



Arches National Park

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Best Hikes

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Best Views

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Why Go?

With the highest density of rock arches anywhere on earth, Arches National Park offers up a whimsical escape that pushes you to jump, gasp, leap and skip. Simply put, it's magic.

Located just a hop away from Moab, this diminutive park is quite user-friendly, making it a great spot for families, people with disabilities and hikers looking for big views. These views do sometimes come at a price, as the park can get downright overrun on weekends. Get up early, visit weekdays and consider some of the longer hikes to really explore the richness of this national treasure.

While there are more than 2000 arches here, top bucket-list sights include Delicate Arch, Balanced Rock and the Windows. Go further afield with canyoneering trips into the sandstone labyrinths of the Fiery Furnace or Devils Garden. Seeing the sun set or rise over these vainglorious arches, fins, bridges and spires is exhilarating and sublime.

Driving Distances (miles)

Bryce Canyon National Park	270				
Canyonlands National Park (North Entrance)	25	280			
Capitol Reef National Park (Visitor Center)	140	120	155		
Moab	5	270	30	145	
Zion National Park (East Entrance)	310	75	325	180	315
Arches National Park					
Bryce Canyon National Park					
Canyonlands National Park (North Entrance)					
Capitol Reef National Park (Visitor Center)					
Moab					

Note: Distances are approximate

Entrances

The park entrance and visitor center are accessed 5 miles northwest of Moab off Hwy 191. Most people drive it, but you can get here on a paved bike trail as well.

Past the visitor center, you climb into the park proper, where you'll find 22 miles of paved roads – most sights lie on or alongside the pavement. Crowds are often unavoidable. Parking areas overflow at peak times (weekends, spring through fall).

Every year the park takes new measures to handle the problem. The NPS may eventually institute a shuttle system if visitation increases. For now, to keep drivers from parking in dangerous or sensitive areas, rangers have stepped up ticketing for illegally parked cars. Always consider cycling, car pooling or taking a tour through the park to limit the congestion.

The best strategy is to arrive at the park by 7am, when crowds are sparse and the temperatures not so bad; or visit in the evening after 7pm. If you can't find a designated parking spot at one place, continue to the next. Also, drive carefully; accidents occur when drivers focus on the scenery, not the road – an easy trap to fall into at Arches.

DON'T MISS

A guided hike through the Fiery Furnace, one of the signature hikes of the park, takes you into a wild mousetrap of sandstone desertescapes. You need to be fit because you'll be clambering over rock, through canyons and around boulders. Access is extremely limited, so reserve ahead. If that just ain't your thing, make sure you check out both Landscape Arch, the longest arch in Arches National Park, measuring 306ft from base to base, and Delicate Arch.

When You Arrive

- ➔ Admission, good for seven days, is \$25 per car, \$15 per motorcycle and \$10 per person on bike or foot.
- ➔ A Local Passport, good for admission to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks and Natural Bridges and Hovenweep National Monuments for a one-year period, costs \$50.
- ➔ Arches is open year-round.
- ➔ Bring your own water and lunch. Expect to bring a gallon of water per person per day in the summer.
- ➔ The video at the visitor center gives an excellent (though slightly over-dramatized) view on the park's geological history.

PARK POLICIES & REGULATIONS

Most standard national parks policies apply here. Horses are only allowed in Arches National Park in very limited areas, including Salt Wash upstream from the Delicate Arch road and Courthouse Wash. Pets are not allowed on any of the hiking trails or in the visitor center. You can take them out on the leash at the campground, overlooks or pullouts along the paved scenic drive. Backcountry, climbing and canyoneering permits are available online and at the visitor center.

Fast Facts

- ➔ Total area: 119 sq miles
- ➔ Elevation: 4085ft
- ➔ Average high/low temperature (at the visitor center) in July: 100°F/87°F (31°C/38°C)

Resources

- ➔ **Arches National Park**
(www.nps.gov/arch)