

Visiting Hoover Dam: A Traveler's Guide

The Mike O'Callaghan – Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge downstream of Hoover Dam officially opened to traffic in October 2010. Vehicles travelling on U.S. Highway 93 no longer cross the dam. Visitors to the dam must now exit U.S. 93 at Nevada State Route 172 to reach the site.

The dam is not open to through-traffic. The roadway on the Arizona side of the site has been closed. Vehicles can still cross the dam to visit the Arizona viewpoints and concessions, but all are required to turn around and re-enter Nevada to access Highway 93.

Visitors who have Hoover Dam as a destination in their travel plans need to know a few facts, as there are some restrictions around the site. All vehicles entering the dam site are subject to inspection by officers at the security checkpoint located in Nevada approximately one mile from the dam.

Here are some guidelines to help you on your way:

What vehicles CAN come to the dam?

- All passenger vehicles with a cargo capacity of one-ton or less, including:
 - automobiles
 - light trucks (including pickups with covered beds)
 - dual-wheel rear-axle vehicles
 - vans
 - sport utility vehicles
 - motorcycles
- Semi-truck “bob-tails” without trailers
- Buses WITHOUT luggage
NOTE: All buses will be inspected, including a walk-through of the passenger area; carry-ons such as small backpacks are okay.
- Recreational vehicles and motorhomes
- Vehicles towing camper-type or other small trailers, personal watercraft or boats, 5th wheel trailers, or non-commercial livestock trailers
- Tow trucks with 10 wheels or less towing no more than 2 vehicles
- Commercial vehicles with official business at Hoover Dam

What vehicles CANNOT come to Hoover Dam?

- All commercial semi-trucks (18-wheelers), including those with empty flatbed trailers
- Buses WITH luggage
- Enclosed box trucks, rental trucks/trailers (such as U-Haul/Ryder-type), moving vans, utility trailers, and racecar-type boxed vehicle/equipment transport trailers
- Double-stacked trailers
- Overloaded vehicles as determined by the inspection officer (excessive luggage, packages, etc.)
- Vehicles with cargo that cannot be inspected
- Vehicles carrying hazardous, combustible or flammable materials (other than the vehicle's fuel), munitions, explosives, fertilizer in excess of 40 pounds, fuel in authorized containers (gas cans, fuel drums, etc.) in excess of 25 gallons, or any material perceived to be a security risk

Please remember, these are only guidelines – inspecting officers at Hoover Dam may use their professional discretion in permitting a vehicle to cross or not.

Hoover Dam Inspection Checkpoint

What is its purpose?

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, checkpoints were established to provide security control by restricting certain vehicles from crossing the dam.

Where is it?

The checkpoint is located on Nevada State Route 172, one mile north of the dam.

Who must stop at it?

All motorists who wish to visit the dam must stop for inspection at the request of security personnel.

Who staffs it?

The checkpoint is staffed by Bureau of Reclamation police officers and contracted security personnel 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Hoover Dam Vehicle Inspection Tips

Will my vehicle be inspected?

Any vehicle may be fully inspected before it is allowed to pass through the checkpoint. Certain types of vehicles (RVs, rental trucks, etc.) will ALWAYS be inspected.

What areas of my vehicle will be inspected?

Vehicle passenger areas, trunks, cargo areas, engine compartments, undercarriages, and cargo holds may be searched, as well as any closed or locked containers. Also, bus cargo-bays, the covered beds of pickups, and pop-up trailer interiors will all be inspected.

Will an officer open or remove any cargo from my vehicle?

No. Vehicle operators or passengers will be responsible for removing any cargo coverings and for opening doors, compartments, cabinets, boxes, and crates, as well as repacking removed items.

What if I don't want my vehicle inspected?

If a driver does not wish to have the vehicle inspected, or if the vehicle cannot be fully inspected, it will NOT BE ALLOWED through the checkpoint.

Can I bring a weapon across Hoover Dam?

No. The following list identifies some of the more common weapons that are prohibited:

- Firearms
- Knives (other than kitchen utensils)
- Pepper spray
- Brass knuckles
- Mace
- Batons

This is NOT a complete list. The inspecting officers at Hoover Dam may use their professional discretion in identifying weapons and deny the vehicle access to the dam.

Additionally, knives of any kind and weapons are **not allowed** in the Visitor Center.

Travel Tips

Can I stop my vehicle on top of the dam?

No. Stopping any vehicle on top of the dam is prohibited, and pedestrians are prohibited from the top of the dam during hours of darkness. You can stop at the parking lots and roadway turnouts on each side of the dam.

Where can I park?

A 459-space parking garage is located on the Nevada side of the dam set into a canyon across the road from the Visitor Center. The parking garage charges a \$32.00 fee.

Access to the Visitor Center is most convenient from this parking garage. However, oversized vehicles, recreational vehicles, and vehicles with trailers must use the parking lots on the Arizona side of the dam.

In Arizona, the closest lot to the dam (to the left of the roadway as you enter Arizona) requires a \$32.00 fee. The other 4 parking areas further up the canyon have no fees, but require a lengthy walk to access the Visitor Center on the Nevada side. (The crest of the dam is nearly a quarter-mile long.)

Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge

Can I see the dam from my car as I cross the Memorial Bridge?

No, the dam is NOT visible to those driving across the bridge.

Can I access the bridge as a pedestrian?

Yes, visitors can access the bridge from a Pedestrian Plaza inside the Hoover Dam security zone (vehicles are subject to inspection prior to accessing this site). A parking area for approximately 70 vehicles is provided near the bridge in Nevada just past the security checkpoint; a set of stairs and access ramps lead to the sidewalk across the bridge. Several interpretive stations are available along the walkway that features panoramic views of Hoover Dam, the Colorado River, and Lake Mead. Access to this area is only available during daylight hours.

When was it opened to traffic?

This bridge, the first concrete-steel composite arch bridge built in the United States and the longest concrete arch in the Western Hemisphere, was opened to traffic on October 19, 2010.

Where can I get information about the bridge?

Visit the Federal Highway Administration's web site at: www.hooverdambypass.org.

Are there alternate routes across the Colorado River other than the Memorial Bridge?

Yes, motorists can use U.S. Highway 95 and Nevada State Route 163/Arizona State Route 68 through Laughlin, Nevada, and Bullhead City, Arizona, to cross the Colorado River to the south; this route adds about 23 miles to travel. Truckers should also be aware of size and weight restrictions on U.S. 93 – see [Nevada Department of Transportation guidelines](#) for more information.

For updated information on the status of Hoover Dam traffic or area roadway construction, call toll free 888-248-1259 or contact the Bureau of Reclamation's External Affairs Office at 702-293-8421.