

Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions

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The Yosemite FAQ (Frequently-asked Questions with Answers)

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rrr 4. Resources 1. Introduction

r [FAQ](#), r [location, destinations, climate, when to visit](#), r [transportation, and rules](#). r r r r

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rrr 4. Resources 2. Accomodations and Services

r [Camping, lodging, and services](#). r r

rrr 4. Resources 3. What to dor

r [Hiking, backpacking, visitor centers, museums, interpretation, biking, river activities, climbing, tours, and winter](#). r r

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rr 4. Resources **rr Detailed Table of Contents** r

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rrr 4. Resources r

r [More information](#), r [books](#), r [online books](#), r [firefall, tunnel trees, Mirror Lake, 1997 flood, and Yosemite Valley Plan](#). r r

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r Have a correction or addition for this FAQ?r Then please fill out thisr [Comment Form](#).r

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[NEXT ->](#)

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r r If you have questions or comments,r please send a message to [Dan Anderson](#).r r r r

r r r <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/faq/r> r r

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Part 1: Introduction

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- r
- [The Yosemite FAQ](#)r
- [Location and Destinations](#)r
- [Climate](#)r
- [When to visit](#)r
- [Transportation](#)r
- [If you will visit Yosemite, please read this section](#)r

r r r r r **THE YOSEMITE FAQ**r r

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unmodified and in its entirety.

Disclaimer

While I have attempted to keep all information correct, up-to-date, and complete, neither I, nor any other contributors to this FAQ, assume any responsibility for its correctness. In other words: use this information at your own risk. Additionally, while Yosemite, like many rural areas, has a relatively low crime rate, do not let your guard down: even though serious crimes may be relatively uncommon, keep your personal safety in mind.

This document is kept at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/faq/>

See also the [Official NPS FAQ](#) and [another NPS FAQ](#).

LOCATION AND DESTINATIONS

Yosemite National Park is located in the central Sierra Nevada, roughly east of San Francisco. Elevations within the park range from 2,000 feet (610 m) to over 13,000 feet (3,950 m).

The most visited portion of Yosemite is Yosemite Valley, the elevation of which is about 4,000 feet (1,200 m). Other popular destinations in Yosemite are Glacier Point (7,200 feet/2,200 m), Tuolumne Meadows (8,500 feet/2,600 m), and Wawonar (4,000 feet/1,200 m).

CLIMATE

Climate Data for Yosemite Valley

Month	Temp high	Temp low	Precipitation (water equivalent)
Jan	49°F/9°C	26°F/-3°C	6.2 in/15.8 cm
Feb	55°F/13°C	28°F/-2°C	6.1 in/15.5 cm
Mar	59°F/15°C	31°F/-1°C	5.2 in/13.2 cm

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Apr	65°F/18°C	35°F/2°C	3.0 in/7.6 cm
May	73°F/23°C	42°F/5°C	1.3 in/3.3 cm
Jun	82°F/28°C	48°F/9°C	0.7 in/1.8 cm
Jul	90°F/32°C	54°F/12°C	0.4 in/1.0 cm
Aug	90°F/32°C	53°F/11°C	0.3 in/0.7 cm
Sep	87°F/31°C	47°F/8°C	0.9 in/2.3 cm
Oct	74°F/23°C	39°F/4°C	2.1 in/5.3 cm
Nov	58°F/14°C	31°F/0°C	5.5 in/14.0 cm
Dec	48°F/9°C	26°F/-3°C	5.6 in/14.2 cm
Annual	87°F/31°C	26°F/-3°C	37.2 in/94.5 cm

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r **Yosemite High Country Climate, Including Tuolumne Meadows**

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r Temperatures in the High Country, such as Tuolumne Meadows, are typically 10°F to 20°F (5-10°C) degrees cooler than in Yosemite Valley. The High Country receives several feet of snow per year, though summertime thunderstorms also occur, usually in the afternoon.

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r **WHEN TO VISIT YOSEMITE**

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r Visitation to Yosemite is controlled mostly by the climate (see the [climate](#) section above for climate information). Peak visitation occurs during the summer months (late May to early September). During winter, the amount of hiking one can do is substantially limited by snow. However, snow provides many other recreational activities. Snowmobiling is prohibited.

r r

r Hiking and backpacking in Yosemite can be done year-round, though those hiking in mid-fall through early-spring may encounter winter storms and abundant snow on the trails.

r r

r Please note that park roads may be temporarily closed or chains may be required following winter storms. **YOU MUST CARRY CHAINS IN YOUR CAR** between November 1st and March 31st-- **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Please also note that during periods of heavy visitation during summer weekends (holiday

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weekends, in particular) the park entrance stations **may** occasionally refuse entrance to visitors who do not have overnight reservations in the park.

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r **TRANSPORTATION TO AND WITHIN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**r

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r Yosemite road and weather conditions: 209-372-0200r California road conditions from CalTrans: 800-GAS-ROAD or 800-427-7623r <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo/>r Note that CalTrans may not have complete information for roads within Yosemite National Park.r r

r r

r **Seasons**r

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r Yosemite National Park closes many roads by October or November and normally reopens them by late May or June. Yosemite Valley and Wawona normally remain open all year; Badger Pass Ski Area is open only in the winter (typically, December through March). Tire chains may be required on park road AT ANY TIME. For more information about winter conditions, see the [winter](#) section of this FAQ.r r

r r

r **Fee scheduler**

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r Car:	\$20.00r
r Individual	
r (on bus, motorcycle, bicycle,	\$10.00r
r foot, or horse)	
r Yosemite Pass	\$40 (Good for one year in Yosemite National Park)r
r Golden Access Pass	free (For permanently disabled US citizens and residents)r
r America the Beautiful National Parks Pass	\$80 (Good for one year in all US National Parks)r
r Golden Age Pass	\$10 (For US residents and citizens over 62 years old)r

r r r

r Car and Individual fees are valid for 7 days, all other passes are valid for one year.r

r r

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r The Trans-Sierra Pass (which was valid for one-way passage over Tiogar Pass) has been discontinued; nearby residents can drive through for free.r

r r

r Upon entrance to the park, visitors receive a park map and the Yosemite Guide, which provides much information about facilities and current activities in the Park. The map is not a suitable replacement for a topographic map. READ THE YOSEMITE GUIDE! It has answers to most of your questions!!!r

r r

r Please note that none of the entrance passes pays for other park fees, including campground fees (though a 50% discount is available with valid Golden Age and Golden Access passports).r Entrance stations may be closed during the evening and night. In this case, fees may be collected upon leaving the park. Fees are not collected from hikers entering on remote trails.r Day-use reservations are not required.r r

r r

r **Roads**

r r

r The best way to keep from getting lost is to spend a few bucks and get a map of California.r

r r

r Between November 1st and March 31st, you are REQUIRED to carry tire chains even if you are driving a four-wheel drive vehicle and all roads are open with no restrictions. If you do not have chains you may be cited. In addition, you might be stranded in the park or have to buy chains for \$80+. Learn from others' expensive and inconvenient lessons: always carry tire chains.r

r r

r For fairly current road conditions, see <http://www.nps.gov/yose/now/conditions.htm> For current road conditions, call 209-372-0200.r r

r r

r **Highway 41 (Wawona Road)**

r Connects with Hwy 99 at Fresno and ends in Yosemite Valley.r Provides access to the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias, Wawona, Badger Pass, and Glacier Point. Normally open all year, except during major snowstorms.r r

r r

r **Highway 140 (El Portal Road)**

r Connects with Hwy 99 in Merced and ends in Yosemite Valley. Open all year except during major snowstorms, floods, or rockslides. This is the least likely road into Yosemite to require tire chains.r Update (9/2006): due to a rockslide, a detour with two bridges has been installed. The detour is one way at a time and controlled by traffic signals.r A temporary 28' vehicle limit is in effect, due to limited turning radius on the bridges. Bike access is allowed.r r

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r **Highway 120 (Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads)**r

r Connects with Hwy 99 in Manteca and with Hwy 395 in Lee Vining. Provides access to Big Oak Flat, Crane Flat, White Wolf, Tenaya Lake, Tuolumner Meadows, and Tioga Pass. The portion of the road from Big Oak Flat Entrance Station to Crane Flat is normally open all year. From Crane Flat, the Big Oak Flat Road (open all year) continues to Yosemite Valley. r CLOSED during winter (Oct/Nov-May/June) from Crane Flat to Tioga Pass. r r

r r

r **Glacier Point Road**

r Runs from Chinquapin (junction of Glacier Point Road and Wawona Road) to Glacier Point. Provides access to Badger Pass and Glacier Point. r CLOSED to Glacier Point during winter (Oct/Nov-May/June); open to Badger Pass December through March. r r

r r

r **Hetch Hetchy Road**

r Runs from Big Oak Flat to Hetch Hetchy Valley. Provides access to Matherr Ranger Station, O'Shaughnessy Dam, and Hetch Hetchy Valley. r May be CLOSED during winter. r r

r r

r **Mass transit to Yosemite**

r r

r There are no airports in Yosemite National Park. The nearest larger airport is Fresno-Yosemite International (Fresno Air Terminal). The nearest municipal airports are in Mariposa and Lee Vining. There are flights to and from Fresno-Yosemite International (Fresno Air Terminal) and the Merced Airport. Air travel to Yosemite is beyond the scope of this FAQ. r r

r r

r **Trains and Buses**

r r

r Amtrak and Greyhound provide service to Yosemite. Amtrak runs train service through the Central Valley of California (the train is called "the San Joaquin"). Buses connect major cities in California (Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento) to the San Joaquin. (It is possible to connect to the San Joaquin by buses or trains from other cities as well.) r To get to Yosemite, passengers should exit the train at Merced or Fresno, where Via Bus connects to Yosemite Valley. r Greyhound also runs buses from major California cities (and many smaller ones along the way) to Merced, where you can connect to Via Bus. r

r r

r Yosemite Area Regional Transit System offers transportation along hwy 140 into the park and limited transportation along hwy 120 east and west and within the park between Wawona and Yosemite Valley. r r

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r For more information:r

r Amtrak: 800-USA-RAIL (800-872-7245)r

r Greyhound: 800-231-2222r

r VIA Bus: 800-369-PARK (800-369-7275) or 209-384-1315r

r YARTS: <http://www.yarts.com/>r I have frequently used Amtrak, Greyhound, and VIA bus, and I can attest thatr traveling to Yosemite by any of these means (particularly via Amtrak + Via) isr nice.r r

r r

r REGULARLY SCHEDULED BUS SERVICE INTO YOSEMITE -- visitr <http://www.yosemite.com/yarts/>r for details!r

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r Transportation withIN Yosemite National Parkr

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r Bus service information: 209-372-1240 or at Yosemite Lodge Tour Desk.r

r r

r FREE shuttle buses!r

r r

r I **strongly** encourage you to use shuttle buses, within the areas theyr serve, in lieu of driving your car. Use of the shuttle buses decreasesr traffic congestion and pollution, and allow you to enjoy the sceneryr without concentrating on driving and being concerned about finding ar parking space. Please note that during summer days, the Mariposa Grover road CLOSES frequently to ALL traffic except shuttle buses and vehiclesr displaying disabled-person placards. The road closes when the parking lotr at the Grove fills up, so park at Wawona and take the shuttle bus.r

r r

r FREE shuttle buses run:r

r

1. around eastern Yosemite Valley (including stops near all major trailheads,r concessions, and most campgrounds),r
2. between Wawona and the Mariposa Grove (summer), andr
3. Between Tioga Pass and May Lake, including several stops in Tuolumner Meadows, Tenaya Lake, and Olmsted Point (summer).r

r r r

r For-fee shuttle busesr

r r

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r A hikers' bus runs daily (during summer) between Yosemite Valley andr Glacier Point. A fee is charged for this service. This is a good way to visit the Glacier Point area without having to hike up to Glacier Point and back.r

r r

r A hikers' bus runs from Yosemite Valley to Tuolumne Meadows daily duringr the summer. A fee is charged for this service. The bus driver will stop at trailheads along the Tioga Road between Yosemite Valley and Tuolumner Meadows if you inform the driver in advance.r

r r

r **Bus Length Restrictions**

r r Here are the current restrictions on maximum bus length on park roadsr (as of June 2006):r r

r

- Highway 41 (Wawona Rd.) - buses up to 45 feet in length allowed.

r r

- Glacier Pt Road - buses over 30 feet in length are restricted from travelling beyond the turnoff to Badger Pass.

r r

- Mariposa Grove of Big Trees - Buses over 40 feet in length are not allowed, parking is extremely limited.

r r

- Hetch Hetchy Rd - Any vehicle exceeding 25 feet in length or 96 inches in width is prohibited.

r r

- Highway 140 (El Portal Rd.) - buses up to 45 feet in length are allowed.r Update (9/2006): due to a rockslide, a detour with a temporary 28' vehicle limit is in effect.r

r r

- Highway 120 (Big Oak Flat Rd. and Tioga Rd.) - buses up to 45 feet in length are allowed.

r r

- Highway 120 West, outside of the park, from the park boundary near the Big Oak Flat Entrance to the Highway 49 Junction at Moccasin is restricted to buses over 40 feet in length.r CHP is enforcing this restriction, so before you suggest a bus use this route please be sure that the bus is no longer than 40 feet.r This is a Caltrans/CHP-enforced restriction that has been in effect for over 5 years.

r r

r **Hitch hiking**

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r Hitch hiking is discouraged in Yosemite, and for good reason. In 1995, a National Park Ranger picked up a seemingly-nice hitch hiker and was subsequently kidnapped. Don't do it. There are plenty of buses to take

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you where you want to go. Hitch hiking in Yosemite is not as reliable as in other parts of the country because of the relative rarity of vehicles with room to take on an additional passenger and his/her gear.

r r

r **IF YOU WILL VISIT YOSEMITE PLEASE READ AND REMEMBER THIS SECTION!**

r r

r If you love Yosemite and you believe others should have a chance to see it as you have, please abide by these rules. If that's not enough of a reason, if you violate these regulations you are in a violation of FEDERAL LAW, and you may be fined, arrested, and/or evicted from the park and possibly barred from reentry for a period. If **that** is not enough of a reason, keep in mind that many people have found out the hard way that if you violate the safety-related rules you may be seriously injured or killed.

r r

r IF YOU HAVE A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY IN YOSEMITE, DIAL 911. Report crimes, and property damage caused by wildlife, to park rangers.

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- DO NOT feed the animals! The animals in Yosemite are wild: please keep them that way. By feeding them, you are spoiling them. The animals will lose their ability to feed themselves. They will rely on you to feed them. When you aren't there, they will starve. If animals become too aggressive because humans are feeding them, they may have to be killed. In addition, human food is bad for, and may kill, wildlife. Think of it this way: if you feed an animal, you are killing it.

r These animals MAY BE DANGEROUS! By feeding them you risk serious injury or death! And if you are injured, the animal will be killed as a result of your irresponsibility. There is always a risk of transmission of often-fatal diseases, such as black plague or Hanta virus. Store your food properly. In campgrounds, Curry Village tent cabins, and Housekeeping Camp, ALWAYS use food storage lockers ("bear boxes"); in the backcountry use bear canisters.

r r

r

- DO NOT LEAVE ANY FOOD (or anything resembling food or food containers, including ice chests, pizza boxes, candy wrappers, or any kind of food packaging or any other packaging that might interest a bear or anything that might possibly smell like food, including toothpaste, soap, cosmetics, lotions, sunscreen, lip balm, coffee, garbage, fragrance containers, etc.) IN YOUR CAR!!!

r During the daytime, it's probably safe to leave food in your car, IF NECESSARY, but it MUST NOT be visible (put it in your trunk, if possible). During nighttime hours, NEVER leave ANY food ANYWHERE in your car. A bear will smell it (even if you can't) and a bear will get it. Store your food indoors (in a hard-sided structure) or use a bear box, if one is available, AT ALL TIMES. Bears don't care about car alarms, door locks, or any other anti-theft devices. Never leave unsecured food

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unattended. If a bear obtains food from your campsite or vehicle, it is one step closer to death-- and it's your fault!

r r

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- DO NOT feed, taunt, or tease the bears. Bears are stronger than you. (If you'd like to see how strong they are, take a look in the Valley Visitor Center.) If you feed, taunt, or tease them, they may attack you. There has never been an unprovoked attack by a black bear in Yosemite. If a bear approaches, make noise, wave your arms, and throw SMALL stones at the bear. (The point of throwing objects at the bear is to scare it away-- not to injure it!) Do not chase the bear. Do not run from the bear. Bears run faster than you and climb trees better and faster than you.

If a bear approaches you because you have food and is not frightened by the above measures, leave the food and walk away. Do not argue with the bear. NEVER try to retrieve anything from a bear.

r r

r

- DO NOT feed, taunt, or tease the deer. The deer may appear to be harmless, but they have killed people in the past! In fact, the only death due to a wildlife attack that has occurred in Yosemite was caused by a (taunted) deer.

r

- DO NOT feed the squirrels. By feeding them, you support an unnaturally larger population of squirrels. The squirrels may have bubonic (black) plague. If you come into contact with squirrels, YOU could get bubonic plague!

Remember this: The best way to enjoy the wildlife is to watch it.

r r

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- DO NOT ride your bicycle on trails. You are allowed to ride your bicycle ONLY on roads and designated, paved bike paths. If it is not a well paved path with a yellow line down the middle, it is not a bike path. Roads and bike paths are easy to recognize. And remember, pedestrians ALWAYS have the right of way. So do not assume that because you are on a bike path, you can ignore everyone else. Use a light if riding at night.

r

- Pets are not permitted on ANY trails within the park, only on paved surfaces (excluding the tram road in the Mariposa Grove).

r

- DO NOT collect or deface any of the natural or historical resources. This includes rocks, berries, leaves, cones, pine needles, flowers, arrowheads, or petroglyphs. Do not remove anything from the park (except trash) unless you brought it into the park.

r

- DO NOT hunt. Hunting is illegal in Yosemite. You will be prosecuted to the fullest extent allowed by law.

r r r

r This list of rules is by no means a complete list, but some of the more important and commonly violated rules.r

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Part 2: Accomodations and Services

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- Camping in Yosemite
- Camping outside Yosemite
- Accomodations in Yosemite
- Accomodations outside Yosemite
- Services in Yosemite

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r CAMPING IN YOSEMITEr

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r Many of the campgrounds inside Yosemite National Park require reservations. Reservations may be made up to FIVE months in advance.r Starting the fifteenth day of each month, a month's worth of camping start-dates is available. For example, on January 15th, it is possible to make reservations with a start date between 15 June through 14 July.r

r r

r The Wawona, Tuolumne Meadows, and Hetch Hetchy Backpackers campgrounds have limited room for horse use.r

r r

r Group campgrounds are available in Yosemite Valley, Hodgdon Meadow,r Tuolumne Meadows, Bridalveil Creek, Wawona, and Hetch Hetchy Backpackers.r Each group site can accommodate 30 people. You may make reservations for Yosemite Valley, Hodgdon Meadow, and Tuolumne Meadows.r

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- r
- r 877-444-6777 (toll free)r
- r 1-301-722-1257 National Parks Reservation System. Campground reservations.r
- r <http://www.recreation.gov/r> for online reservations and information.r
- r <http://www.yosemitesites.com/faq/r> for unofficial information on campground availability (by dates and campground).r

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r Rules for car camping in Yosemite:r

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- Camping is permitted only in designated campsites.r r

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- Yosemite is BEAR HABITAT. Federal law requires that you PROPERLY STORE FOOD and other aromatic substances AT ALL TIMES! This includes ALL food (regardless of and including packaging), drinks, toothpaste, soap, cosmetics, etc. Proper storage means keeping ALL food, etc. in bear boxes at ALL TIMES. All campgrounds have bear boxes. Bears recognize ice-chests and many other types of food containers (including, for example, pizza boxes) and can easily break into your car to get them. Keep all food you are not actually handling stored in a CLOSED bear box. Your bear box MUST be closed at ALL times! NEVER leave food in your car overnight, under any circumstances.r r

r

- DO NOT FEED the animals! This includes squirrels, no matter how much they beg. Human food is unhealthy for wildlife and feeding of the wildlife makes them reliant on humans for food.r r

r

- FIREWOOD COLLECTION IS PROHIBITED IN YOSEMITE VALLEY. You may purchase firewood at Housekeeping Camp, Curry Village, and Yosemite Village. Outside Yosemite Valley, collection of DOWNED firewood is permitted. Do not cut down trees or remove branches from trees.r r

r

- CAMPFIRES are permitted only in fire pits. During summer, campfires are prohibited in Yosemite Valley except between 5pm and 10pm in order to reduce pollution. Before going to sleep or leaving the campsite, you must completely extinguish the fire.r r

r

- QUIET HOURS are from 10pm to 6am. Please show courtesy to your neighbors and refrain from making unnecessary noise during these hours (and during the day, for that matter). Generator use is permitted sparingly in most campgrounds between 7am and 7pm, though their use is discouraged. Please show courtesy to your neighbors and refrain from using a radio: it is very irritating to the hundreds of other people in the campground.r r

r

- CAMPING LIMIT: There is a seven-day camping limit in Yosemite Valley and Wawona between June and September, and a 30-day limit per year. The camping limit elsewhere is 14 days between June and September, and 30 days per year.r

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r CAMPGROUNDS IN YOSEMITEr

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r All car campgrounds in Yosemite have fire pits or grills, picnic tables, r and food storage lockers (“bear boxes”). No campground has hook-ups. r The maximum length for RVs is 40 feet. Many campgrounds have campground hosts. These volunteers are available to answer your questions r and help you solve any problems. For law-enforcement or emergencies, and if a bear is in the campground, call 911. r

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- r r [Official information on Yosemite campgrounds.](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/camping.htm) r
<http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/camping.htm> r

r r

- r r [Campground Maps](http://www.yosemite.ca.us/maps/campground_maps.html) are at http://www.yosemite.ca.us/maps/campground_maps.html r

rr rr r

r r Upper and Lower River campgrounds were closed permanently r after the 1997 flood. r Whether these lost campgrounds will ever be replaced is still up in the air. r r

r r

r Campgrounds in Yosemite

Campground	Sites	RV	Dump	Sta	Pets	Parking	Seasons	Reserve	Cost/Night	r
YOSEMITE VALLEY - 1-209-372-8502 for information only -r										
North Pines	85	y	no		no	yes	Apr-Sep	yes	\$20/site	map r
Lower Pines	80	y	no		no	yes	Mar-Oct	yes	\$20/site	map r
Upper Pines	238	y	yes		yes	yes	AllYear	yes	\$20/site	map r
Camp 4	35	no	no		no	nearby	AllYear	walk-in	\$5/person	map r
Backpackers	25	no	no		no	no	May-Oct	walk-in	\$5/person	r
WAWONA AREA r										
Wawona	100	y	no		yes	yes	AllYear	no	\$20/site	map r
Bridalveil	110	y	no		yes	yes	Jun-Sep	no	\$14/site	map r
TUOLUMNE MEADOWS, TIOGA ROAD, and HETCH HETCHY AREAS - 1-209-372-4025 and 2123r										
Hodgdon Mdw	105	y	no		yes	yes	AllYear	yes	\$20/site	map r
Hetch Hetchy	19	no	no		no	no	Apr-Nov	no	\$5/person	r
Crane Flat	166	y	no		yes	yes	May-Oct	yes	\$14/site	map r
Tamarack Flat	52	no	no		yes	yes	Jun-Sep	no	\$10/site	map r
White Wolf	87	y	no		yes	yes	Jul-Sep	no	\$14/site	map r
Yosemite Creek	75	no	no		no	no	Jul-Sep	no	\$10/site	r
Porcupine Flat	52	y	no		no	no	Jul-Sep	no	\$10/site	r
Tuolumne Mdws	314	y	yes		yes	yes	Jun-Sep	yes	\$14/site	map r
					no	no	Jun-Sep	no	\$5/person	r
Campground Tap Water Toilets Showers Nearby Laundry Nearby Market Nearby r										
YOSEMITE VALLEY r										
North Pines	yes		flush		yes		yes		yes	r
Upper Pines	yes		flush		yes		yes		yes	r
Lower Pines	yes		flush		yes		yes		yes	r
Camp 4	yes		flush		yes		yes		yes	r

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Backpackers	yes	flush	yes	yes	yes	r
WAWONA AREA						
Wawona	yes	flush	no	no	yes	r
Bridalveil	yes	flush	no	no	no	r
TUOLUMNE MEADOWS, TIOGA ROAD, and HETCH HETCHY AREA						
Hodgdon Mdw	yes	flush	no	no	no	r
Hetch Hetchy	yes	flush	no	no	no	r
Crane Flat	yes	flush	no	no	yes	r
Tamarack Flat	no	pit	no	no	no	r
White Wolf	yes	flush	no	no	no	r
Yosemite Cr	no	pit	no	no	no	r
PorcupineFlat	no	pit	no	no	no	r
Tuolumne Mdws	yes	flush	yes	no	yes	r

rr r

r Historical Campground Names

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r The campgrounds were originally identified by numbers instead of names. r The numbers originate back to the 1800s when Yosemite Valley was administered by the State of California. r Camps 1 - 5 were established by the state and abandoned as they had no sanitation facilities and were also polluted from raw sewage upstream from the Sentinel Hotel. r Camps 6 - 20 were established by the U. S. government. r Numbers were used until the early 1970s when all campgrounds were given names. r Here are the numbers:

r

- Camp 1: El Capitan Meadow; abandoned soon after 1906
- Camp 2: Bridalveil Meadow, for army troops; abandoned soon after 1906
- Camp 3: West of Yosemite Village, south of Merced River; abandoned soon after 1906
- Camp 4: Sunnyside Walk-in Campground. r Previously known as Camp 20, a 1930-era winter campground. r Renumbered Camp 4 in 1941 and became famous as a climber's campground of the 1960s. r The name was restored to "Camp 4" in 2003
- Camp 5: Between Yosemite Lodge and Yosemite Creek; abandoned soon after 1906 (Later Camp Lost Arrow?)
- Camp 6: "Camp Tresidder." r Former employee camp south of Yosemite Village. r Closed after 1997 flood; now a day use parking lot.
- Camp 7: Former Lower River Campground; closed after 1997 flood
- Camp 8: Later Kennyville (tent cabins). r Located at present Ahwahnee Hotel before hotel was built in 1926.
- Camp 9: "Organization Camp." r Former Valley Group Camp east of the backpacker's campground next to and including Royal Arch Meadow; now naturalized
- Camp 10: near Iron Spring on Tenaya Creek, south of old Mirror Lake Road; abandoned when Mirror Lake Road aligned over it
- Camp 11: Upper Pines Campground
- Camp 12: North Pines Campground
- Camp 14: Lower Pines Campground
- Camp 15: Former Upper River Campground; closed after 1997 flood
- Camp 16: Housekeeping Camp.
- Camp 17: "Camp Tecoya." r Now Tecoya concessionaire residential area east of Yosemite Village

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- Camp 18: Former campground at current Yosemite Village post office and photo studio.
- Camp 19: Former Government employee campground between Sentinel Bridge and Housekeeping Camp; closed between 1968-1979.
- Camp 20: Former campground at Church Bowl between Yosemite Village and Ahwahnee hotel. Another Camp 20 was a 1930-era winter campground now known as Camp 4.

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r CAMPING OUTSIDE YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARKr

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r Most of Yosemite National Park is surrounded by land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service. The US Forest Service operates campgrounds in the three national forests surrounding Yosemite. Camping is allowed in many places on BLM and USFS land where campgrounds do not exist. For more information about camping call:

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- r INF: Inyo NF, Lee Vining: 619-647-3000
- r SNF-M: Sierra NF, Mariposa: 209-966-3638
- r SNF-O: Sierra NF, Oakhurst: 559-683-4665
- r SNF-G: Stanislaus NF, Groveland: 209-962-7825
- r BLM: Bureau of Land Management, Mariposa: 209-966-3192
- r Mono: Mono County Parks and Recreation: 619-932-5248

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r **Campgrounds Outside Yosemite** r Note: the rates are out-dated; please contact the campground operator directly. r r

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Highway 140r

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Campground	Water	Sites	RV	Hookup	Fee	Season	Reserve/Info
KOA	showers	80	34 ft.	yes	\$25	all year	209-966-2201
McCabe Flat	river	6	27 ft.	no	free	all year	No/BLM-Mr
Willow Placer	river	4	27 ft.	no	free	all year	No/BLM-Mr
Railroad Flat	river	7	27 ft.	no	free	all year	No/BLM-Mr

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Highway 120 West (from Yosemite Valley)r

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Campground	Water	Sites	RV	Hookup	Fee	Season	Reserve/Info
Cherry Valley	tap	46	22 ft.	no	\$9-16	May-Nov	No/SNF-Gr
Sweetwater	tap	13	22 ft.	no	\$9	Apr-Nov	No/SNF-Gr
Lost Claim	pump	10	22 ft.	no	\$7	May-Sep	No/SNF-Gr
The Pines	tap	12	22 ft.	no	\$9	May-Nov	No/SNF-Gr

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Lumsden	river	10	no	no	free	Apr-Oct	No/SNF-Gr
Southfork	river	8	no	no	free	Apr-Oct	No/SNF-Gr
Lumsden Br.	river	10	no	no	free	Apr-Oct	No/SNF-Gr
Moccasin Pt.	showers	90	60 ft.	yes	\$13-17	allyear	209-852-2396r
Yosemite Lakes	showers	51	nolimit	yes	\$18	allyear	209-962-0110r
Pine Mt. Lake	showers	49	35 ft.	yes	\$12-18	allyear	209-962-8625r
Yos. Pines RV	showers	187	75 ft.	yes	\$17-25	allyear	209-962-7690r

Highway 41r

Campground	Water	Sites	RV	Hookup	Fee	Season	Reserve/Info
Summerdale	tap	30	35 ft.	no	\$12	May-Oct	no/SNF-Or
Big Sandy	stream	14	35 ft.	no	\$9	Jun-Oct	no/SNF-Or
Little Sandy	stream	10	26 ft.	no	free	Jun-Oct	no/SNF-Or
Nelder Grove	stream	7	25 ft.	no	free	Jun-Oct	no/SNF-Or
Bass Lake area	tap	258	35 ft.	no	\$15	allyear	800-280-2267r
Hi-Sierra RV	tap	40	40	yes	\$18-28\$	allyear	559-683-7662r

Highway 120 East (from Yosemite Valley)r

Campground	Water	Sites	RV	Hookup	Fee	Season	Reserve/Info
Tioga Lake	tap	13	30 ft.	no	\$8	Jun-Oct	no/INFr
Junction	stream	13	30 ft.	no	free	Jun-Oct	no/INFr
Ellery Lake	tap	12	30 ft.	no	\$8	Jun-Oct	no/INFr
Saddlebag Lake	tap	20	30 ft.	no	\$8	Jun-Oct	no/INFr
Sawmill	stream	12	no	no	free	Jun-Oct	no/INFr
Big Bend	tap	17	30 ft.	no	\$8	May-Oct	no/INFr
Aspen Grove	stream	50	40 ft.	no	\$5	Apr-Oct	no/Monor
Lee Vining Cr.	stream	100	40 ft.	no	\$5	Apr-Oct	no/Monor
Cattle Guard	stream	16	30 ft.	no	\$5	Apr-Oct	no/Monor

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r ACCOMODATIONS IN YOSEMITEr

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r Hotel-style accomodations in Yosemite National Parkr

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r Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts at Yosemite (DNC)r provides hotel-style accomodationsr within Yosemite National Park.r For reservations in Yosemite, call DNC atr 801-559-5000,r writer 6771 N Palm Ave.r Fresno, CA 93704,r or visit on the web atr <http://www.yosemitepark.com/>r

r r

r Accomodations within Yosemite range from tent-cabins in Curry Village tor luxury hotel suites at the Ahwahnee Hotel. You may make reservations upr to 366 days in advance, though it is generally possible to

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get some accommodations several months in advance without much difficulty, especially in winter. If you can't get reservations for the date(s) you want, you can try calling back a little later: cancellations are frequent. Alternatively, you can look at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/lodging.html> and make reservations near the park.

"The Redwoods" provides cabin-style lodging with kitchens. They are located in the southern end of the park (in Wawona near the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoia trees) please see <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/lodging.html#park>

NOTE: If you have trouble getting reservations within Yosemite, try the motels and hotels outside Yosemite. Rooms may be reserved 1 year + 1 day in advance. Lodging is easier to reserve and often lower-priced off-season (mid-Sept. to Memorial Day, Sept to May). You will find that many of them are lower-priced and nicer than accommodations within Yosemite . . . and most of all, easier to reserve!

- Be sure to remove ALL food and other items with a scent from your vehicle.
- Do not store food and related items in a tent cabin-- use a bear box!

Lodging in Yosemite

Accommodation	Style	Season	Cost (2004)	Notes
YOSEMITE VALLEY				
Curry Village	tent cabins	all year	\$75-80/night	public bathrooms
Curry Village	cabins	all year	\$80/night	public bathrooms
Curry Village	cabins	all year	\$88/night	
Housekeeping Camp	tent cabins	Spr-Fall	\$67/night	public bathrooms
Yosemite Lodge	hotel room	all year	\$97-161/night	
Ahwahnee Hotel	luxury hotel	all year	\$373-822/night	
Ahwahnee Hotel	cottage	all year	\$449/night	
TUOLUMNE MEADOWS				
Tuolumne Meadows Lodge	tent cabins	Jun-Sep	\$71/night	public bathrooms
YOSEMITE BACKCOUNTRY -- no roads --				
High Sierra Camps	tent cabins	Jun-Sep	\$112/night	public bathrooms
WHITE WOLF				
White Wolf Lodge	tent cabins	Jun-Sep	\$67/night	public bathrooms
White Wolf Lodge	cabins	Jun-Sep	\$84/night	

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WAWONA

Wawona Hotel	hotel	All year	\$115/night	public bathrooms
Wawona Hotel	hotel	All year	\$170/night	

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r ACCOMODATIONS OUTSIDE YOSEMITE

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r Please seer [r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/lodging.html](http://www.yosemite.ca.us/lodging.html) for information about hotels, motels, and cabins outside Yosemite Nationalr Park.r You can also make reservations there.r r r r

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r SERVICES IN YOSEMITE

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Service	Location	Season
Groceries	Yosemite Village (Yosemite Valley)	all year
	Curry Village (Yosemite Valley)	all year
	Housekeeping Camp (Yosemite Valley)	spring-fall
	Crane Flat (Tioga/Big Oak Flat Rd jctn)	all year
	Tuolumne Meadows	summerr
	White Wolf (along Tioga Road)	summerr
	Wawona	all year
Sporting Goods	Yosemite Village (Yosemite Valley)	summerr
	Curry Village (Yosemite Valley)	all year
	Tuolumne Meadows	summerr
Gas Stations	Wawona	all year
	Crane Flat	all year
	Tuolumne Meadows	summerr
	Yosemite Lodge (Yosemite Valley) CLOSED/REMOVED	
Post Office	Yosemite Village (Yosemite Valley)	all year
	Tuolumne Meadows	summerr
	Wawona	all year
	Curry Village (Yosemite Valley)	CLOSED
Showers (\$2)	Curry Village (Yosemite Valley)	all year
	Housekeeping Camp	summerr
Laundromat	Housekeeping Camp	summerr
Medical and Dental	Yosemite Village (towards the Ahwahnee)	all year

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r **RESTAURANTS IN YOSEMITE**r

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r r Not all eating facilities are open year-round.r r

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Restaurant	Description		Bkfst	Lnch	Dinner	Reservations
YOSEMITE VALLEY r						
Yosemite Village		(seating available nearby)r				
Degnan's Deli	sandwiches, deli	take-out	no	yes	yes	nor
Degnan's Pizza	pizza, ice cream	take-out	no	yes	yes	nor
Degnan's Pasta Pl	pasta buffet	sit-down	no	yes	yes	nor
Village Grill	fast food	take-out	yes	yes	yes	nor
r						
Yosemite Lodge						
Cafeteria	full meals	sit-down	yes	yes	yes	nor
Garden Terrace	buffet	sit-down	yes	no	yes	nor
Mtn. Room Rest	family restaurant	sit-down	no	no	yes	nor
r						
Ahwahnee Hotel r						
Ahwahnee	formal dinners, Sunday brunch		yes	yes	yes	209-372-1489r dinner onlyr
Curry Village (summer only)		(seating available nearby)r				
Cafeteria	full meals	sit-down	yes	yes	yes	nor
Hamburger Stand	fast food	take-out	yes	yes	yes	nor
Terrace Pizza	pizza	take-out	no	yes	yes	nor
r						
There are snack shops at Happy Isles (summer), Glacier Point (summer),r Yosemite Lodge Pool (summer), and Ahwahnee Hotel (afternoons).r						
r						
TUOLUMNE MEADOWS (summer only)r						
The Grill	fast food	take-out	yes	yes	yes	nor
TM Lodge	family	sit-down	yes	no	yes	209-372-1313r dinner onlyr
r						
WHITE WOLF (summer only)r						
White Wolf Lodge	family	sit-down	yes	no	yes	209-372-1316r dinner onlyr
WAWONA (April-October; weekends/holidays rest of year)r						
Wawona Hotel	family	sit-down	yes	yes	yes	209-372-6556r dinner onlyr
BADGER PASS (November-March)r						
Badger Pass	fast food/pizza	sit-down		yes	yes	nor

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Part 3: What to Do

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- [What to Do: hiking and backpacking](#) r
- [What to Do: visitor centers and museums](#)r
- [What to Do: interpretive activities](#)r
- [What to Do: Biking, River activities, Climbing, Tours](#)r
- [Yosemite in winter](#)r

r r r r

r **WHAT TO DO: Hiking and Backpacking**

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r Since some of the most frequently-asked questions deal with what hikes to do, this section will be the most detailed. Without question, the best reference for hiking and backpacking in Yosemite is:r

r r

r Schaffer, Jeffrey P., 1999, r [Yosemite National Park: A Natural History Guide To Yosemite and Its Trails](#).r Berkeley, Wilderness press, 274 p.r (includes updated, plasticized topographic map of Yosemite National Park and Vicinity, scale: 1:125,000. Cost of book in 2002: \$18.95,r \$13.27 on Amazon)r r

r r

r This and other hiking and backpacking books are at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/bookstore/>r r r

r r

r **HIKING IN YOSEMITE**r

r r

r A few things to keep in mind (in addition to the rules in the [Rules](#) section):r

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- Your safety is YOUR responsibility. Before attempting any hike with which you are unfamiliar, assess your abilities and limits. If you are uncertain, ask a ranger. Check the weather conditions the day of your hike. You must be prepared for storms in ANY month. Summer thunderstorms occur often in Yosemite (in addition, of course, to winter storms, which can occur from October through May). Carry plenty of food and water. Stay on the trail. Use extreme caution in and around streams: injuries and deaths due to accidents related to streams occur every year. Pay attention to all trail signs, and heed the warnings. You may be charged for the cost of search and rescue operations if you do something particularly stupid.r
- If you encounter horses or mules on the trail, move to the UPHILL side of the trail and allow the animals to pass. DO NOT make any sudden moves or loud noises. DO NOT attempt to touch or pet the animals.r

r r r

r **Popular Yosemite Valley Hikes**

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r Since most people ask about what hikes to do in Yosemite Valley, I will write a bit about these hikes. However, there are many, many hikes to do elsewhere in Yosemite. These include a few hikes in the Wawona area, along the Glacier Point Road, the Hetch Hetchy area, through the Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Merced Groves; and a variety of hikes along the Tioga Road, especially a great many in the Tuolumne Meadows and Tioga Pass areas. Short descriptions of some of these hikes may be added to this FAQ, at my leisure.

r r

r My trail descriptions are not a substitute for a topographic map or for a hiking guide to Yosemite. ALL of the trails going out of Yosemite Valley gain elevation quickly, so know how to interpret a topographic map so you can see for yourself what the elevation gain will be like. I included these trail descriptions only to provide a sense of what the hike involves. You must judge for yourself whether or not any of these hikes are appropriate for you. To do any of these hikes, you should be in good shape and should think twice if you have heart or respiratory problems.

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r **MIST TRAIL (Happy Isles to Nevada Fall) and the trail to HALF DOME**

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r **Vernal Fall Bridge** (All year; but it may be icy in winter)

r The most popular hike in Yosemite is the hike to the Vernal Fall Bridge. This hike begins at Happy Isles. The hike to the bridge and back to Happy Isles is only a few miles, but it is quite strenuous. If you want to hike to the bridge, I recommend that you continue a few more minutes to the place marked "Vernal Fall view." This view is at Lady Franklin Rock, and has a much better view of Vernal Fall than you get from the bridge.

r r

r **Top of Vernal Fall** (April-October; closed in winter, due to ice)

r Many people choose to continue up all the way to the top of Vernal Fall. The round trip distance for this hike is about 3 miles (5 km) and the elevation gain is about 1,000 ft (330 m). This is a short hike, but even more strenuous overall than the hike just to the bridge. During late spring and early summer, you will get drenched by the spray of the waterfall (which you will look forward to, since you will be hot). The latter part of the trail consists of granitic blocks stacked in such a way as to resemble a crude staircase. A staircase with very steep steps. This trail should be ascended and, in particular, descended with great caution.

r r

r **Top of Nevada Fall** (May-October)

r Some people continue all the way to the top of Nevada Fall. The round trip distance of this hike (from Happy Isles) is about 5 mi (8 km), though the actual distance varies depending upon the trail you take. After you pass Vernal Fall, the trail is mostly flat for a distance, after which you begin a long ascent of switchbacks

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comprised of another granitic staircase (with a view of Nevada Fall). Before you reach the granitic staircase, you will pass the Emerald Pool and Silver Apron. You will probably notice people playing in the water. **DO NOT BE TEMPTED!** This area has a very high occurrence of injuries and deaths. It is now illegal to enter the water in this area: you will be fined and charged for their rescue. There are much safer areas to play in the river. After you reach the top of Nevada Fall, be sure to climb down to the overlook. I recommend that you return to Happy Isles via the John Muir Trail, since it is much safer and easier to descend (not to mention that it's easier on your knees). This trail starts south of the river (other side of the bridge of the trail from which you ascended). This trail consists mostly of switchbacks. Be sure to continue all the way to the end of the trail if you want to avoid the Mist Trail. Be sure, also, to stop at Clark Point, which has a nice view of Vernal and Nevada Falls. A winter route is generally open year-round and uses the lower portion of the John Muir trail and the upper portion of the Mist Trail.

r r

r **Half Dome** (June-September)r

r I'd recommend starting this hike as early as you possibly can, even if it's just as the sun is rising (~6 am), or even before sunrise. Don't start too late... Starting early has several advantages: 1) you reduce the likelihood of getting killed by thunderstorms, 2) you are more likely to finish your hike before it gets dark, 3) you do the hard hiking in the morning, when it isn't as hot, and 4) you get to Half Dome before everyone else (hopefully). During mid- to late-afternoon there is literally a traffic jam on the cables. It can be quite scary, especially for a first-timer. If, when you arrive at the base of Half Dome, there are thunderclouds, **DO NOT ASCEND Half Dome!** People are killed by lightning strikes on top of Half Dome! The length of the hike is about 15 miles. You should undertake this hike only if you are in good physical condition. If you never, or rarely, exercise it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to finish this hike. A summary of the trail: read the above descriptions of the hikes up to Vernal and Nevada Falls. Eventually, you reach the top of Nevada Fall, and continue to the left past the new outhouses into Little Yosemite Valley. This part of the hike is flat. Eventually, you begin the long ascent to the base of Half Dome (make sure you don't miss the junction to Half Dome- turn left at the junction), and finally you reach the base of the cables. At the bottom is a box containing used work gloves (I recommend bringing your own)- the gloves help some people (both others) on the cables.

r r

r **YOSEMITE FALLS** (All year, depending on conditions)r

r r

r Another popular trail is the one to the top of Yosemite Falls. This hike is about 6.8 mi (10.9 km) round trip, elevation gain is nearly 3,000 ft (900 m). I recommend starting this hike early because the most difficult part of the hike (the last two-thirds of it) is completely unshaded, and in summer can be quite hot. This hike is a strenuous hike. If you don't feel up to hiking all the way to the top, a good place to hike to is Columbia Rock, only about 2 miles round trip. If you make it to Columbia Rock, I recommend that you continue up a few more steep switchbacks, down a few more, and around a corner to a view of Upper Yosemite Fall. The trailhead is behind the Sunnyside Walk-in Campground, just north of the Yosemite Lodge and next to the Chevron Station. (The trailhead, though well marked, can be difficult to find, so if you can't find it, ask.) The first part of the trail consists of short switchbacks through a well shaded oak forest. Eventually you will reach Columbia Rock, a railed-in viewpoint with one of the best views of Yosemite Valley. Just above Columbia Rock are three steep gravelly switchbacks, after which you descend a few and come upon a view of Upper Yosemite Fall. After catching your breath on a relatively flat part of the trail, you begin to ascend a series of switchbacks that may seem to go on for ever. Most of these switchbacks are completely unshaded. Finally, you'll reach to top of the trail. Be sure to (*carefully*) descend to the Yosemite Falls overlook. During times

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of low flow, you are likely to see people playing in Yosemite Creek, if you decide to join them, use extreme caution as the rocks are slippery (even when not wet), and almost every year people have the fatal experience of falling over Upper Yosemite Fall. If you want an even better view of Yosemite Valley, continue the extra mile (1.6 km) east to Yosemite Point.

r r

r **GLACIER POINT** (May-October)r

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r Most of the people who get to Glacier Point do it the easy way: they drive. For a much more fulfilling experience, hike to it. My favorite way to do this is to start early and ascend the Four Mile Trail and to descend via the Panorama Trail to Happy Isles. The hike to Glacier Point via the Four Mile Trail is actually 4.6 mi (7.4 km). The hike from Glacier Point to Happy Isles via the Panorama and John Muir Trails is 9.1 mi (14.5 km). (You can also descend via the Mist Trail, which will make the distance a little less.) This hike is strenuous. If you have trouble ascending the Four Mile Trail, I recommend returning down it, instead of taking the Panorama Trail. The Four Mile Trail consists almost completely of switchbacks (many of which are shaded). When it's time to leave, you can return via the Four Mile Trail, or you can descend via the Panorama Trail. From the Panorama Trail, you get various, and oft times unfamiliar, views of Half Dome, Clouds Rest, Nevada and Vernal Falls, and many other peaks. You also get the best (and basically, only) view of Illilouette Fall-- a treat. You'll descend the Panorama Trail via switchbacks until you reach Illilouette Creek (if you reach Illilouette Creek and you haven't seen the waterfall, return up the trail a short distance to the viewpoint). After you pass Illilouette Creek (use extreme caution around the stream), you will ascend sunny switchbacks. Eventually you will begin a descent in a well shaded portion of the trail and reach the top of Nevada Fall. From here you can choose to descend via the John Muir Trail or via the Mist Trail (for descriptions of both, read the "Mist Trail" section above).

r r

r **SENTINEL DOME and TAFT POINT** (June-October)r

r r

r These are two relatively easy and very rewarding short hikes. To reach the trailhead, drive 13.2 mi (21.2 km) on the Glacier Point Road from its junction with the Wawona Road (or, if driving back towards the Wawona Road from Glacier Point, 2.3 mi (3.7 km)) to the signed parking area on the north side of the road. Both trails start at this trailhead and both are approximately 2 mi (3.2 km) round trip. Unlike many trails in Yosemite, these are also relatively flat. The Sentinel Dome trail has a bit of steep climbing just before you reach Sentinel Dome, and the Taft Point trail descends a little bit right before Taft Point. You may see wildflowers (especially along the Taft Point Trail) and though the views rival that from Glacier Point, you will see relatively few people.

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r **Popular Wawona-Area Hikes** r

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r **CHILNUALNA FALLS** (April-October)r

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r This is the only waterfall in the Wawona area, but it's quite different than those found in Yosemite Valley in that it's really a series of cascades. In order to see the largest of these, it is necessary to hike. The signed trailhead is on the Chilnualna Falls Road in Wawona. The hike is 4.1 mi (6.6 km) one way and gains about 2,000 ft (600 m). It is a fairly pleasant hike with nice views. Late in the summer, many people enjoy swimming near the top (and bottom)... do this at your own risk.

r r

r **MARIPOSA GROVE** (May-October)

r r

r The Mariposa Grove contains the largest Giant Sequoias in Yosemite and is the only grove containing a living tunnel tree. The trailhead is in the upper end of the Mariposa Grove parking lot (consider taking the shuttle during the summer). Most people walk 0.8 mi (1.3 km) one way to the Grizzly Giant and the California Tunnel Tree. This takes about 45 minutes to an hour (round trip). However, if you have a few hours, continue up the trail (straight through the tunnel tree) to the Upper Portion of the Mariposa Grove. There are a few ways to go (see a map), but whichever way you go you'll notice few Giant Sequoias past the Lower Grove due to the steep, dry slopes. Once you reach the Upper Grove, you'll see many Sequoias (of all ages). You'll also notice that the forest is more open. The presence of young Sequoias (many more than in the Lower Grove) and the openness of the forest is a result of the return of fire to the Upper Grove, which is a natural part of the ecosystem. The Upper Grove has a small museum, bathrooms, and a water fountain, in addition to some famous Sequoias, including the Fallen Wawona Tunnel Tree (see the [appendix](#)), the Telescope Tree, and the Galen Clark Tree. Allow about 3 hours to return to the trailhead.

r r

r **BACKPACKING IN YOSEMITE**

r r

r Rules for backpackers:

- r
 - wilderness permits are required for all overnight stays in Yosemite backcountry
- r
 - the information you receive with your wilderness permit will contain restrictions on its use: read this and follow it
- r
 - the NPS **STRONGLY** encourages backpackers to use bear-resistant food storage canisters ("bear savers") (see below)
- r
 - proper food storage is required by federal law
- r
 - **DO NOT LEAVE ANY FOOD IN YOUR CAR!**

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

r

- campfires and wood gathering are prohibited above 9600 feet; wherever campfires are permitted, you must only use existing campfire rings (don't make new rings)

r

- pack out all of your waste

rr r

r Wilderness permits are now available from the Yosemite Association. About 50% of the trailhead's quota is reserved in advance (\$3 fee), and the other 50% is available on a first come, first served basis. Reserved permits are available 24 weeks (though no less than 2 days) in advance. For recorded permit information, call 209-372-0310; for permit reservations, call 209-372-0740 between 8am and 5pm Pacific Time.

r r

r PROPER FOOD STORAGE is required. You **MUST** use a bear-proof bear canister! You may rent a bear canister for \$3/per TRIP (not per day) from any permit station in the park (pick it up when you get your permit!) Bear boxes are available at all High Sierra Camps and at the campground in Little Yosemite Valley.

r r

r Popular backpacks are in the Tuolumne Meadows area, in the Tenaya Lake/Clouds Rest area, and around Little Yosemite Valley. Permits for these areas are most difficult to obtain. There are many areas in Yosemite's backcountry that equal the beauty of the popular places, but are much more remote, and therefore less crowded and easier to obtain permits for.

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r **WHAT TO DO: Visitor Centers and Museums**

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r **Yosemite Valley**

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r The main visitor center in Yosemite is located in Yosemite Village. The Valley Visitor Center has various natural history exhibits and the Yosemite Bookstore. Rangers or volunteers are on hand to answer any questions you may have.

r r

r Also in Yosemite Village is the Yosemite Museum, which includes an art gallery (summer), and the Indian Cultural Museum. Behind the museum is a reconstructed Miwok Indian Village.

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

r r

r Ther LeConte Memorial is a small structure near Housekeeping Camp staffed byr Sierra Club volunteers. Various presentations occur during summer.r

r r

r The Happy Isles Nature Center, located near the end of the John Muir Trailr at Happy Isles, houses a variety of **excellent** natural history exhibits.r Great for kids (and adults). There is a small Yosemite Bookstore here.r Open May-September.r

r r

r **Tuolumne Meadows**

r r

r The Tuolumne Meadows Visitor Center offers a small, but impressive,r collection of preserved plants and animals. Rangers are available forr questions. There is a small Yosemite Bookstore here. Open summer.r

r r

r Parsons Lodge, built in 1915 by the Sierra Club, has a focus on humanr history in the Tuolumne Meadows area. Open summer.r

r r

r **Wawona and The Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias**

r r

r Ther Pioneer Yosemite History Center has relocated historic buildings and horser drawn wagons. During summer, volunteers portray pioneers and occupy ther historic buildings. Wagon rides are offered (for a small fee) that taker visitors across the historic covered bridge. During the rest of the year,r a self-guided tour is available. There is a small Yosemite Bookstore here (during summer and early fall).r

r r

r The Mariposa Grove Museum is located in a small log cabin in the Mariposar Grove and has various exhibits interpreting the natural history of ther giant sequoia, and a Yosemite Bookstore. Open summer to early fall.r

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r **WHAT TO DO: Interpretive Activities**

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The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

The Park Service, concessionaire (DNC), and other organizations offer interpretive activities year-round in Yosemite. These activities include campfire talks, ranger walks emphasizing various subjects, and slide shows. The Yosemite Theater in Yosemite Village offers live stage-theater and film programs, including Lee Stetson's famous portrayals of John Muir. Tickets may be bought in advance to ensure seating (available at the Valley Visitor Center, or at the Theater's door, if seating is available). For complete information and schedules, look in the Yosemite Guide.

r r

During the summer, interpretive walks and talks are offered in Yosemite Valley, at Glacier Point, Wawona, Mariposa Grove, Crane Flat and Big Oak Flat, White Wolf, and Tuolumne Meadows. During winter, activities are offered in Yosemite Valley and Badger Pass Ski Area. Schedules are posted and are published in the Yosemite Guide.

r r

The Yosemite Association offers a variety of natural history and other outdoors seminars throughout the year. Most of the seminars involve short hikes or backpacks. A free catalog describing the seminars, their requirements, and the costs is available from the Yosemite Association. For information call 209-379-2321.

r r

The Yosemite Institute offers excellent week-long outdoor education programs, mostly for junior high school and high school classes. For more information, call 209-372-4441.

r r

The National Park Service Branch of Education offers junior ranger programs (July through early September) and school programs. For more information, call 209-375-9505.

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r WHAT TO DO: Biking, River activities, Climbing, Tours

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For information on winter activities, see the winter section of this FAQ.

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Bicycles can be rented from Curry Village during the summer and Yosemite Lodge year round (weather permitting). Bicycles, whether rented or your own, may only be ridden on roads and **designated** paved bike paths (a designated bike path has a yellow stripe down the middle). Bicycles are NEVER allowed on poorly paved or unpaved trails. Pedestrians always have the right of way: keep in mind that bike paths are not reserved only for bicyclists, but that pedestrians frequently use them. Please use appropriate lighting when riding bicycles at night.

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

r r

r The rivers of Yosemite offer many recreational activities. During earlyr summer, many people enjoy calm-water rafting in eastern Yosemite Valley. Ther rivers may be off-limits when the water level is too high and rafting may be prohibited when discharge is too low. ALL rafters are required to haver life preservers. Catch-and-release fishing for native rainbow trout isr allowed, but a valid California fishing license is required for adults.r Swimming is allowed when the river's discharge is not too high (usually byr mid or late summer). Try to avoid walking and climbing on the riverbanks,r as this results in a large amount of bank erosion. The best place tor enter or exit the river is at sand bars, not at steep banks. **DO NOT ENTERr OR EXIT THE RIVER via steep banks!** Please stay out of closed areas alongr the river.r

r r

r During winter, Badger Pass ski area is open for downhill andr cross-country skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing (no sledding).r Rentals are available at Badger Pass. Most of the park is open forr cross-country skiing during winter (wilderness permit is required forr overnight trips), though only Badger Pass/Glacier Point, Crane Flat, andr the Mariposa Grove areas have marked trails.r

r r

r Yosemite has downhill and cross-country ski schools, for more information,r call:r Cross-country ski school: 209-372-1244r Downhill ski school: 209-372-1000r

r r

r Curry Village has an ice-rink (winter only). Rental skates are available.r

r r

r Yosemite is world-renowned for its rock climbing opportunities. Climbsr within the park range from grade I through grade VI. Backcountry permitsr are required for overnight climbs. The Yosemite Mountaineering Schoolr offers instruction in rock climbing. For more information, callr 209-372-8344.r

r r

r Horse, mule, burro, and llama riding are permitted in the park. Ther Yosemite Stables offers mule rides in Yosemite Valley and Wawona in spring through fall, and in Tuolumne Meadows in summer. Horses and other suchr animals are not permitted in the Mariposa Grove (except on the Outer Loopr Trail) and on steep trails. Ask about restrictions at the nearest visitorr center.r

r r

r The concessionaire (DNC) offers,r for a fee, various sightseeing tours in different parts of ther park. Tours are offered in Yosemite Valley (year round), Mariposar Grove (spring-fall), Tioga Road/Tuolumne Meadows (summer), and Glacierr Point (summer-fall). For more information, call 209-372-1240.r

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r YOSEMITE IN WINTERr

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r Winter Drivingr

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r Snow chains may be required on any park road AT ANY TIME. Winter stormsr can occur any time from September through May. Therefore, you MUST carryr snow chains that fit on the tires of the vehicle you're driving and knowr how to use them between November 1st and March 31st. After winter storms,r roads that are normally open may be closed temporarily.r

r r

r For up-to-dater recorded road and weather information in Yosemite, call 209-372-0200 orr go to <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo/do10map.htm> andr <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo/do9map.htm> for road information for roads leading into Yosemite (and sometimes inr Yosemite). Visit <http://www.nps.gov/yose/roads.htm> for road information inside Yosemite;r call 209-372-0200 for the most current conditions.r

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r Skiing and Ice-skatingr

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r During winter, Badger Pass ski area is open for downhill skiing andr cross-country skiing (no sledding). Most of the park is open forr cross-country skiing during winter (wilderness permit is required forr overnight trips), though only Badger Pass, Crane Flat, and the Mariposa Grove areas have marked trails.r

r r

r Yosemite has downhill and cross-country ski schools, for more information,r call:r Cross-country ski school: 209-372-1244,r Downhill ski school: 209-372-1000r

r r

r Curry Village has an ice-rink. Rental skates are available.r

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r River Activitiesr

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r Water temperatures in streams are near or at freezing during winter.r Thin ice may exist. Therefore, extreme caution should be exercised nearr rivers.r

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r Hypothermia

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r Even with relatively warm daytime temperatures around 50°F (10°C) in Yosemite Valley, it is easy to become affected by hypothermia. To avoid hypothermia, keep yourself and your clothes dry. Physical exhaustion and lack of food increase your susceptibility to hypothermia. Synthetic fabrics, silk, or wool should be worn in place of cotton fabrics. Additionally, do not exercise to the point of exhaustion and be sure to eat plenty of food (especially carbohydrates) and drink plenty of water. Be familiar with the symptoms and treatments for hypothermia. Hypothermia is a potentially fatal injury.

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Part 4: Resources

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- [Where to more get information about Yosemite](#)
- [Books about Yosemite](#)
- [Online Books about Yosemite](#)
- [Appendix: Firefall, tunnel trees, Mirror Lake, 1997 flood, Yosemite Valley Plan \(the "real" FAQs\)](#)
- [Acknowledgements](#)

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r WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOSEMITE

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r For general park information:
r Yosemite Public Information, PO Box Box 577, Yosemite, CA 95389

r r

r <http://www.nps.gov/yose/>

r r

r The National Park Service Interpretation Division also has a useful [Yosemite FAQ](#).

r r

r Phone numbers:

r 209-372-0200 (recording for all sorts of information, can also connect to a live person Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)
r 209-372-0740 (wilderness permit reservations)
r 209-372-1000 (DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite: lodging and ski information)

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The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

r **Support organizations**

r r

r **Yosemite Association**,r PO Box 545,r Yosemite National Park, CA 95389r

r r

r 209-372-2646r <http://www.yosemite.org/r>

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r YA is the local cooperating association for Yosemite National Park. As a non-profit organization, it donates most of its profits to park service education, interpretive, and research activities in Yosemite. YA operates the Yosemite Bookstores in the Yosemite visitor centers, the Ostrander Ski Hut, Wilderness Permit reservations, and Yosemite Field Seminars, among other things. Formerly the Yosemite Natural History Association. For membership and other information, call or write.

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r **Yosemite Fund**,r PO Box 637,r Yosemite National Park, CA 95389r

r r

r 415-434-1782r <http://www.yosemitedfund.org/r>

r r

r Established by the Yosemite Association, YF, now a separate organization, funds many projects in Yosemite, including meadow restoration projects and the placing of bear boxes in Yosemite campgrounds.

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r **Yosemite Institute**,r PO Box 487,r Yosemite National Park, CA 95389r

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r 209-379-9511r <http://www.yni.org/yi/r>

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r The Yosemite Institute, YI, provides various environmental educational programs, mostly for junior high and high school children.

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r **Accommodations**

r r

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r For hotel-style accommodations in Yosemite:r DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite,r 5410 East Home Avenue,r Fresno, CA 93727,r 559-253-5635,r <http://www.yosemitepark.com/>r (Formerly the Yosemite Park and Curry Company.)r

r r

r For hotel-style accommodations outside of Yosemite,r please see r <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/lodging.html>r

r r

r For campground reservations in Yosemite:r

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r National Park Reservation System [Biospherics]r PO Box 1600,r Cumberland, MD 21502r

r

- 1-800-436-7275 (US and Canada)r
- 1-301-722-1257 (outside US and Canada)r
- 1-888-530-9797 (US and Canada: TTY ONLY)r
- <http://reservations.nps.gov/>r

rr r

r For information on campgrounds outside Yosemite:r

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- US Forest Service (USFS)r
 - ◆ r Highway 120 West,r Groveland Ranger Station (Stanislaus NF),r 209-962-7825r
 - ◆ r Highway 120 East,r Mono Lake Ranger Station (Inyo NF),r 619-647-3000r
 - ◆ r Highway 140,r Mariposa Information Station (Sierra NF),r 209-966-3638r
 - ◆ r Highway 41,r Oakhurst Ranger Station (Sierra NF),r 559-683-4665r

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- Bureau of Land Management (BLM),r Mariposa area,r 209-966-3192r

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r **Chambers of Commerce**

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r There are numerous private campgrounds outside Yosemite National Park.r For information about these campgrounds and other accommodations outside Yosemite, contact the appropriate Chamber of Commerce:r

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- Tuolumne County (hwy 120, west): 800-446-1333r
- Southern Yosemite (hwy 41): 559-683-4636r
- Coulterville (hwy 132, hwy 49): 209-878-3074 or 209-878-3471r
- Mariposa (hwy 140, hwy 49): 209-966-2456r
- Lee Vining/Mono Lake (hwy 120, east): 619-647-6629 or 619-647-6595r

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r **BOOKS ABOUT YOSEMITE**r

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r This list of works is not a complete list, but a compilation of the most useful books I have found. These and more books on Yosemite are at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/bookstore/>r The complete text for some historical books is available online. See <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/>r

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r All these books are available from the Yosemite Association, from their publisher, from local bookstores, and from <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/bookstore/>r

r r

r Update:r The authors of the Farley comic strip have a new book out. New books by Shirley Sargent, Al Runte, Sellars, others....r r

r r

r **General**r r

r

- r Medley, Steve, 1998, *The Complete Guidebook to Yosemite National Park*,r Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 112p.r
r This book covers just about everything you want to know about Yosemite;r if you're only going to buy one book about visiting Yosemite, this is their one.r
- r National Park Service, 1989, *Yosemite: a Guide to Yosemite National Park*,r Washington, DC: Division of Publications, National Park Service, 143 p.r
r This handbook covers general information about history and science issuesr in Yosemite, as well as some visitor information, some of which is obsolete.r
- r Wuerthner, George, *Yosemite: a Visitor's Companion*, Mechanicsburg, PA:r Stackpole Books, 232 p.r
r A rather thorough book containing information about geology, ecology,r history, and a road guide.r
- r Frank, Susan, and Frank, Phil, 1998, *The Yosemite Handbook: An Insider'sr Guide To The Park*, Rohnert Park, CA: Pomegranate, 208 p.r
r By the authors of the Farley comic strip, a fairly complete, sometimesr humorous, illustrated guide to Yosemite.r
- r Ditton, Richard P., and McHenry, Donald E., 1976, *Yosemite Road Guide*,r Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 79 p.r
r An inexpensive road guide keyed to roadside markers in Yosemite.r

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

- r Browning, Peter, 1988, *Yosemite Place Names: The Historic Background of Geographic Names in Yosemite National Park*, Lafayette, CA: Great Westr Books, 241 p.r
r This is the best reference for place names in Yosemite.r
- r Mather, Jay, and Maharidge, Dale, 1990, *Yosemite: a Landscape of Life*,r Yosemite and Sacramento: Yosemite Association and the Sacramento Bee,r 120 p.r
r This award-winning book is an enjoyable and insightful look at some of thoser who live and work in Yosemite.r
- r Copernicus Software, 1995, *Yosemite Adventure Guide on CD*, Lake Oswego,r OR: Copernicus Software.r
r This CD-ROM contains a wealth of Yosemite information, including maps andr photos.r

rr r

r Hikingr

- r Schaffer, Jeffrey P., 1999, *Yosemite National Park: a Natural-historyr Guide to Yosemite and its Trails*, Berkeley: Wilderness Press, 274 p.r
r This is by far the best, most complete book describing hikes andr backpacks in Yosemite. This book covers hikes and backpacks on virtuallyr every trail in the park. Besides trail descriptions, the author givesr plenty of information about interesting geologic, ecologic, and historizr trailside features. Also includes a guide to the geology, biology, andr history of Yosemite. Reader beware: some of the author's geologicr interpretations of the Yosemite region are generally rejected by ther geological community. Includes a map of Yosemite National Park and Vicinity that has been updated by the author.r r
- r Arnot, Phil, 1992, *Yosemite Valley: Secret Places and Magic Moments*,r San Carlos, CA: Wide World Publishing/Tetra, 217 p.r
r This book tries to point out hikes to less visited and relaxing places.r r
- r Deutsch, Rick,r *One Best Hike: Yosemite's Half Dome*,r Wilderness Press, 2007. 113 p.r
r Anything and everything about Half Dome and the trail to the top of Half Dome.r r
- r Gillmore, Robert, 1993, *Great Walks in Yosemite National Park*,r Goffstown, NH: Great Walks, 186 p.r
r This small book describes mostly easy walks, and some moderate hikes.r
- r O'Neill, Dennis, 1996, *Trail Tools: Yosemite Valley*,r San Francisco, CA:r O'Neill Software, 144 p.r
r This book provides graphic trail profiles and mileage charts for popularr hikes in Yosemite Valley. A potentially useful reference.r

r r Climbingr

- r Meyers, George and Reid, Don. 1987. *Yosemite Climbs*. Denver:r Chockstone Press.r
- r Reid, Don. 1998. *Rock Climbing: Yosemite Free Climbs*r Yosemite climbs. Denver: Chockstone Press, 424 p.r
- r Roper, Steve. 1964. *A Climber's Guide to Yosemite Valley*,r San Francisco: Sierra Club.r

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r Historyr

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The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

The complete text for selected historical Yosemite books are available online. See <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/>

- Sanborn, Margaret, 1989, *Yosemite: its Discovery, its Wonders, and its People*. Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 289 p. This is the most readable book on the history of Yosemite.
- Russell, Carl P., 1992, *One Hundred Years in Yosemite: the Story of a Great Park and its Friends*. [online] Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 269 p. This is the classic history of Yosemite.
- Bunnell, Lafayette H., 1990, *Discovery of the Yosemite: and the Indian War of 1851 which Led to that Event*. [online] Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 315 p. This is an interesting first-hand account of the first military expeditions to Yosemite and other early history.
- LeConte, Joseph, 1994, *A Journal of Ramblings Through the High Sierras of California*. [online] Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 119 p. This is the journal of Joseph LeConte, a geologist with the University of California, written during his 1870 trip to Yosemite and Owens Valley.
- Sargent, Shirley, 1998, *Protecting Paradise: Yosemite Rangers, 1898-1960*. Yosemite, Ponderosa Press, 146 p. A collection of many interesting stories of the early rangers of Yosemite.
- Runte, Alfred, 1990, *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness*. [online] Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 271 p. This is an excellent book dealing with the environmental history of Yosemite.
- Runte, Alfred, 1997, *National Parks: the American Experience*, 3d ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 335 p. This is another excellent book by Runte dealing with the management and environmental history of the US national park system.
- Sellars, Richard, W., 1997, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: a History*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 380 p. And yet another **excellent** book dealing with history of the national park system. A good companion to Runte's book.

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r **Geology**

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- Huber, N. King, 1987, *The Geologic Story of Yosemite National Park*. Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 64 p. This is probably the best general book describing the geologic history of Yosemite. Originally published as USGS Bulletin 1595.
- Matthes, Francois E., 1950, *The Incomparable Valley: a Geologic Interpretation of the Yosemite*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 160 p. This is the most complete book describing the geologic history of Yosemite. This book was compiled by Fritiof Fryxell from Matthes' notes and his professional papers. A significant amount of information in this book is now believed to be incorrect, but the book is still worth reading.

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

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- r Schaffer, Jeffrey P., 1997, *The Geomorphic Evolution of the Yosemite Valley and Sierra Landscapes: Solving the Riddles in the Rocks*, Berkeley: Wilderness Press.r

r This book expounds a highly controversial reinterpretation of the development of Yosemite's landscape, which is widely rejected by the geological community.r

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r **Biology**r

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- r Basey, Harold E., 1976, *Discovering Sierra Reptiles and Amphibians*, Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 50 p.r
- r Beedy, Edward C., and Granholm, Stephen L., 1985, *Discovering Sierran Birds*, Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 229 p. [Out of Print!]r
- r Gaines, David, 1988, *Birds of Yosemite and the East Slope*, Lee Vining: Artemesia Press, 352 p.r
- r Grater, Russell K., and Blaue, Tom A., 1978, *Discovering Sierra Mammals*, Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 174 p.r
- r Morgenson, Dana C., 1975, *Yosemite Wildflower Trails*, Yosemite: Yosemite Association, 88 p.r
- r Wilson, L., Wilson, J., and Nicholas, Jeff., 1994, *Wildflowers of Yosemite*, El Portal: Sierra Press, 143 p.r

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r **Maps**r

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r Various maps of Yosemite are published by Wilderness Press, US Geological Survey (USGS), and Trails Illustrated. These maps are available in Yosemite, at your local map store, from the publishers, and at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/bookstore/>r

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r [Historical maps of Yosemite](http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/maps/) are available online at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/maps/>r

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r **ONLINE BOOKS ABOUT YOSEMITE**r

r r The following selected Yosemite books are available online at <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/>r r

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- John W. Bingaman,r

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- ◆ r *Guardians of the Yosemite* (1961)r

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- ◆ r *The Ahwahneechees: A Story of the Yosemite Indians* (1966)r

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The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

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- William H. Brewer, r r *Up and Down California in 1860-1864: The Journal of William H. Brewerr* r (1930)r r
- Lafayette Houghton Bunnell, r r *Discovery of the Yosemite and the Indian War of 1851, r Which Led to That Eventr* (c. 1892)r r

- Galen Clarkr

r

- ◆ r *Indians of the Yosemite* (1904)r

r

- ◆ r *The Big Trees of Californiar* (1907)r

r

- ◆ r *Early Days in Yosemite* (1964),r Originally published as "A Plea for Yosemite" inr *Yosemite Nature Notes* (February 1927)r from a manuscript written c. 1907.r

r

- ◆ r *The Yosemite Valley*,r (1910)r

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r r

- Laurence Degnan and Douglass H. Hubbard, r r *The Old Stagedriver's Yosemite Yarnsr* (1962),r Yosemite stories set in the early 1900s and late 1800sr

r r r

- Francis P. Farquhar, r r *Place Names of the High Sierrar* (1926)r

r r

- Elizabeth H. Godfrey, r r *Yosemite Indians; Yesterday and Todayr* [1941]r

r r

- Lady Constance F. Gordon-Cumming, r *Granite Cragsr* (1884)r Later reprinted as *Granite Crags of Californiar*

r r

- Edward Winslow Gifford, r *Miwok Mythsr* (1917)r

r r

- Ansel F. Hall, r *Handbook of Yosemite National Park: a compendium of articles on the Yosemite region by the leading scientific authoritiesr* (1922)r

r r r

- John S. Hittellr r *Yosemite: Its Wonders and Its Beauties* (1868)r

r r

- r N. King Huberr *The Geologic Story of Yosemite National Park*,r (1987)r

r r

- James Mason Hutchings, r

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The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

- ◆ *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity* (1862)

r r

- ◆ *In the Heart of the Sierras; the Yosemite Valley, . . . Big Tree Groves. The High Sierra.* (1888)

rr

r r

- Douglass H. Hubbard, *Wild Flowers of the Sierras* (1958)

r r

- Clarence King, *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada* (1902)

r r

- Thomas Starr King
- *A Vacation among the Sierras: Yosemite in 1860* by Thomas Starr King (1962)

r r

- Samuel Kneeland, *The wonders of the Yosemite Valley, and of California With original photographic illustrations, by John P. Soule.*

r r r

- Joseph LeConte, *A Journal of Ramblings Through the High Sierras of California* (1875)

r r

- James W. McFarland, *A Guide to the Giant Sequoias of Yosemite National Park* (1949)

r r

- C. Hart Merriam, *The Dawn of the World: Myths and Weird Tales Told by the Mewan [Miwok] Indians of California.* (1910)

r r r

- John Muir

r

- ◆ Articles in the New York *Tribune*, 1871: "Yosemite Glaciers." "Yosemite in Winter." and "Yosemite in Spring."

r

- ◆ *Studies in the Sierras* (1874-1875; 1915-1921; 1950)

r

- ◆ *Picturesque California* (1888-1890)

r

- ◆ Articles in *The Century Magazine*, 1890: "The Treasures of the Yosemite" and "Features of the Proposed Yosemite National Park."

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- ◆ *The Mountains of California* (1894)

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

- ◆ r r *Our National Parks* (1901)r

- ◆ r *My First Summer in the Sierras* (1911)r

- ◆ r *The Yosemite* (1912)r

- ◆ r r *The Story of My Boyhood and Youth* (1913)r

- ◆ r *Letters to a Friend* (1915)r

- ◆ r *Steep Trails* (1919)r

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- Mrs. H. J. Taylor r
 - ◆ r *The Last Survivor* (1932)r Biographical sketch of Maria Lebrado “To-tu-ya”r (ca. 1840-1931), granddaughter of Tenaya, chief of the Yosemite Indians.r

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

- ◆ *Yosemite Indians and Other Sketches* (1936) Biographical sketches of early pioneers and artists, and Yosemite Indians.

r r

- Mary Curry Tresidder *The Trees of Yosemite: a Popular Account* Revised ed. (1948). Tree descriptions and identification. Linoleum prints by Della Taylor Hoss.

r r

- Keith A. Trexler *The Tioga Road: a History 1883-1961* (1961, rev. 1980) Describes the history of the Tioga Road, and it's relation with the Great Sierra Mine.

r r

- Thérèse Yelverton *Zanita: A Tale of the Yo-semiter* (1872). Fictional novel about Yosemite, including glimpses of a young John Muir.

r r

- Myrl V. Walker *Reptiles and Amphibians of Yosemite National Park* (1946)

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- Josiah Dwight Whitney, Jr., *The Yosemite Book: a description of the Yosemite Valley and the adjacent region of the Sierra Nevada, and of the big trees of California* (1869)

r r r r

r r r

r **APPENDIX**

r r

r This portion of the FAQ actually answers the "real" Frequently-asked questions!

r r

r **The Firefall**

r r

r The Firefall, a tradition for many years, occurred each summer night, when glowing embers were pushed off of Glacier Point-- a glowing waterfall.

r r

r The Firefall began in July 1872 when James McCauley pushed off the remains of a barbeque fire. He had planned a barbeque at his hotel at Glacier Point, the Mountain House, but no one showed up, so he shoved the coals off the cliff in disgust. People in Yosemite Valley marveled at their spectacle, and urged him to do it again, so he did for several years. (An alternative version is that McCauley planned the Firefall for July 4th, to outdo others' plans for fireworks.)

r r

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r In 1899, the Curry Family left Yellowstone NP, where they had a smallr business, for Yosemite Valley and established a smallr tent-cabin camp, appropriately named Camp Curry (now Curry Village).r Curry, an astute businessman, needed an attraction to draw people to hisr new camp, and since Camp Curry was perfectly located to view the Firefall,r he revived it. In 1913, the Department of the Interior (the National Park Service was not created until 1916) banned the Firefall, ostensibly forr safety reasons, but more likely as a punishment for Curry's persistent andr irritating requests for more privileges.r (Competition between the various concessions was very intense;r difficulties arising from competition lead the NPS, in 1925,r to force Curry Company to merge with the other large concession,r Yosemite Park Company, to form Yosemite Park and Curry Company,r which remained the park's chief concessioner until 1993, when it was replaced byr DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite).r However, the National Park Service reinstated the Firefall in 1917.r

r r

r Finally, in 1968, the Firefall was abolished for several reasons. First of all, Yosemite National Park is protected mostly for its naturalr features, and the Firefall, an artificial attraction that drewr additional visitors at a time when visitation was increasing dramaticallyr anyway, was out of place. Additionally, excessive environmental damage,r especially to eastern Yosemite Valley's meadows, was occurring due to ther the large crowds that gathered in the meadows to watch the Firefall. Inr addition, major traffic jams occurred while everyone stopped to watch.r

r r

r For a 1936 sketch of the firefall seer "Yosemite Fire Fall"r in *Yosemite Indians and Other Sketches* (1936) by Mrs. H. J. Taylor.r For a popular version, seer "How the Firefall Began" inr *Yosemite Yarns*r (1962) by Laurence Degnan and Douglass Hubbard.r

r r

r **The Tunnel Trees**

r r

r Three giant sequoias have had man-made tunnels cut through them inr Yosemite. The Old Big Oak Flat Road ran right through the Tuolumne Tunnelr Tree (cut in 1878) until it was closed in 1992. Tunnels were cut throughr the Wawona and California Trees in the Mariposa Grove in 1881 and 1895,r respectively. A road ran through both. In the winter of 1968-1969, ther Wawona Tunnel Tree toppled due to snow accumulation on its branches. Ther road that previously ran through the California Tunnel Tree was reroutedr around it in 1932. So, no, it is not possible to drive through a tree inr Yosemite, though you can walk through both the Tuolumne Tunnel Tree andr the California Tunnel Tree.r

r r

r **Camping on Half Domer**

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r No longer allowed.r Campers were burning the remaining trees on top and leaving trash and human waste.r

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r **The disappearance of Mirror Laker**

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

r r

r Mirror Lake has always been a favorite stopping place for Yosemite tourists, however since 1971 it has been shrinking. The lake was formed on Tenaya Creek by a rockfall dam that was later enlarged by humans, but sediment carried by Tenaya Creek has slowly filled the lake. For several decades (since 1914) the National Park Service (before 1916, the Dept. of Interior) dredged the lake to keep it from filling in and in order to use the sand on roads during the winter. However, in the 1970s, the NPS decided that natural processes should prevail in Yosemite and have since stopped dredging the lake. Eventually, sand and mud will fill in the lake completely... creating a new meadow. A similar process is occurring at Siesta Lake, along the Tioga Road.

r r

r **The Happy Isles rockfall of June, 1996**

r r

r At 6:52 PDT on 10 June 1996, a portion of the cliff near Glacier Point came crashing down into the Happy Isles area in Yosemite Valley. From below, the scar from where the rocks fell looks tiny, but a total of about 78,000 cubic yards (60,000 cubic meters) of granitic rock fell (that's about the same as a cube with sides of 43 yds (39 m)).

r r

r Rockfalls are a continuing natural process in Yosemite and have been occurring there for millions of years. In fact, Yosemite Valley looks the way it does in part because of rockfalls. What was unusual about this rockfall is that the rocks, rather than sliding, free-fell much of the way down. The result was an air blast (think of what happens when you drop a book on a table) that created hurricane-force winds. These winds are what caused all of the damage-- falling rocks caused none. The winds knocked over hundreds of trees, some of which fell into the snack stand, destroying it, into the nature center, damaging it, and over several footbridges, damaging or destroying some of them. One person was killed and another paralyzed.

r r

r **The Flood of 1997**

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r By January 1st, 1997, the Yosemite region was covered by a significant amount of snow. A series of warm storms dumped rain to elevations up to about 10,000 feet. The warm rain not only ran off into streams, but also melted snow (which also ran off into streams). As a result, Yosemite's streams quickly flooded. The 1997 flood was the largest recorded flood (though historic floods prior to 1915 may have been larger) in Yosemite's history. All of the largest floods have resulted from rain falling on snow. Other such floods occurred in 1937, 1955, 1960, and 1964; several of these were nearly as large as the 1997 flood (which has been classified as a 60-year flood, if I remember correctly). Damage from the 1997 flood included major damage to the El Portal Road (Hwy 140 inside the park) and other minor road damage; Yosemite Lodge cabins, and several valley campgrounds.

r r

r **The Yosemite Valley Plan**

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

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r Perhaps you have heard about the Yosemite Valley Plan. An early incarnation of the plan, called the Draft Valley Implementation Plan, was withdrawn by NPS in 1998 after a judge, in a preliminary ruling, agreed with the Sierra Club that valley planning (which at the time included the VIP, Lodge DCP, and Valley Housing Plan) was fragmented. (Public opinion of the plan wasn't all that great, either.)r

r r

r The National Park Service, in response to public comments, decided to combine all valley planning into one document, the Yosemite Valley Plan. The plan will be released sometime in 2000.r

r r

r The goal of the Yosemite Valley Plan is NOT only to reduce traffic congestion. In fact, the driving force behind the YVP is improvement of the protection of Yosemite Valley's natural and cultural resources and improvement in the experience visitors have when visiting the valley.r

r r

r Constraints on development of facilities (including lodging, campgrounds, and concessioner housing) include minimizing:r

- r
 - construction of new facilities in the rockfall/slide zone
- r
 - encroachment into highly valued resource areas (e.g., meadows and riparian areas)
- r
 - minimizing development in the floodplain.r

rrr r

r Visit <http://www.nps.gov/yose/planning/> for more information.r

r r

r **What does Yosemite and Ahwahnee mean?** [by Dan Anderson]r

r r

r *Yosemite* means "those who kill."r The term was used originally by the surrounding Miwok tribes to refer to the Indians that occupied Yosemite Valley.r The occupiers were a band of renegade Indians who were much feared by neighboring tribes.r Yosemite Valley was named in 1851 by Mr. Bunnell.r Mr. Bunnell was part of the Mariposa Battalion, which was sent to capture the Yosemite Indians.r The Valley was named in honor of the soon-to-be-captives.r

r r

The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

The Yosemite Indians referred to themselves as *Ah-wah-ne-chee* or “dwellers of Ahwahnee.” Ahwahnee (or *Awooni* or *Owwo*) was the original name for Yosemite Valley. It means (gaping) “mouth,” which referred to the deep opening of Yosemite Valley in the Sierra Nevada.

r r

For more details on the [origin and meaning of Yosemite](http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/origin_of_word_yosemite.html) see http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/origin_of_word_yosemite.html

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Entrance Stations (fee schedule): Bond Shands, "Back Packer"

- If you will visit Yosemite, please read this section: Georgia Stigall

- Camping Outside Yosemite: Tina Wang

- Accommodations in Yosemite: Bond Shands, Dan Anderson

- Accommodations Outside Yosemite: Richard King, Kay Hewitt, RJ Clark, Chris Falkenstein

- Appendix: Ben Parker, Bond Shands

- And many thanks to Eugene Miya, for editing early versions of this FAQ.

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r r r

This FAQ was initially compiled by Jeffrey Trust, a geologist formerly at California State University Northridge and long-time park ranger at Yosemite National Park. His specialities are lithological geomorphology, Sierra Nevada, Owens Valley, and glacial geomorphology. His photograph of Half Dome at Sunset is at the [official NPS Yosemite website](#).

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r The National Park Service Interpretation Division also has a useful [Yosemite FAQ](#).r

r r

r Last updated by Jeffrey Trust on 9 July 2000.r First converted to HTML with by Dan Anderson, 1 August 2002.r

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r [Yosemite](#) > FAQ >r

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The Yosemite FAQ (Frequently-asked Questions with Answers)

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rrr 4. Resources 1. Introduction

r [FAQ](#), r [location, destinations, climate, when to visit](#), r [transportation, and rules](#). r r r r

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r [Camping, lodging, and services](#). r r

rrr 4. Resources 3. What to dor

r [Hiking, backpacking, visitor centers, museums, interpretation, biking, river activities, climbing, tours, and winter](#). r r

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rr 4. Resources r Detailed Table of Contents

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rrr 4. Resources r

r [More information, books, online books, firefall, tunnel trees, Mirror Lake, 1997 flood, and Yosemite Valley Plan](#). r r

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The Yosemite FAQ, Yosemite National Park Frequently-asked Questions with Answers

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r Have a correction or addition for this FAQ?r Then please fill out thisr [Comment Form](#).r

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r r If you have questions or comments,r please send a message to [Dan Anderson](#).r r r r

r r r <http://www.yosemite.ca.us/faq/r> r r

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