



DAY TRIP TO FAIRBANK

From Tombstone · Cochise County, Arizona



Photo: The Old Pueblo, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0



RAILROAD AND
ROAD

OPEN · FREE

BLM historic townsite, free. Schoolhouse museum open Friday to Sunday; parking area open daily, sunrise to sunset.

Fairbank is the easiest stop on the San Pedro, with paved road, free entry and a short walk from the car to the buildings. Come Friday to Sunday if you want the schoolhouse museum open. Walk out to the Grand Central Mill in the morning, picnic under the trees, and spend the afternoon in Tombstone, 15 minutes away.

A SAMPLE DAY

- ☐ 9 a.m. Leave Tombstone. Take AZ 80 northwest and AZ 82 west, about 15 minutes in all.
- ☐ 9:30 a.m. The schoolhouse museum opens. See the restored classroom and the exhibits, then walk past the mercantile, the houses and the hotel foundations.
- ☐ 10:30 a.m. Take the gravel trail north past the cemetery to the Grand Central Mill, 1.25 miles each way.
- ☐ 12:30 p.m. Picnic at the shaded tables by the schoolhouse.
- ☐ 1:30 p.m. Drive back to [Tombstone](#). From October to May the courthouse museum is open until 4:30 p.m.
- ☐ Dinner The Longhorn Restaurant on Allen Street, which the Tombstone Chamber of Commerce calls the town's oldest continually operated restaurant. It's open until 8 p.m.

Coming from Tucson? Allow about 1 hour 25 minutes, and leave by 8 a.m. to arrive at opening.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The mercantile.** The long adobe front reads best from across the lot, with the big trees beside it, as in the photo at the top of this page.
- **The schoolhouse.** Its green-trimmed gable and sign face the path. Inside, tall windows light the classroom, so expose for the room.
- **The Grand Central Mill.** The stone terraces climb the hillside. Shoot from the trail below to show the steps, and keep off the walls.
- **The cemetery.** Small and on a rise north of town. Watch your footing on the loose rock going up.



USGS topographic map, 1915 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	9 mi, about 14 min each way from Tombstone's historic district. From Tucson: 73 mi, about 1 h 25 min.
OPEN	The parking area is open sunrise to sunset every day. The schoolhouse museum opens Friday to Sunday and Monday holidays, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., staffed by volunteers from the Friends of the San Pedro River.
ADMISSION	Free. Day use needs no permit.
ROAD	Paved AZ 82 to the parking area on the north side of the highway, half a mile east of the river. The BLM says you don't need four-wheel drive or high clearance.
RESTROOMS	An accessible vault toilet near the accessible parking spaces.
FOOD AND WATER	No water on site and nothing for sale. Bring plenty, especially for the walk to the mill.
SHADE	About six picnic tables stand in the shade of trees, and a larger group picnic site next to the schoolhouse is shaded too.
ON FOOT	An interpretive trail runs through the townsite. A hardened gravel trail goes 1.25 miles north to the Grand Central Mill. The side path up to the cemetery is short but has a steep stretch with loose rock.
GUIDED WALKS	The Friends of the San Pedro River lead free Saturday history walks, Fairbank on November 7, 2026, and the Grand Central Mill on November 28, both at 9 a.m. No reservation is needed, but you sign a waiver.
RULES	Pets on a leash. Metal detectors are banned, and removing artifacts from public land is illegal. No camping at the trailhead.
CELL SIGNAL	The BLM says reception is generally good but can be spotty in bad weather. There's no public Wi-Fi.
WEBSITE	blm.gov/visit/fairbank-historic-townsite

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Keep out of unstable buildings and off fenced ruins.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 31.72320, -110.18840 · 31°43'24"N
110°11'18"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/arizona/fairbank/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.