

UT Gardens Facility Rentals FAQs

1. How do I book an event?

All event scheduling must be booked through and approved by UT Gardens rental staff: Lauren Carver - lmcarter@utk.edu, 865-974-3656, or Holly Jones - hjones3@utk.edu, 865-974-9266. Site tours are encouraged prior to booking and may be arranged with rental staff. A non-refundable deposit of ½ total rental fees (cash, checks, M.C, Visa, Discover accepted) and a signed Event Rental Agreement must be received in order to secure and hold the date. Final balance is due no later than 4 weeks prior to the event. For events booked 30 days or less before an event the full fee must be paid and is non-refundable.

2. Can a date be held?

A date may be held for 10 full days with no money exchange. An Event Rental Agreement will be sent for review during that time. After 10 days, if there is no Event Rental Agreement signed and a deposit received, the hold will be released. There can only be one date held at a time, and each date can only have one hold at a time.

3. Do I need to pay the damage deposit?

All events, aside from Micro Weddings, are charged a damage deposit of \$500. This is due no later than 4 weeks out from the event. For events booked 30 days or less before the event, the full damage deposit must be paid with the Event Rental Agreement form and rental fees. The damage deposit is fully refundable within 14 days of the event.

4. What if I need to cancel?

If cancellations occur at least 30 days prior to an event, fees paid beyond the non-refundable deposit will be returned. No refunds are given for cancellations less than 30 days prior to the event. No refunds are given for inclement weather.

5. What if it rains?

The McIlwaine Friendship Pavilion (covered with open sides), if available, is an option for reserving if inclement weather is expected. Additional fees may apply. Tents are allowed from outside vendors with prior approval.

6. What is the catering policy?

Any licensed and insured caterer may provide services. All vendors (e.g., florists, caterers, musical groups, etc.) must contact the Gardens' staff two weeks prior to the event to arrange delivery and setup, and parking. It is the lessee's responsibility to inform vendors of this policy.

7. What is the alcohol policy?

The dispensing and consumption of alcohol must be in accordance with the UTIA alcohol policy (<https://ag.tennessee.edu/Documents/UTIA%20Policies/715A.pdf>).

Alcoholic beverages may only be served by vendors that are properly licensed and possess all the required state and local permits. Currently enrolled students may not be served or be in possession of alcoholic beverages on UT property.

Approved Alcohol Vendors:

Aramark

Bridgewater

Bradford Events

All Occasions Catering

Rosa's Catering

8. Does the Garden provide any site furnishings?

Tents, tables, chairs and décor are not provided. The exceptions are the Children's Garden Pavilion, which includes rectangular tables and chairs for up to 30 guests and the Friendship Pavilion which includes 8 square tables and 32 chairs. We recommend coordinating equipment rental through your selected vendor.

9. Are there any restrictions on decorating?

No environmentally harmful, unsightly or potentially dangerous materials may be used – such as rice, glitter, confetti, birdseed, artificial flower petals or fireworks (including sparklers). Butterflies and bubbles are permissible outdoors. Limited decorations including candles, garlands, and fabric, and signs directing guests to the event venue may be permissible with prior approval.

10. Is the photography permit included in the rental fees?

When hosting a wedding reception and ceremony at the Garden, a professional photography permit fee is included. Any area of the Garden may be used for photographs on the day of the event but cannot be reserved. Photographers and guests must not stand in planting beds or damage or remove vegetation or garden structures in any way.

11. Will there be other people in the Garden on my wedding day?

Yes. UT Gardens is open to the public and other events may happen on the same day. Visitors from the public will be notified by signage that your event space has been reserved.

12. Where can my guests park?

There are plenty of parking spaces available for weekend events (excluding UT special events). Please park in designated areas only. During business hours (M-F, 8-5pm) parking is very limited and confined to ten spaces reserved for Gardens parking. Special arrangements for parking are available with advanced notice. Parking outside of the designated areas may result in lessee being ticketed, fined, or towed.

13. Are there any other rules I should be aware of?

We are unable to book any events on Fridays or Saturdays of UT Home Football Games.

For a complete list of rules and regulations please refer to the Event Rental Agreement.