MADISON, WI AREA INFORMATION

Madison, the capital and second largest city in Wisconsin, lies west of Milwaukee. It's known for the domed Wisconsin State Capitol, which sits on an isthmus between lakes Mendota and Monona. Since the 1960s, Madison has been a center of political liberalism, influenced in part by the presence of the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

The city's paved Capital City State Trail runs past Monona Terrace, a lakefront convention center designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The main downtown thoroughfare is State Street, which links the University of Wisconsin campus with the Capitol Square, and is lined with restaurants, espresso cafes, and shops.

Area Vibes Score –Madison scores a 74 livability rating, with its strength in amenities.

Transportation

Driving and Parking
A car is practically a necessity for regular travel outside the city center. More than 5,000 City public parking spaces are downtown, including 1,300 on-street metered spaces. 4,000 more spaces are available in other lots and garages.

Bus
Madison Metro Transit operates a bus service throughout the city of Madison and the surrounding communities of Middleton, Fitchburg, and Verona. It's easy to ride using a mobile device, planning your trip at home or on the bus. While traveling, get real time bus arrival information for your individual stop.

Bike
Bike Your Commute! Commuting by bike is often the quickest and most efficient mode of travel for trips of five miles or less. Biking to and from work or school is not only a healthy way to get exercise, but also a great way to save gas money and wear and tear on your car!

Airport
Dane County Regional Airport (airport code MSN) offers more than 95 daily arrivals and departures.

Schools

Generally, to register your child for school you will need to have a passport and/or birth certificate, proof of immunizations, any applicable past school records and proof of residency. Most public schools have boundary areas, and you must show proof (i.e. copy of lease or home purchase agreement) to be allowed to register in that particular school. Please always confirm requirements with the school you are interested in before assuming that your child will be able to attend that school.

Grade level in the public school system is determined by the age of the child. Typically, the child must be 5 years old by September 1st to enter kindergarten. School districts may be very strict about the age requirement, but inquire with the school district you are interested in to determine if there are any exemptions for foreign students who are ahead in grade level. You may also want to ask about any gifted or advanced programs as well as their English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs. Some elementary schools also offer a pre-Kindergarten program for children who miss the September 1st requirement. You may inquire at the school districts for availability.

Contact your IOR Destination Services Consultant for more assistance with schooling questions.

Public, Private, and Preschools
A complete listing of public schools in Madison can be viewed here.

A complete listing of private schools in the Madison area can be viewed here.

A directory of preschools in the Madison area can be viewed here.

Additional Resources
- www.greatschools.org
- www.eschoolprofile.com
- www.schooltree.org

Colleges/Universities
- Colleges and universities near Madison

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Museums

If you love going to galleries and museums, you'll appreciate all there is to do in Madison.

Performing Arts

Theater, opera, ballet and symphony can all be found in Madison. Find a list here.

Parks

The Greater Madison area is a mecca for recreational opportunities offering four seasons of fun! Whether you enjoy winter sports such as skiing or skating, summer scenic biking and hiking trails, rock climbing, love to be on the lakes (or in them!) for everything from sailing to swimming, or are ready to give golf a try. Plus, more than 260 parks and beaches become a backdrop for everything from exercise to memorable moments captured on camera. Or, hop in the car and head for one of the many Wisconsin State Parks.

Governor Dodge State Park

Dog Parks

Off-Leash: Our best friends have a place to run, roll around in mud, meet (and sniff) new four-legged friends and even catch a Frisbee! The Madison Area has 8 off-leash exercise areas for dogs and their human friends.

Spectator Sports

Madison was recently voted one of Travel+Leisure's America's Best College Football Towns and is the perfect place to experience game day—and not just for football! When you visit Madison, you can cheer on the University of Wisconsin-Madison Badgers in a variety of athletic events that take place throughout the year.

Free Things To do

It's easy to find free things to do in Greater Madison. Our area is graced with five sparkling lakes and stunning landscapes that lend themselves to endless hours of outdoor fun.

Obtaining a Driver's License

In the US, a driver's license or ID card is issued by each individual state and not by the federal government. Since there is no national identity card in the USA, and many Americans don't have a passport or carry around a birth certificate, a driver's license issued by your state is often the only official piece of identification for many citizens. Since 9/11, you will need to show a valid driver's license or State ID card to enter many big office buildings.

A new resident must apply for a Wisconsin license in person at any driver license office to continue to drive legally. When applying for the new Wisconsin license the individual must surrender any unexpired driver license in their possession from another U.S. state, U.S. territory or a Canadian province. Specific information on driver license and reciprocity with other countries [here](#).

- For information on how to obtain a driver's license, see the website of the [Driver and Vehicle Services](#)

Your Destination Services Consultant will also assist you with the proper procedure.