

family guide



to the Pitt Rivers Museum

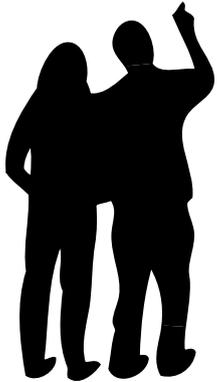
Exploring the Museum

The museum is so full of stuff there's always something new to see each time you visit.

Here are some tips for spotting new and exciting things:

Look up HIGH

What's that hanging from the ceiling?
What's in those cases under the balcony?



Look down LOW

What's that lurking under the cases?
What's that fallen down the grate?



Look in DRAWERS

What can you see?
Are they full of the same things you keep in your drawers at home?



Use your TORCH

What's in the dark corners, nooks and crannies?



Things to DO in the Museum

There are loads of games you can play right now in the museum.
Best of all, none of them needs pens or paper - just your eyes and ears.

Let's start with an oldie (but a goodie)

wherever you see this logo, on our activities or trails, you know that it is particularly suitable for the little ones in your group (as well as the not-so-little ones!)

i spy

I spy with my little eye, something in the museum that is...

big

spiky

scary

small

heavy

patterned

shiny

smooth

ugly

beautiful



Things to DO in the Museum

we're going on an adventure

Imagine you're going on an adventure...

to the North Pole

underwater

to Africa

in the dark

What would you take with you in your rucksack?
Choose from things you can see in the museum.



animal antics



There are lots of animals lurking in the museum. Can you spot an animal...

with 4 legs?

that has wings?

that lives in the sea?

that lives in a cold climate?

Things to DO in the Museum

collect the colours



It may seem like the museum is full of brown objects, but look closely and you'll see all the colours imaginable.

Find something which is:

orange

pink

white

grey

blue

green

red

purple

yellow

black

the torch game



Find a mask at head height.

Shine the torch under your chin so that your face is lit up.

Match your reflection with the mask.

Can you make the mask change its expression?
(Try sticking your tongue out, or making a silly face!)

What would you like to know about the Pitt Rivers Museum?

What sorts of things are in this museum?

The Pitt Rivers Museum is a museum of anthropology - this is the study of human beings. Everything in the museum has been made or used by humans.

Lots of the objects are old, but there are also many newer, modern objects too. The museum keeps growing - objects are added to the collections all the time.

Why is it called the Pitt Rivers Museum?

The museum is named after Lieutenant-General Henry Augustus Lane Fox Pitt Rivers (phew!) who donated his collection of 18 000 objects to the museum in 1884.

How are things organised? It doesn't look like any museum I've seen before.

The museum doesn't arrange its objects like other museums (like putting all the things from one country together). Instead the objects are grouped together by the job they do, or their function. So, all the musical instruments are together, all the things to do with writing are together.

This may seem odd at first, but it means that if you look at a case full of lamps, you can see how people from different times and places have all solved the problem of how to make light.

Why are there so many objects in the cases?

When the museum was started it was mainly visited by students from the University. It was decided that the students would find out more if there were lots of things to see rather than just a few objects in each case.

Because there are so many objects in the cases there sometimes isn't enough room for labels explaining everything. If you want to know anything about the objects just ask one of our friendly Attendants who can help you.

Why is it so dark in here?

A lot of the objects are made from natural materials like wood, feathers and fibres.

These materials will fade if they are exposed to bright light over a long period of time. So we keep the lights down low to protect the objects.

And it's a brilliant excuse to go exploring with a torch!

Am I allowed to take photos?

Yes! You're welcome to take photos of yourself, each other, the objects, the floor - anything you like. Even with the flash on. But remember that the glass cases will reflect your flash, and that sometimes, because it's dark, the pictures don't turn out so well!



Things to SEE in the Court

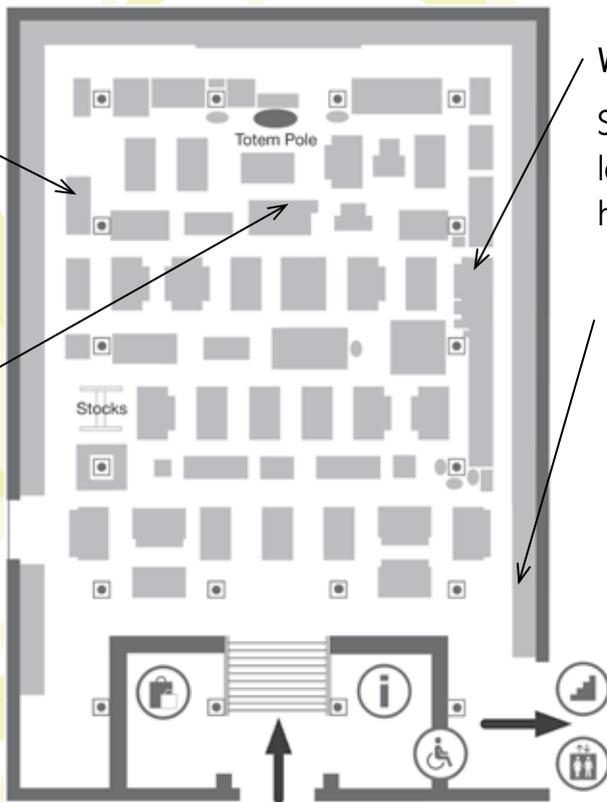
Model houses

Shine your torch inside.
What can you see?

Bull Roarers

What sort of noise do
you think these make?

Have a go pretending
to be a bull roarer.



Witch in a bottle

She's been in this bottle for a very
long time... what do you think might
happen if we open the bottle?

Masks

There are masks from Japan,
Papua New Guinea and Canada
here.

Which one is your
favourite?



psst... why not have a nosey about in the drawers in the Magic section?

Things to SEE on the Lower Gallery

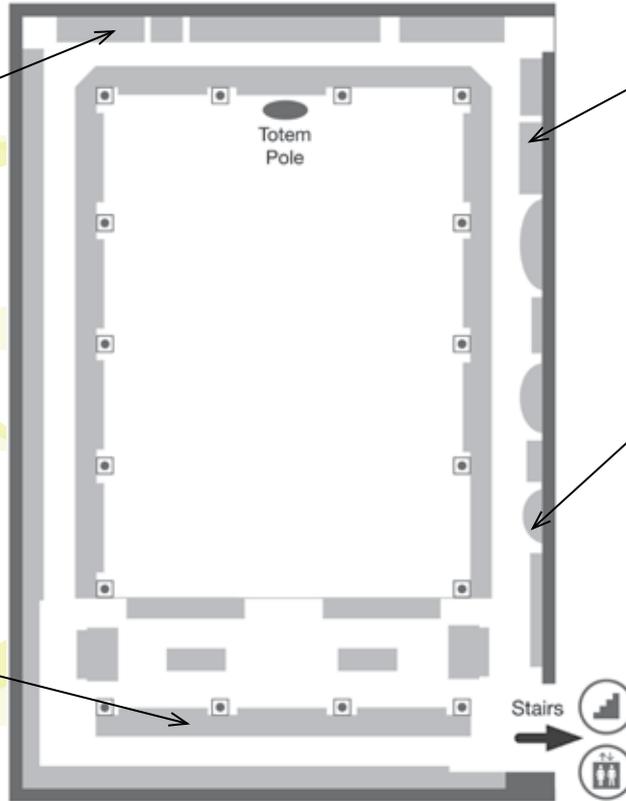
Feathers

How many different colours can you see?

Currency

People have used all sorts of things as money.

Which one do you think is the most interesting?



Reindeer cheese

This cheese is over 120 years old!

What do you think it smells like in the case?

Balls and racquets

There are ball games from all over the world here.

Can you spot any that you play at home?

psst... as you're walking around look up - what can you see in the rafters?

Things to SEE on the Upper Gallery

Totem Pole

This pole has been carved from one whole tree trunk.

Can you see the carving marks on the back?

Armour

Look at all the different materials people have used to make their armour.

Which one would you choose to wear?

Inuit Harpoon float

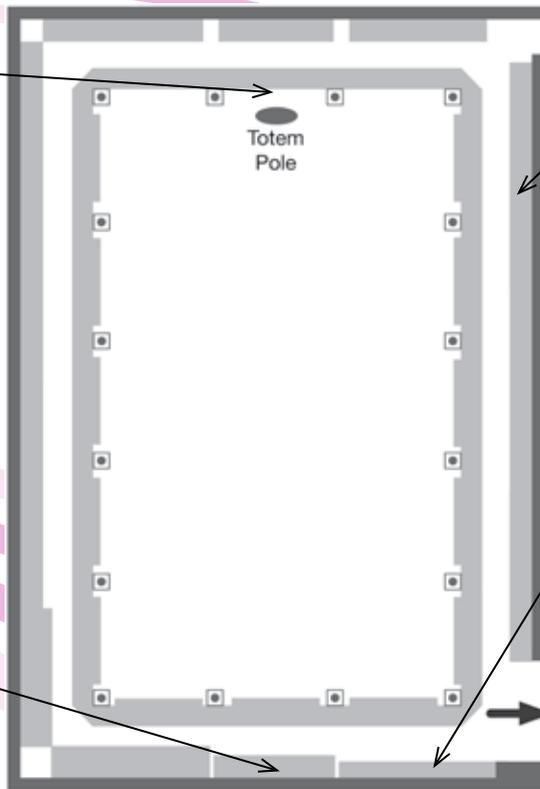
The Inuit people attach these floats to harpoons for hunting.

What has it been made from?

Shields

There are all different shapes and sizes here.

How many shields can you count in this case?



psst... try looking through the gratings in the floor - what can you see?