



Overview:

Amusement parks present a variety of hazards. They include:

- Getting lost/separated
- Injuries on rides
- Sun damage
- Heat Stress/dehydration
- Contact with strangers

Before entering the park:

1. Verify an adult/student ratio of 1:10.
2. Have at least 3 adults. One may need to leave for medical reasons, or if a student must leave the park for any reason.
3. Have an adult bring a backpack containing waterproof sunscreen (SPF 30), water, a small first aid kit (band-aids for blisters, etc...), and a cell phone.
4. Wear comfortable shoes. There will be a lot of walking.
5. Establish a meeting place and time should someone get separated. Meet several times throughout the day.
6. Establish a buddy system.

Once in the park:

1. Check in with the park management. Tell them you are a group, and find out about where the first aid facilities are. Leave your cell phone number.
2. Remember to re-apply sunscreen throughout the day.
3. Drink plenty of water, and make sure the students do, too.
4. Be aware of where you are, and who is around you.
5. Know what you're going on, and read the boarding restrictions before you get in line. If you are pregnant, have pain or injuries in your back or neck, or have a heart condition, you will not be able to go on some rides. If you are shorter than five feet, or taller than six feet, you'll also encounter rides where you will either not be permitted, or won't be comfortable. If you can't find the boarding restrictions at a particular ride, or have any questions about them, find a park employee and ask.
6. Don't "cheat" and ignore these rules to get on ride where you don't belong. You might think a ride looks tame enough for you. But sometimes there are potential problems on a ride that visitors can't see. A hidden drop or turn. A sudden stop. Or a portable ladder that riders will have to descend if the ride shuts down. Don't think that you know more about a ride than the park does. If they tell you not to ride, don't.
7. On any theme park ride, keep your rear on the seat, your hands on the grab bar and your feet and knees inside the car.
8. If there is no grab bar, keep your hands on your lap. If you are riding a "floorless" coaster, relax your legs and let them dangle underneath you. Don't kick them out to the side or front.
9. If you are on a ride with a lap bar, seat belt or safety harness, make sure that it is in place, snug and locked. If the ride starts to move and your restraint is not in place, immediately yell for help.
10. Do not get on or off a ride until you've been given the okay by an attendant to do so.

11. Unfortunately, some theme parks have cut corners on safety, and no longer staff all load and unload positions. If that is the case, wait until a vehicle stops still before you try to get on or off. Don't crowd others who might be exiting. And make sure that your vehicle has stopped next to the unload platform before you get off. Often, vehicles stop short of the unload platform to wait for groups up ahead to exit.
12. Some rides, especially roller coasters and simulator rides like Disney's Star Tours, can whip your head around, leaving you at risk for headaches as well as more serious head injuries. On those types of rides, sit in the middle of the chair and don't slouch or lean to one side. Relax, but do not go limp. You want to keep your balance in the seat.
13. When the seat pitches you to the left, relax your torso and bend to the right to keep your head upright and centered. And vice versa. Think of riding a horse, or surfing. You want to ride the seat--not have it throw you around.
14. Again, if you are prone to headaches, have any neck or back problems, or have been diagnosed with aneurysm, do not get on a roller coaster or simulator ride.
15. Remember the old saw about not going swimming for an hour after eating? Well, you needn't be that extreme, but it should be obvious that you shouldn't get on a coaster or other turbulent ride if you have an upset stomach. So wait a few minutes after eating to make sure everything's sitting right. And throw away that gum before getting on board a theme park ride, too. A young girl recently died while choking on gum on a roller coaster. On a high-speed ride that twists, flips and dips, you don't want anything in your mouth that could block a vital airway.
16. If you are visiting with younger students, take a moment to explain the ride to them, and tell them how they should behave. They are depending upon you to keep them safe. Set a good example for them by following the rules above, and make sure that they know you expect them to follow those rules, too.
17. Tell them to stay seated, to hold the grab bar or put their hands in the laps, and not to stick their knees and feet outside a ride vehicle. Make them look to you for the okay to get on or off a ride, too.
18. And never put a crying child on a ride. If a student starts to cry, let others pass you in line until your student is calmed. Or, gently exit the queue and find something more relaxing to do. Young kids can't keep an adult's pace in a theme park. Let them take plenty of breaks.
19. Line-jumping is against park rules and can result in ejection from the park.