

STEPS TO GETTING AN ALABAMA DRIVER'S LICENSE (MOBILE AREA)

A very important document to have in the United States is a driver's license. This is used to operate a motor vehicle and as a main source of identification, as the U.S. does not have a national identification system.

Currently, Germany, South Korea and Taiwan have reciprocity agreements with the Alabama Department of Motor Vehicles. Foreign nationals from these countries can present their foreign license and receive an Alabama driver's license without the necessity of taken written or driving tests. Alabama also waives both knowledge and driving tests for Puerto Rican and Canadian applicants.

To acquire a driver's license, one must follow the essential steps to have the required knowledge of the road in order drive in the country:

First, one must familiarize themselves with the rules and regulations for operating a motor vehicle. You can do so by visiting the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) that each state has or go to their website and download a driver's manual. ([Alabama](#)) ([Alabama Road Test Study Guide](#))

For out-of-state new residents, first-time issuance of an Alabama driver's license, suspended driver's license, or a foreign national driver license, you must apply at the following Alabama Department of Public Safety Office:

3400 Demetropolis Road
Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 660-2330

Once you are confident that you have learned the written rules for driving go, to the nearest Alabama Department of Public Safety office listed above and take a written test and driving test. The written test generally contains a number of multiple choice questions, either taken on paper or on a computer. Foreign Nationals should request to take their written driver's examination in their native language. The computer will return a pass/fail message at the end of the examination. Do not accept this answer as final – confirm with a window agent whether you passed or failed the examination. The computer ruling is not always accurate. (*New drivers only: Once the test is passed, you will be given a learner's permit allowing you to operate a car only if a licensed driver is sitting next to you. A permit is required to take driving lessons, which can either be done privately or through a driving school.*)

When you are comfortable driving on the roads in the U.S. you will have to take a road test at the DMV. The car you plan on using for your road test should have proper liability insurance, as well all working-condition controls (break lights, indicator lights, horn, etc). During the test, an inspector will sit next to you and direct you where to drive while checking your driving/parking skills. You will find out immediately after you finish the test whether you passed or failed. If you pass, you will get a temporary paper license and receive the original license in the mail around two weeks later.

If you are a foreign national and already hold an international driver's license, you may drive yourself to the DMV for your driving test. If you do not hold an international driver's license, you must be accompanied by a licensed driver.

Foreign nationals are given priority processing on Wednesdays, and you may show up without an appointment. In the alternative, an appointment can be scheduled for your written and driver's test, on

any open date, by visiting this [Department of Public Safety webpage](#). Written and driving tests may be completed on the same day. Once you pass the written test, you will be sent out for your driving test. According to the DMV, a person should be able to complete the entire process in one and a half hours.

You will be required to pay a fee for your license and also show proof of identity with a photograph (which includes your date of birth) as well as proof of residence in the state in which you are applying. To obtain an Alabama Driver's License, you must present the following documents:

- A valid foreign passport with an acceptable visa or resident alien card;
- A valid I-94 arrival/departure record issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security;
- A Social Security Number, or a letter from Social Security stating non-eligibility for a Social Security Number.
- Proof of residence in Alabama.
- A written English translation of the information on your foreign driver's license.
- \$5 test or transfer fee plus cost of license – approximately \$30.00 (no checks).

Lastly, you will be required to take a vision test before getting your license.

Some useful links are provided for information on getting your license in the U.S.:

http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Foreign_Visitors_Driving.shtml - general information on obtaining a license.