



Austin Sunshine Camps

Summer Camp 2025 Family Guide

(**Revised on 11.14.24)



Welcome

Welcome to the Austin Sunshine Camps Family! We are **thrilled** that your child is going to join us for the #bestsummerever! This guide will give you information about what your camper can expect this summer, and what you need to do to prepare! As always, please email programs@sunshinecamps.org with any questions! LET'S GO CAMP!!!

Statement of Rights & Dignity

Austin Sunshine Camps is committed to creating a culture of inclusion and connection. We are able to grow and learn better together with a diverse community of families, campers, staff members, volunteers, and other stakeholders. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, and knowledge we all bring to Austin Sunshine Camps makes us better as an organization. As a camper or family member, we respect and welcome the unique contributions that you bring in terms of education, opinions, culture, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity and expression, nation of origin, age, languages spoken, veteran's status, color, religion, disability, sexual orientation and beliefs.

Program Goals

- At Austin Sunshine Camps, we believe in the power of camp. Austin Sunshine Camps provides the magic of overnight camp without the barrier of cost.
- Austin Sunshine Campers will have the opportunity to **Grow, Connect and Explore!**
- At the end of your child's camp experience at Austin Sunshine Camps, we hope for the following:
 - Your child will depend less on other people for solving problems and their day-to-day activities and believe that they can be successful in the things they do
 - Your child will develop skills in making friends and working in groups
 - Your child will be more curious, inquisitive and eager to learn new things
 - Your child will feel a greater attraction to nature and feel welcomed and supported at camp

Key Program Notes for 2025:

Austin Sunshine Camps has provided free fun-filled overnight summer camp programs for the children of the greater Austin area since 1928. There are some key changes for this summer that we want to make sure everyone is aware of.

- Campers who attended in summer 2023 or 2024, who are returning in 2025 (and their siblings) **automatically qualify** for ASC programs, regardless of current household income or foster care status.
- Just like in 2024, camp sessions are **10 days and 9 nights** long!
 - Camp sessions will start on **SUNDAY afternoon** (Day 1) and conclude on **TUESDAY morning** (Day 10).
- **New for 2025:** This summer, we have a **7-Day option** for campers at Zilker who are **ages 8-9**.
 - **All 8 year olds** will participate in the 7-day option. 9-year olds can choose either a 7 or 10 day option.
- First Time Campers will need to participate in a [First Time Camper Day](#) during the school year.
- Just like in 2024, camper drop-off/check-in for campers will take place **directly at their respective camp location** (ASC does not provide transportation - see Drop-Off/Check-In section for more details)
- Due to erosion and low water levels resulting in unsafe shorelines, **swim time will not be offered at our Lake Travis location**. Other water activities, including Water Wars, will still take place.

Camp Locations, Cabins and Facilities

Austin Sunshine Camps has two locations, each serving different age groups. Campers ages 8-11 attend Zilker Lodge in downtown Austin, while campers ages 12-15 attend our Lake Travis location, in between Lago Vista and Marble Falls.

Zilker Lodge

Campers **Ages 8-11**



- [2225 Andrew Zilker Rd, Austin](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=je5qz3Tyu9Y)
- Zilker Lodge is a 20,000 square foot, air conditioned lodge with 8 camper cabins inside.
- In 2025, for each session at Zilker, there will be **one** 7-Day cabin for boys and **one** 7-day cabin for girls for campers who are **ages 8-9**.
 - **All 8 year olds** will be in a 7-day cabin this year.
 - 9 year olds can select a 7-day or a 10-day session.

Watch our Zilker Camp video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=je5qz3Tyu9Y>

Lake Travis

Campers **ages 12-15**



- [5001 Shaw Drive, Marble Falls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2PdZopRNhg)
- Lake Travis is a rustic campsite with 6 standalone cabins, located in Turkey Bend Recreation Area, between Lago Vista and Marble Falls.
- **As of April 2023, the cabins at Lake Travis are AIR CONDITIONED!**
- For 2025, there is **one** All-Gender Cabin option for Lake Travis campers: Session 4 (July 20 - 29).

Watch our Lake Travis video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2PdZopRNhg>

Both Camps

- ****Each cabin will have a minimum of 2 adult staff members who live in the cabin.**
 - Most cabins will also have a Counselor-In-Training (CIT) who lives in the cabin.
- We respect the privacy of all campers, staff and volunteers and all nudity is strictly prohibited. Changing clothes and other private activities must take place within a bathroom or shower stall.
 - Zilker Lodge and Lake Travis both have centralized bathrooms with individual shower stalls.
- Camper drop-off/check-in for campers will take place **directly at their respective camp location**
 - **ASC does not provide transportation** (see *Camper Drop-Off/Check-In* section for more details)

Packing List: **CLEARLY LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH CAMPER'S NAME**

● **REQUIRED ITEMS: Campers MUST bring**

○ **General Items**

- Suitcase, duffle bag or footlocker
- Durable, reusable water bottle**



○ **Clothing**

- Closed-toe shoes** (*Crocs are not allowed for some activities*)
- 10 sets of clothes
- Pajamas
- Rain coat
- Laundry Bag



○ **Bedding**

- Pillow
- Sheets (beds are twin size)
- Blanket/sleeping bag

○ **Medications** (*see Medications section*)

○ **Toiletries/Hygiene**

- Bath towel
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Bug spray
- Sandals or shower shoes
- Other toiletries



● **Swimming/Water Wars**

- Bathing suit
- Beach towel
- Sunscreen
- Shoes to wear while swimming**
- Life jackets provided by ASC



CLEARLY LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH CAMPER'S NAME

● **OPTIONAL ITEMS: Campers MAY bring**

- Watch (no smart watches are allowed)
- Fan (plug-in is preferred over battery-powered)
- Backpack/fanny pack/bag to carry to different activities
- Fun/nice clothes for our Dance Night
- Games/books/activities for rest time (we will have plenty, but if you want to bring your own!)



● **PROHIBITED ITEMS: Campers may not bring any of the following items into camp.**

- Cell phones** & other electronic devices, including smart watches
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or nicotine products, including **vapes or e-cigarettes**
- Weapons - including pocket knives or anything sharp
- Snacks/food - unless pre-approved for specific dietary or medical needs
- Money/Valuables/Jewelry
- Fireworks/Matches/Lighters



During check-in, all bags will be checked to ensure that we have collected all medications and food, and make sure no prohibited items are in the bag

Medications

- **ALL MEDICATIONS:** All medications, including inhalers, epi-pens, vitamins and supplements, must be listed on your health form on your [CampBrain](#) account prior to arrival.
 - Other than emergency medications (ex: inhalers or epi-pens), campers may not keep any medication on their person. ALL medications will be kept and distributed by the camp nurse.
 - Other than emergency medications (ex: inhalers and epi-pens), ALL medications must be turned into the Camp Nurse/Health Officer.
 - **This includes over-the-counter (OTC medications), vitamins and supplements**, such as melatonin, vitamin gummies, and prescription topical ointments
 - All medications, including prescriptions, over-the-counter (OTC) medications, and vitamins/supplements **must be in their original packaging and must be labeled with the camper's name**. No camper may bring medication into camp that is not so labeled.
 - During check-in, the camp health officer will confirm details of administration and dosage of the medication with you prior to checking in the medication.
- **EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS (EPI-PENS AND INHALERS)**
 - If a camper has an inhaler or epipen, based on consultation with the parent/guardian, the camper, their counselor or the nurse will keep it on their person at all times.
 - **If you indicated that your child has asthma on the health form, you MUST drop your child off with an inhaler**, unless you have a doctor's note saying they may attend without one.
 - **If you indicated that your child has an epipen on the health form, you MUST drop your child off with an epipen**, unless you have a doctor's note saying they may attend without one.

Camper Drop-Off/Check-In Locations and Times

- Camper Drop-Off/Check-In will take place **directly at their respective camp location**.
 - **Austin Sunshine Camps does not provide transportation.**
 - **Please be on time. We cannot officially begin camp activities until all campers have arrived.**
- Please make sure you have at least an hour blocked off in your schedule to dedicate to checking your camper(s) in at each camp.
 - **If you have children attending at both camps**, please drop off at **Lake Travis first**, then Zilker.
- **ZILKER** (Campers ages 8-11)
 - [2225 Andrew Zilker Rd, Austin](#)
 - Camper Drop-Off/Check In is on **Sunday afternoons** at **4pm-6pm**
- **LAKE TRAVIS** (Campers ages 12-15)
 - [5001 Shaw Drive, Marble Falls](#)
 - Camper Drop-Off/Check In is on **Sunday afternoons** at **3pm-4pm**

Camper Drop-Off/Check-In Process

- **CHECK-IN STATIONS:** Your child will go through a series of check-in stations and will not be fully admitted to enter camp until they have been to each station.
 - **Paperwork & Emergency Contacts**
 - We will check to make sure we have all of your necessary paperwork and waivers on file.
 - We will check to make sure that you have provided at least 3 emergency contacts with active phone numbers.
 - **Lice Check**
 - We will conduct a lice check of each camper.
 - Campers found to have lice (either live or eggs/nits) must leave the premises, have the lice treated, and may return 24 hours after treatment. An additional check is conducted upon returning.
 - **Bag Check**
 - All bags will be checked to ensure that we have collected all medications and food, and make sure there are no prohibited items in the bags.
 - **Nurse/Health Officer**
 - Medications
 - We will verify all medications have been properly turned in (see *Medications* section for more information) and ensure that the camper's health form is accurate and complete.
 - If any changes need to be made to the medications listed on a camper's health form, additional forms will be completed at this station.
 - Health Screening
 - It is important for the safety and health of everyone that campers arrive to camp in a healthy state.
 - If your child is showing signs of illness such as running a temperature, throwing up, has diarrhea, nasal drainage and/or coughing/sneezing, keep the child home and contact your camp director
 - Families can prepare their campers for a successful camp experience by reading this article from the Association of Camp Nurses: "[Healthy Camp Begins at Home](#)"
 - Upon arrival at camp, each camper will undergo a "Bumps, Scrapes and Bruises" health screening, to ensure that they are healthy and are ready to actively participate in a full summer session.
 - **Meet your counselors**
 - After completing all stations, campers and their parents/guardians will meet their cabin counselors for the session.

Sample Daily Schedule (Subject to change)

Zilker	Activity Description	Lake Travis	Activity Description
7:30 AM	Wake Up and Get Ready	7:30 AM	Wake Up and Get Ready
8:00 AM	Breakfast & Morning Kapers	8:45 AM	Breakfast & Morning Kapers
9:30 AM	Morning Benches	10:00 AM	Morning Activities
10:00 AM	Cabin Activities	12:00 PM	Team Competition
12:00 PM	Lunch	1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM	Swimming (½ of camp) / Rest Hour (½ of camp)	2:00 PM	Rest Hour
2:30 PM	Swimming (½ of camp) / Rest Hour (½ of camp)	3:30 PM	Cabin Activities / Barn Time
4:00 PM	Tracks	4:30 PM	Tracks
5:15 PM	Dinner	6:00 PM	Dinner
6:30 PM	Evening Event	7:00 PM	Evening Event
9:30 PM	Lights Out	10:30 PM	Lights Out

Tracks

- Each camper selects one Track to specialize in each day for the full course of their camp session.
- **ZILKER** (subject to change)
 - Sports & Play
 - Performing Arts
 - Concoctions
 - Arts & Crafts
 - Leadership
 - Journalism
 - Culinary Arts
- **LAKE TRAVIS** (subject to change)
 - Sports & Play
 - Outdoor Adventure
 - Arts & Crafts
 - Photography
 - Outdoor Cooking
 - Workshop

Teams

- Each camper is assigned to 1 of 4 camp teams, and competes in contests throughout the session.
- Campers stay on their team for life. Camp team gear is available for purchase on [RedBubble](https://www.redbubble.com/).



Evening/All-Camp Events (Subject to change)

Each day there will be a unique all-camp activity and/or evening event for campers to participate in.

Night	Zilker Event	Lake Travis Event
Day 1: Su	S'mores Night	Sorting Ceremony & S'mores Night
Day 2: M	Sorting Ceremony	Pocket Hunt
Day 3: T	Canoe Night / Game Night 1	Camp Olympics
Day 4: W	Canoe Night / Game Night 2	Water Wars
Day 5: Th	Camp Dance / Board Game Night	Field Day
Day 6: F	Carnival Night	Movie Night 1 (High Ropes in the morning)
Day 7: Sa	Movie Night (Field Trip/High Ropes in the morning)	Talent Show
Day 8: Su	Talent Show (Field Trip/High Ropes in the morning)	Movie Night 2 (Camp-A-Tition in the morning)
Day 9: M	ACL @ ASC	Barn Dance / Board Game Night
Day 10: T	Camper Pickup at 9:30am	Camper Pickup at 11:00am

Camper Pick-up/Check-Out

- Camper pick-up/check-out will take place **directly at their respective camp location.**
 - Austin Sunshine Camps does **not** provide transportation.
- The person who checks out your camper must be an adult on your emergency contact list.
 - You may edit your emergency contact list by emailing programs@sunshinecamps.org.
- **Please be on time. We cannot complete camp close out until all campers are picked up.**
 - **If you have children attending both camps**, please pick up at **Zilker first**, then Lake Travis.
- Zilker Lodge: **Campers ages 8-11** - [2225 Andrew Zilker Rd, Austin](#)
 - Pick-up/Check-Out is on the 2nd **Tuesday morning** (Day #10) at **9:30am**
 - For the 7-day sessions, Pick-Up will be on **Saturday morning** (Day #7) at **9:30am**
 - At Zilker, Pick-up/Check-Out is a drive-thru process
- Lake Travis: **Campers ages 12-15** - [5001 Shaw Drive, Marble Falls](#)
 - Pick-up/Check-Out is on the 2nd **Tuesday morning** (Day #10) at **11:00am**

Camp Activities & Inherent Risks

Below are the activities offered at camp, inherent risks associated with each activity, and degree of difficulty or physical challenge associated with each activity. If you have concerns about your child's participation in any activity, please contact us at programs@sunshinecamps.org.

Activity	Risks Related to Activity (if applicable)	Degree of Difficulty/Challenge
Swimming (Barton Springs)	Drowning (non-fatal and fatal), slipping, head/neck/spinal injuries, cutting or injuring feet or other body parts on rocks underwater or on shore	Low difficulty, water is shallow, allowing campers to stand. All campers will wear a properly fitted life jacket while swimming
High ropes	Falling, getting splinters, equipment falling, critters hiding in equipment, hitting head/body part on equipment	To complete elements, moderate difficulty. Must be able to climb and balance.
Low ropes	Twisting ankles, getting splinters, falling, hitting head/body part on equipment	Low difficulty, teamwork is skill most required. Balance may be required.
Playground	Falling, hitting head/body on equipment	Little to no difficulty.
Sports	Falling, colliding with another camper, getting hit with balls/equipment	Little to no difficulty. Strength/mobility may be required for advanced portions.
Crafts	Getting cut with scissors, poked with needle, burned with iron/glue gun, inhaling paint fumes, falling off step stool or ladder	Little to no difficulty for most projects. Some projects require learning a skill such as sewing stitches.
Outdoor Cooking / S'mores	Burning self with fire/cooking elements, cutting self with knife, allergic reactions	Little to no difficulty.
Canoeing	Falling in water, drowning, hitting head/body part with paddle or canoe	Low difficulty. Ability to paddle. All campers and volunteers wear properly fitted life jackets while canoeing
Hiking	Getting lost, rolling an ankle, falling	Low difficulty. Some hikes may be faster paced for older/more physically fit campers.
All-Camp Games	Colliding with another camper, falling	Little to no difficulty. May require physical elements such as running, picking things up, and moving about.

Swimming and Waterfronts Procedures

Camp staff members are lifeguard certified, have additional water safety training, and will be on duty during all waterfront activities. There are water watchers (lookouts) in addition to lifeguards.

ZILKER: On multiple days each session, campers will be able to swim in Barton Springs, as well as take part in Canoe Night once per session (*weather permitting*).

- Regardless of swimming ability, **all Zilker campers wear lifejackets** while swimming and while participating in Canoe Night.

LAKE TRAVIS: For summer 2025, due to erosion and low water levels resulting in unsafe shorelines, swim time will **not** be offered at our Lake Travis location.

- Other water activities, including Water Wars, will still take place

Austin Sunshine Camps (ASC) Policies:

- **Weapons:** ASC is a Weapon-Free Zone. Weapons of any kind are not permitted on ASC's property, whether concealed or open-carry.
- **Alcohol and drugs:** ASC adheres to a zero tolerance policy for drugs and weapons. If these items are found in a camper's possession, it will result in immediate dismissal from camp.
 - Employees and volunteers are prohibited from reporting to work or working while using illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol.
 - In addition, employees and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful or unauthorized use, manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of illegal drugs and alcohol in the workplace including: on organization paid time, on organization premises, in organization vehicles or while engaged in organization activities.
- **Tobacco:** Smoking and the use of any tobacco products of any kind, including e-cigarettes/vapes, are not permitted on the premises of any ASC facility. ASC's Zilker Park facility is located in a public park in the City of Austin; the City of Austin prohibits smoking in parks and other public outdoor spaces.
- **Vehicles:** Generally speaking, campers are not driven by Austin Sunshine Camps employees. This should only happen in case of emergency. In case of an emergency, a camper may be transported via ambulance. Families will always be informed when this is happening.
- **Animals:** Animals including but not limited to dogs, cats, fish, birds and turtles may be present at camp. If a child has a severe allergy or fear of such animals, the parent/guardian should disclose this to camp staff to make arrangements for the camper to have a safe and healthy camp experience. As the camps are located in a natural environment, campers may come into contact with wild animals such as snakes, lizards, birds, foxes, armadillos, and more. Campers should avoid contact with all wild animals.
- **Personal Property:** ASC is not responsible for any personal belongings left in a vehicle or at camp. This includes phones, computers, cameras, sports equipment, or other personal items.

Family Communication

It is generally our policy to communicate with you often through our [private Facebook group](#) and via emails. However, please assume that “no news is good news.” If there is ever a question about whether or not to communicate with a family member, we will err on the side of calling or texting you.

It is our policy that family/guardians must be notified by health care staff or a camp director if a camper experiences any of the following:

- Temperature over 100°
- Experiences digestive issues for 24 hours or more
- Breathing difficulties
- Loss of consciousness
- Requires the administration of emergency medication (inhaler, epinephrine)
- Needs medical attention beyond the scope of what is available at camp

Health care staff may contact a guardian to gather more information regarding a child’s condition or health history or at their own discretion when considering the participants’ symptoms or condition.

It is mandatory that either the parent or guardian or an emergency contact on the child’s application be able to pick up the child from camp within two hours for any reason.

Mail and Communicating with Your Camper

- Please note that **we do not put campers on the phone with parents, unless it is an emergency.** Please see the section below for how to send letters to your campers.
- Letters and care packages may be dropped off at arrival with the name of your camper and the date you would like the package to be delivered.
- **Please do not send any food to your campers.** Food in cabins invites unwelcome visitors (animals!). Additionally, camp is a nut-free zone.
- When providing care packages for your camper, consider items such as: books, cards, address books, small stuffed animals, and/or items to share with the cabin.

Cabin Notes Emails

- This one-way communication is just like sending a letter except it will be delivered a bit quicker and no stamp or payment is required!
- Cabin Notes are delivered each day, typically at lunch or at bed time.
- Simply use this link and start typing! <https://ascprograms.wufoo.com/forms/ztnj8u91hqnfzr/>
- Campers are encouraged, but **are not required**, to write responses to letters that they receive.
 - If campers elect to write a response, our staff members will scan and email the letter.
 - Our goal is to send responses from campers within 24 hours of receiving them.

Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

Parents and guardians should thoroughly read and abide by the [Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct](#) that is included in the summer camp application.

Failure to abide by any of the guidelines in the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct will result in a meeting with the one of ASC's Programs Leadership staff and may result in removal from the current camp session, as well as possible removal from all future camp program participation for all members of the household.

Restorative Practices

At Austin Sunshine Camps, we strongly believe in the power of compassion in building a trusting, kind community, both at ASC and beyond. We use a proactive behavior management and community-building system known as Restorative Practices. Restorative practices helps to:

- reduce harmful behaviors and bullying
- strengthen our camp culture
- restore relationships and repair harm

We use:

1. Proactive relationship-building with campers, families, and staff
2. Community-building circles
3. Peace-making circles and conversations

Campers who are unwilling to engage in Restorative Practices at Austin Sunshine Camps, or engage in behaviors that are unsafe to themselves or others, will be asked to go home for the week and try camp again the following summer.

Volunteers

- Throughout the summer, many trained and background check volunteers will be participating in camp.
- Many of our wonderful volunteers are from the [Young Men's Business League](#) (YMBL). YMBL is a social service organization for young professionals, which actually founded ASC in 1928! For over 100 years, the YMBL has built today's young professionals into tomorrow's leaders by creating connections, fostering leadership development, and serving the Austin Sunshine Camps.



ASC Programs Leadership Contact Information

- It is important to us that our families be able to communicate with our staff.
- All staff members, including leadership staff, are actively involved in the daily camp programming, and are often away from our desks and phones. Please be aware that we may not be able to answer phone calls or emails immediately, but we will return your call within 4-6 hours.
- For any general questions, please contact us at programs@sunshinecamps.org or [512-472-8107](tel:512-472-8107)
- For questions related to a specific camp location, please contact the following individuals.



Camp Director - Zilker
Nicole Clifford
nicole@sunshinecamps.org
512-472-8107



Sr. Camp Director - Lake Travis
Jacob Summer
jacob@sunshinecamps.org
512-505-0908



Chief Programs Officer:
Zak Van Voorhees
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