations, wreaths, tabletop tree displays, and fireplace mantels created and donated by members of the community. Check eastman.org in the fall for exact dates and more info.
 - Each academic year during February, the museum hosts the annual bulb flower show, Dutch Connection, featuring thousands of colorful tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, amaryllis, and spring annuals throughout the mansion. Check the website in late fall for exact dates and more info.
 - Gardens, when open, are free for you and your students to explore. Gardens open 5/1/2026 and will close in October for the winter.

Museum—Photography Galleries:

- **Main Galleries:** Exhibitions of photography and moving images.
- **Selections from the Collection:** Rotating display of photographs, cameras, and related technology, which chart a course through history.
- **Gallery Obscura:** Exhibitions created or presented in collaboration with regional institutions, or that support museum initiatives and programs.
- **7Crest Financial Partners Hall:** Moving image screenings on a loop, special projects/events, presentations.
- **Project Gallery:** Exhibitions of contemporary works and thematic projects.
- **Donna Fielding Discovery Room:** Interactive, hands-on space. Activities and devices that promote inquiry-based learning as visitors lead themselves on a journey to understanding photography and moving images.

Questions about content?

Please contact Adrienne Turnbull-Reilly, Education Program Manager, by emailing aturnbullreilly@eastman.org, or visit the [Learn/ForEducators](#) section of our website for full details on our offerings as well as an abundance of educational resources to enhance your museum experience.

Planning Your Visit

We currently only offer docent-led tours of the historic mansion. However, the entire museum is available to you and your students as a self-guided experience. You are welcome to take a guided tour of the mansion, then explore the rest of the galleries on your own.

Docent-Led Tours

- Tours are designed to emphasize local history, visual literacy, digital literacy, media literacy, and global competence. These skills translate across the curriculum. Each tour is approximately 45 minutes.
- George Eastman Museum requires a minimum of three weeks advance notice to schedule your tour. Please have multiple dates in mind when you [fill out the form](#).

Self-guided Tours

Teachers and group leaders are welcome to guide their students through the museum without museum docents, during our regular hours of operation, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- The appropriate number of adult chaperones is required (1:8 ratio for students 3rd grade or below, 1:10 ratio for students 4th grade and above) and all other tour policies still apply.
- Please contact the museum at least one week in advance of the desired visit date. To do so, please complete and submit a [Group Tour Request Form](#) online.

Now What?

Planning Your Visit

The George Eastman Museum is accessible. Some areas of the historic mansion and gardens have limited accessibility. Please add information on your specific needs to your [group tour request form](#).

Use this checklist to help you plan and to maximize your museum visit.

Schedule Your Visit Checklist

- Gather your preferred dates and times, and [fill out this form](#)
- Once your tour date and time has been confirmed, secure transportation and chaperone attendance (1:8 ratio for students 3rd grade or below, 1:10 ratio for students 4th grade and above)
- Gather all necessary permission slips for your students
- Inform us about any learning differences or accommodations you will need when you request your tour.
 - Please provide one-on-one aides for those children who require additional assistance. Student aides are admitted free of charge.
- The museum is wheelchair accessible. If you have specific questions or concerns, please add those to the [Group Tour Request Form](#).
- Make lunch plans, if applicable. Please plan for students to eat lunch before or after their visit at school, on the bus, or at an offsite restaurant, as the George Eastman Museum does

not have lunch facilities. The museum's onsite eatery, Open Face, has limited seating and serves the public as well as museum visitors. Large groups cannot be accommodated.

Tour Scheduling Policies

Timing

- Docent-led tours require at least three weeks advance notice.
- Self-guided tours require at least one week advance notice.
 - Please have multiple dates in mind when you fill out the [form](#).
- Tours may be scheduled Tuesdays through Fridays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The museum is closed on Mondays. Tours are also available on Saturday and Sunday for organizations supporting youth programs.
- A maximum of 40 people may tour at one time (this includes all students and adults/chaperones) If you have more than 40 people coming, please plan on booking multiple time slots (this can be either a morning and afternoon time, or over the course of multiple days).

Pricing

- Title I schools are always free
- \$9 dollars per student
- For groups of ten or more, all adults are \$9
 - For groups of nine or fewer, all adults are \$19
 - 1:1 aides for students are always free
- Invoicing is not available. Payment is due upon arrival in the form of cash, credit card, or check. If interested in prepaying, please contact Group Tours at tours@eastman.org.
 - Please note: Prepayment is due a minimum of 3 business days before the reservation date. If paying with cash, please ensure it is counted and correct for a smooth transaction at the admission desk.

Questions about scheduling?

Please visit eastman.org/group-school-tours for information about what is available and to fill out a group tour request form. The Manager of Visitor Experience Operations will be in touch to confirm availability or changes to your request.

Pay special attention to our [BUS](#) and [LUNCH](#) information.

Tips for Making the Most of your Visit

Use these tips to help make your museum visit as enjoyable and engaging as possible.

- If you feel comfortable, consider student and chaperone name tags (first name), as this allows for an increased sense of engagement when the docent can use names.
- Identify items to leave on the bus. We do not have storage for certain items, such as large bags and backpacks. We do have bins for smaller bags and coats (this includes lunch boxes).
- Organize students into groups with one chaperone per group prior to your arrival.

- Inspire your students by reading stories about photographers, or themes related to the exhibitions.
- Explore exhibition-related resources and books on [our website](#).
- Storytime at GEM! Listen to a reading of, "[It's a Snap! George Eastman's First Photograph](#)" by Monica Kulling.
- Encourage students to use the bathroom prior to your museum arrival.
- Educators who wish to preview the George Eastman Museum to prepare for their visit may email education@eastman.org to request a free advance visit.
- Please share [Museum Manners](#) with your students and chaperones.

Exhibition Guides/Interactive cards/Activities

- Click here to be taken to our [educator resource page](#).

Gallery Prompts for Self-Guided Tours

We have a series of interactive cards to prompt close looking and conversation during your visit. They are available [online](#) and in the racks outside the photography galleries.

- Elementary School:
 - I Spy: An Imaginative Game
 - Consider: Using a Viewfinder
 - Explore: Understanding Object Labels
- Middle and High School:
 - Consider: Traumatic Images
 - Consider: Exploring Perspective Taking through Photography
 - Consider: Critiquing a Photograph
 - Consider: Using a Viewfinder
 - Consider: Nudity in Art
 - Consider: Understanding Gender
 - Explore: Understanding Object Labels

Day of your Visit

Logistics

The details below are important to help make your experience at the George Eastman Museum as smooth and streamlined as possible.

- **BUS loading, unloading, and parking for University Ave:** Kindly inform the bus driver that school buses must enter the grounds via the **University Avenue** entrance. Free parking for buses is available on University Avenue. For directions, enter "873 University Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607" instead of our mailing address into your navigational device. [See map here](#). If your bus is running more than fifteen minutes late, please call the Welcome Desk at (585) 327-4913.
- **VAN and CAR loading, unloading, and parking for East Avenue:** Vans can park in the parking lot on the west side of the museum (with other visitor cars).

- **Walk in:** Enter through the museum's main entrance on the west side of the building through the Thomas Tischer Visitor Center adjacent to the parking lot and reachable from the University Avenue entrance via the sidewalk to the right of the building.
- **Timing:** Please be on time. Late or early arrivals can throw your group and others off schedule. Arrive no more than ten minutes early. Note that if you are late, your tour will be shortened. If you are more than fifteen minutes late, your tour will become self-guided. If you are delayed, please call our Welcome Desk at (585) 327-4913
- **Eating:** Please plan for students to eat lunch before or after their visit at school, on the bus, or at an area restaurant as the George Eastman Museum does not have lunch facilities. The museum's onsite eatery, Open Face, has limited seating and serves the public as well as museum visitors. Large groups cannot be accommodated.

Museum Manners and Best Practices

All students, chaperones, and teachers are asked to observe museum manners during their visit. We strongly suggest the following for your own group experience and for our other guests. Please:

- Throw away or store food, water bottles, and gum before leaving the bus or entering the museum.
- Walk, don't run.
- Keep voices at inside levels as your group enters and moves through the museum to be able to hear instructions and information from docents and staff.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Bulky items are not allowed inside the galleries. Backpacks should be left on the bus, at school, or stored in our locker area. Free tokens to access the lockers are provided by the admissions desk.
- Place your mobile device on silent.
- Remind students to stay with their group and chaperone.
- Practice the buddy-system in the hallway, walking two-by-two to shorten the line and have one grown-up at each end.
- Do not touch the objects in the mansion, gardens, or the photography galleries. The Discovery Room is our area where students can explore objects hands on.
- If you need assistance, please flag a security guard or contact the admissions desk.
- Taking photos is encouraged in the galleries and mansion unless otherwise noted. The use of flash, selfie sticks, and tripods is prohibited. Please check with your docent before taking pictures during tours so as not to disrupt or detain the group.

Thank you for choosing to visit the George Eastman Museum!