

Maryland State Fair 2026: Dates, Tickets & Travel Guide



The **Maryland State Fair 2026** returns to Lutherville-Timonium, Maryland, for three weekends of agriculture, livestock, carnival rides, competitions, entertainment, food, shopping, and family activities. The fair takes place from August 27 through September 13, with events spread across three weekends.

Located at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Baltimore County, the fair is one of Maryland's biggest annual celebrations and gives visitors a chance to experience the state's agricultural traditions alongside classic fair entertainment.

What Is the Maryland State Fair?

The Maryland State Fair is an annual celebration of Maryland agriculture, community traditions, competitions, entertainment, and family recreation.

Agriculture remains at the heart of the event, with livestock shows, 4-H and FFA activities, horse events, agricultural exhibits, and competitions. Visitors can also enjoy carnival rides, concerts, food vendors, shopping, and other attractions throughout the fairgrounds.

Maryland State Fair 2026 Dates & Location

These are the essential details to know before planning your visit.

- **Dates:** August 27-30, September 3-7, and September 10-13, 2026
- **Venue:** Maryland State Fairgrounds
- **Address:** 2200 York Road, Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21093
- **Maine Fairs:** [*Get Details Here*](#)

Unlike other [*US state fairs*](#) that operate continuously for one or two weeks, the Maryland State Fair is scheduled across **three weekends in 2026**. The fair is closed to the public on August 31, September 1-2, and September 8-9.

What to Expect at the Maryland State Fair 2026

The 2026 fair combines Maryland's agricultural heritage with classic midway entertainment and special events.

Agriculture and Livestock

Agriculture is one of the defining parts of the Maryland State Fair. Visitors can see livestock competitions involving cattle, sheep, swine, poultry, rabbits, horses, and other animals. The 2026 schedule also includes numerous 4-H and FFA competitions, giving families an opportunity to learn more about Maryland agriculture and youth agricultural programs.

Carnival Rides and Midway

The midway brings the traditional carnival experience to the fair with rides, games, and attractions for different ages. Families can choose from rides for younger children, while thrill-seekers can enjoy larger carnival attractions. Ride wristbands are sold separately from fair admission, and carnival games are not included with the ride wristband.

Live Concerts and Entertainment

Live entertainment is another major part of the Maryland State Fair experience. The 2026 M&T Bank Concert Series includes performances such as Congress The Band, Clutch with JD Pinkus, and a special lineup of shows on September 13, including the Pop Princesses Show and K-Pop Dance Party. Concert tickets include admission to the fair for those events. Check the official entertainment schedule before your visit because performances and times vary by date.

Competitions and Exhibits

Competitions are an important part of the fair's agricultural and community focus. Visitors can see 4-H and FFA competitions, livestock judging, horse shows, horticulture, home arts, baking, crafts, and other exhibits throughout the fair. The official 2026 schedule includes events across multiple buildings and livestock facilities.

Fair Food

Fair food is part of the Maryland State Fair experience. Visitors can expect classic carnival favorites, snacks, desserts, drinks, and other foods from vendors throughout the fairgrounds. If food is one of your priorities, allow time to explore different vendor areas rather than stopping at the first option you see.

Shopping and Vendors

The fair also includes shopping and vendor areas where visitors can browse products, crafts, merchandise, services, and other offerings. This can be a good way to take a break from the midway while still exploring the fairgrounds.

Maryland State Fair 2026 Hours

The fair operates on different schedules depending on the day.

On Thursdays, gates open at **5 PM**, while Friday through Sunday and Labor Day Monday begin at **9 AM**. The official FAQ lists gates closing at 9 PM, with individual buildings and carnival attractions following their own schedules.

The fair's 2026 schedule is:

- **Thursday:** Gates 5 PM-9 PM
- **Friday-Sunday:** Gates 9 AM-9 PM
- **Labor Day Monday:** Gates 9 AM-9 PM

Individual buildings, the Exhibition Hall, rides, and special events may have different hours, so check the official schedule for the day you plan to visit.

Best Time to Visit the Maryland State Fair

The best time to visit depends on whether you prefer a quieter agricultural experience or a busier carnival atmosphere.

For Smaller Crowds

Thursday evenings can be a good option for visitors who want to experience the fair after work while avoiding some of the weekend crowds.

For Families

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings are useful for families who want to explore livestock exhibits, competitions, and agricultural attractions earlier in the day.

For Concerts and Entertainment

If live music is your priority, choose your visit around the 2026 concert schedule. Some of the major concerts take place during the final weekend.

For the Full Fair Experience

A weekend visit gives you more opportunities to experience the midway, food vendors, entertainment, livestock, competitions, and special events.

Travel Tips for Attending the Maryland State Fair

A little planning can make your Maryland State Fair visit easier and more enjoyable.

- **Check the three-weekend schedule:** The fair is not open continuously between August 27 and September 13.
- **Check the daily schedule:** Livestock shows, competitions, concerts, and special events vary by day.
- **Buy tickets in advance when available:** Check the official ticket page for current admission offers.
- **Plan carnival costs separately:** Ride wristbands and carnival games are separate from general admission.
- **Wear comfortable shoes:** The fairgrounds require plenty of walking.
- **Arrive early:** Morning visits are useful for agricultural exhibits and livestock events.
- **Bring sun protection:** Late August and early September can be warm.
- **Stay hydrated:** Spend extra time in shaded or indoor areas during hot afternoons.
- **Plan around concerts:** Popular performances can change the busiest times of the day.
- **Check the minor admission policy:** In 2026, guests under 18 must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or qualifying chaperone age 21 or older. Each qualifying adult may accompany no more than six minors.
- **Consider staying nearby:** Baltimore County and Baltimore offer a wide range of accommodation options for visitors planning a longer trip.

Things to Do Near the Maryland State Fair

The fairgrounds are in Lutherville-Timonium, making it easy to combine your visit with attractions around Baltimore County and Baltimore.

Explore Baltimore

Baltimore is a short drive from the fairgrounds and offers museums, historic neighborhoods, waterfront attractions, restaurants, and family activities.

Visit the Inner Harbor

Baltimore's Inner Harbor is one of the city's best-known visitor areas, with waterfront walks, restaurants, museums, and attractions.

Explore the National Aquarium

Families can add the **National Aquarium** to a Maryland State Fair trip for an indoor attraction featuring marine life and aquatic exhibits.

Visit Baltimore's Historic Attractions

Travelers interested in history can explore attractions connected to Baltimore's maritime heritage, historic neighborhoods, and important Maryland landmarks.

Explore Maryland's Food Scene

The Baltimore region offers plenty of opportunities to try Maryland favorites, including Maryland blue crab, crab cakes, Old Bay-seasoned dishes, and Chesapeake Bay seafood.

Why You Should Visit the Maryland State Fair in 2026

The Maryland State Fair offers a combination of agriculture, livestock, carnival rides, food, competitions, entertainment, and live music that makes it appealing to both families and travelers.

The **three-weekend format** is also convenient for visitors. Instead of trying to experience everything in one continuous visit, travelers can choose the weekend that best matches their interests, whether that means agriculture, carnival rides, concerts, or Labor Day activities.

The fair's location near Baltimore adds another advantage. Visitors can combine a fair trip with museums, waterfront attractions, historic sites, restaurants, and other Maryland travel experiences.

Conclusion

The Maryland State Fair 2026 takes place across three weekends: **August 27-30**, **September 3-7**, and **September 10-13** at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Lutherville-Timonium.

From livestock and agricultural competitions to carnival rides, concerts, food, shopping, and family entertainment, the fair offers plenty to experience. Visitors can also use the trip as an opportunity to explore Baltimore and the surrounding Chesapeake region.

Before you go, check the official fair schedule and ticket information because individual event times, ticket prices, and entertainment can change.

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the Maryland State Fair 2026?

The **Maryland State Fair 2026** takes place August 27-30, September 3-7, and September 10-13, 2026.

Where is the Maryland State Fair held?

The fair is held at the **Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road, Lutherville-Timonium, Maryland 21093.**

What is the Maryland State Fair known for?

The fair is known for **Maryland agriculture, livestock shows, 4-H and FFA competitions, carnival rides, live entertainment, food, shopping, horse shows, and family activities.**

Is the Maryland State Fair family-friendly?

Yes. Families can enjoy carnival rides, agricultural exhibits, livestock, competitions, entertainment, food, and other attractions. In 2026, visitors under 18 must be accompanied by a qualifying adult under the fair's minor admission policy.

What can I do near the Maryland State Fair?

Visitors can explore **Baltimore, the Inner Harbor, the National Aquarium, historic attractions, museums, restaurants, and Maryland's Chesapeake Bay food scene** during their fair trip.