

# Alaska Museum of Natural History Pre-visit Guide for Groups

**Welcome!** We are very excited about your upcoming visit to the Museum. This guide contains information to help you, chaperones and students have the best possible learning experience while enjoying all the Museum has to offer.

You will also find **helpful information** and **suggested activities** to share with your students under each workshop title.

**Remember, you and your chaperones** play an important role in your students' learning by engaging the children in conversations about the exhibits and activities. Encourage the students to use good observation and listening skills.

## **Reminders for students:**

- Please use walking feet,
- Please touch gently and carefully,
- Use inside voices,
- Listen carefully and ask questions,
- Wear socks if you want to play in the Dino Dig, no bare feet!

## **Reminders for teachers and chaperones:**

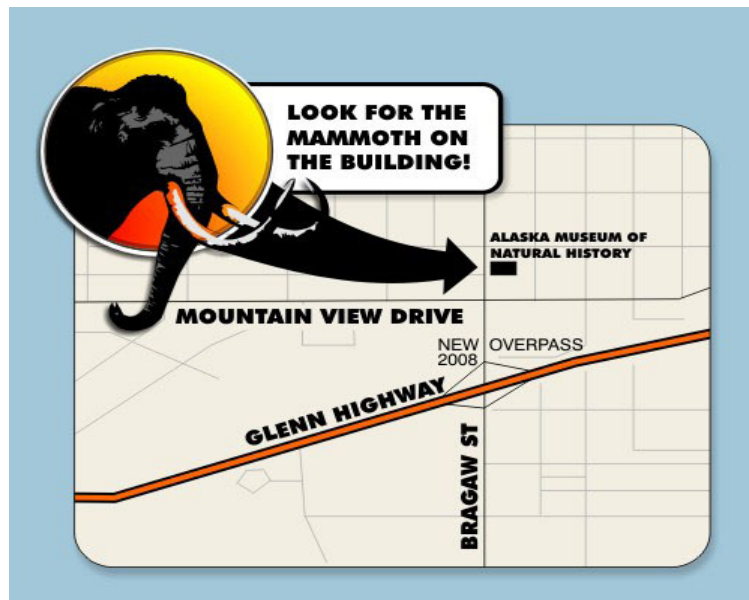
- Please watch your e-mail for your confirmation letter. It will contain information specific to your group.
- Prevent noisy and undisciplined behavior,
- No gum allowed in the Museum,
- Please let us know ahead of time if you will be eating a snack or lunch at the Museum so we may set up an appropriate area for you and your students to eat.

## **Directions:**

The Museum is located 2 blocks North of the Glenn Highway & Bragaw St. intersection.

**Contact us**, if you have any questions about your upcoming visit, or if we can help with another topic:  
(907) 274-2400

**Remember, we are  
here for you!**



# Alaska Museum of Natural History

## Pre-visit Guide:

### Museums and Learning

We are looking forward to seeing you very soon for a “hands-on, minds-on” science experience. You may take advantage of the following activities below; they are designed to enhance your visit and learning experience. You and your students will have staff members to facilitate your workshop. A staff member will stay with your group at all times during your visit to answer questions and assist your students with the activities. Typically a workshop consists of 2 or more stations followed by a topic based scavenger hunt and explore time.

#### **Pre-visit Learning Activities:**

Here is some helpful information about museums and how children can best enjoy them as well as learn from them.

#### **1. What is a Museum?**

Museums house different types of exhibits, treasures, artifacts and activities. Museums preserve memories of cultures, inventions, works of art and historic documents. There are many different types of Museums and they differ by their collections and their focus such as: History, Art, Science and Technology, Natural History and Children’s Museums. The Alaska Museum of Natural History is a museum that uses natural objects found throughout time to stimulate learning! We invite people of all ages to explore, imagine, and discover new experiences through “hands-on” activities. People are encouraged to touch and learn by handling objects that might be off limits at other Museums.

#### **2. How do children learn from the exhibits in the Museum?**

Observing, listening, reading and “doing”! Looking at an object in a very careful way is called **observing**. Encourage your students to look closely at all the objects in the exhibits. Be detectives, use your observation skills, look for differences and similarities in objects or classify them into groups of things that belong together. Part of cultivating good observation skills is listening very carefully to everything. Probing questions and focused conversation help students strengthen their interpersonal skill by quizzing them about the objects they observed.



**Classroom Activity** We are getting very good at observing! Now it is time to play a game of *I Spy* in your classroom. Have one student pick an object in the class. Using their observation skills they must describe the object to the other students in the class. The description should include: color, size, texture and shape. The other students must try to guess what the object is that is being described. This game is not only fun, but it teaches the children to look very closely at objects in their environment and it helps them to improve their comprehension and language skills.

**Museum visit activity** During your visit you can also play a similar game of “Where is it?”. Ask the students to find an object in the museum that is shiny . . . furry . . . hard . . . soft . . . etc. This will sharpen their observation skills while making the visit more fun.

**4. Talk to your students** about what they will see in the Museum. Ask the children if they have had an opportunity in the past to visit a Museum. What did they see?

**5. Visit our web site!** You will find more activities and resources under each workshop title. The more students know ahead of time the more focused they will be in the Museum.

**6. Reflect on the lessons learned.** To wrap up your museum visit, ask the children to tell you about their favorite activities. What did they learn from these activities. What new questions do they have?

We hope you enjoy your experience!

