

The Zion Trip Planning Checklist

Best time to visit, what it costs, what to pack, and how to plan your trip.

bestofzion.com

Best Time to Visit

Zion is open year-round, and every season shows a different side of the canyon. The best overall balance of comfortable weather, flowing water, and manageable crowds falls in April-May and late September-October.

For the fewest crowds, visit December-February and trade warmth for solitude and snow-dusted red rock.

Entrance Fees & Passes

- Private vehicle entrance fee: \$35, valid for 7 days - covers everyone in the car.
- America the Beautiful annual pass: \$80 - worth it if you'll visit other national parks (Bryce, Grand Canyon, the Mighty 5) this year.
- Keep your pass or receipt - you'll need it to re-enter if you leave the park during your visit.

What to Pack

- Refillable water bottle - refill stations are at the Visitor Center and Zion Lodge.
- Sturdy hiking shoes with good traction - many trails have exposed slickrock.
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen - shade is limited on most trails.
- Layers - canyon mornings and evenings run cooler than midday, even in summer.

Before You Go: Trip Planning Checklist

- Pick your season using the Best Time to Visit section above, then book lodging early - Springdale fills up fast in peak months.
- Confirm the current shuttle and park-access setup close to your trip date - it changes by season.
- Pick 2-3 hikes matched to your group's fitness level rather than trying to do everything in one trip.
- Buy your park pass online in advance if available, to skip the entrance line.