



INFORMATION AND
PROCEDURES FOR PROSPECTIVE
VISITORS TO THE COLLECTIONS



These notes are written to help with planning a research visit and to explain what you can expect during your visit to the Pitt Rivers Museum.

Please note that visitors are only admitted to the collections by appointment.



RESEARCHING WHAT THE MUSEUM HAS

It is very important to consult the Museum's collections online catalogue before making an enquiry about a research visit. This can be accessed via:

<https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/collections-online>

The collections online catalogue is a complete listing of all the material that the museum holds, and also gives access to a large amount of the information that we hold about each item, including imagery if the item has been digitized.

Prospective visitors should look through this resource carefully before making a research enquiry, taking note of object numbers that are of research interest.

Please note that we normally offer a maximum of 3 days per year for research without charge, with additional days possible only at the discretion of the department. If you need more than this then the museum may charge a £250 per day curatorial fee for access. However, such additional days will still only be possible subject to availability of collections and staff time. Large group visits may also incur a fee.





WHEN CAN I VISIT AND WHAT HOURS CAN I WORK?

If you wish to arrange a research visit to view collections, you should first contact the appropriate member of staff (listed below) who will act as your host. You will need to arrange with your host a mutually convenient time and date(s) for your visit.

During initial discussions with your host please inform them if you have any access requirements or specific cultural protocol you wish them to follow, either whilst preparing material for your visit and/or during the visit itself. Please appreciate that we sometimes have extremely high demand for access and it may be necessary to limit the number of visitors, collections made available, or the amount of time spent within the department to ensure that everyone has enough space to work and that the host has the time to provide any needed support to ensure the visit is useful.

The research room is open from 10:00 to 16:30 daily (Monday to Friday) with one hour closure for lunch. Access outside these hours is at the discretion of your host and is not guaranteed. The museum collections are not open to visitors at weekends, unless prior arrangement is made with your host.

The Museum has a very limited amount of parking available, please contact your host in advance of your visit if you require a space; we cannot guarantee that a space will be available. Oxford does have an extremely efficient Park & Ride system and we recommended that visitors use this service.

BOOKING A VISIT

We ask that visits to consult object collections be booked at least 4-6 weeks in advance, and visits to consult photograph, manuscript, film, and sound collections be booked at least 2-3 weeks in advance.

Appointments are allocated on a “first come, first served” basis and every effort will be made to accommodate researchers on their preferred dates. In the event of a clash, priority will be given to originating community members requesting access to ancestral cultural material, or researchers coming from UK higher education providers.

Every effort will be made to grant access to all material requested, however, we cannot guarantee that everything can be retrieved at the time of request. Other material may be too culturally sensitive (such as human remains) or in too fragile a condition to be handled. Any decisions made by your host regarding the availability of such material should be respected.

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WHERE DO I MEET MY HOST?

The Museum's research room is located on the first floor of the Museum. You should report to Reception on the ground floor by the South Door of the Museum at your appointment time and they will call your host to let them know you have arrived.

Reception is accessible via Robinson Close, off South Parks Road, Oxford. The precise location is available via what3words.com - ///horns.goal.paid

Please note that the Museum does not open until 12 on a Monday, and so visitors will need to come via this entrance and not through the Natural History Museum.





IN THE RESEARCH ROOM

Visitors will be expected to read and sign an access agreement upon arrival which sets out the conditions governing the use of museum collections in the research room.

It is strongly recommended that gloves be worn when handling all object collections items. Nitrile gloves will be provided and are for visitors' own protection when handling objects made of organic materials which may have been treated with harmful pesticides in the past. Some photographic material will require the use of cotton gloves. For archives, we request visitors to wash their hands before starting research.

Visitors will always be supervised by a member of curatorial staff and all handling instructions given by staff must be observed and decisions regarding any handling or access restrictions must be upheld. This is to ensure the safety and conservation of collections.

It may be necessary to close the research room without notice in the event of an emergency. The Museum has set procedures to be followed in an emergency and for your own safety any instructions given by staff must be acted upon immediately. This may involve evacuating the building and visitors must accept that there may not be time for dismantling of apparatus such as cameras or laptops.



Only pencils are allowed for note taking in the research room. Pens, biros, felt tips etc. are not permitted, so as not to inadvertently damage historical documents.



Food and drink are not permitted in the research room (pests love our collections!). Water bottles are permitted but should be left in the cabinet just outside the door to the room.

PHOTOGRAPHY



Visitors are permitted to photograph, film and 3D scan objects, subject to the safety and cultural sensitivity of the collections concerned, on the understanding that copyright of the images or footage is assigned to the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. Such photographs or films may only be used for private, non-commercial purposes.

If photographs are intended for use in publication, either immediately or at a future date, permission must be sought from the Museum for their use. See <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/photographic-services> for more details.



WHAT EQUIPMENT IS THERE THAT I CAN USE?

Wifi (eduroam and public wifi)

Power sockets for laptops

Lighting for photography, a light tent, tripods for cameras

Scale bars, measuring tapes, rulers, magnifying glasses

Light tables for slides

Album cradles and other supports

CAN I CONSULT BOOKS FROM THE LIBRARY?

Books in the museum's Balfour Library can be consulted during your research visit but not borrowed. The library's holdings can be searched via SOLO at <https://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk> Ask your museum host about access to any of the library's holdings.



ACCESS TO CULTURALLY SENSITIVE MATERIAL

As well as agreeing what material will be studied during the visit, the host will ask the visitor if they have any access requirements or if there are specific cultural protocols to be observed, either whilst preparing material for the visit and/or during the visit itself. Staff will endeavour to follow any cultural care advised by the visitor (within reason), including smudging, handling restrictions, recommendations for storage, or the provision of offerings.



ACCESS TO HUMAN REMAINS

Access to this type of material is considered on a case-by-case basis and subject to specific access guidelines.

An object that contains some element of human remains, such as composite objects with hair locks, may be subject to the provisions of this policy. Advice on this will be given at the time of request.

All requests for access should be addressed to the Head of Object Collections via objects.colls@prm.ox.ac.uk

A staff member will then communicate with the applicant about the request and whether further information or clarification is required, and whether a formal application for access is required.



CONTACTS



Object collections

(objects.colls@prm.ox.ac.uk)

Photograph, manuscript, film, and sound
collections

(ms-photo.colls@prm.ox.ac.uk)