

Buckingham Palace Summer Opening 2026

Access Guide & Photo Journey





This guide will show you what to expect and help you plan a visit to the State Rooms of Buckingham Palace.

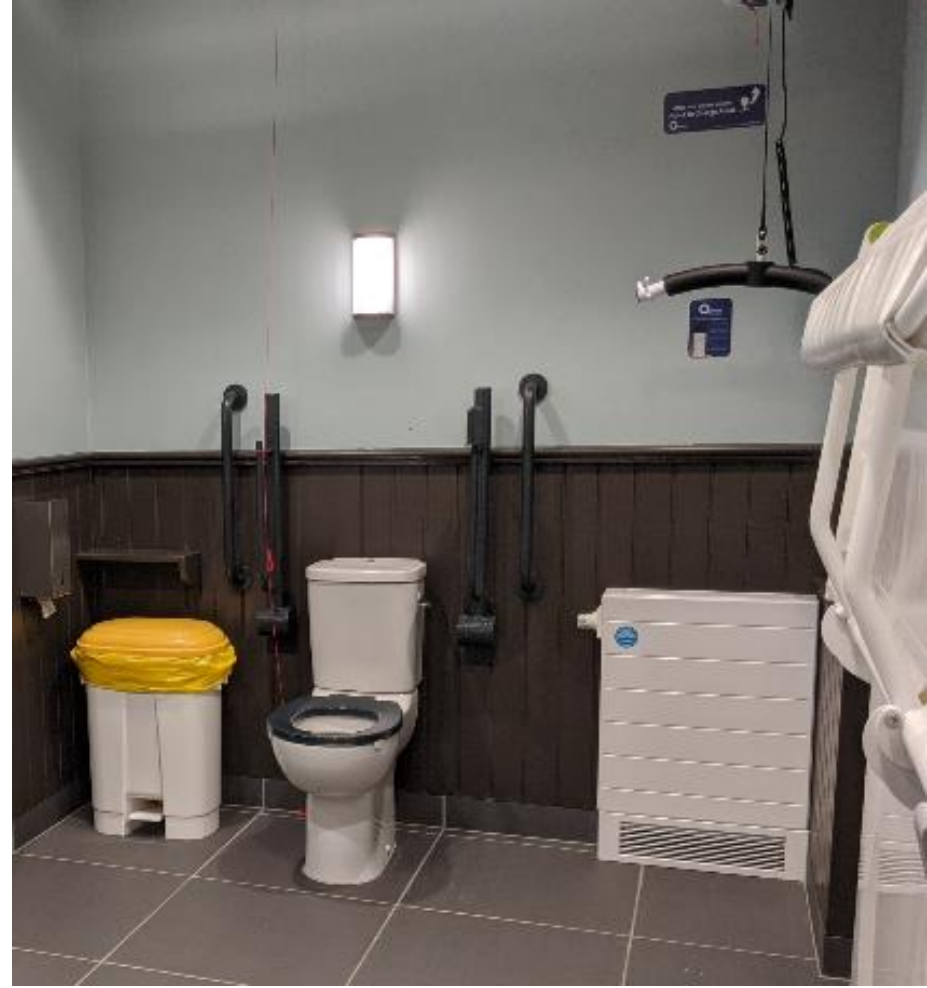


Our staff wear a dark blue uniform and are there to help you on your visit. They all wear a name badge, some printed with flags to show which other languages they speak.



Facilities:

- Toilets, an accessible toilet and a Changing Places: beginning & end of the visit
- Baby changing facilities: end of the visit
- Accessible entrance: front of the Palace



Facilities:

- Accessible toilet: beginning & end of the visit
- Changing Places: beginning & end of the visit



Facilities:

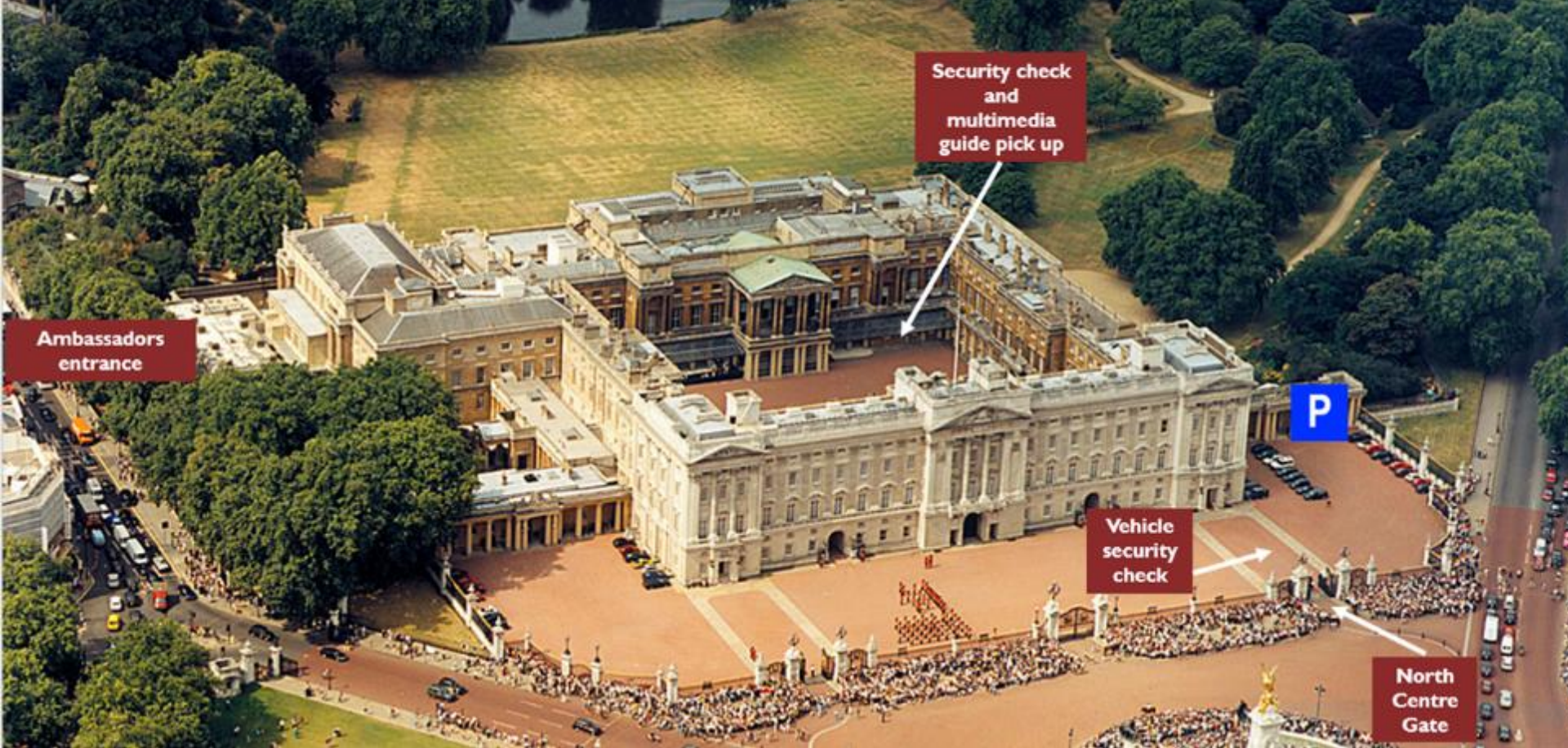
- Café: the end of the visit
- Shop: in the garden at the end of the visit



Arrivals and admission:

The main visitor entrance is on Buckingham Palace Road, where there is a sign marked 'Ticket Holders Entrance'. There is a waiting area under large tent-like canopies. There may be background noise from people and traffic. Please arrive for the time on your ticket – this will help keep queuing to a minimum.

There is an alternative step-free entrance – the Access Entrance – for visitors with additional needs, or those who get overstimulated, at the front of the Palace. Entrance via this route **must be pre-booked** by calling the Specialist Sales team in the Ticket Office on 0303 123 7324. If calling is not a suitable contact method you can e-mail: specialistsales@rct.uk.



Access Entrance:

If you book step-free access you will be met by a Warden at the North Centre Gate, the gate nearest to Green Park. There are also armed police officers positioned here.

The warden will escort you across the gravel forecourt on a motorised, wheelchair accessible buggy. The sound of the buggy on the gravel can be very noisy.



Access Entrance:

When you enter the Quadrangle of the Palace there is a manual security search, where staff will look through your bag, and ask you to walk through a metal detecting arch.

If you require step-free please read the information here: www.rct.uk/visit/buckingham-palace/mobility-access-at-buckingham-palace#the_summer_opening_of_the_state_rooms

Once you have been through the security search you will be escorted into the Grand Entrance to join the main visitor route. There is a mixture of flooring from a spongy mat, a temporary metal ramp and stone floor.



Main Entrance:

Depending on the time of your ticket you will be directed to one of two canopied waiting areas by a member of our Warden team.

Whilst in the waiting area you will be given a briefing by a Warden highlighting our visit guidelines:

- no photography is allowed until you reach the garden
- no chewing gum
- no food or drink, other than water, is to be consumed inside
- toilets are available once you are inside the Palace and then again in the garden



Security at the main entrance:

On a visit to Buckingham Palace, you must go through a security search. You should follow the instructions of the Wardens.

This security area is located just after the covered Admissions area. It is a bright, noisy space that gets busy and always involves queuing.

There are three air-conditioning units working in the space.



Security at the main entrance:

The flooring is decking and squeaks in many places and there are several ceiling fans which may or may not be on.

You will be asked to put bags through an x-ray machine and all metallic items – keys, coins, mobile phones etc. – must be removed from pockets and put into your bag.

You will be asked to walk through a metal detecting arch. There is a metal strip on the floor to show you where to stand until you are directed to move through the arch by staff.

The metal detecting arch makes a loud noise if it detects something metal. If this happens, staff will use a hand-held detector and wave it around your body to find out what set-off the alarm. The detector should not touch your body. Often a watch or metal belt buckle will have caused the alarm to sound.



Bag & Pram drop:

Once you have passed through security you will be asked to place any large pieces of baggage, backpacks or prams into the cloakroom. This does not include specialist buggies for disabled children.

If you hand in baggage, the Warden behind the desk will give you a ticket. Give this back to a Warden at the end of your visit, in the garden, and they will give you your belongings. If you are not sure whether your bags are too large to carry round with you, you can ask the Warden at the Bag & Pram Drop.



Multimedia Guide Pick-up:

You will exit the security area and walk along more decking to the multimedia guide desk.

The multimedia guide tells you about the history of the Palace, the role of The King and about several of the works of art on display, using sound and video clips.

You can stop and restart the tour at any point. If you listen to the whole tour it will take you about one hour. The tour can be used with or without headphones. If used without, people often hold it like a mobile phone.



Inside the Palace:

As you enter the main building, you cross a very spongy mat before walking along a long narrow corridor where there is potential for jostling.

The space echoes and there can be background noise from the multimedia guide.



Inside the Palace:

You will exit outside again onto more decking in the Quadrangle of the Palace.

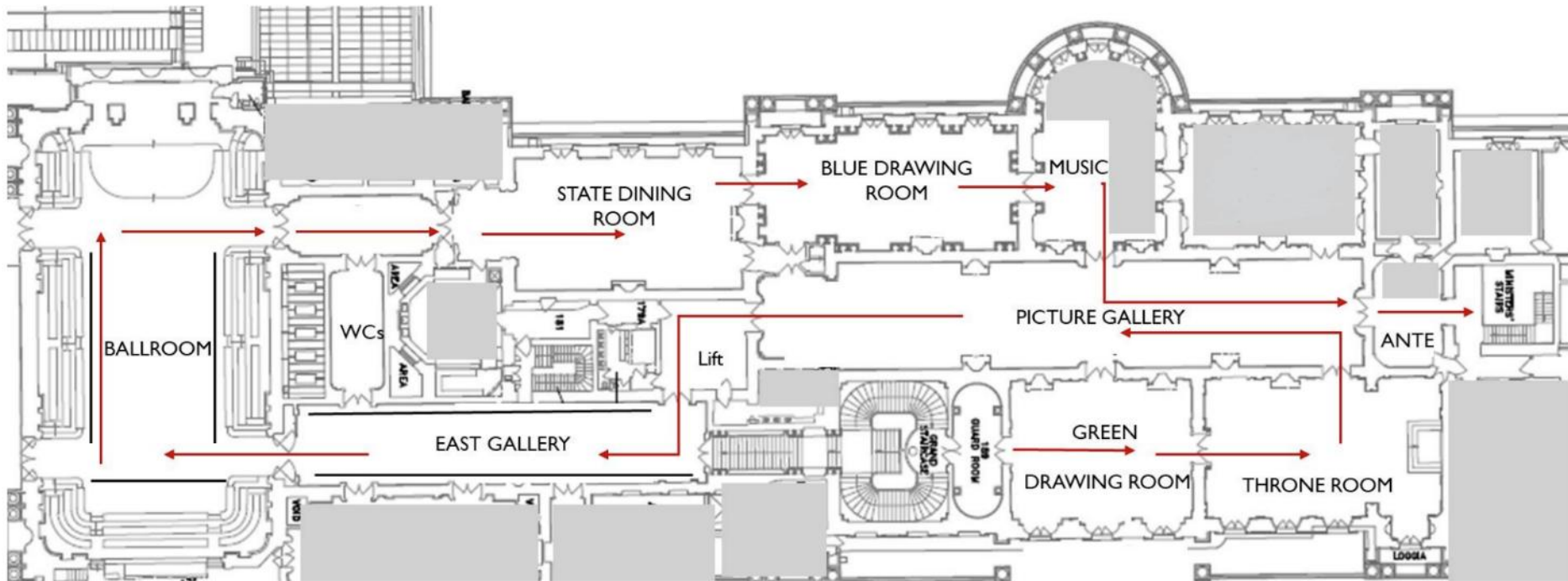
Bench seating is available before re-entering the building via the Grand Entrance.



The Grand Entrance:

You will go up steps to enter the Grand Entrance.

On bright days there can be a significant contrast in light levels from light to dark. You must follow the route and go all the way up the Grand Staircase – there are grey rope barriers to prevent you from going in the wrong direction. The rope barriers can be difficult to see.



The Visitor Route:

The route, through the State Rooms of Buckingham Palace, is shown above. After ascending the Grand Staircase, visitors start in the Green Drawing Room.

The route is one way, and thick red and thin grey rope barriers are used to prevent visitors from going in the wrong direction. Our staff are on duty in each space to help you with any needs or questions.

If you need to leave at any point, please just ask a member of staff.



Through the State Rooms:

The light levels change throughout and range from quite bright to very dim.

Flooring is mostly carpet, some of which is heavily patterned. There are floorboards at the entrance to some of the rooms and these are often squeaky.

Windows may be open or closed, and background noise can drift in from outside.

Seating is available in all rooms by asking a warden.

**The East Gallery:**

This year, due to re-servicing works, the East Gallery is hoarded. The lighting in here may appear very bright and there may be building works audible.



The Ballroom:

This year, due to re-servicing works, the Ballroom is hoarded and there may be building works audible.



The Picture Gallery:

You see this room in two parts. Thin grey rope barriers are used to prevent visitors from going in the wrong direction and getting too close to the paintings.

Wooden bench seating is available, and it can get busy in here with slow moving people looking at the paintings hanging on the walls.

If you need to leave, if it feels too busy, please signal to a Warden and they will assist you.



Exiting the Palace:

You will exit the Palace through the Bow Room where, on certain days, there can be an intense forward light and gusts of air from outside.

As you exit the Bow Room there are three doors which all exit onto the same terrace. Go through the left-hand door to:

- return the multimedia tour - you should separate the headphones from the player
- collect your bags from the Bag & Pram Collection
- pose for a photo in front of a Palace balcony backdrop
- go into the Family Pavilion



Family Pavilion:

The Family Pavilion is a space for families with children to relax and enjoy a number of different activities. There are dressing-up, role-play and drawing and colouring activities as well as opportunities to pose for photographs.

There is a ramp in the room that can be difficult to see without clearly defined edges. There is an air conditioning unit in the back of the room and fluorescent, flickering lights.



The Café:

As you leave the Bow Room there are three doors which all exit onto the same terrace. Go through the right-hand, ramped, door to the Garden Café.

The Café offers a selection of refreshments, including tea, coffee, juice and a choice of cakes and sandwiches.

A wide number of dietary needs can be catered for. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the Cafe team.

The flooring in the Café is hard gravel and there can be a lot of background noise.



Exiting the Palace:

There are 10 steps down from the terrace that take visitors into the garden where you follow the path along the South side to the exit near Hyde Park Corner.

If you cannot manage steps please speak to a Warden for alternative access to the garden.

The garden path is gravel and takes you past the toilets and the Garden Shop.



Garden Shop:

The shop is a busy environment with lino flooring. There are lots of items on open display, including porcelain and glass.



Toilets:

The toilet block in the gardens has decking flooring and may squeak. The hand-dryers are loud and omit a bright blue light along with the hot air blast. The accessible lavatories have heavy doors and are heavily fragranced.

No radar key is required.



Leaving Buckingham Palace:

Visitors leave the Palace via the Garden. The $\frac{1}{4}$ mile path takes you along the edge of the garden and you exit onto Grosvenor Place – where is red X is on the map above.