



GUIDED TOURS | INFORMATION AND FAQs

Scheduling a Guided Tour

MMoCA provides high-quality, lively tour experiences for groups of students and adults that focus on critical and creative thinking through observation, analysis, and interpretation of original works of art. MMoCA's docents are adept at engaging a variety of age groups with modern and contemporary visual art.

Tours may be requested online by [clicking on this link](#). You may also call the Education Department at (608) 257-0158 ext. 227 or email education@mmoca.org to schedule a guided tour of MMoCA exhibitions.

- Please schedule guided tours **at least three weeks in advance** of your desired date. Exceptions to this timeline may be arranged upon consultation with Education Department staff.
- Groups of 10 to 60 people may schedule a guided tour of the museum; larger or smaller groups may be accommodated upon discussion with Education Department staff.
- All elementary and middle school groups, and high school groups of more than 25 students must schedule a guided tour.
- MMoCA aims for a 10:1 student/docent (tour guide) ratio for school tours. Groups should be divided according to this ratio, with one chaperone or teacher required to accompany each group.
- Name tags for school group members are helpful.
- There is no guided tour fee for school groups; admission to MMoCA is free. A guided tour fee of \$3 per person is requested for adult groups.

The museum is fully accessible.

Teaching pages are available on MMoCA's web site for teachers who schedule guided tours of the museum. These online resources contain full-color illustrations and analysis of featured works of art, background information on the artists, key ideas and vocabulary, pre- and post-visit discussion questions, and suggested resources for further study.

Guided tours meet Common Core State Standards for visual art and student literacy, including Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, and Vocabulary Acquisition. Social studies topics may also be incorporated in a guided tour.

MMoCA's classroom may be reserved for lunch for up to 35 students. The rooftop sculpture garden is also a popular lunch option, depending on the time of year and weather.

MMoCA is a private, membership-supported non-profit museum. For more information on current exhibitions and education programs call (608) 257-0158 or visit the museum's website at mmoca.org.

View works in [MMoCA's permanent collection](#), or delve deeper into [MMoCA's rich collection of works by the Chicago Imagists](#). Comprehensive information and teacher-tested lesson plans are available on the website.

Scheduling a Self-guided Tour

High school teachers may schedule a self-guided tour of MMoCA during the museum's public hours: Tuesday-Thursday, noon to 5 pm; Friday, noon to 8 pm; Saturday, 10 am to 8 pm; and Sunday, noon to 5 pm. Please email education@mmoca.org to inform the museum of your visit.

- Self-guided school groups are limited to 45 students.
- Please contact the Education Department in advance of your visit so we may welcome your group and provide you with an orientation to the museum's exhibitions.
- Teachers must accompany their group during their visit and are responsible for their students' behavior.
- The **MMoCAteens Art Guide** offers an introduction to looking at and thinking about contemporary art and is available in the exhibition galleries and learning centers.

Adult groups are welcome to visit the museum on their own; please call the Education Department so we are aware of your plans and may welcome your group.

Elementary and middle school teachers must schedule a guided tour.

Guided Tour FAQs

When are tours available? School tours may be scheduled Tuesday through Friday, 9 am to 4 pm. Group tours also may be scheduled during museum hours on Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday, depending on docent availability.

How long does a tour last? Tours typically last an hour, but the time may be modified to fit your goals for the visit. We ask that groups be at the museum for 75 minutes to allow for an introduction and dividing into smaller groups.

How much does it cost? There is no guided tour fee for school groups; admission to MMoCA is free. A guided tour fee of \$3 per person is requested for adult groups. Checks should be written to the MMoCA Education Department; credit card and cash payments are also accepted. Payment may be made on the day of the tour. A receipt will be sent upon request.

How can I make a tour of MMoCA relevant to my classroom plans? School tours at MMoCA can meet a variety of curricular goals and support learning in visual arts, language arts, social studies, and other subjects as appropriate. When you call to schedule a tour, you will be asked to describe your learning goals for the visit. We encourage you to visit the museum to see MMoCA's exhibitions firsthand before scheduling a tour. This preplanning will help you to suggest specific curriculum connections for gallery discussion or the direction you wish the tour to take.

Which academic standards do tours meet? Guided tours meet Common Core State Standards for visual art as well as CCSS for student literacy, including Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, and Vocabulary Acquisition. By experiencing the in-depth “noticing” that is encouraged on a tour, students become more aware of the power of details to communicate an idea. By analyzing a work of art, they begin to see the different parts and how they relate to the whole. And by traveling to different contexts through the art in the museum, students acquire a range of vocabulary basic to visual art and its varied content. Tours may also be tailored to address social studies standards as well as teachers’ specific learning goals.

How should I prepare my students for their tour? MMoCA’s Education Department develops [Teaching Pages](#) for current exhibitions and the permanent collection. These online resources contain full-color illustrations and analysis of featured works of art, background information on the artists, key ideas and vocabulary, pre- and post-visit discussion questions, and suggested resources for further study. Find them at mmoca.org/learn/teachers/teaching-pages.

How should I prepare my chaperones for their tour? Chaperones are important in helping students follow museum rules during their exploration of MMoCA. The [Guided Tour Chaperone Guidelines](#), sent with each tour confirmation, describes the chaperones’ role during a tour to help students observe the rules below. Teachers are asked to give this information to each chaperone prior to the group’s arrival at the museum.

- Respect others
- Stay together
- Walk in all areas of the museum including the sculpture garden
- Do not touch the art

Where do I arrive with my group for a scheduled tour? Groups should enter MMoCA through the museum’s main doors at 227 State Street. Buses should temporarily park on North Henry Street so students may disembark and walk to the main entrance. School buses and private vehicles are not permitted on State Street, which is open only to city buses, delivery vehicles, and bicycles.

Where should the bus driver park the bus during the tour? According to city ordinance, buses are not permitted to remain on North Henry Street for the duration of a tour. Bus drivers should park at an unrestricted area, such as Olin-Turville Park. Download and print the [Bus Parking and Directions](#) PDF for an area map, directions, and more detailed information on drop-off and parking.

Who will meet me at the beginning of the tour? Groups are met at MMoCA’s main entrance by Education Department staff and docents. Your group will receive a brief orientation in the museum’s lobby. Classes of students should be divided into groups of approximately ten students each prior to arrival at the museum, with one chaperone or teacher required to accompany each group. Each group will move to a different location in the museum to begin its tour, and rotate through all exhibition galleries. All groups will return to the lobby at the conclusion of the visit.

Is there a place where my group may leave their belongings? There is a coat room at the museum, but it is best to leave backpacks, cameras and valuables on the bus. Cell phones are to be used in the galleries only for photographing works of art, where permitted. Museum staff will direct members of your group to hang their coats in the coat room.

What can I expect from the docents (tour guides) who lead the tour? MMoCA docents are skilled at engaging visitors in a dialogue about visual art. They provide information, ask questions and build upon the group's observations. This interactive approach facilitates a process of observation, analysis, and interpretation of works of art. With student groups, docents may use activities designed to promote imaginative and critical thinking and provide students with tools for looking and thinking. Docents are trained specifically for their role as museum guides. They are responsible for providing a well-planned tour that engages group members directly with works of art. Docents are not responsible for maintaining discipline within a group; teachers and chaperones take on this role.

Is there a room where we may eat lunch? School groups may make prior arrangements with the Education Department to use MMoCA's classroom for lunch. The classroom accommodates up to 35 students; groups are responsible for placing all trash and recyclables in receptacles. The rooftop sculpture garden is also available for lunch when weather permits.

May we visit the Museum Store following the tour? Unfortunately, school groups are not permitted in the Museum Store due to the fragile nature of many of the objects.

How can I learn about the art on view at MMoCA?

- Subscribe to MMoCA's quarterly newsletter for art educators, the **Teacher eNEWS**: visit mmoca.org, click on **Connect with MMoCA** at the bottom of the homepage, enter your name and email address, and choose "Art Educator eNEWS." ("MMoCA Notes" is the museum's weekly newsletter.)
- Contact the Education Department: send an email to education@mmoca.org or sheri@mmoca.org, or call (608) 257-0158 x227 / x228 to talk with a department staff person.
- Visit the Exhibitions pages on the museum website: mmoca.org/exhibitions/current.