

ILLINOIS STATE • MUSEUM
explore. discover. learn. share.

Social Story

A guide for people with sensory needs and preferences to have a comfortable and fun visit to the Illinois State Museum.

Illinois State Museum
502 S. Spring St.
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-0979
illinoisstatemuseum.org

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Illinois State Museum Society

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INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

Before you visit:

- The museum is free! You still may want to bring money or a credit card for the ISM Society gift shop.
- Prepare what you need for personal comfort. Water is allowed in the exhibits, and snacks can be eaten on the front porch or in the lobby. Meals need to be eaten before or after your museum visit.
- Children under 16 need to be with an adult at all times.
- You may bring tools like stim objects or noise cancelling headphones. The front desk has additional resources, just ask.
- You may call the museum with any questions or requests for accommodation at 217.782.0979. You can also look at our website, illinoisstatemuseum.org
- Plan ahead for your trip, including transportation and parking. More information is available in this guide.

Symbols:

These symbols tell you what you might encounter in different areas of the museum:


Loud noises


Quiet space


OK to touch


Do not touch

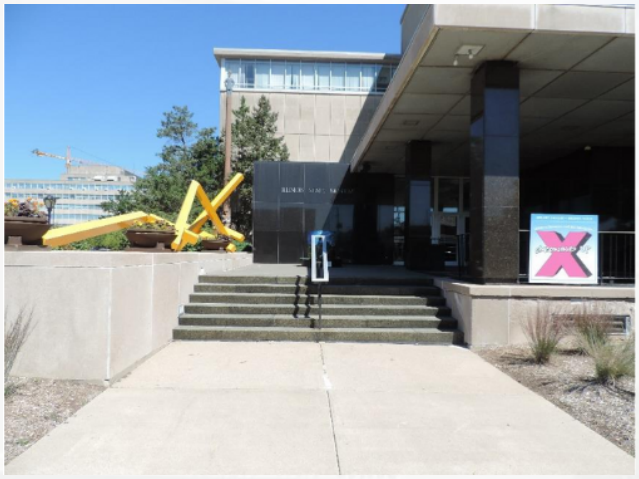

Textures


Dark area


Crowded area

Welcome to the Illinois State Museum!

The stairs go up to the main entrance.



You may use a ramp instead, located to the right of the stairs.



The front porch has concrete benches.
You can rest here.

There may be sounds of traffic from the street.



These are the front doors.
The right door is automated and accessible.



You will check in at a desk in the lobby.

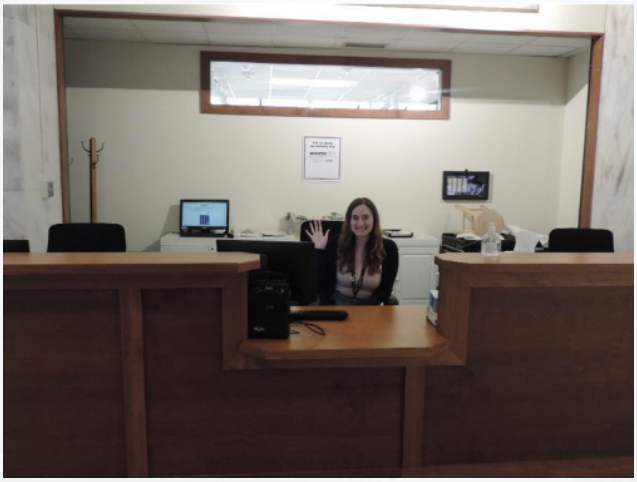


The people at the front desk will ask you a few questions. They will ask how many people you are with and what your zip code is.

They will tell you what you will see on your visit.

If you have questions or need something, please ask them.

They wear name tags and sometimes have walkie-talkies.



Guards also work all around the museum.

They are there to keep you and the objects safe.

They can answer questions you have or help you.

Guards wear blue or purple shirts and walkie-talkies.

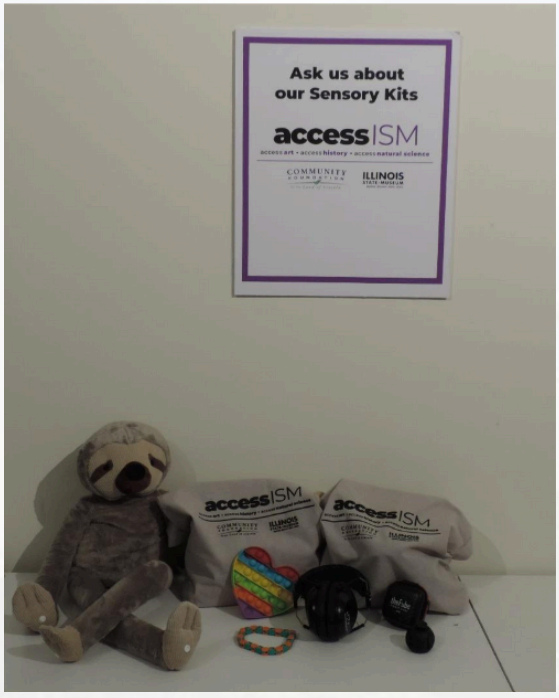


The front desk has sensory kits.

These have toys and tools to help you feel calm or focused.

If you want to try one, please ask.

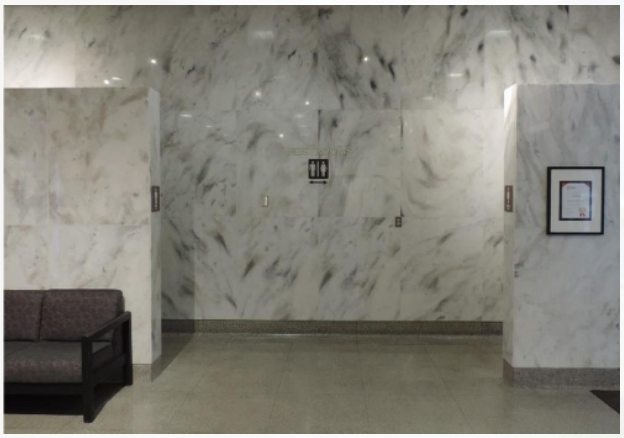
They are free but must be returned before you leave.



Bathrooms are in the lobby and on each floor.

The lobby bathrooms can be busy.
The bathrooms in the basement are more private.

If you need to use a bathroom in private, please let staff know.

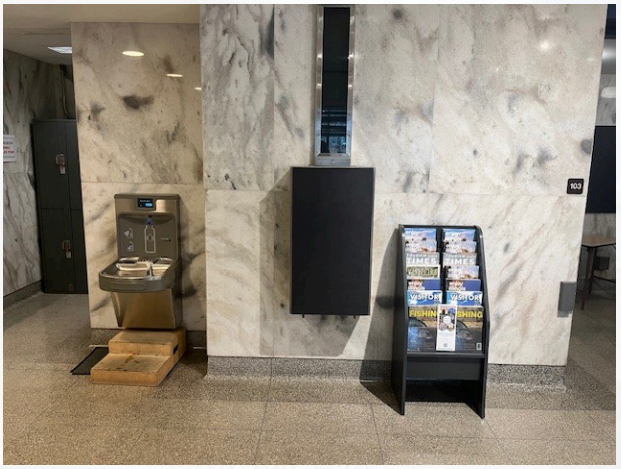


There is a water fountain in the lobby and another on the lower level.

You can fill up a water bottle here.

Magazines are in the lobby.

The magazines are free. They are about places to visit in Illinois.



The Society gift shop entrance is in the lobby.

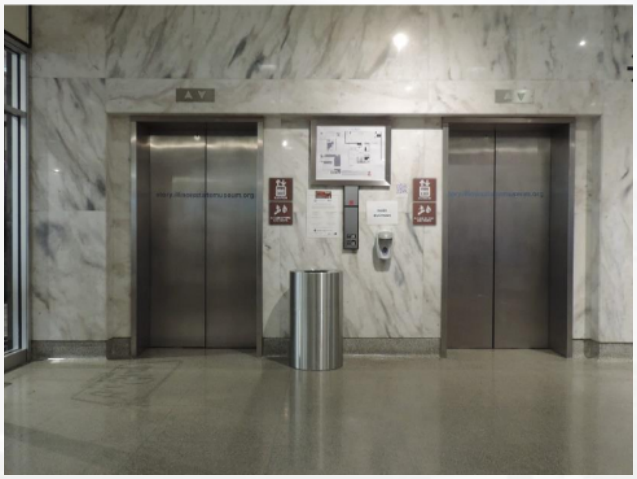
If you are under 16 years old, your adult(s) will tell you when it is okay to enter the shop.



There are three ways to move between floors of the museum.

Elevators can take you to the lower level, first floor, and second floor.

Sometimes the elevators make loud or squeaky sounds.

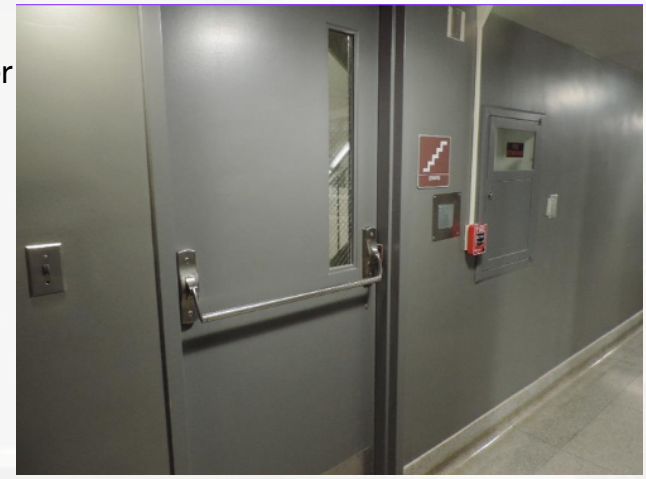


Escalators can take you to the first and second floor.

The museum escalators have tile on the walls. The way it looks can make some people dizzy.



Stairs can take you to the lower level, first floor, and second floor.



This is *Changes*.

It is on the first floor.

This exhibit is about the natural history of Illinois.



Some parts of *Changes* have big animals - these are just models. None of the displays are alive.



The Hall of Dinosaurs is a silly part of the exhibit. It is a joke about how we have never found dinosaurs in Illinois.

These doors will not open.



Illinois used to have very large animals, like these replica mammal skeletons. Replicas are copies of real skeletons.



Parts of *Changes* can be dark.

If you need a flashlight, let the front desk staff know.

The dark parts of the exhibit are small, like this hallway.



A lot of things in *Changes* are O.K. to touch.

They are marked by labels that say, “please touch.”



Labels with a red circle like this tell you when it is not okay to touch things.

Things behind ropes should not be touched.

Things that are up very high should not be touched.

If you're not sure what you can touch, you can ask staff.

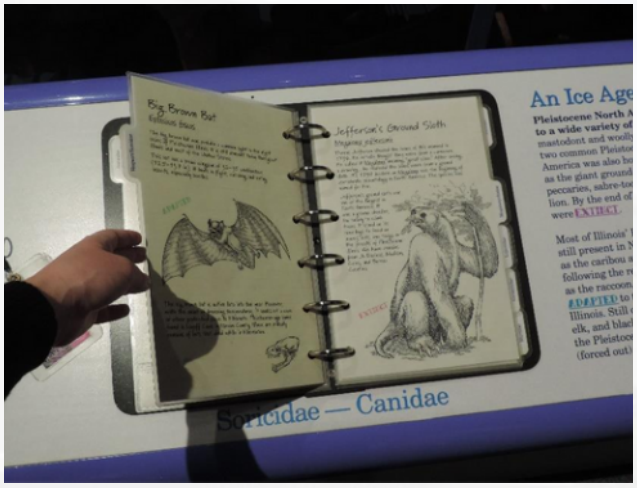


Drawers can be opened to show more information about artifacts or specimens.



These flipbooks can also tell you more about Illinois plants and animals.

Changes has a lot of text to read.



These swipe cards can be used to hear recordings of scientists.

Swipe the card in the black slot and hold the phone to your ear to learn more.



This is the entrance to the exhibit *At Home in the Heartland*.

It is on the second floor. It is a history exhibit about how people have lived in Illinois for the last 300 years.



This exhibit has a lot of things to touch.



Touch screen videos can tell stories about people's lives.

You can select different options to hear different stories.



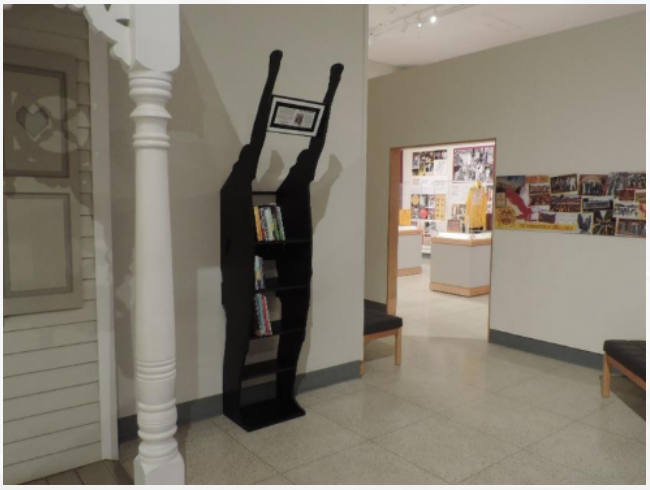
Dioramas light up when you press their button.



The Little Library is also on the second floor.

You can take or leave books here.
This Little Library highlights African American authors and themes.

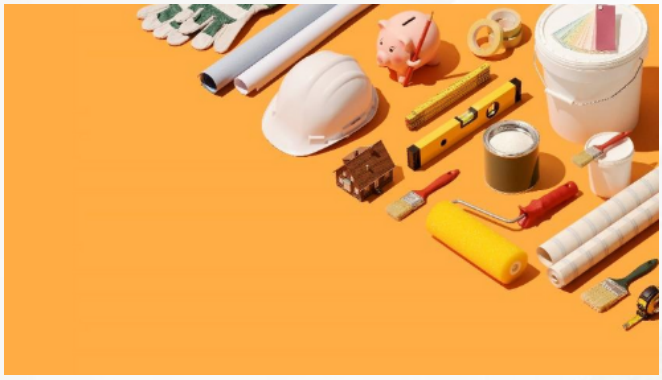
Anyone can take or leave books!



The exhibits on the second floor change often.

There will be at least one other exhibit upstairs.

If you have questions, you can call the museum ahead or ask at the front desk.

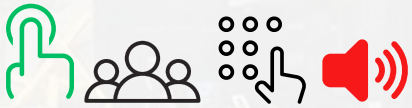


This is the *Play Museum* entrance.

The *Play Museum* is in the lower level.

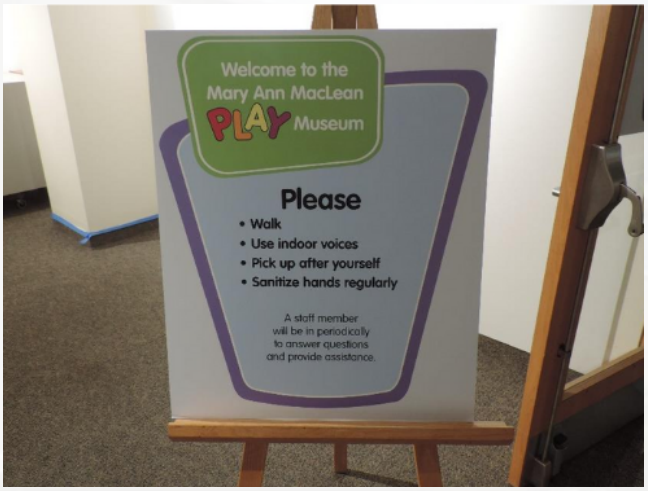
Sometimes, the *Play Museum* is loud and busy.





The *Play Museum* rules make sure it is fun and safe for everyone!

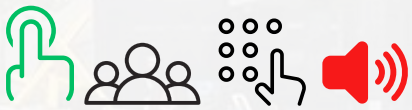
Please walk, use indoor voices, pick up after yourself, and sanitize your hands regularly.



The Jeep is fun to sit in and play with.

Please do not climb on the Jeep.





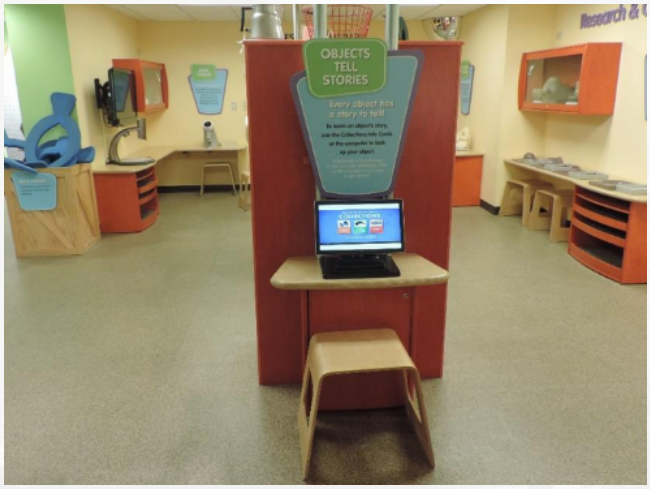
In the dig pit, use shovels and brushes to find fossils.

The rubber mulch can get in your shoes or clothing and be uncomfortable.





Touch screen computers can tell you more about specimens you find in the *Play Museum*.



The *Play Museum Research Library* is usually a quieter place.



Here you can find books about fossils, animals, people, and culture in Illinois.

These books are for kids and their adults to use in the museum.

Please put books back when you are done.

The research library has cozy places to read or rest.

You can use this space to calm down if needed.





The Prairie Gallery is outside the Play Museum.

It changes frequently, but usually features art and family friendly exhibits.







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Thank you for visiting the Illinois State Museum!
We hope to see you again.

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