

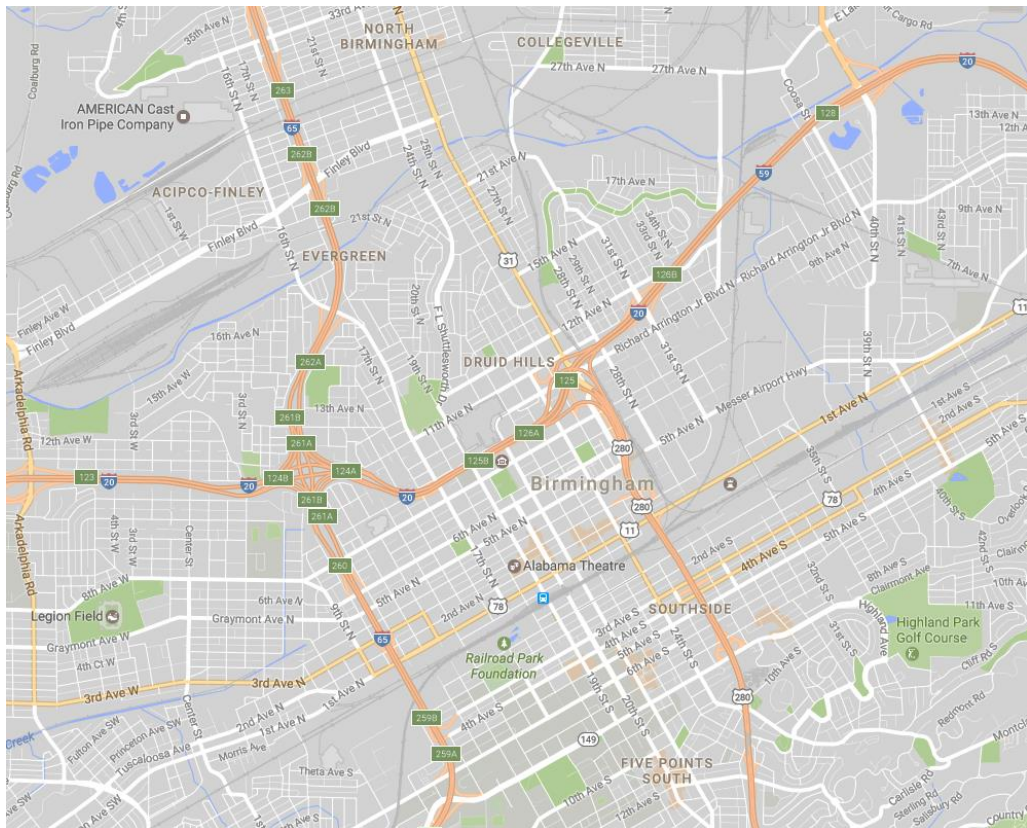
BIRMINGHAM, AL AREA INFORMATION

Founded in 1871 as the merger of three farming towns, [Birmingham](#) is now the most populous city in Alabama. While it was primarily an industrial center for the first century of its existence, Birmingham now boasts a diverse economy and is one of the most important banking and business centers in the Southeast of the United States. Residents enjoy various recreational activities and a bustling city culture.

Transportation

By Car

It is easy to drive and park around Birmingham. Whether you drive yourself or let someone else take the wheel via [Uber](#), all of Birmingham’s attractions are accessible by car.



By Bike

By road, trail, or path, on two wheels is one of the best ways to see the Birmingham region. Don't worry if you don't own a bike either. [Zyp BikeShare](#) has over 400 bikes in 40 different locations around Birmingham that are just waiting for you to jump on and explore.



By Bus

[The Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority](#) (or Metro Area Express) is Birmingham's public transportation operator, providing bus service to Birmingham, Bessemer, Fairfield, Homewood, Mountain Brook, Hoover, and Vestavia Hills. Check out the routes [here](#).



By Air

[Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport](#) (BHM) is located five miles northeast of downtown Birmingham and is the largest airport in Alabama.

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 Birmingham can be viewed [here](#).

A complete listing of private schools in the Birmingham area can be viewed [here](#).

A directory of preschools in the Birmingham area can be viewed [here](#).

Additional Resources

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

Colleges/Universities

- [Colleges and universities near Birmingham](#)



Courtesy of [Bama Hammer](#)

Recreation

Listed below are a few of the attractions offered in Birmingham. A more complete listing of attractions in Birmingham can be found [here](#).

- [Museums in Birmingham](#)
- [Outdoor Attractions in Birmingham](#)
- [Nightlife in Birmingham](#)
- [Sports in Birmingham](#)
- [Arts & Culture in Birmingham](#)
- [Dining in Birmingham](#)



Courtesy of Birminghamal.org

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.

If you have an out-of-state or out-of-country license, you may use it for as long as you maintain your residency in the state where it was issued. International licenses are not recognized in Alabama. If you are moving permanently to Alabama, you may use your out-of-state license for only your first 30 days. To change to an Alabama license, bring your Social Security card, another form of ID, and two utility or phone bills verifying that you are an Alabama resident to a motor vehicle facility. You'll have to pass written and eye exams, and usually a road test.

For general information and instructions on how to obtain an official state ID card or driver's license, visit the [Alabama Law Enforcement Agency](#) .

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