



The Academy of
Natural Sciences
of DREXEL UNIVERSITY

CAMP HANDBOOK

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The Academy of
Natural Sciences
of DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Academy of Natural Sciences (Academy) Camp hosted by the Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel University. We are a leading natural history museum dedicated to understanding the natural world and inspiring our campers to care for it. Throughout camp we have an exciting schedule filled with planned adventures. Please read this entire handbook as it contains important information regarding our camp policies and procedures. Keep the handbook handy during the duration of your child's camp program as you may need to refer to it during camp.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us using the contact information listed on the front of this packet. Thank you and we look forward to meeting you this year!

Sincerely,

Jennie Payne

Manager of Camp Programs

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Summary of Camp

Mini Academy

The Mini Academy is the first step into our scientific journey here at the Academy. Campers, ages 5–6, learn about their favorite subjects, ranging from bugs to dinosaurs to mammals, in fun and creative ways. They will engage in science in digestible ways to help them understand the content, while fostering an interest in the natural world. Typical activities include crafts, movement-based games, live science shows, walks around the museum floor, outdoor playtime at local parks and special talks from guest speakers. Below is a sample schedule of a typical camp day.

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
8:45–9 a.m.	Drop Off	19th Street Entrance
9–9:30 a.m.	Morning Meeting/Ice Breakers	Classroom
9:30–10:20 a.m.	Craft	Classroom
10:20–10:30 a.m.	Bathroom & Snack Break	Classroom
10:30–11:30 a.m.	Live Science Show	Auditorium
11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.	Visit Exhibits	Classroom
12–1 p.m.	Lunch & Recess	Cafeteria
1–2 p.m.	Park Visit	Outside Local Park
2–2:15 p.m.	Bathroom Break	Classroom
2:15–3 p.m.	Movement Game	Museum Floor
3–3:45 p.m.	Craft/Game	Classroom
3:45–4 p.m.	Pack Up and Dismissal	19th Street Entrance

Summary of Camp (continued)

Junior Academy Explorers

Campers, ages 7–9, in our Junior Academy Explorers group are in for an adventurous experience where they can dig into their favorite animal topics and develop their love of the natural world through hands-on science activities. Camp themes are designed to foster the imagination while inspiring further environmental science learning. Typical activities may include a live science show, exhibit exploration, walks to local parks, a weekly field trip and behind-the-scenes tours of the Academy's collections. Games, science lessons and crafts will change daily. Below is a sample schedule of a typical camp day.

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
8:45–9 a.m.	Drop Off	19th Street Entrance
9–9:30 a.m.	Morning Meeting/Ice Breakers	Classroom
9:30–10:20 a.m.	Craft	Classroom
10:20–10:30 a.m.	Bathroom & Snack Break	Classroom
10:30–11:30 a.m.	Live Science Show	Auditorium
11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.	Visit Exhibits	Museum Floor
12–1 p.m.	Lunch & Recess	Cafeteria
1–2 p.m.	Park Visit	Outside Local Park
2–2:15 p.m.	Bathroom Break	Classroom
2:15–3 p.m.	Experiment	Classroom
3–3:45 p.m.	Craft/Game	Classroom
3:45–4 p.m.	Pack Up and Dismissal	19th Street Entrance

Summary of Camp (continued)

Academy Explorers

Campers, ages 10-12, in the Academy Explorers group will have the opportunity to deeply dive into animal science and other STEM topics while getting a glimpse of what it's like to have a science career. Topics will focus on ecosystem science, environmental justice and current research being conducted by the Academy. Typical activities include community science, behind-the-scenes tours, visits to local parks, dissections, meet and greets with science experts and a weekly field trip. For activities which require personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, parents will be notified in advance, and campers will have access to all the proper equipment. Below is a sample schedule of a typical camp day.

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
8:45–9 a.m.	Drop Off	19th Street Entrance
9–9:30 a.m.	Morning Meeting/Ice Breakers	Classroom
9:30–10:20 a.m.	Science Activity: Geologic Timescale	Classroom
10:20–10:30 a.m.	Bathroom & Snack Break	Classroom
10:30–11:30 a.m.	Behind Scenes Tour: Paleontology	Behind the Sciences
11–11:30 a.m.	Intro to Community Science Project	Classroom
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch & Recess	Cafeteria
12:30–1:30 p.m.	Park Visit: Community Science Project	Outside Local Park
1:30–1:50 p.m.	Bathroom Break	Classroom
1:50–2:30 p.m.	Science Expert Meet & Greet	Classroom
2:30–3:30 p.m.	Lab Dissection	Classroom
3:30–4 p.m.	Clean Up, Pack Up and Dismissal	19th Street Entrance

Payment and Refund Policy

Payment in full must be made at the time of registration. Refund requests before or on June 1, 2025 may be accommodated, minus a 25% per week nonrefundable deposit per camper. Starting June 2, no refunds will be given, but campers may be able to switch into a different camp week pending space availability.

The Academy reserves the right to suspend or terminate the enrollment of any camper without refund if we deem it is in the best interest of the camp and/or camper; please refer to our Behavior Management Policy.

If an entire week, and only an entire week, of camp is missed due to illness/injury/medical procedure, a doctor's note is required for a refund minus the non-refundable deposit. Refunds will not be issued for missing any days during a week of camp.

Camp Attire

In general, campers should wear clothes that are appropriate and suited for both indoor and outdoor playtime. We recommend comfortable pants/shorts and closed-toed shoes with socks. Please avoid open-toed shoes (such as Crocs, flip-flops or sandals), tight pants like leggings, crop-tops and short shorts.

On Field Trip days, campers must wear their Academy Camp T-shirt issued to them on the first day of camp.

On Water Play days, campers must wear clothing that can get wet and will cover children appropriately. We recommend clothes such as rash guards and shorts, which can be worn over swimsuits. Bikinis and bare swimsuit bottoms are not allowed. We also request that campers wear water shoes with closed toes to avoid slipping or stubbing toes. Flip flops are not allowed. When we return to the museum, campers will have the opportunity to change into dry clothes. Please make sure they have shoes and clothes that follow the general guidelines.

Lunch and Snack

Campers should come each day with a packed lunch that does not need to be refrigerated. Please also send a water bottle with your camper every day. We will also have time in the morning for a quick snack.

We will have extra snacks here in case of emergencies. These snacks will most often include Goldfish crackers, popcorn, 100% juice drink or similar foods.

What to Bring

- Reuseable water bottle
 - A lunch, and separate snack(s) if desired
 - Change of clothes for Water Play days
 - Hat and sunglasses for Field Trip days
-

What Not to Bring

- Money or valuable items:
Academy staff are not responsible for lost or damaged items
- Gaming systems/electronics: cell phones can be an exception, but may be confiscated by staff if they become a distraction and will be returned at the end of the day
- Sunscreen and bug spray
 - Please apply these before arriving to camp.
 - *Exception:* Campers can take along sprays and sunscreens on Field Trip days and Water Play days
- Personal items such as games, stuffed animals, toys, trading cards:
Academy staff are not responsible for any lost or damaged items
- Weapons of any kind, real or fake

Medications

Academy staff will not be able to administer any medication without clear instructions and written consent from parents/guardians. This information should also be discussed in-person with your camper's counselor. Medications should be placed in a clear bag and have a doctor's note as well as written directions to avoid any issues in the event that administration is required. To prevent any issues with medication getting lost or misplaced, medication will remain in your camper's bag during camp (with the exception of Epi-pens). If medication is needed at times when campers will not have access to their bags, such as on a field trip or at water play, camp staff will carry them in designated first aid and medical bags. **All camp staff are CPR and First Aid certified.**

Camper Illnesses

In the event that a camper becomes ill at camp, Academy staff will notify parents/guardians immediately using the contact information provided. To protect both our staff and other campers, **please do not send your camper in if they are sick.** Do not bring your camper in if they are presenting any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100°F or more: to return to camp, campers must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the help of fever-reducing medications

- Pink eye
- Chronic runny nose with colored discharge
- Ringworm
- Severe/persistent coughing
- Sore throat
- Vomiting/nausea
- Rash
- Lice
- Any other contagious illness

If your camper begins to exhibit any of these symptoms while at camp, we will refer to their emergency contact information and contact a parent/guardian as soon as possible.

If an entire week, and only an entire week, of camp is missed due to illness/injury/medical procedure, a doctor's note is required for a refund minus the non-refundable deposit. Refunds will not be issued for missing any days during a week of camp.

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

The Academy of Natural Sciences is located at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia. For Academy Camp, please use the 19th Street entrance located on the side of the building.

Drop Off: 8:45–9 a.m.

On **Mondays**: Please enter the 19th Street entrance with your camper. Camp staff will greet you at the Camp Check-In table. This is a great time to go over last-minute details and concerns, double-check information and meet the staff. Once checked in, you may then walk your camper to our morning meeting location. Make sure to check out our weekly bulletin posted on the table that details important reminders and announcements for the week.

Every other day: The drop-off procedure will be much quicker as we start to learn about you and your campers. ANS staff will wait just outside the doors to greet you and your camper and walk them to our morning meeting location.

Pick Up: 3:45–4 p.m.

Pick up will run similarly to Monday drop off. Please enter the 19th Street entrance and meet our staff at the Pick-Up table. Inform staff which camper you are picking up. Be prepared to show a form of identification so we can ensure that each camper is going home with an authorized adult. After you have been cleared, ANS staff will point you in the direction to go and collect your camper.

Running Late?

If you are running late for drop-off/pick-up, need to pick a camper up early, have a change in your authorized adults list, or any other reason, please reach out to Jennie Payne at jn894@drexel.edu. Email is generally best in the event that Jennie is not at her desk to answer the phone.

Camp Hours

ANS Camp runs from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Campers may be dropped off as early as 8:45 a.m. and should be picked up no later than 4:15 p.m. If your camper has not been picked up by 4:15 p.m., we will try to contact you by phone. There is no before care or after care service.

Field Trips

The Mini Academy, Junior Academy Explorers and Academy Explorers camps will all go on one field trip each week. Drop Off and Pick-Up times will remain the same on field trip days but be prepared for slight delays during Pick-Up in case traffic prevents us from returning to the Academy on time. We depart for field trips early in the morning, so campers must arrive and be checked in by **9 a.m.** to join us on our trip. We will not be able to delay transportation to wait for late campers. If campers arrive after we have departed, they will not be able to join us on the trip or stay at the museum to wait until we return. If campers must leave camp early during the field trip, then they should not come to camp on field trip day.

Reminders of field trips will be sent out in the days leading up to the field trip. They will also be posted in our weekly bulletin at the Check-In/Pick-Up table. ANS camp reserves the right to cancel field trips if necessary. We will make sure parents/guardians are aware of any changes that are made surrounding field trips (cancellation, returning early, etc.)

Academy Staff

The Academy staff that assists with camp is composed of counselors that are qualified and responsible adults, as well as volunteer assistant counselors. All camp staff are First Aid and CPR certified and have been through the necessary background checks. Our camp operates with a 1:6 ratio of counselors to campers to ensure the best environment possible.

Absent Campers

If your camper will be absent, please call or email with your child's name by 8 a.m. The best way to reach Jennie Payne, Camp Manager, is by email at jn894@drexel.edu. If an entire week, and only an entire week, of camp is missed due to illness/injury/medical procedure, a doctor's note is required for a refund minus the non-refundable deposit. Refunds will not be issued for missing any days during a week of camp.

Behavior Management Policy

It is the Academy's intent to maintain a positive and safe environment for our campers. The Academy of Natural Sciences will not tolerate bullying or violent behavior. Parents or guardians will be informed of inappropriate behavior and asked to discuss corrective solutions. ANS camp staff have been trained to complete the following steps when managing camper behavior:

1. First verbal warning
2. Second verbal warning
3. "Time out" away from the activity and discussion with Lead Counselor
4. A **yellow slip** will be sent home with the camper describing the inappropriate behavior. This slip must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to camp the next morning
5. A **pink slip** will be sent home with the camper stating that the behavior has not improved and must be further addressed outside of camp. This slip must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to camp the next morning
6. Final warning in the form of a **second pink slip** will be sent home with the camper requesting a meeting between a parent/guardian and the camp manager. **This is a final warning.** If behavior does not improve, the camper will receive a one-day suspension from camp without a refund.

If a child's actions are severe enough, steps within this sequence may be skipped. If consequences #5 and #6 are administered, they will be recorded in a written report and provided to the parent/guardians. If it is determined by Academy camp staff that it is necessary to terminate the enrollment of any camper due to behavioral or other concerns, the Academy reserves the right to do so without refund.



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*Founded in 1812, the Academy of Natural Sciences
of Drexel University is a leading natural history
museum dedicated to understanding the natural
world and inspiring everyone to care for it.*

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