

Tour Guide Manual

We are excited to have you as a member of our program! As a tour guide, you play an important role in Middlebury College recruitment. You have a responsibility to our visitors and the entire College community and we expect you to share your experiences about Middlebury with visitors and to give them a positive impression of campus. Your efforts and your willingness to share your Middlebury knowledge and enthusiasm help bring incredible students into the community each year.

This document lists the basic expectations, rules, and responsibilities for the tour guide program. We look forward to working with you!

The Overview

- **You have assumed the responsibility of representing Middlebury College.** This position is a job, and we expect that you will treat it with the care and diligence that it deserves. Following these basic guidelines ensures an experience that is enjoyable and informative for both you and our guests.
- **Be enthusiastic and accessible!** You may be the only Middlebury student who the people on your tour will have the chance to meet; your role in representing the college is larger than you might imagine.
- **Personalize your tours.** Our tours are designed to give our visitors a complete overview of Middlebury – not just facts and figures or information about buildings, but also details that will help make Middlebury come alive and distinguish it from other small liberal arts schools. Share your thoughts, stories, and experiences with our visitors and do your best to be engaged on campus so that you are always finding new things to share!
- **Be mindful of your audience.** Middlebury welcomes a wide range of guests from all over the world—not everyone on your tour will have the same background and beliefs as you. Keep in mind that you are speaking to prospective students and families; your interactions should be thoughtful, respectful, and professional at all times.
- **Tell the truth.** Please be honest with your audience, but try to keep the emphasis on the positives of Middlebury. Tours are not the proper environment to share your grievances with the school, its administration, or other students.
- **It is okay to not know.** You are not an exhaustive list of Middlebury information! If you do not know the answer to a question, let the visitor know that you will refer them to a resource that does. Never make up information just for the sake of answering a question.
- **Never accept inappropriate behavior from a visitor.** You are never obliged to interact with a student or parent who is being inappropriate. If anyone on your tour uses foul language, asks an inappropriate or harmful question, berates you, or says or does something that makes you uncomfortable, you may politely ask that person to leave the tour and return to the office to speak with an admission officer.
 - You are always allowed to decline to answer questions that are overly personal, such as your financial aid status or test scores.

Policy and Procedure

Availability

At the beginning of each semester, you will fill out a form with your [availability](#) for each tour time. Please update throughout the semester as your availability changes. If you know there is a date you will be unable to give a tour, please let the team leadership know by emailing tourguides@middlebury.edu and chatch@middlebury.edu.

Schedules

Please see the information on the Middlebury HR webpage on how to get [paid](#). Once you are a tour guide, you will receive a weekly email. You can sign up for future tours by selecting a future tour on the [Main Tour Calendar](#). When you select a tour, you are committing to giving that tour, if for any reason that you are unable to give that tour you are responsible for finding a replacement. You do this by going to the [Availability form](#) and emailing the tour guides available for that time slot and making sure tourguides@middlebury.edu and chatch@middlebury.edu knows your replacement. Do not remove yourself from the Main Calendar as this will be completed by the tour guide coordinators once you confirm a replacement.

Coverage

We expect that you will make tour guiding a priority. However, should you find yourself unable to give a tour for which you were scheduled, please email team leadership immediately to request coverage. It is your responsibility to find a replacement. A good place to start is by emailing all other guides available for that slot. This list can be found on the Master Availability sheet at [go/mytour/](#). Once you have found a replacement, please reply to everyone in the thread as well as team leadership and close the request.

If you are unable to find a replacement, please email the TGCs at tourguides@middlebury.edu **AND** Cindy Hatch at chatch@middlebury.edu. We need to be able to make other arrangements with as much notice as possible.

Dress Code

When staffing a program, you are a **representative of Middlebury College**. Therefore, it is imperative you dress appropriately.

You may dress casually, but please avoid sweatpants and revealing clothing. Additionally, you **may not** wear t-shirts printed with logos of other colleges, anything alcohol or drug related, or anything that in any way may be deemed political or controversial.

When you are leading a tour, dress appropriately for the weather. Tours will be held rain, snow, or shine!

Accountability

We hold guides accountable for making sure our programs are of the highest quality and that all expectations are met—or exceeded. These include, but are not limited to, being punctual, attending all events for which you are scheduled (or finding a replacement), and following the guidelines for participating in programming. If these guidelines are not adhered to you we will work with you to address any issues and determine if the tour guide program is an appropriate position for you.

Programming

Giving tours is the main way you will engage with prospective students and families, however, there may be other opportunities for engagement at certain times throughout the year. This section covers some of the basic expectations and procedures for these events.

Tours

During the academic year, tours take place immediately following an information session that is given by either a Senior Fellow or an Admissions Counselor. It is critical that you arrive at Emma Willard on time in order to make sure that you are ready to begin your tour as soon as the session concludes.

Please arrive at Emma Willard at least **10 minutes before the tour begins**. Check in with the Tour Guide Coordinator, grab your nametag and headset mic, and highlight your name on the spreadsheet in the back. You may leave your personal belongings next to the fridge.

The guides will meet the Senior Fellow and/or the Admissions Counselor in the presentation room and divide the visitors into tour groups of 10-12 people before heading outside for introductions, which should include your name, class year, major(s), and co-curriculars.

The tour itself should take about an hour, and should be an absolute maximum of 75 minutes. Before you begin your tour, you should consult with your fellow guides to determine an order (i.e. guides who give quicker tours should head out first as to avoid traffic en route). After your tour, please welcome your visitors back in the admissions waiting area and to help them get additional information and talk to a Senior Fellow or Admissions Counselor.

- Please plan on staying for 5-10 minutes after the tour to answer questions that visitors might not have had an opportunity to ask during the tour.

- Encourage visitors to fill out a Tour Guide Evaluation form. They receive an email with an electronic evaluation form.
- We have customizable business cards located at the front desk if you would like to give out your e-mail address to people on your tour.

When giving a tour, walk backward at all times, except when (1) crossing the street, (2) going up/downstairs, and (3) entering and exiting buildings.

- During winter months, if you are concerned about your footing on snow and/or ice, you can walk forward. Clarify to the group why you won't be walking backward, and pause often to gather everyone together before sharing your talking points.

Emergency/Weather Protocol

There are some emergency/weather situations that you should be able to know the appropriate steps that you should take on a tour.

Tours are not given in an active thunderstorm. Cindy or the counselor on duty would be able to determine if an active thunderstorm is occurring and if the tour would need to be delayed or cancelled. In the event that a thunderstorm occurs while you are on your tour, you should shelter in place, discontinue the tour, or return to Admissions depending on your location. You can call back to Admissions if the storm is not letting up. The admissions direct number is 802-443-3000.

Lock down procedures should be observed during the drills or in a real event. You should plan on sheltering in the closest building observing the protocols of that building with any instructions of staff in those buildings.

If anything outside of these rare occurrences happens during your tour, you can

Special Events

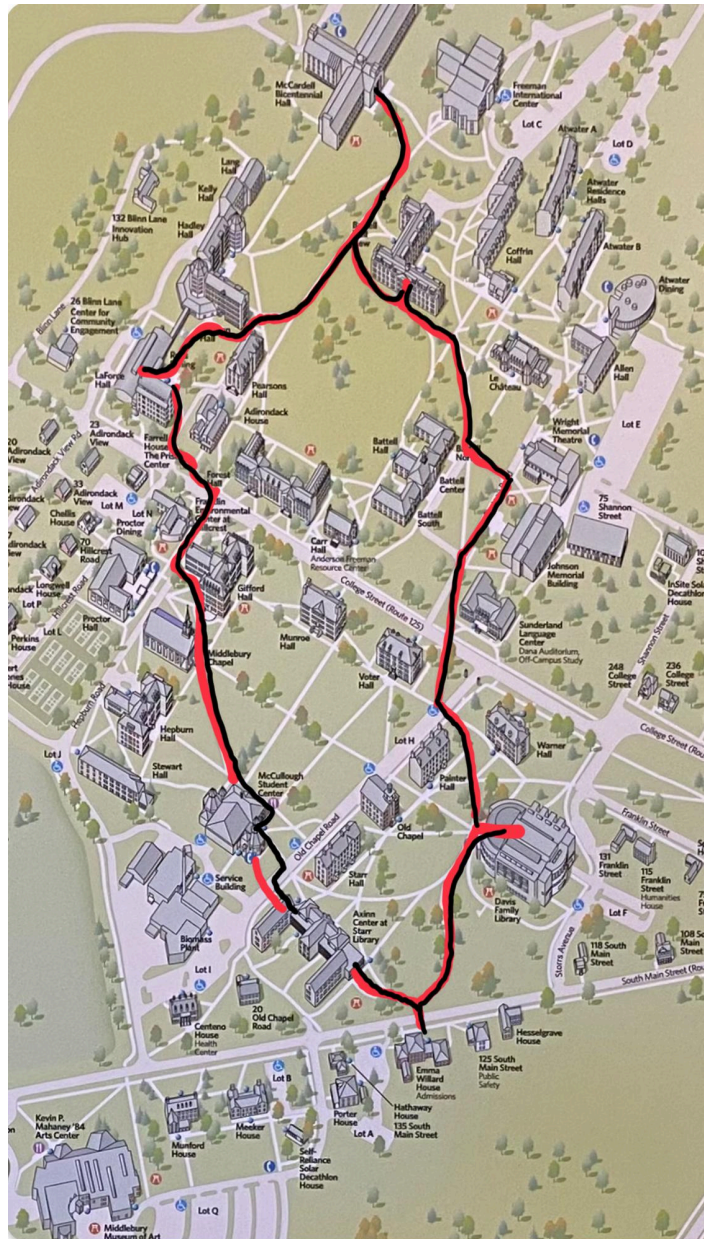
We will have a special group come to visit campus, from various national and international high schools and outreach programs that may require tours at non-traditional times (e.g. weekends, evenings). You will receive more information from program leadership in advance of these visits should we need tour guides.

In addition, there are two annual events, Discover Middlebury and Previews, that require additional tours.

- **Discover Middlebury** (DiscoMidd) is Middlebury's "fly-in" program for students who might otherwise not have the opportunity to visit campus. It generally takes place over three days in late September or October and helps give participants a glimpse into what college life at Middlebury is like.

- **Previews** is a series of programs for accepted students and their supporters that take place from mid-March to May. Previews include virtual programming in addition to in-person visits that typically occur over a few weekends in April.

The Campus Tour




Red - standard route. Black - ADA accessible route.


All tours—unless otherwise specified—will follow this set route, starting and ending at Emma Willard. The tour enters six buildings: Davis Library, New Battell, Bi-Hall, Ross, McCullough, and Axinn. While in these spaces it is important to respect the privacy and routines of Middlebury students.

The following are brief descriptions of things you should mention at certain points on the tour. It is not a comprehensive list nor is it a script. You can and should include personal anecdotes, experiences, and additional information to personalize the experience and bolster the tour.

INFO SESSION OUTLINE PLUS WHAT TOUR GUIDES SHOULD HIT HARD

Key:

 indicates a point at which you should stop walking to talk about a building/space

 indicates a building/space that you should point out and mention as you are near it

/ **Stop 0: Emma Willard**

If you are giving a tour on a particularly high volume day, you should consult with your fellow guides to determine where you will give your introductions. You are encouraged to cross the street and spread so that each group has enough space to not talk over one other.

- Give the group your tour guide intro
- For smaller groups, or if you need more space between groups, you can ask the group to briefly introduce themselves.

Walking Emma Willard → Davis Family Library

- Give a brief overview of the founding, history, and setting of the school along with some basic statistics: 2600 undergrads, avg. class size of 16, student to faculty ratio of 9:1
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Stop 1: Davis Family Library

When the weather allows, do most of your talking outside of Davis to prevent disturbing students who are studying inside. If talking inside, be sure to **turn off** your mic and encourage your group to gather close to keep your volume down. Refrain from stopping with your group in the lobby. Ask your group to respect the privacy of Middlebury students by taking photos of the space, not the people.

- The campus's main library, built in 2004 and housing 1.1 million volumes
- 3 floors offer a variety of study spaces, from silent to collaborative.

- Support services: **Center for Teaching Learning and Research (CTLR)**, research librarians, tech support, Digital Learning and Inquiry (DLNQ)
- Special Collections, home to rare books and manuscripts (that you can use)
- Honor Code

Walking Davis → Sunderland

Point out Voter as a great example of mixed use space: both an academic building and a dorm. As you prepare to cross College Street, you can touch on campus transportation including TVT, break buses, cars, and the Bike Shop's bike sale each semester.



Sunderland Language Center

You will have the opportunity to talk more about the languages when passing Le Chateau, so we recommend keeping your main focus on study abroad when passing by Sunderland.

Talking Points

- 60% of students study abroad, with programs worldwide.
- 36 Language Schools abroad across 17 different countries
- Linguistic and cultural immersion
- Non-language study abroad programs also available

Walking Sunderland → Johnson Memorial Building

Share an anecdote about studying abroad or share your future plans with the group. Good time to ask for any questions.



Johnson Memorial Building

Talking Points

- Home of the Middlebury Makerspace, a space for students wanting to tinker, create, and fabricate with a variety of resources for CNC milling, 3D printing, and laser cutting

Walking Johnson → Wright Memorial Theater

Johnson is another multipurpose building, so there are a variety of other things you could mention here. We suggest beginning your introduction to the arts since Wright Memorial Theater will be easily within view.



Wright Memorial Theater

Since the MAC is not on the tour route, this is the best opportunity to speak to the arts.

Talking Points

- The Mahaney Arts Center (MAC) is the campus hub for the arts, but there are opportunities to engage all over campus, including Wright Memorial Theater and Hepburn Zoo
- Various performance opportunities: choir, music ensembles, dance troupes, a capella

Wright Memorial Theatre → Le Chateau

Continues to talk about the prevalence of the arts on campus. You might mention the film department, student art shows, or WOMP (mentioned later). Please draw from your own experiences.



Le Chateau

Talking Points

- Another mixed use space, and also a great time to talk about the languages at Middlebury
- Be sure to mention the language pledge, immersive instruction, and other opportunities to engage like language tables and language houses
- Mention that students do not have to take a language— this will require you to give a brief explanation of distribution requirements and how they work at Middlebury

Walking Le Chateau → New Battell

Wrap up your overview of the arts and languages.



Stop 2: New Battell

Pause Outside of New Battell to give an overview of the housing system and how it operates. If the weather does not allow for you to give your introduction outside, you can use the main lounge located on the first floor. Since this is an active residential space, remind guests to be respectful of the residents. Avoid stopping in any of the hallways.

Talking Points

- RAs in every first-year dorm to assist with the transition to college.
- Overview of the lottery system, how picking works, singles v. doubles
- Themed houses, language houses, etc.
- Lesser known features: bike/ski storage, kitchens on every floor

Walking New Battell → Bi-Hall

Wrap up any final information about housing.



Stop 3: McCardell Bicentennial Hall

Enter through the doors facing New Battell and stop briefly by the balcony to let your group take in the view. On large visit days it is imperative that you keep your points short while inside so that other groups can enter behind you. Only one tour guide should be talking inside of Bi-Hall at a time. Again, please **turn off** your microphone before entering and remind your visitors to be respectful of our students.

Talking Points

- Labs and research without the competition with grad students
- Interdisciplinary connections (biology + environmental studies, comp sci + neuroscience), student symposiums
- Strong advising for pre-med, 94% acceptance rate to med school over the last 5 years
- Q-Center

Walking Bi-Hall → Battell Beach

It will likely be difficult to cover all the Bi-Hall has to offer, especially if there are other tours behind you. Feel free to use the time after you've exited to wrap up any STEM conversations and check for questions from the group.



Battell Beach

Since the Athletic Center and fields are not on the tour route, use Battell Beach as a way to talk about athletics via club and intramural sports.

Talking Points

- Quadball and other club and intramural sports use Battell Beach for practice; it is also just a popular place to hang out
- 31 varsity sports competing in at the NCAA DIII level as part of the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC)
- Mention the Mountain Club (you'll have a great view) and other ways to get outside and stay active at Middlebury

Walking Battell Beach → Franklin Environmental Center at Hillcrest



Franklin Environmental Center at Hillcrest

Talking Points

- Emphasize Middlebury's commitment to sustainability
- Carbon neutral since 2016, Energy 2028, Biomass Plant
- Point down the road towards the Knoll and share a little about that

Hillcrest → Proctor Dining

There's not a lot of time here, but a good transition is to finish with composting and immediately launch into dining.



Proctor Dining

Talking Points

- One dining plan: unlimited swipes
- Variety of options, with accommodations for dietary needs.
 - Midd Xpress, the sushi restaurant, the Grille
- Local and sustainable sourcing initiatives; composting

Walking Proctor → New Chapel

Good time to answer any questions about dining. You can point out Hepburn as another multi use space: upperclassman dorm and classroom. Mention the amphitheater where WOMP takes place.



New Chapel

The bookends on the Middlebury experience.

Talking Points

- Used for concerts, performances, lectures, and community gatherings.
- Historic importance.

Walking New Chapel → McCullough Student Center

Great view of the quad. Can be used as time to share about graduation, sledding, other fun traditions.



McCullough Student Center

Talking Points

- The building houses the offices of the Student Government Association and Student Activities, mail boxes, MiddXpress (the campus convenience store), and a performance hall for visiting acts, campus events, and student groups.

Walking McCullough → Axinn Center at Starr Library

Share about an event that you've attended in McCullough



Stop 4: Axinn Center at Starr Library

If possible, show your tour a seminar-style classroom located at the end of the first floor as you are on your way out of the building.

Talking Points

- The Axinn Center for Literary and Cultural Studies is home to the American Studies, English and American Literature, Film and Media Culture, and History departments.
- Built around an existing cornerstone of campus, Axinn added a courtyard, screening rooms, eight video editing suites, and production studios to the College's first library, Starr Library, originally built in 1900 of Vermont marble.
- Axinn now serves as a hub of humanities on campus, hosting students in its many reading rooms, media production spaces, and seminar-style classrooms and is a great example of interdisciplinary learning spaces

Walking Axinn → Emma Willard

Thank your guests for coming on the tour. Mention that any of the buildings you entered (with the exception of New Battell) are open to the public if they'd like to go explore them more on their own. Point out the MAC and the Athletic Center as two additional spaces they are encouraged to check out if they have time.

You are welcome to close your tour however you see fit, but we suggest closing with a "why Middlebury?" Recount what drew you in or what you've come to appreciate about Middlebury that has made you want to show it off to visitors!

Remind guests that the Counselor on Duty is inside and happy to answer any questions they might have. Feel free to give them your email if you are comfortable doing so.

Thanks again for being a tour guide!

