

ACCESSIBILITY GUIDE

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

Twelve Days of **FUN** Ending Labor Day



Tips for Visiting the Minnesota State Fair With Sensory Sensitivities

To help you make the most of your day at the fair, below are tips from [Fraser](#) and the [Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota](#).

When to Visit

- Come early in the day. Arriving by 8 a.m. will enable you to enjoy much of the fairgrounds before it gets crowded and the noise gets louder. Flashing and bright lights are less intense during daylight. Lines for activities and food are often shorter earlier in the day.
- Many people come as early as 7 a.m. when we open, walk through the barns and livestock area to see the animals, eat breakfast and stroll the grounds. The [Pet Pavilions](#) and [Kemps Little Farm Hands](#) areas open at 8 a.m.; the other buildings and exhibits open at 9 a.m. and are rarely crowded right when they open. The rides and games at [Kidway](#) open at 9 a.m., and [Mighty Midway](#) opens at 10 a.m., and are not usually busy in the morning.
- We also recommend coming on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. The attendance on these days (especially Wednesday) is much less than on the weekends. Lines for activities and food tend to be shorter on these days.
- Sensory-Friendly Morning at Mighty Midway & Kidway on Monday, Aug. 26, is offered to better accommodate those with sensory sensitivities. Lights, sounds and non-safety-related announcements will be minimized on Aug. 26, from 9 to 11 a.m. at Kidway, and from 10 a.m. to noon at Mighty Midway.
- Please be aware that a fireworks show follows the Grandstand concert each night; the time will vary depending on when the concert ends and is usually between 9 and 10:30 p.m. On Labor Day, the fireworks show is at 9 p.m. If you'd like the specific time scheduled for the evening you are at the fair, ask at an information booth when you arrive.

Things to Do

- The Fraser Sensory Building is an oasis specially created for fair guests of all ages with sensory-processing challenges who may find the sights, sounds, smells and crowds of the fair overwhelming. See above for more information about the building and the services and resources offered. The Fraser Sensory Building is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily (8 p.m. on Labor Day) and is

located on the west side of Cosgrove Street just south of the Home Improvement Building.

- Two interactive outdoor exhibit areas in Family Fair at Baldwin Park – [Alphabet Forest](#) and [Math On-A-Stick](#) – are geared toward children and provide fun, hands-on activities in a relaxing, shaded environment; these areas tend to be less crowded and less hectic. Guests can come and go, do some or all the activities, and stay as long or as short as they'd like. These two areas are right across the street from the 4-H Building.
- On the outdoor [Family Fair Stage at Baldwin Park](#), we have a variety of entertainment designed for the whole family - jugglers, music & dance, magic and more. The seating area is less crowded than other parts of the fair, and there's easy in and out access in case guests come late or want to leave early.
- The [Thank A Farmer Magic Show](#) is an engaging, educational program that weaves together magic tricks and fun facts about agriculture, farmers and where our food comes from. The seating area is usually less crowded, so there's room to move around. This program is presented three times a day at the Christensen Farms Stage outdoors in front of the CHS Miracle of Birth Center. (The 1 p.m. show is ASL-interpreted.)
- The FFA Leadership Center and Chapter House is right next door to the Christensen Farms Stage and the CHS Miracle of Birth Center. Venture inside for hands-on activities exploring aspects of farming and agriculture. Activities are led by youth involved in the statewide FFA program. The exhibit area is typically not as crowded and is more quiet than other places on the fairgrounds. The building is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily (3 p.m. on Labor Day).
- Many of the [animal competitions](#) are held in the Warner Coliseum. While some shows are very popular (such as the draft horse show, Western horse speed races and the llama-alpaca costume contest), many of the exhibitions are held throughout the day, and the Coliseum is not very full. The Coliseum air tends to be cooler too, so it's a nice place to sit and rest and watch cattle, other livestock and horses being judged.

[Fairgrounds map.](#)

What to Bring

- Guests are welcome to bring their own sensory tools such as fidgets and noise-reducing earmuffs/earplugs/headphones. If you forget your sensory tools, you can purchase a sensory kit at the Fraser Sensory Building. (Please note that guests will enter the fairgrounds through metal detectors, and bags may be subject to search.)
- Wear sunglasses to reduce bright lights.
- Guests may bring in water bottles and outside food and beverages (except alcohol). Having a supply of snacks, food and drinks may come in handy if the lines at food vendors are long. (Please note that bags and coolers may be

subject to search at the entrance, and coolers are not permitted in the Grandstand concert seating area.)

- Water will help you stay hydrated. Water bottle refill stations and drinking fountains are located throughout the fair. [State Fair map](#)
- If you have epilepsy, wear a seizure ID bracelet.
- Bring seizure emergency medication as needed.
- Visit the fair with a companion or caregiver to assist as needed.
- At the present time, face coverings are not required at the fair.

Other Tips

- Make sure to stay hydrated! Water bottle refill stations and drinking fountains are noted on the [State Fair map](#).
- Plan for breaks throughout the day, especially from the heat, physical exertion, loud and/or abrupt noises and bright and/or flashing lights.
- Areas and events at the fair that can be louder and have more bright/flashing lights include: Mighty Midway, Kidway, the daily parade at 2 p.m., and some vendors. [State Fair map](#)
- There are two First Aid locations during the fair, sponsored by Regions Hospital.
 - [First Aid West](#): 8 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. (10:30 p.m. Labor Day), across from West End Market.
 - [First Aid East](#): 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (8 p.m. on Labor Day), on the outside of the north end of the 4-H Building on Cosgrove Street.
- If you need assistance, please call 911.

Pre-Visit Story

Pre-visit stories, also called social narratives, provide a blueprint to explain new experiences and decrease the anxiety around unfamiliar or potentially overwhelming events.

This narrative, developed by Fraser, highlights in general the parts of the fair that might be the most challenging and explains that if individuals feel overwhelmed, they can take a break in the Fraser Sensory Building.

Read [Fraser's Minnesota State Fair pre-visit story](#) to help you and your family or group prepare for the fair.