

A Trip to Democracy Lab



A Story to Prepare for Your Visit

U.S. CAPITOL
Visitor Center

Introduction

We can use this story as we get ready for our visit to the **Democracy Lab** at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center.

The Democracy Lab is a hands-on learning space in the Capitol Visitor Center where we learn about the work of Congress.





How do I enter the Capitol Visitor Center?

We are going to the Democracy Lab but first we must enter the **U.S. Capitol Visitor Center**. Inside, we can see and do many fun things, like see statues, take a tour, and visit Exhibition Hall.



Security

First, we go through security. We might have to wait in line outside to get into the building.

Inside the building we will see **police officers**. They will ask us to put our belongings through machines and walk through a metal detector.

This makes sure everyone is safe at the Capitol. The security area can be crowded, and the machines can make loud noises, but other areas will be quieter.

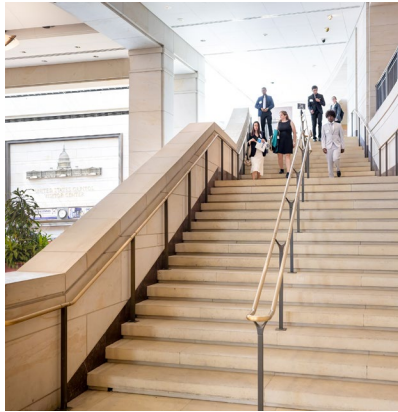
***Know before you go!** Check out the [list of prohibited items](#) or scan this QR code.





Helpful People

Inside the Capitol Visitor Center, we will see more staff members wearing red vests, sweaters and blazers! These people are here to help. They can give us directions and answer our questions.



Getting Around

Staff can help us find the nearest **stairs**, **elevator** or **escalators** that take us to the lower level where Democracy Lab is located.

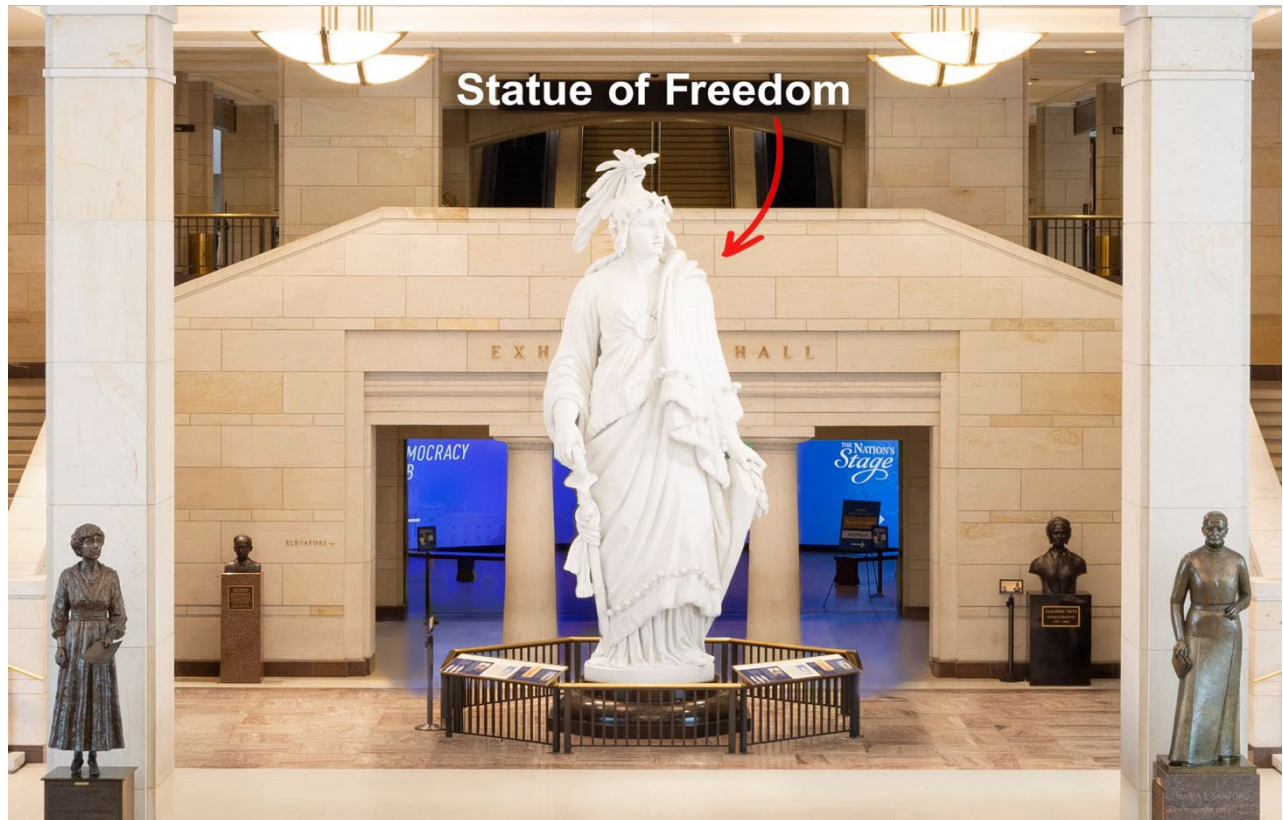


Take a Break

Staff can help us find a quiet area to take a break. Family restrooms are available near all eight restroom locations, and a Mothers Room can be found near the Restaurant on the lower level.



Inside the Capitol Visitor Center



Where is the Democracy Lab?

The Democracy Lab is located inside Exhibition Hall. To get there, we will find the big white statue, called the **Statue of Freedom**. Behind the statue is the entrance to Exhibition Hall.



Exhibition Hall

Exhibition Hall is like a museum. There are historic objects, models, and interactive kiosks. To find the **Democracy Lab entrance**, we make our way toward the big model of the Capitol Dome.

Democracy Lab



What's inside the Democracy Lab?

Inside the Democracy Lab are fun activities to learn about Congress and democracy, such as making a speech, looking at maps, and making art.

If we want to learn more about the activities in the Democracy Lab, we can read the [Democracy Lab Guide](#).





Sensory Bags

If Democracy Lab gets too loud or overwhelming for us, we can ask a staff member at the entrance for a **sensory bag**. This bag has fidgets, noise canceling headphones, and a weighted blanket. When we are finished, we give the bag back to the staff member.



Flexible Space

The Democracy Lab is a flexible space and when we visit, we might see it set up a couple of different ways.

Sometimes one or all the table activities are covered. We can ask a staff member which activities are available to explore. The [Event Calendar](#) also lists daily activities.





The Democracy Lab is open from **10 a.m. – 3 p.m.** We might see a sign saying “Closed for Special Program” if the space is not available at that time.

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