

FAQ for paid school programs (Spring & Fall)

Programs

Q: What grades do you offer programs for?

A: We have a preschool program, kindergarten programs, programs for grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. We are always working on new programs, so check back if you are interested in a program for a different grade.

Q: How many students can participate in a program?

A: Programs can be run with between 20 and 30 students. If you have fewer than 20 students in your class/group you must still pay for the minimum of 20 students. We can run two programs (including two of the same program) simultaneously. We run up to two programs in the morning and two in the afternoon each day.

Q: How many adults can come with the group?

A: Adults are free up to 1 per 5 students. Any additional adults must pay the same fee as the students. Special needs assistants are always free.

Q: What if I feel that my group needs more adult supervision?

A: Special Needs Assistants are always free. If your group is young children (e.g. Junior Kindergarten) you may want to book the preschool program, this program is structured so that you may bring one adult per child. It is also a shorter program.

Q: How many classes can I bring from my school on one day?

A: You may bring up to two groups of students per day. Each group must be between 20 and 30 students. If you have small classes or a lot of split classes you may choose to group them by grade rather than by class.

Q: Are the programs curriculum connected?

A: Yes. All the programs are connected to the Ontario curriculum. Most are connected to the Science and Technology curriculum, but many also have some connections to “Social Studies, History, and Geography,” “Health, and Physical Education,” or “The Arts.”

Q: Do you have programs for special needs groups?

A: At the moment we don't have any programs specifically for special needs groups. However, we are happy to adapt a program to suit your group. The preschool program works well for some groups.

Q: How long are the programs?

A: Most programs are 1.5-2 hours in length. The preschool program is about 1 to 1.5 hours in length. They run from about 9:30am until 11:30am and from 12:00pm until about 2:00pm.

Q: What if our bus won't arrive in time for the start of the program?

A: This is a very common issue. We encourage you to try to come as close to the start time as possible. We will start the program whenever you arrive. However, it is not always possible to extend the program past its scheduled end time. We are usually able to squeeze most of the program components into a shorter time if necessary.

Q: How much do programs cost?

A: Most programs are \$10 per student. Our special preschool program – “Sing for Spring” is \$12 per adult/child pair. If you want to stay on the grounds for lunch and some self-directed exploration before or after your half day program you can add our hike-in-a-bag program for an additional \$1 per student.

Q: Is there a deposit or booking fee?

A: No.

Q: Is there a cancellation fee?

A: Not if the cancellation is made 2 weeks or more before the program. If a program is cancelled less than two weeks prior to the scheduled date, the projected cost of the program must be **paid in full**.

Q: Do you have special rates or free programs for high needs schools?

A: We have, if funding is available, a sponsored school program for Grade 4 classes from priority schools called Living Winter. This program is only available in November, December, January, and February.

The sponsored grade 4 program takes place at TBG and includes bussing and a healthy snack. Please email education@torontobotanicalgarden.ca if you would like to be on our email list for the next season of the Living Winter Program.

Q: What happens if there is bad weather?

A: Our programs stay outside unless the weather is considered dangerous. In dangerous weather conditions we will move all programs inside.

Q: Can classes stay in the garden for lunch/to explore on their own after a program?

A: See the hike-in-a-bag section below

Q: Can classes/camps/groups just come and explore the grounds on their own?

A: Unfortunately no. Edwards Gardens is a city garden and requires permits. Information

about park permits can be found on the city website here: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/venues-facilities-bookings/booking-park-recreation-facilities/simple-permit-booking/>

Registration

Q: How do I register my class for a paid school program?

A: Fill out a request for booking form on our website here:

<http://torontobotanicalgarden.ca/learn/school/register-your-class-today/> We will follow up with you to confirm your booking!

Q: What dates are available?

A: Available dates are always changing due to staff schedules and other school bookings. School programs run in the fall and spring on Tuesdays through Fridays. The specific dates for this school year will be available on the website here:

<http://torontobotanicalgarden.ca/learn/school/register-your-class-today/>

Q: What time do programs run?

A: Most programs are 1.5-2hours in length. They run from about 9:30am until 11:30am and from 12:00pm until about 2:00pm. We are pretty flexible if busses don't fit this schedule.

Q: How much do programs cost?

A: Most programs are \$10 per student. Our special preschool program – “Sing for Spring” is \$12 per adult/child pair. If you want to stay on the grounds for lunch and some self-directed exploration you can add our hike-in-a-bag program for an additional \$1 per student.

Q: Can classes stay in the garden for lunch/to explore on their own after a program?

A: See the hike-in-a-bag section below

The day of the trip

Q: How can I get in touch with TBG teachers in case of emergency, or to let them know important information on the day of a trip?

A: You can speak with the volunteer at the reception desk in the TBG building. Reception's phone number is 416-397-1341. These volunteers can call us directly on our cell phones.

Q: Where should we have the bus drop us off?

A: For grades 1 and above, students should be dropped off at the main entrance of the TBG building, The George and Kathy Dembroski Centre for Horticulture, 777 Lawrence Ave. East, Toronto.

For Preschool, Kindergarten, and some special needs classes, students should be dropped off at the Bridal Path entrance to Edwards Gardens (near the teaching garden)

To get there from the TBG parking lot:

Turn West/Left on Lawrence

Turn Left/ South at the stop sign onto Bridal Path

The entrance to the park is on the left, beside a City of Toronto park sign for Edwards Gardens, about 300m south of Lawrence on Bridal Path.

Q: What happens if there is bad weather?

A: Our programs stay outside unless the weather is considered dangerous. In dangerous weather conditions we will do our best to move all programs inside the Toronto Botanical Garden building.

Q: Where should we eat lunch?

A: Only classes who have booked the additional Hike-in-a-bag program may have lunch on the grounds. This costs an additional \$1 per student. Please refer to the map attached to your Hike-in-a-bag for possible lunch locations.

Hike in a bag – Information

Q: What is Hike-in-a-bag?

A: These backpacks allow classes to stay on the grounds for lunch and to do some self-directed activities either before or after their program with TBG education. You are encouraged to plan your own activities as well as using the materials found in the bag.

Q: What is inside the bag?

A: The bag includes bug boxes, magnifying glasses, measuring tapes, laminated activity sheets, dry erase markers, felt erasers, a story book, a map of the grounds, and an activity instruction book.

Q: Where do I pick up my bag?

A: If you are doing the self-guided Hike-in-a-bag program first, staff will meet you in the lobby to hand off your bag and answer any questions you might have. If you have a guided program with TBGKids staff first, your TBGKids educator will give you the bag.

When you pick up the bag you will be asked to carefully read through the guidelines and sign the “hike in a bag sign-out sheet.” This ensures that you understand the guidelines for the use of the bags and for behaviour on the grounds.

Q: Where do we have lunch?

A: You may eat lunch in Edwards Gardens in the field near the teaching garden (noted on the map). You may also eat in front of the café or in or around the Moriyama pavilion. You are not guaranteed indoor space to eat.

Q: What if the weather is very bad/ dangerous?

A: Education staff will have arranged alternate rainy day locations in the building for you ahead of time. Staff will be able to point you to the appropriate rainy day location.

Q: How do we get started?

A: First, find a quiet location to look through the activity booklet, the attached map, and the rules. Then ensure the group, including all adults accompanying you, knows the rules. You can then decide which activity you would like to do first. You are welcome to hike throughout the gardens, and the Wilket creek ravine.

Q: When and where do we meet the guide for our afternoon program?

A: Afternoon programs start at 12:00, unless arranged differently ahead of time. You should meet your TBGKids educator outside the front entrance of The George and Kathy Dembroski Centre for Horticulture at 12:00pm ready to start the program.

Q: What do we do with the bag when we are finished?

A: You may either return the bag to your educator or bring it back to the reception desk.