



# Sensory Guide

# Seasonal Updates



It is an exciting time at the Zoo with many changes being made including construction to different exhibits. *Please be advised this could lead to loud noises and alternate pathways.*



Dinosaurs are returning to the Zoo April 1 - September 7. The dinosaurs are spread out around the Zoo in between exhibits. *Please be prepared that the dinosaurs might move and roar as you walk past them.*

**Disclaimer:** This guide was made by an Occupational Therapy Doctorate Student from Carlow University and the Education Department of The Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium. The Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium will not be held liable for any events or consequences that occur from recommendations of this guide. Information from this guide could change depending on events taking place at the Zoo.

# Sensory Guide:

The Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium is proud to accommodate all guests who may have sensory sensitivities. Our Sensory Guide can be used to plan your Zoo trip and create the best possible experience for you and your family.

The following symbols represent the scale of multiple sensory experiences involving touch, smell, sound, movement, sight, and temperature.



## Sound

The intensity of noises in the area.



## Sight

The amount of light your eyes will see.



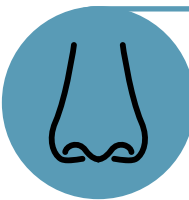
## Touch

The amount of sensation on your skin.



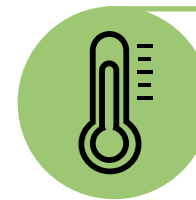
## Movement

The amount of motion your body performs.



## Smell

The strength of odors in the area.



## Temperature

The feeling of heat or cold detected by your skin.

# The Village:

The entrance of the Zoo is the first stop for guests. Here, you can purchase tickets, use the restroom, and grab a snack before exploring the Zoo.

*Please be advised that the entrance of the Zoo can be crowded and noisy as people get their tickets and start their adventures.*



## Sound

Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.



## Touch

Low / Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Medium / High

This area may be crowded at busy times.



## Smell

Medium

Minimal sensory impact.  
Some food smells.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperature.

# The Village Attractions:

The Village offers attractions which include the seasonal carousel and the One Wild Express train. These offer a tactile experience, colorful visual stimulation, auditory components, and movement breaks.



## Sound

Medium / High

Music and speakers on both attractions can be loud.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting or shade. Neither ride is in direct sunlight.



## Touch

High

Riders will be strapped into the ride and asked to hold on. Close proximity to other riders.



## Movement

High

Carousel horses move up and down. The train follows a flat, meandering path.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperature.

# Echo Tunnel:

There is a tunnel as you move from The Village to the Forest Passage. The tunnel includes an echo sound machine with colors, sounds, and projections of animals on the wall. *This area can feel crowded and loud as the sounds of excitement echo off the walls of the tunnel.*



## Sound

Medium

Sounds from the echo noise machine and echoing voices.



## Sight

Medium

Shaded area with colorful lights and occasional animal projections on the wall.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperature.

# Forest Passage:

Animals in this area can be viewed through either glass windows or open viewing, which allows guests to experience an animal's smells and sounds.



## Sound

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Some animal sounds.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimum sensory impact.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low / Medium

In warmer temperatures,  
animal smells might be  
more noticeable.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperature.

# African Savanna:

Walk through the Savanna where you see a variety of animals through open enclosures, windows, and indoor viewing areas. The seasonal Safari Amphitheater offers shows throughout the day and is a great way to see animals up close. *The indoor viewing area for the African Elephants has a strong smell.*



## Sound

Low / Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak time.  
Some animal sounds.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Low indoor lighting and outdoor natural lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact. Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low / Medium

Minimal sensory impact in outdoor areas. Strong smells in elephant indoor viewing.



## Temperature

Medium / High

Natural outdoor temperature. Warmer in the indoor elephant viewing area.

# Tropical Forest:

When you go inside the tropical forest you might see a variety of monkeys and apes swinging through the trees, climbing up branches or relaxing in the forest. All animals will be visible through glass windows or open enclosure outside. *Please be advised that the Tropical Forest is mainly indoors with strong smells and can be loud and crowded depending on the day.*



## Sound

Medium / High

Indoor area can echo.  
Some animal sounds.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Low indoor lighting and  
outdoor natural lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact. Close  
proximity to other guests at  
peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

High

Strong smells due to the  
indoor exhibit.



## Temperature

High

The building temperature  
mimics a natural  
tropical climate.

# Safari Plaza:

If you are looking for food or a place to sit down, this is where you will go. In the Safari Plaza, there are multiple restaurant options which include Jambo Grill, Wild Burgher, Safari Ice Cream, and The Beer Den. *During busy times, it can feel crowded, with lots of noise, movement, and food smells around this area.*



## Sound

Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Natural indoor and outdoor lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact. Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Medium

Minimal sensory impact. Navigating the area can be challenging in peak season.



## Smell

Medium

Some food smells.



## Temperature

Low / Medium

Natural outdoor temperatures.

# The Islands:

This area features endangered island species from around the world. Guests can experience the animals through underwater viewing windows, open viewing areas, or enclosed viewing areas. *Please be advised that The Islands has narrow and curvy pathways that can feel crowded during busy times*



## Sound

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact. Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperatures.

# Jungle Odyssey:

This area contains sights you might expect to see if you were walking through a jungle. Guests can experience these animals through underwater viewing, open viewing areas, enclosed viewing areas and windows. *Please be advised that the Jungle Odyssey loop has narrow and curvy pathways that can feel crowded during busy times.*



## Sound

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperatures.

# I Spy a Butterfly:

This seasonal walk-through exhibit allows guests to experience free-flying butterflies. This is an immersive sensory experience, engaging sight with vibrant colors and smell through a blend of flowers and feeding stations. *Please be advised that the butterflies are free-flying and might land on you as you wander through their habitat.*



## Sound

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests.



## Sight

Medium

Natural indoor lighting.



## Touch

Medium

Butterflies might land on you. Close proximity to other guests.



## Movement

Medium

Movement around the room with butterflies fluttering.



## Smell

Low / Medium

Some flower smells.



## Temperature

High

Higher temperatures due to the indoor tent exhibit.

# Aquarium:

As you make your way through the Aquarium, the lights will be low to allow you to watch the underwater animals swim around their habitats. You might hear water flowing and bubbling from filters. You will be able to see the animals through underwater viewing areas on both floors of the Aquarium.



## Sound

Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times.  
Indoor area can echo.



## Sight

Low

Low indoor lighting.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Low

Natural indoor temperatures.

# Aquarium Attractions:

Draw Alive® is an interactive digital drawing experience where users color paper templates and scan them to see their artwork come to life on a large screen. In addition to Draw Alive®, there is also a gift shop located on the bottom floor of the Aquarium. *During busy times, it can feel crowded, with lots of noise and movement in the area.*



## Sound

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Low indoor lighting. Draw Alive® includes bright and vibrant screens.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low / Medium

Minimal sensory impact.  
Drawing and hands-on play with Draw Alive®.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Low

Natural indoor temperatures.

# Water's Edge:

As you make your way through Water's Edge you might see animals swimming in the water through multiple viewing windows. Journey Below the Sea offers an underwater viewing space.



## Sound

Low

Indoor areas can echo.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.  
Dark and light spaces in the indoor tunnels.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor and indoor temperatures.

# Water's Edge Plaza:

The Water's Edge plaza is a great spot to take a break in the shade if needed. This area offers a pavilion with tables and a spot to get Dippin' Dots or other snacks and drinks. This plaza also features The Northwest Trading Co. gift shop.



## Sound

Low / Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.  
Shaded relief under pavilion.



## Touch

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Low / Medium

Minimal sensory impact.  
Some food smells.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperatures.

# Kids Kingdom:

As you make your way through Kids Kingdom guests will be able to experience different viewing options including open enclosures and walk through exhibits. *The pathway includes a walkthrough aviary and an optional swinging bridge through the trees. There is also a suspended bridge near the alligator habitat.*



## Sound

Low

Minimal sensory impact.  
Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting.



## Touch

Low / Medium

Minimal sensory impact.  
Option to touch goat, sheep, and wallabies.



## Movement

Low / Medium

Suspended bridges might rock or bounce.



## Smell

Low / Medium

In warmer temperatures animal smells might be more noticeable.



## Temperature

Medium

Natural outdoor temperatures.

# Kids Kingdom Attractions:

In Kids Kingdom, there are many options for movement including our animal connections and animal motions playgrounds. The playgrounds offer a mix of experiences including movement, touch, sound, and sights to explore all senses. Kids Kingdom also includes a café and the Kids Kingdom pavilion to allow for spaces to rest or eat if needed.



## Sound

Medium / High

Can be loud at peak times. Close proximity to other guests.



## Sight

Medium

Natural outdoor lighting. Shaded structures available for relief from sun.



## Touch

Medium / High

Close proximity to other guests at peak times. Touching playground equipment.



## Movement

High

Climbing nets, slides, crawling tunnels, running, walking.



## Smell

Low

Minimal sensory impact. Some food smells.



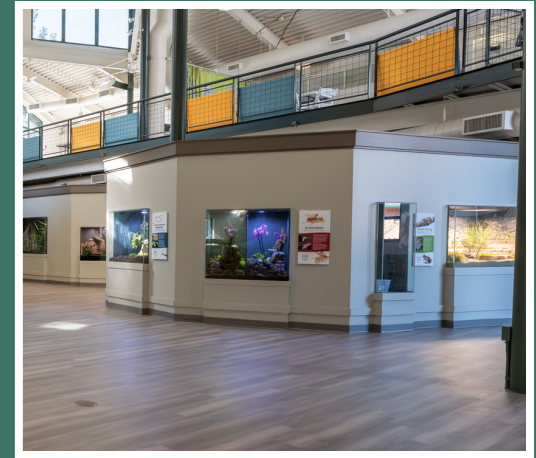
## Temperature

Medium

Playground equipment may feel warm during hot temperatures.

# Discover Disguises:

This indoor building features animals perfectly camouflaged within their habitats. Animals can be seen through windows, open viewing, and walk through exhibits. There is a dark room with bats free-flying in their habitat with strong smells and sounds. *During busy times, it can feel crowded, with lots of noise and movement around this area.*



## Sound

Medium / High

Close proximity to other guests at peak times. Bat wing flapping noises in exhibit.



## Sight

Low

Indoor lighting.



## Touch

Low / Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times.



## Movement

Low / Medium

Minimal sensory impact.



## Smell

Medium / High

Some animal smells. Strong smells in the bat exhibit.



## Temperature

Medium / High

Warmer temperatures inside the building. You may feel a breeze in the bat habitat.

# Discover Disguises Attractions:

The Discovery Amphitheater hosts seasonal animal shows and educational presentations. There are opportunities for movement with a tree slide and an underground tunnel in the meerkat habitat. *During busy times, it can feel crowded, with lots of noise and movement.*



## Sound

Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times. Indoor areas can echo.



## Sight

Low / Medium

Indoor lighting. Dark inside the tree slide and meerkat tunnels.



## Touch

Medium

Close proximity to other guests at peak times. Opportunity to use a slide and meerkat tunnel.



## Movement

Medium

Crawling through the meerkat tunnel and opportunity to go down the tree slide.



## Smell

Medium

Some animal smells.



## Temperature

Medium / High

Warmer temperatures inside the building.