



*connecting people with nature*

## **Bernheim Accessibility Recommendations**

Bernheim wants every visitor to be able to connect with nature. Although not all of our trails are accessible to individuals with limited mobility, we are working on ways to ensure we are meeting the needs of all visitors. We hope this list describing some of our trails and points of interest will help find the best areas that fit your needs and make your Bernheim visit enjoyable.

You can also find these recommendations on site at the entrance kiosk and the Visitor Center. If you need assistance while visiting our trails and points of interest, please ask one of our staff members at the Visitor Center or call a **Bernheim Ranger at (502) 648-4190**.

This guide will help prepare you for your visit to Bernheim. Each area you might experience is described and ranked for ease of use below.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or to share your feedback on ways we can be more accessible and inclusive for all visitors. You may call us at (502) 955-8512 or [email us](#).

### Accessibility Levels Key

 = Easy

 = Moderate

 = Hard

\*\*\* accessibility determined by % grade, distance, ground surface and perceived barriers to independence\*\*\*

### **Parking**

Parking is available throughout Bernheim Forest to allow for closer access to trailheads and points of interest. Designated accessible spaces are marked with the international access symbol and are reserved for visitors who identify as having that need. Larger parking areas around main attractions have been labeled on the map with a parking symbol, while the smaller lots in less centralized areas are marked as gray rectangles on the visitor map.



## Visitor Center

The Visitor Center is located across from Playcosystem and is a great place to begin your visit. The main door has an automatic opening button which provides access to children in strollers, individuals with mobility devices, or individuals who may identify a need for an accessible door. Just inside is a welcome desk where staff is available to answer any additional questions/concerns about accessibility. Staff can also offer suggestions on accessible trails and activities that best fit the needs of your group.

## Picnic Tables and Dining

**Isaac's Café** is located inside the Visitor Center for visitors to have a bite to eat or drink.. You will find tables and picnic tables inside the Café and surrounding the Visitors Center for your convenience. Additionally, there are picnic tables throughout Bernheim near trails and other points of interest. There are a few ADA compliant picnic tables around the Forest that allow wheelchair and stroller users the opportunity to get closer to the tables. If you have any questions regarding picnic tables and dining while you are visiting, please stop by the Visitor Center and ask a staff member.

## Restrooms

There are restrooms located throughout Bernheim Forest with varying levels of accessibility. Restrooms located at the Visitor Center and at the Playcosystem parking lot, just across the street, are accessible to individuals with varying mobility challenges. Both restrooms are accessible during all operating hours. The Visitor Center restrooms have entry doors accessible from inside and outside the building, but these restrooms may require assistance with entering/exiting due to lack of automatic door opener. Partially accessible restrooms are available at the Silos/Sensory Garden, though they also do not have an automatic door opener. Additionally, this space relies on natural light and can be challenging for individuals with visual deficits. There is an accessible portalet near Mama Loumari on the Forest Giants Trail. Unfortunately, many of the additional outdoor restrooms at Bernheim are not accessible. Bernheim is striving to create more opportunities for updated restrooms around the Forest to ensure all visitors of varying ages and abilities have access.

## Bernheim's Paved Roads

See map link below to see Bernheim's paved road map in addition to the trails. The roads in the Guerrilla Hollow area are flatter than Forest Hill Drive and may be more accessible to visitors with mobility challenges.

For further information about trail accessibility, please visit the [trails and maps section of our website](#).

## Trails

### Lake Nevin Loop

Distance: 1.3 miles

Terrain: Mostly flat, gravel, one section of natural trail with incline, wood slat bridges to cross

Accessibility Details: This trail is close to a large parking lot.

### **Big Prairie Overlook Path**

Distance: Less than ¼ mile

Terrain: Paved, slight incline

Accessibility Details: This very short path is a short distance from parking and paved and should be easily accessible to anyone with mobility challenges.

### **Sun and Shade Loop**

Distance: ¾ mile

Terrain: Gravel path, natural trail

Accessibility Details: Half of this trail is mostly flat and gravel and will allow visitors to see some of the highlights of Bernheim's woody plant collection.

### **Overalls Loop**

Distance: ¼ mile

Terrain: Natural terrain, mostly flat

Accessibility Details: This trail is close to Forest Hill Road parking. The trail is mostly flat, but the natural trail is narrow.

### **Arboretum Loop**

Distance: 1.5 miles

Terrain: Paved; dedicated hike/bike lane

Accessibility Details: This is the main loop through the Arboretum travels through much of Bernheim's plant and art collection. The road is shared with vehicles with a dedicated hike/bike lane through all but a small section where road traffic is two-way.


## **Popular Attractions**

### **Forest Giants** →



Distance: 2 miles (out and back)

Terrain: Mixed – paved, dirt, some rough terrain

Accessibility details:

- Little Nis 
  - Is the most accessible
  - Park in the Visitor Center lot and follow yellow footprints to Nis



- Path is mostly paved, with one wood slat bridge
- Mama Loumari 
  - Can be accessed with mobility challenges
  - Park in the Sun and Shade Loop lot and follow signs
  - Mama is close to the lot, but the path is primarily uneven terrain – grass, mulch and slightly hilly
- Little Elina 
  - Is the least accessible
  - Park in areas located by the Sunset Amphitheater
  - Elina is approximately ¼ - ½ mile from parking
  - Path is rough terrain, including gravel, wood slat bridges and natural trail across some slightly steep hills

### Silos/Sensory Garden

Distance: <¼ mile

Terrain: Paved, flat

Accessibility details: The Sensory Garden offers opportunities to join in on an outdoor experience where you can see, touch, hear and smell the different parts of the garden. Additionally, the Sensory Garden may allow individuals who identify with autism spectrum disorder to be able to explore their senses without feeling overwhelmed as well as offer an immersive experience for individuals with visual deficits. Signage in this area also offers braille components and Picture Exchange Communications System for individuals with limited verbal communication.



### Canopy Tree Walk

Distance: ¼ mile

Terrain: Paved, wood slats

Accessibility details: The Canopy Tree Walk is a short distance from parking and is mostly flat and paved and should be accessible to anyone with mobility challenges.

### Edible Garden

Distance: ¼ - ½ mile

Terrain: Mainly paved and flat; one section of gravel

Accessibility details: Located across the street from the Visitor Center parking lot. This area should be easily accessible to anyone with mobility challenges. Additionally, the garden allows individuals with mobility devices the opportunity to roll up to the garden beds for a closer look.

### **Children's Play Garden**

Distance: ¼ mile

Terrain: flat, paved, gravel

Accessibility Details: The Children's Play Garden has two parking lots. There is grass and hilly land throughout most of the area, but the paths through it are flat and mostly paved or gravel.

### **Playcosystem**

Terrain: Paved sidewalks, mulch, dirt, grass, gravel

Accessibility Details: Parking is available a short distance away, in the Visitor Center lot as well as behind Playcosystem with several designated accessible parking spaces. A paved sidewalk allows visitors to access the Playcosystem from the Visitor Center as well as the parking lot. The sidewalk continues throughout the enclosed play environment allowing individuals with mobility challenges the ability to travel throughout the space. However, it may be challenging to interact with each moving part within Playcosystem if you are an individual who identifies with mobility challenges. There are various surfaces and hills within this natural space that house activities that could be challenging to reach. Additionally, there are wooden objects that may be challenging to step on and climb on if you experience mobility challenges. Bernheim Forest is continuing to work on the accessibility to fit the needs of all visitors regardless of age or ability and is striving to make the Playcosystem more inclusive and accessible. Zones 2 and 3 of Playcosystem are scheduled to open in 2024 and will have many features that will allow access to people of all mobility levels. Stay tuned!

### **Lake Nevin Fishing Access**

Distance: 900 feet

Terrain: Gravel path

Accessibility Details: The path is smooth, but some small inclines may present challenges for those with limited mobility.

### **Garden Pavilion/Quiet Garden Landscapes**

Distance: ¼ - ½ mile

Terrain: Paved, brick pavers

Accessibility Details: Follow the walkway from Lake Nevin parking lot and follow signs.