

Researching at The Strong FAQs

If you are visiting The Strong for research purposes, the following answers to Frequently Asked Questions will help you plan a successful visit.

Before your visit

If you are not feeling well or have a fever, cough, or [other symptoms](#), please delay your visit until you no longer have symptoms and have a negative COVID test.

How do I arrange a visit?

- Scholars, students, collectors, and other researchers are welcome to conduct research on site. For library and archives staff to optimize collections access, please request an appointment at least two weeks in advance of your arrival. Appointments may be [requested online](#), by phone at 585-410-6349, or by sending an email to library@museumofplay.org. Please provide a topic of research and indicate the materials desired and any special needs.
- As of June 25, 2021, the New York State Travel Advisory is no longer in effect. As such, travelers arriving in New York are no longer required to submit traveler health forms. All travelers, domestic and international, should continue to follow all CDC travel requirements.
- All travelers, [domestic](#) and [international](#), should continue to follow all CDC travel requirements.
- For additional information on accessing collections and policies visit: <https://www.museumofplay.org/collections/access-collections>

What should I bring?

- You may bring a laptop, digital camera, smartphone, or tablet to take photographs on-site. WiFi is available.
- The Strong supports the CDC guidelines that indicate masks are encouraged in indoor spaces. Information regarding the proper wearing of masks can be found on the [CDC website](#).
- In non-public spaces, such as the Reading Room, vaccinated staff, business guests, contractors, partners, etc. may choose to remove their masks, but are asked to remain considerate of the needs and comfort level of colleagues who may prefer to continue wearing masks when interacting face-to-face. If you are in doubt, ask before removing your mask. If you would prefer that staff wear a mask when interacting with you face-to-face, please be sure to communicate this as well.

How should I prepare for my visit?

- The best preparation requires knowing what materials you would like to see and sending a list ahead of your time at The Strong. The Researcher Request Form (found on the [Research Access](#) page) must be submitted two weeks prior to your visit.
- Please refer to the [Archives Catalog](#), [Library Catalog](#), and [Online Collections](#) to identify materials.
- Refer to this guide on [how to use the Archives Catalog](#).
- Advance notice will be required for use of museum objects as well as coordinating with The Strong's International Center for the History of Electronic Games (ICHEG) for playing video games. Curators may limit the number of objects made available to researchers, depending on staff time, object condition, and special handling needs.

How can I become a research fellow?

- The Strong awards research fellowships to academic professionals, independent scholars, museum scholars, and advanced graduate students at the Masters or PhD level. Fellowships provide financial support for scholarly play research conducted on site at The Strong in Rochester, New York, for periods of study ranging from one to four weeks. For more information and to apply visit: <https://www.museumofplay.org/research-publications/research-fellowships>

While you are visiting

Where should I stay?

- You may choose to stay in one of the nearby hotels, bed and breakfasts, or use AirBNB. We recommend staying in the [Park Avenue neighborhood](#) as it is within walking distance of the museum and features beautiful Victorian homes, restaurants, and businesses. The [South Wedge neighborhood](#) may also be a good area to stay. The nearest hotels are the [Hilton Garden Inn](#) and the [Strathallan Doubletree](#). You could also try [HomeAway](#) or [VRBO](#).

Where should I park?

- Parking is provided in the on-site parking garage off Howell Street for \$5 a day. Complimentary parking is provided for research fellows.
 1. Enter the museum's parking garage via Howell Street.
 2. Take parking ticket at gate.
 3. Carry parking ticket with you into the museum.
 4. Insert ticket at self-service parking ticket kiosks near museum entry or visit the admissions desk to pay for parking. Tickets must be scanned inside the museum to receive the \$5 rate.
 5. Do not lose your ticket. Insert validated ticket to exit garage. For more parking information visit: <https://www.museumofplay.org/visit/directions-and-parking>

Where can I eat?

- There are restaurants that are within a mile of the museum (check for COVID-19 restrictions or closures):
 - Nourish 585 at The Strong (hours of service vary): <https://www.nourish585.com/>
 - Puppy's Game Café at The Strong: see [Menu](#)
 - Nerdvana (pub fare, with board games and video games) – 50 Adventure Place
 - FLX Wienery at ROC Brewing Co. (hot dogs, sausages, burgers, etc.) – 56 S. Union Street
 - Owl House (vegan-friendly American plates) – 75 Marshall Street
 - Native Eatery and Bar (comfort food, has outdoor tables) – 180 S. Clinton Ave
 - Branca Midtown (Italian, pizza) – 280 E. Broad Street
 - Original Grain (comfort food, takeout) – 280 E. Broad Street
 - Dinosaur Bar-B-Que (barbecue) – 99 Court Street
 - Old Toad (British pub fare) – 277 Alexander Street
 - Bar Bantum (bistro fare) – 1 S. Clinton Avenue
 - Natural Oasis (Ethiopian vegan buffet lunch in a modest setting) – 288 Monroe Avenue
 - Park Avenue neighborhood restaurants a little further from the museum
 - The Union Stop (small bodega offering fresh produce, bread, groceries, etc.) – 34 S. Union Street

What are the expectations for me as a researcher?

- Researchers must fill out, read, and sign the Use of Collections Materials Agreement (found on the [Research Access](#) page) before receiving any materials or objects in the Reading Room, indicating that they understand and agree to the requirements and restrictions.
- Library staff will make a photocopy of a photo ID to be kept with the Use of Collections Materials Agreement and the Reference Request Form to document the researcher’s identity and the collections and objects they used during their visit.
- A member of the Security Team will search the researcher’s bag(s) upon entry to the museum and upon exit. Researchers will be assigned a locker and padlock for use during their visit. Outerwear, bags, and other personal effects must be stored in the lockers.

What’s Allowed in the Reading Room	
Allowed	Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All persons with an appointment to research in the library and archives ● Museum staff, Board members, other guests as escorted by a staff member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unscheduled walk-in researchers or visitors ● Guests or family members of researchers ● Food, drink (including water), candy, gum, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or any other tobacco products ● Hand sanitizer or lotion ● Weapons
Notes & Related Materials	
Allowed	Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loose paper, notebooks, notepads ● Pencils and mechanical pencils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Envelopes, binders, folders ● Pens, markers ● Post-It notes

Special Equipment <i>*All equipment must be removed from cases and the cases stored in lockers</i>	
Allowed	Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laptops, smartphones, tablets, cameras ● Flatbed scanners without auto-feed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scanners with auto-feed attachments (whether the attachment is disabled or not) ● Flash bulbs or use of flash photography
Clothing & Personal Effects <i>*Your bag(s) will be searched upon entry to the museum and upon exit</i> <i>*You may be asked to remove outer clothing that is wet or contains outdoor debris</i>	
Allowed	Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sweaters and sweatshirts, indoor business attire, indoor jackets ● Religious headwear and garments ● Coin purses or small pocket-sized wallets ● Small eye glass cases ● Clear plastic bags for storage of small items, no larger than 10" x 10" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outerwear (overcoats, windbreakers, jackets) ● Purses, fanny packs, briefcases, suitcases, handbags, backpacks, boxes, bags, equipment bags, containers of any kind ● Clear plastic bags larger than 10" x 10" ● Camera vests

What are the guidelines for using library and archive materials?

- You may take photographs of non-restricted items for personal research use only.
- When working with archival materials we ask that you work with one folder and box at a time to ensure that materials are returned to the correct folder and box.
- We ask that all materials be returned 15 minutes prior to closing.
- Additional materials can be requested at designated times throughout the day. Researchers can begin the day with one archival collection in addition to any library materials. Pull times for additional collections and materials will be 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Please prioritize the collections you want to utilize to allow for this schedule.
- To reduce the density in the library and archives in public areas, only two (2) researchers will be in the library and archives at a time. We cannot accommodate researcher guests or family members in the library and archives.
- Four worktables will be in the Reading Room with one chair at each table to maintain social distancing. Two (2) Digital Access Workstations will be available to researchers. Work surfaces will be cleaned throughout the day, prior to opening, and after closing.

- Most of The Strong's collection does not need to be handled with gloves. Rare exceptions are things like glass plate negatives or other photographs that we avoid touching. Photographic materials have mostly been rehoused or sleeved to prevent surface contact.
- Clean, dry hands are best for paper and most plastics in the collection. Staff will request that researchers wash their hands and be conscientious about what they are handling and touching. If you are uncomfortable touching shared materials without gloves, we will provide nitrile gloves as a convenience.
- ICHEG materials, like games and console controllers, are mostly plastic. Clean, dry hands are better than gloves.
- Hand sanitizer is alcohol-based and can erase or smear sensitive inks. If you frequently apply hand sanitizer, be sure that your hands are completely dry from it evaporating or rubbing into skin before continuing to handle papers with inks. Sensitive items include inkjet-printed paper, color-printed magazines, and color-printed book jackets.

What additional services are available to help me with my research?

- The library offers printing, copying, and scanning (fee incurring) services to assist you with your research. The preservation needs of the materials outweigh technical limitations of the photocopier or scanner. If museum staff determine that a book or document is too fragile for photocopying, other arrangements may be made to prevent damage to the material. The Strong reserves the right to limit the number of pages copied from any item to one-third of its total content or 30 pages, whichever is less. This applies to bound volumes and to individual files.
- Staff cannot scan materials for researchers until the quarantine period has passed. A small flatbed scanner will be available for scanning if the researcher does not want to use their camera, phone, or tablet to take photos of the material.
- The library has digital, video, and audio materials that can be accessed with the equipment we have on site:
 - Computers
 - TV and VHS player
- Note that there are some restrictions as to what can be accessed.

Will I be able to view the museum exhibits?

- You can view the museum exhibits with a visitor's badge which must be visible while you are in the museum. Visiting the butterfly garden or riding the carousel and train will require an extra ticket purchased separately. If you would like to view the museum's exhibits during your visit, please let us know so we can arrange for a badge.

What are the library and archive's hours?

- The library and archives are open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

After your visit

Can I share the product of my research (article, book, etc.)?

- We would love to see your work and add it as part of our library and archival materials.

What are the image licensing rules?

- Please refer to our Image Rights and Reproductions Fee Schedule (found on the [Research Access](#) page) for any questions on image licensing.

Who should I contact if I have follow-up questions?

- For any follow-up questions relating to the library and archives, please email library@museumofplay.org.
- For questions from research fellows please contact Christopher Bensch at cbensch@museumofplay.org.

Can I share feedback about my visit?

- We would love to have feedback after your visit. Helping researchers have a successful visit is very important to us.