

# British Museum visitor regulations

The Museum's website carries an extensive range of information for visitors at [britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)

These visitor regulations provide for the safety, wellbeing and security of our staff, visitors, collection and premises.

There is no public right of entry into or through the British Museum and it is a condition of entry that you abide by these visitor regulations.

## 1. Admission

- 1.1 We warmly welcome you to the Museum and wish you an enjoyable visit and an excellent experience.
- 1.2 Admission to the Museum is free, but we may charge for entry to some temporary exhibitions and events.
- 1.3 We regret that it may be necessary, for example in the interests of security or public safety, for us to alter the Museum's opening hours or close specific areas of the Museum at any time, and without prior notice.
- 1.4 If it should be necessary to close all or part of the Museum temporarily for any reason, we may direct you to leave by certain routes, or prevent you from leaving by certain routes.

## 2. Opening hours

- 2.1 Galleries open daily from 10.00–17.00 and until 20.30 on Fridays. Staff may ask you to begin leaving up to 10 minutes before closing.
- 2.2 The Museum's Great Court is open from 10.00 until 17.30, except on a Friday when it is open until 20.30.
- 2.3 You must leave the Museum by 17.30 (or 20.30 on a Friday). Staff may ask you to begin leaving up to 10 minutes before closing.
- 2.4 The Museum is closed 24–26 December and as otherwise notified on [britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)

## 3. Bag searches and other searches

- 3.1 If asked, you must allow our security officers to search your bags when you enter the Museum or when you enter one of our special exhibitions.
- 3.2 A list of items that we do not allow you to bring into the Museum is displayed in the search areas at the entrances to the Museum. If, on searching your bag, our security officers find any of these items (or any similar item that may be a risk to the collection, building, staff or other visitors) they will remove it, and return it to you when you leave the Museum. If our security officers find an illegal item in your bag they will confiscate it, and hand it to the police. Please be aware of regulation 6.1 below.
- 3.3 At our discretion we may ask our security officers to carry out more general searches as a condition of entry to the Museum. The reason for such a search will be explained and it will be conducted by security officers of the same sex as the visitor who is searched.

## 4. The Museum as Licensed Premises

- 4.1 The British Museum has a premises licence for regulated activities under the Licensing Act 2003, pursuant to which we must:
  - a. refuse any person entry (or ask any person to leave), if our security officers believe that person to be intoxicated or behaving antisocially;
  - b. apply age restrictions and/or require proof of age identification for entry to some events or the supply of some services;
  - c. limit the number of people permitted into our premises at any time;
  - d. refuse to serve alcohol or to supply other services to any person who is intoxicated or behaving antisocially.
- 4.2 At the end of evening events, you are asked to leave the premises quietly and with due consideration for our residential neighbours.

## 5. Consideration for other visitors

- 5.1 The Museum can become very crowded at times. You are asked to be patient and considerate to other visitors.
- 5.2 You are asked not to use your phone to make calls in special exhibitions, and to turn your phone to silent in the galleries.
- 5.3 You are welcome to draw and sketch in the galleries but you should consult staff at the Information Desk about the rules for the use of art media, stools and easels within the Museum.

## 6. Visitor Services and Security staff

- 6.1 Our Visitor Services and Security staff are identifiable by their British Museum identity passes. They are authorised by the Museum to require you to comply with these visitor regulations or any directions given under them. If you fail to do so, or our security officers believe you are intoxicated or behaving antisocially or that your conduct causes or is likely to cause risk, annoyance or disturbance to other visitors, to our staff, to the collection or to property, you may be refused admission to the Museum, you may be asked to leave and/or you may be escorted from the Museum.
- 6.2 Please be aware that we will not tolerate violence or abuse towards any member of our staff and that failure to cooperate with the lawful directions of our security staff may put you at risk of committing a criminal offence.

## 7. Tour groups

- 7.1 Tour groups (any group of 10 or more adults visiting the Museum together) must book in advance using the groups booking section of the Museum website.
- 7.2 All tour groups must enter by the Montague Place entrance. If a tour group arrives at the Great Russell Street entrance its members, guide or leader will be asked to go to the Montague Place entrance.
- 7.3 No person other than our authorised staff may sell services as tour guides, leaders or speakers anywhere within the Museum.
- 7.4 Loudspeakers, voice amplifiers or microphones must not be used by tour guides or leaders when conducting or leading tour groups. Guides and leaders of tour groups should also take particular note of regulations 9.1.j and 9.1.k below.
- 7.5 Tour groups are not permitted in Rooms 61, 62 or 63 due to the number of visitors and space restrictions.

## 8. On-site accessible parking

- 8.1 We have a designated number of accessible parking spaces for disabled visitors and Blue Badge holders.
- 8.2 These spaces must be booked in advance via the Box Office. Email: [tickets@britishmuseum.org](mailto:tickets@britishmuseum.org) Phone: +44 (0)20 7323 8181

## 9. Health and safety and the protection of the collection

- 9.1 In the interests of health and safety, you must not:
  - a. smoke anywhere in the Museum (and this prohibition extends to the use of electronic cigarettes and vaping products) except in the colonnade and on the forecourt;
  - b. run within the Museum, particularly in the galleries or on staircases;
  - c. sit on any stairs or on the colonnade steps;
  - d. block or obstruct entrance doors in any way;
  - e. leave any children in your care unattended, or allow them to behave antisocially;
  - f. climb on any part of the collection, or the fabric of the building including walls, monuments, barriers and columns;
  - g. disregard any safety signs or barriers put in place for public protection;
  - h. cross barriers, cordons or protective spaces in front of objects on open display;
  - i. disregard fire alarms or any directions for the evacuation of the Museum;
  - j. use any laser pointer or laser pen (a small handheld device with a power source and a laser diode emitting a very narrow coherent low-powered laser beam) for any purpose within the Museum;
  - k. point or gesture towards people or objects within the collection using sticks, umbrellas, poles, flags or any other object.
- 9.2 You must not touch any collection object on open display, including sculpture or stonework, except as part of our organised events, which include Touch tours and object handling desks.
- 9.3 If you do not comply with any part of this regulation you may be asked to leave the Museum. Please be aware of regulation 6.1 above.

## 10. Fire alarms

- 10.1 Fire Action Notices in the galleries explain how you should raise the alarm in the event of a fire or suspected fire.
- 10.2 Our fire alarm provides two audible signals:
  - a. A constant alarm signal means that you must evacuate the Museum and leave by the nearest fire exit immediately. Staff will ensure you are aware of the alarm and direct you away from any fire-affected areas. If you require help to evacuate the Museum you should seek the assistance of a member of staff.
  - b. An intermittent signal is a warning alert for staff, and you are not required to leave the Museum unless the signal changes to the evacuation signal.
- 10.3 In the event of a fire evacuation, the cloakroom will be closed immediately and you must follow our fire evacuation instructions. Staff will help to retrieve your items from the cloakroom as soon as possible after the Museum reopens.

## 11. Access to non-public areas

- 11.1 If you are found by staff in a non-public or closed area without authority you will be required to explain your presence and provide proof of identification. You may also be escorted from the Museum premises. Please be aware of regulation 6.1 above.

## 12. Cloakrooms and luggage

- 12.1 You must not bring into the Museum any item of luggage (other than fold-up pushchairs, or mobility aids if you have a disability), which has a size greater than 40x40x50cm or a weight greater than 8kg.
- 12.2 Wheeled cases are not allowed onto the Museum premises.
- 12.3 Access to special exhibitions may be subject to additional restrictions on bags and luggage.

## 13. Unattended and lost property

- 13.1 You must not leave any of your property unattended at any time in the Museum, including in any outdoor areas. We reserve the right to have unattended property removed and/or destroyed without warning in the interests of safety and security. You will not hold us liable if we remove or destroy any property that you have left unattended.
- 13.2 If it is handed in to us, we will keep your lost property in accordance with our lost property operating procedure.

## 14. Film, photography, 3D imaging and audio recording

- 14.1 Except where indicated by notices, you are permitted to use handheld cameras (including phones) with flash and 3D imaging software, and audio and film recording equipment not requiring a stand.
- 14.2 You may use your photographs, scanned data, film and audio recordings only for your own private and non-commercial purposes, which include use in personal, non-commercial social media profiles, blogs and websites, provided no further commercial reuse of the content is permitted by the terms of use of the social media platform or website. More information about uses that we regard as 'commercial' can be found on our website.
- 14.3 You must make arrangements with the Commercial Filming Team if:
  - a. you need to use a stand or special lighting or other equipment for filming, photography or audio recording in the Museum;
  - b. you wish to take any commercial or professional film or photography.
- 14.4 You must respect the privacy of other visitors while taking photographs, filming or making audio recordings in the Museum. If a visitor complains that your photography, filming or recording is intrusive you may be asked to stop or leave the Museum. Please be aware of regulation 6.1 above.
- 14.5 The use of 'selfie sticks' (or similar devices) is not permitted within the Museum.

## 15. Bicycles and scooters

- 15.1 Mobility scooters are welcome in the Museum.
- 15.2 You are not permitted to cycle or ride a scooter on the Museum's forecourt.
- 15.3 You may leave your bicycle in the racks provided on the forecourt at your own risk. You are not permitted to bring folding bicycles or adult scooters inside the Museum, nor are they accepted in the cloakrooms.

## 16. Food and drink

- 16.1 You are not allowed to consume food and drink inside the Museum, except in designated places such as the restaurant and cafés or Great Court. You may, however, consume food and drink outside on the colonnade and forecourt. Please dispose of your uneaten food and packaging responsibly.
- 16.2 Families with children may use the Ford Centre for Young Visitors on the Lower floor of the Museum's Great Court at weekends and during school holidays for eating.

## 17. Animals

- 17.1 Animals are not allowed in the Museum under any circumstance, unless you are a disabled visitor accompanied by a guide, assistant or companion animal.
- 17.2 Owners should bring the dog's Assistance Dogs (UK) identification book (or the appropriate international equivalent) with them.

## 18. Demonstrations

- 18.1 If you are proposing to demonstrate inside or outside at the Museum, you should notify our Press Office at least 24 hours in advance. The Museum may set conditions on such events in the interest of safety, security and other visitors' enjoyment of their visit. If you demonstrate at the Museum, please be aware of regulation 6.1 above.

## 19. Closed circuit television

- 19.1 You should be aware that we operate a secure, closed circuit television system throughout the Museum in the public interest for the protection and safety of our visitors, staff, collection and property. Please see our CCTV Policy on our website for further details.

## 20. Comments and feedback

- 20.1 We welcome enquiries, opinions and comments from visitors and members of the public. You can:
  - a. email [info@britishmuseum.org](mailto:info@britishmuseum.org)
  - b. message us at [facebook.com/britishmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/britishmuseum)
  - c. tweet [@britishmuseum](https://twitter.com/britishmuseum)
  - d. write to:  
The British Museum  
Great Russell Street  
London WC1B 3DG

## 21. Amendments

- 21.1 We may change our service provision or amend these visitor regulations from time to time and we recommend that you check the Museum website for our latest visitor information before visiting.

By order of the Director  
2021

These regulations are marked as an unrestricted information document.

The British  
Museum