

BOOKING AND PRE-VISIT

THE CLARK

How can I plan a visit?

The Clark requires all school groups to schedule their visit, whether guided or self-guided, through the Education Department with a minimum of **two weeks' advance notice**. To get started, check out our [available school tours](#) and complete the school group [visit request form](#). We will work with you to tailor your experience to best meet your learning goals.

What will it cost?

The Clark is free to school groups year-round! We also offer free admission to accompanying chaperones (see “Chaperones” section) and a generous [bus reimbursement program](#) to support your visit.

What if I have questions while filling out the visit request form?

If you have any questions, please contact the Gallery Education Programs Assistant Chelsea Staub by [email](#) or by phone at 413 458 0563. Our goal is to work together to make your visit as valuable as possible for you and your students.

What is the scheduling timeline?

Our calendar fills up quickly. Please give at least **two weeks' advance notice** when requesting a visit and be prepared to propose alternative dates in case your first choice is not available. For the greatest range of dates and times, schedule your field trip as far in advance as possible. The Clark can arrange for a guided tour, led by a Clark educator, Tuesdays–Sundays at 10:15 am, 11:30 am, or 1:00 pm. We also offer early Thursday openings at 9:15 am exclusively for guided school tours. Other start times can be arranged if needed for guided visits or for self-guided groups. Larger groups can be split up between two time slots on the same day or over multiple dates.

How can I plan a guided tour?

When booking, you can request a Clark educator to guide your students' time in the galleries. Guided gallery tours enhance student learning in a variety of ways. While planning your visit, we will work with you to tailor your gallery tour to support particular areas of your curriculum or classroom learning or even specific projects, as well as the age and grade of your students.

What happens during a guided tour at the Clark?

Guided gallery tours improve student learning by offering opportunities to develop and exercise critical and creative thinking skills. Our tour approach involves in-depth conversation and engagement around a few artworks rather than a broad overview covering many objects. Students are encouraged to closely observe works of art, share their ideas, ask questions, and explore different interpretations. You can choose from available [permanent collection tours](#). School group gallery tours last approximately one hour, and some tours may last longer. We encourage you to plan additional time to visit the galleries or grounds independently after your guided tour—remember to build this extra time, as well as time for check-in and bathroom breaks, into your field trip timeline.

What if I don't want a guided tour?

You're welcome to book a self-guided visit! All school groups must arrange their self-guided visit through the Education Department with a minimum of **two weeks' advance notice**, so we can prepare for your arrival. Materials like drawing pads and self-guides to the galleries and grounds may be available for your group to enjoy during your visit. Please let us know if you would like to have any of these materials set aside for you in advance.

How does the Clark address students with diverse needs?

Please share any pertinent information about your group with the Gallery Education Programs Assistant before your visit. We will work with you to adapt guided or self-guided gallery experiences to support students with diverse needs. All Clark buildings and public areas, including all galleries, are fully accessible and comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The Clark also has many accessible all-gender bathrooms available for use by students and chaperones.

Seating is provided in some galleries and folding gallery stools are available for use in all galleries. We also have wheelchairs available for use by the public, including students. The Clark's digital guide on the [Bloomberg Connects app](#) is readily available. Use the QR code below to access the app. Audio and video components have captions and transcriptions available, and the entire app is screen-reader friendly.

How can I prepare my students ahead of our visit?

We encourage you to start with a discussion. Ask students to share their assumptions and thoughts about art museums. Then tell students your goals for the visit. If your visit will include a guided tour, emphasize that the experience is intended to be interactive and that Clark educators want to hear students' voices and opinions. Consider sharing elements from this packet and/or the emailed visit letter. You may enjoy exploring and using our [teacher resources](#), which include videos, subject-specific packets, and activities that engage with the Clark's artworks, as pre-visit materials. You can also browse or download images of artworks in our permanent collection [here](#).



ARRIVAL



Will someone greet us when we arrive?

If you scheduled a guided gallery tour as part of your visit, Clark educator(s) will greet you at the main entrance, located at the Clark Center admissions desk. If you scheduled a self-guided visit, our Visitor Services team will get you checked in and oriented when you arrive at the main entrance.

What do we do with our belongings?

Please instruct your students to leave backpacks and anything else they won't need during their visit on the bus. Coats can be stowed in our coatroom. If you are staying for lunch, lunches can be brought inside and left in your designated lunchroom or in our coatroom. We also have large rolling bins available for larger groups.

What happens if my group arrives late for our guided tour?

If you anticipate a late arrival, please contact the Gallery Education Programs Assistant at 413 458 0563 or by [email](#). If you cannot reach them, please call the admissions desk at 413 458 2303. Groups that arrive late are not guaranteed their full timeslot.

INSIDE THE GALLERIES



Why can't we touch the art?

The oils on our skin can damage fragile artworks, so touching by anyone (even Clark employees) is not permitted. However, please look closely! You can get within an arm's length of the artworks. You may notice that when Clark educators draw your students' attention to details in an artwork, they use their fingers to point and not a pencil.

Do we have to be quiet in the galleries?

No! The Clark is a place of learning, and we encourage discussion, curiosity, and active engagement. We want to know what students think, so expect your time with Clark educators to be interactive. Students will be urged to share their ideas, listen to one another, and ask questions. Clark educators know and understand students, and we expect children to be children during school group visits.

Who else may be in the galleries?

You'll see Clark employees, including educators, Visitor Services staff, and security officers, who are all there to assist as needed. There will likely be visitors and other groups circulating in the galleries as well, so remember that your behavior can impact others' time positively or negatively. Please keep your group together and remember to walk when indoors.

What else can we do in the galleries?

You are welcome to write or draw with pencils (or colored pencils!). Talk about the art with one another. Sit on benches, folding gallery stools, or even the floor. Feel free to give your students a focused assignment or activity after your guided tour or during a self-guided visit. Taking pictures of the artwork (without a flash!) is a great way to remember your field trip. If you're on a guided tour, please wait until the tour is done to take any photos.

Can we make art at the Clark?

You are always welcome to sketch or draw in the galleries as long as you are using a pencil or colored pencils. For a more comprehensive creative experience, it is possible to arrange an art-making activity to complement your visit. Check out our [available tours](#) and talk to the Gallery Education Programs Assistant to learn more about art-making opportunities.

CHAPERONES

Do we need chaperones for our visit?

Yes, the required number of chaperones for a school visit depends on the age and/or grade of your students:

- **Pre-K–Grade 3: one chaperone per five students**
- **Grade 4–Grade 8: one chaperone per seven students**
- **Grade 9–Grade 12: one chaperone per ten students**

We provide free admission for teachers, required chaperones, and for any one-on-one aides or paraprofessionals accompanying students with diverse needs. All additional adults are expected to pay admission.

How can chaperones make the best use of their time at the Clark?

Teachers and chaperones are expected to familiarize themselves with the Clark's [visitor guidelines](#) and remain with their students at all times while in the museum. Chaperones and teachers, not Clark educators, are responsible for students and their behavior. We hope chaperones will enjoy the experience alongside their students. Active participation from chaperones is encouraged. It is valuable for chaperones to model engaged behavior for students. Please see our [Chaperone Guidelines](#) for more information.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



What should my students wear?

What is appropriate for students to wear to school is also appropriate attire for their visit to the Clark. If a student is wearing something that might bump or damage artwork, such as a large bag or backpack, they will be asked to leave the item in our coatroom. It is helpful, but not required, for students to wear nametags during a guided school group visit.

Can we spend time outside?

Yes! A hike on our beautiful 140-acre campus can be a great way to take advantage of the Clark's unique setting. Outdoor walks on our campus travel through both pastures and forests. With advance notice we can provide your group with copies of our *Art and Nature* guide that examines the relationship between humans and the natural world. Your group can also pick up copies of the Clark's trail guide at the main admissions desk or at the Orientation Center. Please remind students to wear sturdy footwear and weather-appropriate clothing when preparing for a visit that will include time outdoors. There are no bathrooms or water fountains on the trails. Encourage your students to use the bathroom before starting a hike and remember to bring your own water. Please help your students to be mindful of outdoor artwork, wildlife, and other visitors on the campus.

Can I take a digital visit?

We strongly encourage all school groups to visit in person to enjoy the full experience of the Clark, but we realize that this is not possible for all schools. If your group cannot visit in person, please fill out the school group [visit request form](#) and select Digital Engagement under "Type of visit," or contact the Gallery Education Programs Assistant to set up a virtual visit. After you design a learning plan with us and schedule a date and time, we will set up a Zoom meeting and share an invitation with you. Though Clark educators will facilitate discussion, we ask classroom teachers to help encourage verbal or written participation and engaged behavior from all students.

What should I do if I have additional questions?

Please contact the Education Department by [email](#) or by phone at **413 458 0563**. We are more than happy to answer questions and talk through visit options to help develop the best possible visit for your students.

Clark Art Institute

225 South Street, Williamstown, Massachusetts

clarkart.edu

General information: 413 458 2303