

A Field Guide to Tunnel Tops for youth group visits

(with a focus on the Outpost & Presidio Field Station)



Where is Tunnel Tops in the Presidio?



Field Station
public hours
Wed-Fri 11am - 4pm
Weekends 10am - 5pm

drinking fountain

WEST ENTRY GATE
(check website for seasonal open hours)



RESTROOMS
open daily

rinsing station

stroller parking

EAST ENTRY GATE
(check website for seasonal open hours)

Mason Street



 Suggested chaperone spots
(covering the two entry/exits gates and the plaza in front of the Field Station and restrooms)

Get ready for a unique fun-filled experience of park discovery and outdoor adventure!

Here's everything you need to know to plan your trip to these unique park facilities...

PRESIDIO TUNNEL TOPS

Free. Outdoor areas open all year.

Presidio Tunnel Tops is part of the Presidio, a national park site that's part of the larger Golden Gate National Recreation Area. It's built on top of the Presidio Parkway tunnels, with amazing Golden Gate views that can't be found elsewhere in San Francisco. This new 14-acre destination connects the center of the Presidio to the park's Crissy Field waterfront. Presidio Tunnel Tops features a Visitor Center, gathering and picnic areas, overlooks, play spaces for kids, a campfire circle, and pathways to walk through a variety of gardens and native plant areas.

OUTPOST OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PLAY

Free. Open daily (see www.presidio.gov for current hours that change seasonally). Most engaging for 2 to 12 year olds.

Adventure awaits! The Outpost is a two-acre outdoor adventure play area (the largest in the Bay Area) inspired by the Presidio's nature and history. Kids can swing, crawl, and climb on features built from fallen trees, logs and boulders, and also create their own structures on a smaller scale. There's a variety of challenges and creative opportunities, letting kids pick the level that feels right to them by choosing their own adventure of the day. Wednesday through Sunday there are facilitated art and science activities.

PRESIDIO FIELD STATION

Free. Open Wednesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. All ages.

The Field Station is your park curiosity lab: a place that feels behind-the-scenes where you can use your sense to investigate real things from the Presidio. This interactive space is inspired by base camps where scientists do their research in remote parts of the world. Visitors can also choose from a menu of self-guided adventures and field kits to explore the park in fun ways. The Field Station experiences will change with the seasons ensuring surprises on any visit.

General Group Visit Information

- Scheduling is highly recommended for youth and community groups with more than 20 people visiting the Outpost or Field Station. To ensure adequate supplies for the day of your visit please request your visit. Field Station and Outpost are not available for rental to private parties. Please note that scheduled visits don't represent exclusive access and on rare occasions we may need to adjust entry time to the Field Station as it has limited capacity as an indoor space.
- Both the Field Station, the Outpost, and the larger Presidio Tunnel Tops can be independently explored and experienced spaces. This means that families, children with their caregivers, and groups can just walk into the Field Station and Outpost during open hours and jump into play, exploration, and learning. That said, Park Ambassadors, Adventure Guides and Park Guides may be able to welcome and orient your groups during their visit (including Spanish-speaking guides).
- We recommend a minimum two-hour visit. Typically, groups start in the Outpost. We suggest allowing at least 30 minutes and up to an hour or more for Outpost play and exploration followed by a 20 to 30 minute Field Station experience. If you have sufficient chaperones, we recommend allowing kids to move between the Outpost and Field Station (see map of suggested chaperone locations for duration of visit).
- There is not a limit to your group's size. Note that the Field Station is a public space with a limited capacity of 70 people at a time. Your group may need to adjust your time of entry or break into smaller groups, as needed. The adjacent Outpost is a good option to pass the time!
- Adult chaperones are recommended for youth groups. We recommend a ratio of 1:10 (adults to youth).
- Weekends are typically very busy with general public visitation. Group scheduling is not available on weekends. Some summer weekdays may also experience high visitation.



WOODLAND CLIMBING WALL IN THE OUTPOST

Plan Your Group Visit

Since weekends are typically very busy with general public visitation we strongly recommend a weekday for your group's visit. Use the checklist below to ensure you've got everything you need for a great visit to your national park in the city:

BEFORE YOUR TRIP

- **Know which hours we are open and schedule your trip accordingly:** The 2-acre Outpost adventure play area is open 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. November – March and 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. April – October. Regular open public hours for the Presidio Field Station are Wednesday – Friday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and weekends 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Submit a [group scheduling form](#) so we are ready for your group.**
- **Prepare your group so they can play freely!** To optimize freedom of outdoor play advise that attendees wear clothes that they won't mind getting dirty or wet and comfortable closed-toed shoes for climbing. They may even want to bring spare clothes in case they get wet.
- **Prepare chaperones to support play and exploration.** This Field Guide (also available in Spanish and Chinese) has everything you need to stay organized. Share with the adults supporting the field trip.
- **Check the weather.** The Outpost stays open, rain or shine, but may close when hazardous weather, such as thunderstorms, are in the forecast. Visit the National Weather Service website for the most up to date weather conditions.
- **Plan your transportation to and from Presidio Tunnel Tops.** Click here for transportation FAQs.

Driving: Provide directions to the Tunnel Tops to your drivers. There are paid parking lots next to Tunnel Tops.

Your own bus: Parking for buses can be reserved [here](#). View bus drop-off and pick-up locations [here](#).

Public transportation options: The MUNI 30 and 43 come right to the site. There is a free around-the-park Presidio Go shuttle: click [here](#) for info.

- **If your group has time to explore beyond Presidio Tunnel Tops, check out our self-guided experiences!** These park explorations are treasure hunt style adventures that bring you to unique places in the park.
- **Check out our website www.presidio.gov for accessibility information.**

If you have further questions please contact us at groupvisits@presidiotrust.gov



INVESTIGATIONS AREA IN THE FIELD STATION

ARRIVING AT TUNNEL TOPS

- If possible, leave lunches in your vehicles. If you will need space for lunches and backpacks, there are lockable storage chests in the Outpost. Please note this in your group scheduling form.
- When you arrive you can gather your group on the plaza between the Field Station and the Outpost. There is an all-gendered public restroom and a water fountain at this plaza.
- Have one group leader check in with a staff member at the Field Station.

GUIDELINES FOR THE OUTDOOR OUTPOST EXPERIENCE

The Outpost play features are designed to challenge kids and youth according to their ability. There are great benefits to “choosing your own adventure”. In doing so, kids and youth develop both physical abilities and self-confidence.

This is a national park and the landscape here is a natural habitat.

- Please protect plants by staying out of marked planted areas
- Let wildlife find their own natural food sources

Please plan to eat outside. There are a variety of places to gather for eating: picnic areas, lawn areas, and the Presidio Steps adjacent to the Outpost and Field Station. Visiting on a very rainy day? There’s a covered Pavilion in the top area of Tunnel Tops, near the Presidio Transit Center.

Make a plan for where your children/youth can find you.

HOW TO EXPLORE THE PRESIDIO FIELD STATION

We encourage visitors of all ages to freely interact with everything in the facility but please treat the space like it’s a behind-the-scenes research lab.

The space is intended to spark curiosity about the Presidio using your senses and practicing observation.

It’s an independent experience but Field Station staff are always available to help.



FOREST DEN IN THE OUTPOST



MAP AREA IN THE FIELD STATION

FAQs

What is the Presidio Field Station?

The Field Station is your park curiosity lab: a place that feels behind-the-scenes where you can use your senses to investigate real things from the Presidio. This interactive space is inspired by base camps where scientists do their research in remote parts of the world. Visitors can also choose from a menu of self-guided adventures and field kits to explore the park in fun ways. The Field Station experiences will change with the seasons, so there's always a reason to come back. Free. Open Wednesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

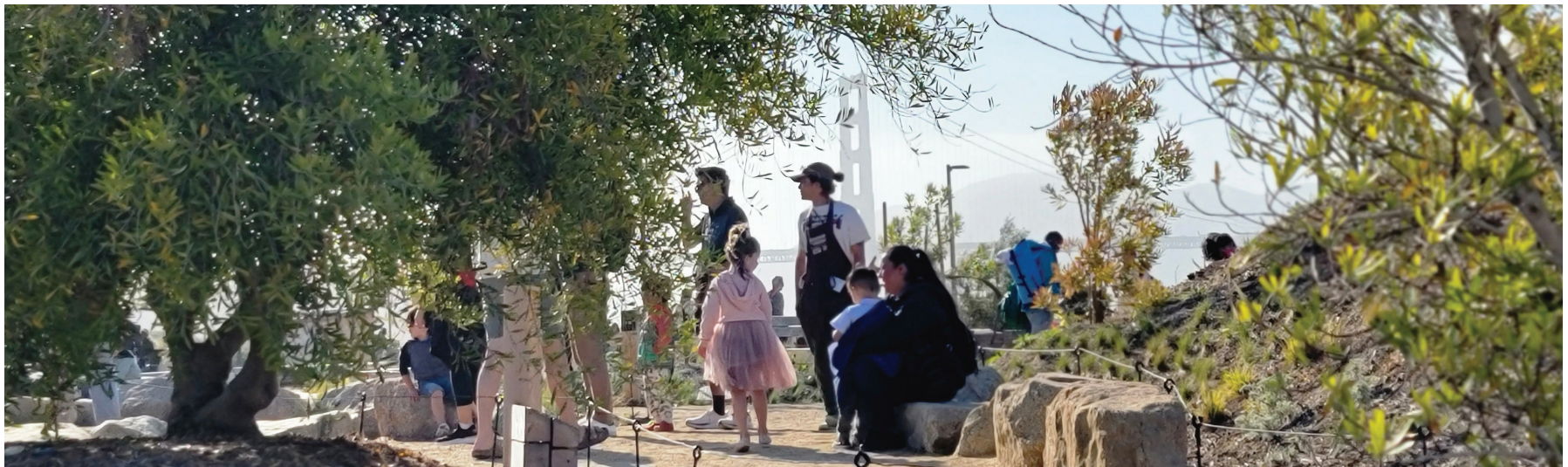
What is the Tunnel Tops Outpost?

Adventure awaits! The Outpost is a two-acre outdoor adventure play area (the largest in the Bay Area) inspired by the Presidio's nature and history. Kids can swing, crawl, and climb on features built from fallen trees, logs and boulders, and also create their own structures on a smaller scale. There's a variety of challenges and creative opportunities, letting kids pick the level that feels right to them by choosing their own adventure of the day. Wednesdays through Sundays from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. there are guided art and science activities in the center pods of the Outpost. Free. Check our website for the seasonal open hours for the Outpost.

How much time should we allow for our visit?

We recommend a minimum two-hour visit. Typically, groups start in the Outpost. We suggest allowing at least 30 minutes up to an hour or more followed by a 20 to 30 minute Field Station experience. If you have sufficient chaperones, we recommend allowing kids to move between the Outpost and Field Station (see map of suggested chaperone locations for duration of visit).

If you have more time your group can take a [self-guided adventure](#) or simply explore the park. The beaches at Crissy Field are less than a 5-minute walk.



THE OUTPOST

What is included in a group visit?

While the Outpost and Field Station are independently explored spaces calendared groups will be welcomed by park staff.

How much does a group visit cost?

These public park spaces are free to everyone. If a group arrives by private vehicles or chartered bus, parking fees may apply.

Does my group need a reservation?

While reservations are not required it's very helpful to get all groups on our calendar to ensure adequate supplies and staffing for the day.

How far in advance should I submit my request?

We ask that you let us know by the Thursday in advance of the week of your visit.

Can my group visit on the weekend or a holiday?

Yes, but note that weekends and holidays are the busiest days for general public visitation. We only schedule group visits for weekdays.

How many people can we bring on our trip?

There is not a limit to your group's size. Note that the Field Station is a public space with a limited capacity of 70 people at a time. Your group may need to adjust your time of entry or break into smaller groups, as needed. The adjacent Outpost is a good option for wait time!

Where can our group eat lunch?

There is ample lawn space at the Tunnel Tops. There are also first-come, first-serve picnic tables and an indoor Pavilion near the Transit Station at Tunnel Tops.

Are there options to purchase food at Presidio Tunnel Tops?

There are typically at least 4 food trucks at Tunnel Tops on weekdays. Click [here](#) for information about food options at Tunnel Tops.



ROCK RIVER IN THE OUTPOST

If you have further questions please contact us at groupvisits@presidiotrust.gov