



German Guide to ALABAMA



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1.



Welcome to our beautiful state of Alabama!

An interest in improving relations between Alabama and Germany began in 1993, when Mercedes-Benz began looking at Alabama as a site for its new North American plant. Many organizations, agencies, corporations and individuals joined together to present Alabama as “the” place to locate the Mercedes-Benz US International (MBUSI) car plant.

In 1997, the Birmingham International Festival (BIF) (now known as the Birmingham International Center), an award-winning, internationally-recognized event and oldest event of its kind in the United States, highlighted Germany with its international salute. The mission of the Birmingham International Center is to “promote mutual understanding between cultures through art, education and economic development programs.” Many volunteers spent hours planning the Salute to Germany. As a result of the connections made and the relationships built during the planning and implementation of the Salute to Germany, a group of interested businesses and individuals across the state had the idea to start a non-profit organization which utilized and built upon those connections and relationships.

The AlabamaGermany Partnership began operations in 1998, as a statewide, non-profit, membership-driven organization. We invite you to learn more about our membership options on our website: www.AlabamaGermany.org.

Now, 20+ years later, more than 70 German companies can be found here in Alabama. The oldest German company in Alabama is Evonik Industries, which located in Mobile in 1973. MBUSI, located in Tuscaloosa County, added the C-Class sedan to their production in 2014, joining the M-Class and GL-Class SUV’s, and the R-Class Crossover Sports Tourer. A fifth vehicle will be announced in 2014/2015.

AGP VISION

The AlabamaGermany Partnership was founded to develop and support relationships and friendships between organizations and individuals in Alabama and Germany.

Our purposes:

1. Encourage understanding and relationships between Alabamians and Germans.
2. Stimulate and pursue educational opportunities through language, cultural and exchange programs.
3. Serve as an information network for existing and new organizations and relationships in Alabama and Germany.

4. Regularly communicate with the public and our members through meetings and appropriate media.
5. Support business development by encouraging such areas as direct investment, trade and tourism.

The AGP is governed by a statewide board of directors and officers who meet quarterly to plan activities and events. An Executive Director works for the board and takes care of the day-to-day operations of the organization. Students are used throughout the year as interns to assist the organization.

Over the past years, AGP has held an Annual Dinner with special guest speakers providing current information on programs and opportunities for our members and the community relating to Germany/Alabama relationships. It is also a time for networking and building relationships.

AlabamaGermany Partnership

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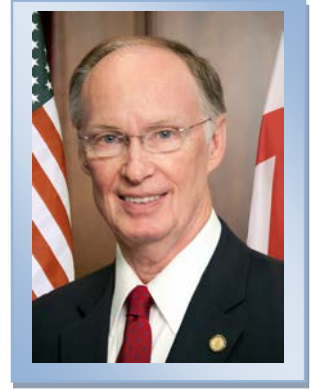
German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern United States

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Atlanta, GA 30318
Phone: (404) 586-6800
www.gaccsouth.com/en

Goethe Institut in Atlanta

Colony Square, Plaza Level
1197 Peachtree St., NE
Atlanta, GA 30361
Phone: (404) 892-2388
www.goethe.de/atlanta

2. Message from the Governor



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100
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STATE OF ALABAMA

Greetings:

As Governor, I would like to introduce the German Guide to Alabama presented by the Alabama Germany Partnership (AGP).

The Alabama Germany Partnership (AGP) is THE organization for facilitating collaboration between businesses and individuals with ties to Alabama and Germany. Its mission is to develop and support relationships and friendships between organizations and individuals with ties to Alabama and Germany and to increase and improve business opportunities and foster cultural exchange.

This guide will provide useful information on the great State of Alabama while serving as an invaluable resource full of contact information for public offices, maps, tourist attractions, schools, corporations, hospitals, and other key areas of interest to German families and to those who are visiting or relocating to Alabama.

The State of Alabama is proud to recognize the Alabama Germany Partnership (AGP) for the publication of this remarkable guide. May it be an invaluable resource for all.

Sincerely,

Robert Bentley
Governor

Welcome to Alabama!

Welcome to Alabama - the Heart of Dixie, in the Deep South of the USA! You have decided to spend the next few years in Alabama, and this handbook is intended to help make your “settling in” easier. Maybe you have already found out some things about living in Alabama as well as experienced and enjoyed the proverbial Southern hospitality.

This handbook is intended to bring you closer to “Alabama the Beautiful,” familiarize you with the educational system, places of interest, shopping options, restaurants, leisure activities, and its distinct and unique features. It should help in your organization of everyday activities and provide information that could be extremely useful.

The information and tips included are based largely on the personal experiences of Germans who have already called Alabama home for some time now.

3. The State of Alabama

3.1 Overview

Spanish explorers are believed to have arrived at Mobile Bay in 1519, and the territory was visited in 1540 by the explorer Hernando de Soto. The first permanent European settlement in Alabama was founded by the French at Fort Louis de la Mobile in 1702. The British gained control of the area in 1763 by the Treaty of Paris but had to cede almost all the Alabama region to the U.S. and Spain after the American Revolution. Known as the Heart of Dixie, Alabama became the 22nd state in 1819. The name Alabama is derived from an Indian word meaning "thicket clearers." Alabama has been at the center of many American battles--between white settlers and Native Americans, and between the North and South in the Civil War. The Confederacy was founded at Montgomery in February 1861, and, for a time, the city was the Confederate capital.

During the latter 19th century, the economy of the state slowly improved with industrialization. At Tuskegee Institute, founded in 1881 by Booker T. Washington, Dr. George Washington Carver carried out his famous agricultural research.

In the 1950s and '60s, Alabama was the site of such landmark civil-rights actions as the bus boycott in Montgomery (1955–56) and the “Freedom March” from Selma to Montgomery (1965).

The state ranks high in the production of poultry, soybeans, milk, vegetables, livestock, wheat, cattle, cotton, peanuts, fruits, hogs and corn.

Today aerospace, chemicals, rubber and plastics, primary materials, automobile manufacturing and shipbuilding constitute the leading industries of Alabama. Birmingham is also a world-renowned medical center.



State Flag

Capital: Montgomery

State abbreviation/Postal code: AL

Governor: Robert Bentley

Lieut. Governor: Kay Ivey

Organized as territory: March 3, 1817

Entered Union (rank): Dec. 14, 1819 (22)

Present constitution adopted: 1901

Motto: *Audemus jura nostra defendere* (We dare defend our rights)

State symbols:

flower	camellia (1959)
bird	yellowhammer (1927)
song	“Alabama” (1931)
tree	Southern longleaf pine (1949)
salt water fish	fighting tarpon (1955)
fresh water fish	largemouth bass (1975)
horse	racking horse (1975)
mineral	hematite (1967)
rock	marble (1969)
game bird	wild turkey (1980)
dance	square dance (1981)
nut	pecan (1982)
fossil	species <i>Basilosaurus Cetoides</i> (1984)
official mascot and butterfly	eastern tiger swallowtail (1989)
insect	monarch butterfly (1989)
reptile	Alabama red-bellied turtle (1990)
gemstone	star blue quartz (1990)
shell	<i>scaphella junonia johnstoneae</i> (1990)
nickname:	Yellowhammer State



Camellia flower

Origin of name: From Alabama River by early European explorers and named "Alibamu" after the local Indian tribe

Alabama by the Numbers

760,000 visitors across 22 state parks
77,000 miles of river and stream channels
52,419 square miles, 190 miles wide and 330 miles long
2,407 feet at highest point, Mount Cheaha
1,200 sites included in the National Register of Historic Places
468 holes of championship-caliber golf on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail
347 species of birds on Dauphin Island
240 species of commercially harvested freshwater fish, marine fish and shellfish
100 historic antebellum homes
67 counties and 460 incorporated cities and towns
61 colleges and universities
53 miles of coastline
36 National Historic Landmarks
11 historic covered bridges
1 National Monument

3.2 Geography of Alabama

Alabama is 330 miles long and 190 miles wide at its most distant points. The state is bordered by Tennessee on the north, Georgia on the east, Florida and the Gulf of Mexico on the south and Mississippi on the west.

<http://www.mapsofworld.com/usa/states/alabama/alabama-map.html>

Alabama covers 52,423 square miles, making it the 30th largest of the 50 states.

50,750 square miles of Alabama are land areas. 1,673 square miles of Alabama are covered by water.

The highest point in Alabama is Cheaha Mountain at 2,407 feet above sea level. Cheaha Mountain, from the Creek Indian word meaning "high place" is located in Lineville, Alabama. The lowest point in Alabama is sea level where Alabama meets the Gulf of Mexico.

The Mean Elevation of the state of Alabama is 500 feet above sea level. Major rivers include the Tombigbee River, Alabama River, Tennessee River, and Chattahoochee River. Major lakes include Guntersville Lake, Wilson Lake, Martin Lake, West Point Lake, and Lewis Smith Lake.

Alabama is comprised of coastal plains at the Gulf of Mexico turning to hills and broken terrain in the north. Five major land areas make up the Alabama landscape with more than two thirds of the state covered by the East Gulf Coastal Plain.

East Gulf Coastal Plain: The East Gulf Coastal Plain covers the southern two thirds of the state, except for the Prairie Black Belt. On the western side of the state the East Gulf Coastal Plain runs north almost to the Tennessee border.

The East Gulf Coastal Plain itself is composed of varying landscapes. In the southwest around Mobile, the land is low and swampy. The southeast plain is called the wiregrass section because of the tough grass that once grew there among the pine forests. These days, the southeastern section has become an important farming area in the state. To the north, the terrain becomes hilly and is covered by many pine forests. This area is often called the Central Pine Belt.

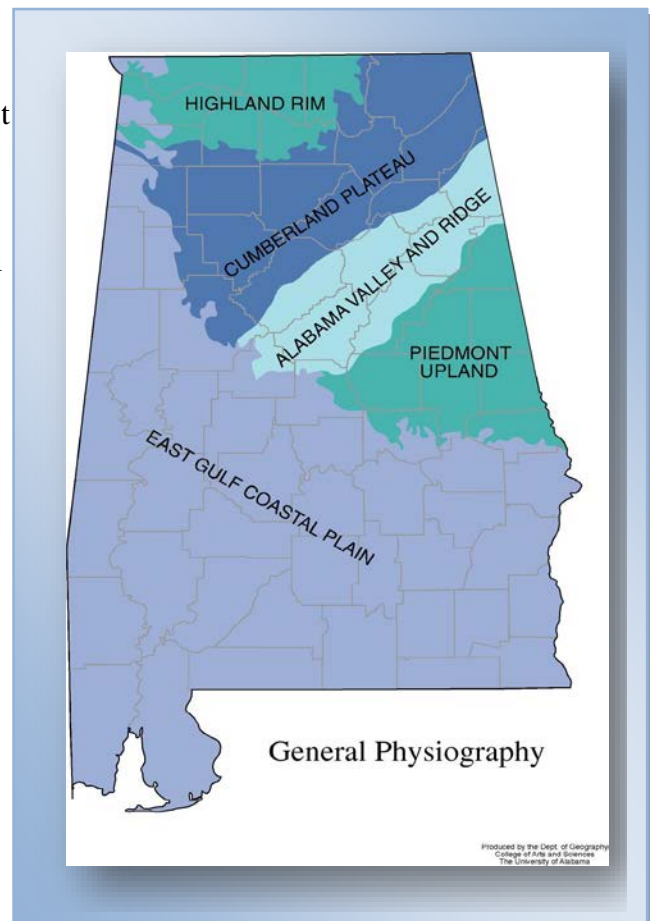
The Black Belt Prairie cuts a path between the southern and northern East Coastal Plain. The Black Belt Prairie was the home of many of Alabama's large plantations. The soil in this swath of rolling hills is black and sticky and supported acres and acres of cotton crop until the boll weevils visit in 1915.

The Piedmont Upland: The Piedmont is located in the eastern central section of Alabama and consists of low hills, ridges, and sandy valleys. Coal, iron ore, limestone, and marble are found in this area of Alabama along with Cheaha Mountain, Alabama's highest point.

The Appalachian Ridge and Valley: Northwest of the Piedmont lies the Appalachian Ridge and Valley region of Alabama. This region is comprised of sandstone ridges and fertile limestone valleys. The three ingredients for steel manufacture, coal, iron ore, and limestone are found in abundance in this area.

Cumberland Plateau: Sometimes called the Appalachian Plateau, the Cumberland Plateau lies to the northwest of the Appalachian Ridge and Valley region. The rolling terrain and flat areas rises to 1,800 feet above sea level in the northeast and slopes southwest down to about 500 feet above sea level to meet the East Gulf Coastal Plain.

Highland Rim: In the northwestern corner of Alabama is the Highland Rim or Low Interior Plateau. A lot of this land is in the Tennessee



River valley and farms grow corn, cotton, and hay in this area.

Vegetation and Animal Life: About two-thirds of Alabama is covered by forests, largely made up of southern yellow pine, red cedar, and other conifers. The most common deciduous trees are hickory, sweet gum, and several species of oak. Alabama has a varied wildlife population with numerous deer, foxes, bobcats, game birds, and other animals. Large numbers of migratory ducks and geese winter in the state.

Mineral Resources: Alabama has deposits of several important minerals. Coal, iron ore, and limestone - all used in the production of iron and steel - are found in north-central Alabama, notably around Birmingham. Crude-petroleum fields are in the southwest, and bauxite deposits are in the southeast. Alabama has deposits of several important minerals. Coal, iron ore, and limestone - all used in the production of iron and steel - are found in north-central Alabama, notably around Birmingham. Crude-petroleum fields are in the southwest, and bauxite deposits are in the southeast.

Number of counties: 67

Largest county by population and area: Jefferson, 659,479 (2013); Baldwin, 1,596 sq. mi.

State forests: 21 (48,000 ac.)

State parks: 22 (45,614 ac.)

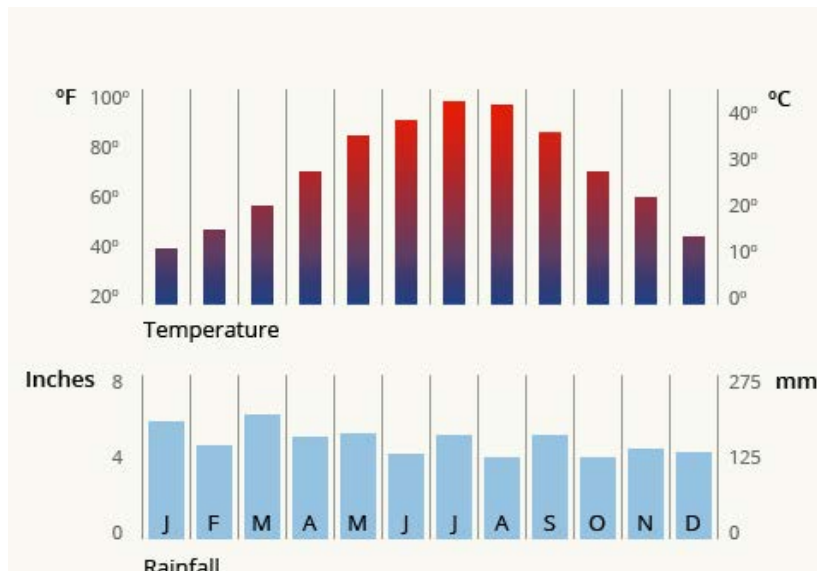
3.3 Alabama's Climate

The majority of Alabama's days are warm and sunny. Rainfall across the state is lowest in October and highest in March. Spring comes early, with a brilliant palette of colors and temperatures around 60 degrees Fahrenheit (15 degrees Celsius) daily by March. Summer days average in the 80s F (mid-20s C), with periods of heat in the 90s F (32 C) peaking in July.

In the cooler months of September, October and November, you usually won't need more than a sweater or light jacket to stay warm. Severely cold weather is rare in Alabama, though snow flurries can be seen in the higher elevations of North Alabama. For Birmingham, the average low temperature in January is 33 F degrees, while the high is 54 F. In the coastal city of Mobile, the average January low is 40 F and the high 61 F.

Hurricane season extends from May to October in Alabama, while conditions for tornadoes are most common in March, April and November. The Alabama Emergency

Management Association offers tips on how to be prepared for [severe weather](http://ema.alabama.gov/preparedness.cfm) (<http://ema.alabama.gov/preparedness.cfm>), and you can stay informed of Alabama weather conditions through the [National Weather Service](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/bmx) (<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/bmx>).



Source: <http://alabama.travel/visitor-tips/planning>

3.4 Demographics

As of 2012, Alabama has an estimated population of 4,822,023 which is an increase of 18,334 or 0.3%, from the year 2011. Immigration from outside the United States resulted in a net increase of 6,005 people, and migration within the country produced a decrease of 133 people. As of 2011 Alabama had 162,673 foreign-born (3.4% of the state population). Unauthorized immigrants made up 2.5% of the state population in 2011.

Demographics of Alabama					
By Race	White	Black	AIAN*	Asian	NHPI*
2010 (Total)	68.5%	26.2%	00.6%	1.1%	0.06%
2010 (Hispanic Only)	1.66%	0.20%	0.09%	0.04%	0.04%
*AIAN is American Indian or Alaskan Native; NHPI is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander					

The largest reported ancestry groups in Alabama: African American (26.2%), American (13.4%), English (9.6%), Irish (9.4%), German (7.7%), and Scots-Irish (2.4%). 'American' includes those reported as Native American or African American.

Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Alabama ranks:

- 34nd in its percentage of Whites
- 7th in its percentage of Blacks
- 40rd in its percentage of Hispanics
- 45th in its percentage of Asians
- 29th in its percentage of American Indians
- 48th in its percentage of people of Mixed race
- 46th in its percentage of males
- 6th in its percentage of females

As of 2010, 94.8% of Alabama residents age 5 and older speak English at home and 3.5% speak Spanish. German speakers make up 0.6% of the population, French/French Creole at 0.3%, and Chinese at 0.1%.

As of 2010, 23.3% of residents of the state were under 18, 6.3% were under 5, and 14.5% were over 65.

51.5% of Alabamians are female and 48.5% are male.

Religious affiliations of the people of Alabama are as follows:

Christian – 80%

- Catholic – 7%
- Protestant – 63%
 - Baptist – 36%
 - Methodist – 9%
 - Non-denominational – 4%
 - Episcopalian – 2%
 - Church of God – 2%
 - Church of Christ – 2%
 - Pentecostal – 2%
 - Lutheran – 2%
 - Congregational – 1%
 - Seventh-day Adventist – 1%
 - Protestant - no denomination supplied – 0.5%
- Jehovah's Witnesses – 0.5%
- LDS – 0.5%
- Christian - no denomination supplied – 9%
- Jewish – 0.5%
- Other religions – 6%
- No religion – 10%
- Refused – 5%

July, 2014

4. Guide to Alabama Living

4.1 Sports & Leisure

It is hard to imagine Alabama without its college football. Many Alabamians spend every Saturday in the fall either going to the games, attending “tailgate” parties in the parking lots of the stadiums, or sitting spellbound in front of the television watching the game. During the rest of the year there is much discussion of either the last or upcoming season. Football is important. German football (soccer) plays only a minor role. The college football season, however, is only from September to December.

The University of Alabama’s Bryant-Denny Stadium accommodates 101,821 spectators, and is in the top five on-campus football stadiums in the country. The stadium holds more than the 95,000 population of the City of Tuscaloosa where it is located. This stadium is bigger than any in Germany. No professional athletes play here, rather students who are not paid and receive only a scholarship. The coach however is paid in the millions. Hotels and restaurants are completely booked on game weekends. Many come in their giant motor homes that resemble tour buses, and all parking lots and fields in the city are full.

The state’s great football rivalry is between the University of Alabama *Crimson Tide* and the Auburn University *Tigers*. Auburn University is located in Auburn/Opelika and both schools have national championships to their credit. Auburn University’s Jordan-Hare Stadium, the nation’s 10th-largest on-campus stadium, has a capacity of 87,451 and has served as home of the Auburn Tigers since 1939. On football Saturdays in Auburn, Jordan-Hare Stadium becomes Alabama’s fifth-largest city. More than 75,000 season tickets have been sold to Auburn home games in each of the last 18 years.

American football is not the same as German football. (German football is called soccer here – and more closely resembles English rugby.) The basic playing time is 4 15-minute periods, i.e. 1 hour, but with all the breaks, show interludes, cheerleader shows, band performances, etc. a game usually lasts around 4 hours. Before and after the game there are big parties all over the city.

Many Alabamians love hunting and fishing almost as much as football, both as sports and as pastimes. And then of course there is golf. If you have never played golf before, you really should try it here because it will never be more affordable elsewhere, nor will you find such a large selection of golf courses. In addition to private golf courses that require club membership to play, there are a number of public courses for everyone. A highlight of golf in Alabama is the [Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail](#) built by the Retirement Systems of Alabama. There are 378 holes at eight spectacular sites throughout the state. The RTJ Golf Trail is the largest golf course construction ever attempted.

All four of the state’s metropolitan areas (Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile) have minor league professional baseball teams who play a season from April until November at their respective home parks.

Most country clubs located in municipalities and some neighborhood associations have large swimming pools for members and their guests to use. There are a few public pools in municipalities throughout the state. All sorts of water sports – from sailing and rowing to fishing and waterskiing – are possible on area waterways throughout the state. Visit <http://alabama.travel/> for additional information.

Tennis is not quite as widespread in the South, perhaps because it is so hot outside in the summer. Public tennis courts are found in community parks, private ones at clubs. Private clubs and community centers often have tennis pros who oversee their instructional and competition teams. The Mobile Tennis Center is recognized as one of the world's largest public tennis facilities, with 60 Laykold tennis courts. The facility hosts numerous tennis tournaments that attract thousands of participants.

All of the larger municipalities have a Parks and Recreation Department of some sort. They offer a variety of leisure activities and entertainment, including dance lessons, sports classes and informational programs. YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) and YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) have built recreational facilities throughout the state and are inexpensive ways of keeping fit. They offer team sport activities for both youth and teens. They also offer afterschool childcare programs and summer camps as well.

NASCAR (**National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing**) is also a favorite pastime for many Alabamians. Talladega Superspeedway is biggest superspeedway in NASCAR. The stand can hold up to 143,000+. It is one on the fastest auto race tracks in the USA and hosts major races in the stock car and truck racing circuits in the spring and summer. Displays about past winners and losers, as well as a large number of trophies, are found in the nearby International Motorsports Hall of Fame. 3366 Speedway Blvd Talladega, AL 35161 www.talladegasuperspeedway.com/

The **Barber Motorsports Park** is a 740 acres (300 ha) multi-purpose racing facility located on the eastern fringes of Birmingham, Alabama, USA near Leeds. It was built by George Barber, and includes the Barber Vintage Motorsport Museum. It has been the site of the IndyCar Series Grand Prix of Alabama since 2010 season.^{[1][2]} Barber is also the home of the North American Porsche Driving School and the Kevin Schwantz Motorcycle School. 6030 Barber Motorsports Pkwy, Birmingham, AL 35094, (205) 699-7275 <https://www.barbermotorsports.com/>

Options for hiking, mountain biking and camping are found in the large state parks, such as: Lake Lurleen State Park 13226 Lake Lurleen Rd Coker, AL 35452 (205) 339-1558 Tannehill State Park 12632 Confederate Parkway McCalla, AL 35111 (205) 477-5711 Oak Mountain State Park (near Birmingham) 200 Terrace Dr Pelham, AL 35124 (205) 620-2520. There are 22 Alabama State Parks and you can learn more at www.alapark.com.

Bowling

If Bowling is your thing there are plenty of opportunities for that as well in Alabama where there are more than 50 Bowling Centers.

Other

Many children and teens, as well as some adults, really enjoy martial arts such as Karate or Taekwondo. For additional information on Taekwondo, visit the Alabama Taekwondo Network. For Karate visit www.dojos.info/alabama/.

Enjoy the outdoors

<http://www.outdooralabama.com/>

http://www.alabamatrail.org/hikingAL/state_parks

<http://www.alabamabirdingtrails.com/> The eight Alabama Birding Trails unify existing and potential birding sites into a series of cohesive trails collectively marketed as part of a state-wide system. The Alabama Birding Trails offers a chain of eight geographic regions with 270 sites covering our great state from the mountains to the gulf.

Fishing, Hunting License

<http://www.outdooralabama.com/licenses/>

HUNTING: Allows a resident age 16 - 63 to hunt all legal game within Alabama. All-Game license required for deer or turkey. Includes the wildlife heritage privileges. Expires August 31 annually. No trip licenses available. Cost: varies - see application

FRESHWATER FISHING: Allows a resident age 16 - 63 to fish the freshwaters of Alabama. Includes the Wildlife Heritage privileges. No trip licenses available. Expires August 31 annually. Cost: \$12.00

SALTWATER FISHING: Allows a resident age 16 - 63 to fish the salt waters of Alabama. Annual licenses expire August 31. Seven day trip licenses available. Cost: varies - see application

Music and Dance

Alabama has been home to many of music's greats across the board. These include Country, Jazz, Blue Grass, Rock. There are opportunities for every taste of music in Alabama. From Country, to Jazz, to Blue Grass, to Rhythm and Blues, to Classical. Whatever you prefer, you can find in Alabama. Alabama has a rich history in music.

Alabama Music Hall of Fame

<http://www.alamhof.org/>

<http://www.alabamabluegrassmusic.org/>

<http://www.jazzhall.com/>

<http://countrymusicchalloffame.org/>

Sports Teams by Name: College, Minor League and Professional Sports

College

University of Alabama Crimson Tide – Tuscaloosa
University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB) Blazers – Birmingham
University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) Chargers – Huntsville
Alabama State University – Montgomery
Auburn Tigers – Auburn
Birmingham Southern Panthers – Birmingham
Jacksonville State University Gamecocks – Jacksonville
University of North Alabama Lions – Florence
University of South Alabama Jaguars – Mobile
Spring Hill Badgers – Mobile
Troy State University Trojans – Troy
University of West Alabama Tigers – Livingston

Minor League Professional

Birmingham Barons (baseball) – Birmingham
<http://www.milb.com/index.jsp?sid=t247>
Huntsville Stars (baseball) – Huntsville <http://www.milb.com/?sid=t559>
Mobile BayBears (baseball) – Mobile <http://www.milb.com/index.jsp?sid=t417>
Montgomery Biscuits (baseball) - Montgomery
<http://www.milb.com/index.jsp?sid=t421>


Stadiums and Arenas

Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex – Birmingham
Regions Park – Hoover
Hank Aaron Stadium – Mobile
Riverwalk Stadium - Montgomery
Joe Davis Stadium - Huntsville
Rickwood Field - Birmingham

For more information on Outdoor recreation and activities in Alabama visit AGP member <http://alabama.travel/>

4.2 Emergency Procedures (911)

Alabama Hazards


 Biological

 Chemical


 Earthquake


 Fire

 Flood

 Hurricane

 Nuclear

 Radiological

 Snow and Ice

 Terrorism

 Tornado

Fire, police and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) may be reached by dialing 911.

Alabama is subject to different kinds of hazards. These may be weather related (like hurricanes) or dangers produced by activities people are involved in every day. The list of hazards that are possible threats in Alabama are listed on your left. For additional information regarding the EMA planning and preparedness aspects, visit our Preparedness section at <http://ema.alabama.gov/>

Call 9-1-1 to report any emergency whether Police, Fire or Medical. If you need help immediately, call 9-1-1. Don't waste time, call 9-1-1 as soon as you think help is needed!

When to call 9-1-1...

- Car wreck
- Someone is choking on their food
- Fire of any type, house, woods or other building
- If you see a crime
- Dangerous situation such as gas leak or a power line down
- Someone is drowning
- Someone is hurt or is bleeding or is having trouble breathing
- Tornado or other severe weather damages your home

What Should I Say?

All you have to do is answer our questions! Stay on the phone and answer the Dispatcher's questions as calmly as you can. We will ask the following:

- The location of the problem. If you do not know the address, be prepared to give directions or describe your location.
- The type of problem. Tell us in plain language what is happening.
- Details about the problem. The Dispatcher is trained to get more information while the emergency units are responding.

Do Not Call 9-1-1 if the problem is not an emergency, look up the non-emergency number in the phone book. If you call 9-1-1 for non-emergencies, someone with a real emergency might have a delay in receiving service.

When NOT to call 9-1-1...

- Loud party or music
- Barking dogs or cats up a tree
- To ask directions or for general information
- To report water or electricity is out
- To check if a police report is ready
- To check for severe weather reports

What Can I Do?

You can make a real difference by helping until the emergency units arrive, and the Dispatcher will provide directions for things such as:

- CPR
- Rescue Breathing
- Childbirth
- Choking (Heimlich maneuver)
- Controlling Bleeding
- Other first-aid

Emergency Medical Dispatchers are trained to provide pre-arrival instructions to callers. Medical emergencies are the most common use of pre-arrival instructions.

Poison Control: (205) 345-0600

4.3 Insurance

Upon your arrival in Alabama it is suggested that you acquire insurance to protect your assets as well as cover the cost and consequences of any accident which may occur. While there are over 150 different types of insurance available, the most common types of insurance offer coverage for automobile, life, health, home owners, renters, disability, and business.

Based on your individual needs, an insurance agent will design a policy and calculate the cost of your coverage which is known as a premium. The premium is calculated by each individual's specific policy requirements and it can be affected by a variety of factors including the amount of coverage you would like as well as: age, sex, home address, medical history (for life and health), and driving record (auto). Most agencies offer a variety of coverage policies to accommodate all your needs. It should be noted however, that health and or dental coverage operates in a slightly different fashion. More information on health coverage may be found under Healthcare in 6:4. Additional general information on insurance can be found at www.ampminsurance.org.

Major insurance agencies include:

- ALFA – <http://www.alfavision.com/>
- GEICO – www.GEICO.com
- State Farm – www.statefarm.com
- Allstate – www.allstate.com
- Nationwide – www.Nationwide.com
- Liberty National – www.libnat.com

****Your coverage and the amount of your premium will vary according to the insurance agency you select. It is suggested that you make inquiries with various agencies to determine the best agency for you. A complete listing of all insurance agencies can be found at www.manta.com.**

****It is important to note that the law of the State of Alabama requires registered automobile owners to maintain coverage on their vehicles. Upon receiving your automobile insurance, the insurance agency will assign you a policy number and send you an insurance card that must be kept in your vehicle at all times. If you are pulled over by an officer of the law, he or she will request to see your proof of insurance as well as your proof of your vehicle's registration.**

4.4 Health Care

In the USA health insurance is a somewhat difficult issue. Normally health insurance is dependent on the employer, but there are a great many employers that do not offer this insurance. Individual insurance policies are very expensive but available. As a result of the expense, many Americans are uninsured.

Under the [Affordable Care Act](#), all Americans can get health insurance regardless of income or health history. Generally, you can only buy Marketplace health insurance during [open enrollment](#), but you may still be able to get health insurance if you qualify for a [special enrollment period](#). The [Plan Finder](#) can help you identify private plans outside of the Health Insurance Marketplace, but--unless you experience a qualifying life event--you won't be able to enroll until the next open enrollment period. There is no limited enrollment period for [Medicaid](#) or the [Children's Health Insurance Program](#). If you qualify, you can enroll at any time.

The comprehensiveness of any health insurance depends upon the insurance plan that the employer selects. That makes it possible for example, to have dental, optical or cancer care excluded. However, one may choose to acquire supplemental insurance for oneself, although at a high cost.

Most health insurance plans require a yearly contribution (the deductible) as well as per visit contributions (the co-pay) to be paid by the insured. Co-pays must be paid at each visit to the doctor, unlike in Germany.

Medical care in the USA is very good. Generally one can select one's own doctor; however she or he must be one who participates in one's particular insurance plan, otherwise the insurance provider may deny payment, in part or in full. Insurance providers offer directories of participating doctors online and also in brochures.

As soon as practical after your arrival in the US, you should find "your" doctor and make an introductory appointment. Some doctors have waiting lists for new patients or are no longer accepting any. It is easier and faster to get an appointment if the doctor's practice already has you on file. This is very important in case of an emergency. A detailed list of local doctors by specialty is available in the Yellow Pages.

It is important to note that even without health insurance, emergency care is available to all. Due to Federal Law, no emergency facility can turn a patient away due to inability to pay. In case of emergency, the following medical facilities are available 24 hours:

Birmingham

Children's Hospital 1701 3rd Ave S, Birmingham, AL (205) 323-3866
1600 7th Ave S, Birmingham, AL (205) 939-9147 <https://www.childrensal.org/>

UAB Hospital 619 19th St S, Birmingham, AL (205) 934-4322
<http://www.uabmedicine.org/>

St Vincent's Hospital
810 Saint Vincent's Dr, Birmingham, AL (205) 939-7000 <http://www.stvhs.com/>

Brookwood Medical Center 2010 Brookwood Medical Center Dr, Birmingham, AL -
(205) 877-1000 <http://www.bwmc.com/en-US/Pages/default.aspx>

Princeton Baptist Medical Center
701 Princeton Avenue South West, Birmingham, AL 35211
(205) 783-3000 <http://www.bhsala.com/princeton/>

Children's Hospital of Alabama
1600 7th Avenue South, Birmingham, Alabama 35233
205-638-9100 <https://www.childrensal.org/default.cfm?id=1>

Other Birmingham Hospitals: <http://www.healthgrades.com/hospital-directory/al-alabama/birmingham>

Cullman

Cullman Regional Medical Center 1912 Al Highway 157 Cullman, AL 35058
2126 2nd Ave NW Cullman, AL 35058 <https://www.crmchospital.com/>
402 4th Ave Ne Cullman, AL 35055

Cullman County Hospital 1910 Cherokee Ave SW Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 734-2684

Decatur General Hospital 201 2nd Ave SE, Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 734-2725

Huntsville

Huntsville Hospital System 101 Sivley Rd SW, Huntsville, AL (256) 265-1000
1963 Memorial Pkwy SW, Huntsville, AL (256) 265-1000 <http://huntsvillehospital.org/>

Huntsville Hospital
1201 7th St SE Decatur, AL 35601
(256) 301-4700 <http://www.huntsvillehospital.org/>

Montgomery

Baptist Health – www.baptistfirst.org
2105 East South Boulevard Montgomery, AL 36111 (334) 288-2100

Northport

DCH Northport 2700 Hospital Drive Northport (205) 333-4500 www.dchsystem.com

Opelika

East Alabama Medical Center 2000 Pepperell Parkway Opelika, Alabama 36801 (334)
749-3411 <https://www.eamc.org/>

Mobile

USA Children's & Women's Hospital (251) 415-1000

<http://www.usahealthsystem.com/usacwh>

University of South Alabama Medical Center (251) 471-7000

<http://www.usahealthsystem.com/usamc>

Mobile Infirmary Medical Center (251) 435-2400 www.mobileinfirmary.org

Springhill Memorial Hospital (251) 344-9630 www.springhillmedicalcenter.com

Providence Hospital (251) 633-1000 www.providencehospital.org

Healthsouth Surgicare-Mobile (251) 473-2020 www.healthsouth.com

Mobile Mental Health Center: Baypointe Hospital & Children's ...

(251) 661-0153 www.altapointe.org

Tuscaloosa

DCH Regional Medical Center 809 University Blvd East (205) 759-7111

www.dchsystem.com

Poison Control: (205) 345-0600

Emergency Number 911 For medical, fire, and police services

Pharmacies

In larger towns and cities there are many drugstores with integrated pharmacies that are open 24 hours, such as Rite Aid, CVS, and Walgreen's. Most large supermarkets also have pharmacies. There you will find a large assortment of non-prescription medications, which can be somewhat overwhelming at the beginning. Unlike in Germany, most prescription medications are counted and dispensed by the pharmacist from bulk containers into smaller, individually prepared and labeled containers, which means that there can be a certain time requirement for filling a prescription. Generally there is also a co-pay for prescriptions. It can be useful to always use the same pharmacy so that it already has one's information stored.

Immunization Schedules (visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>)

Alabama Department of Public Health (including low-cost immunizations)

<http://www.adph.org/administration/default.asp?id=505>

If you want to enroll a child in kindergarten, at a day care center or in school, you must provide proof of immunization using the Alabama Certificate of Immunization (Blue Card), ensuring that your child has had the required immunizations. Your family doctor

or the Alabama Department of Public Health can give the immunizations. In the USA immunization against chicken pox is also required in addition to the following:

DTP diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis
IPV/OPV polio
MMR measles, mumps, rubella
Hib haemophilus influenzae (Type B)
Hep B hepatitis B
TD tetanus, diphtheria
Booster shots DTP, IPV/OPV, MMR

German Speaking Physicians:

Dr. Godehard Oepen (Psychiatry)
2868 Acton Road, Birmingham, AL 35243
(205) 968-8360

Dr. Michael Gerhardt (Orthopaedic Surgery)
120 Cahaba Valley Pkwy Suite Suite 100, Pelham, AL 35124
1004 1st St N, Alabaster, AL 35007
(205) 663-2103

Bittner, Vera A., M.D., M.S.P.H
UAB Hospital (205) 934-9999

Cardiovascular Disease Treatment of high cholesterol, coronary heart disease in women, congestive heart failure, cardiac rehabilitation and preventative cardiology.

4.5 Weather Alerts

Alabama has a wide range of weather activity - from hurricanes in the south to winter weather in the north. There are multiple outlets for weather alert information. News on both the radio and television is a quick and effective source of weather alerts for your area. Many metropolitan regions of the state also have warning sirens that alert residents to inclement weather.

Hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30 each year. Hurricanes that enter the Gulf of Mexico have a greater chance of affecting Alabama. Coastal areas remain vigilant throughout the year, however the interior of Alabama has also been devastated by aftermath of a hurricane on many occasions. Being a coastal state brings with it these risks. Hurricane watches and warnings are posted by the National Weather Service or by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). It is very important to heed warnings early and quickly due to effects of evacuation on traffic in the area. If you remain in the area within 48 hours of an approaching hurricane you are basically stuck for the duration.

Tornadoes affect Alabama fairly regularly throughout the year as storm fronts move through the state or as a result of a hurricane passing through. Sirens offer some warning, however being aware of an approaching storm through media outlets is the best protection. Tornadoes are fast developing and fast moving and as such there is little warning. Should you be caught in a strong thunderstorm in Alabama, find an interior room on the first floor with no windows to remain safe for the duration. Bathtubs with blankets, pillows or mattresses are also used in the case of an approaching tornado in order to defend against flying debris.

In northern areas of the state, occasional freezing weather or snow and sleet may develop during the winter months. Alabama is not equipped for this type of weather and in many cases businesses and government, along with schools will close during severe winter weather. Roadways are particularly unsafe as the state has little in the way of winter weather protection. If you feel unsafe driving on icy roadways, remain home. Bridges will freeze over prior to roads, so pay special attention to driving over a bridge during cold weather.

For any severe weather alert, it is always advisable to have bottled water, a flashlight, a radio and other essential items such as medicine on hand. Always be prepared for anything.

4.6 Financial & Banking

In Alabama, banks are as prevalent as churches. Banking is quite a large sector of the economy. Unlike Europe, checking accounts are very popular in the United States. Alabama is no exception. If you do not wish to pay bills online, or if it is unavailable in your area, a checking account is the next best option. Visiting a local bank allows you to select many services other than checking. Savings accounts, mortgages, loans and CD's are all offered by banks in Alabama. While the internet has opened up many options for banking and financial services, the brick and mortar banks are still very visible in every town in the state. Alabama State Banking Department <http://www.banking.alabama.gov/>

Major regional banks include:

Regions Bank
1-800-734-4667
www.regions.com

Wells Fargo
1-800-869-3557
www.wellsfargo.com

BBVA Compass Bank
1-800-266-7277
www.bbvacompass.com

BB&T
1-800-226-5228
www.bbt.com

Credit Unions are popular in Alabama as well. Credit unions are financial institutions formed by an organized group of people with a common bond. Members of credit unions pool their assets to provide loans and other financial services to each other.

Credit unions differ from other banks in several ways:

Credit Unions	Other Financial Institutions
Not-for-profit cooperatives	Owned by outside stockholders
Owned by members	Owned by outside stockholders
Operated by mostly volunteer boards	Controlled by paid boards

These factors allow credit unions to pay dividends to their members (not shareholders) and offer them lower loan rates, higher savings rates and fewer service fees.

In many cases, your employer, or perhaps a professional or personal affiliation that you have also offers a Credit Union service to you as a member. To find Credit Unions in your area, visit www.creditunion.coop

4.7 Housing

If you are just moving to the area, there are several housing options in Alabama to choose from. For many newcomers, renting is a great option. This allows you to get a feel for the area without committing to any long term financial agreements. Leasing options range from short term monthly contracts to long term annual contracts. Rental amounts vary widely and are based upon the size of the unit, location, amenities, etc. Please note that if you have animals, many leasing agencies do not allow pets, or if they are allowed, there is a fee or deposit (usually non-refundable) for allowing pets in the rental.

If you plan on staying in Alabama for an extended period of time, then home buying may be a better route. In the US, home purchasing is a common occurrence. It can be quite a complex experience, so consulting experts in the mortgage, real estate or legal field is advisable. Real estate professionals will help you buy or sell a home for a defined percentage of the sales/purchase price.

Average price (2014) \$151,195

Change over year 5.87%

Change over 5 years 5.82%

Source: Alabama Center for Real Estate

Public School Districts

Public school pupils must attend the schools assigned to the zone in which they live. It is, therefore, extremely important to know ahead of time into which school zone one moves.

4.8 Utilities & Garbage

Utilities are the responsibility of you the renter or homeowner in Alabama. Some leasing companies include certain utilities in the rental agreement, however you are generally responsible for the following: Electricity, gas, water, sewer, garbage, cable/internet and phone. Usually there is a deposit to establish service for utilities, and in many cases a connection fee is charged as well. Sometimes this fee can be applied to the first bill. Cable companies offer television, telephone and internet, and providers differ from locale to locale. Check your area for available services.

Some of the major utilities companies in Alabama include:

Alabama Power - 1-800-245-2244 www.alabamapower.com

AT&T - Phone & Internet Services www.att.com

Specialist Electricity and Gas Resellers Association <http://segra.org/>

Tennessee Valley Authority 1-(865) 632-2101 tvainfo@tva.gov

Waste Management - Garbage and Recycling Services - (800) 333-7724 www.wm.com

Alagasco - Gas services - 1-800-292-4008 www.alagasco.com

Mobile Gas, a Sempra Company (251) 476-8052 www.mobile-gas.com

Most cities offer some or all of these services as well. Check with your local government office for more information on services specific to your area and for your needs.

Most metropolitan areas and smaller cities offer garbage pickup on a weekly basis. There is nearly always a fee for garbage pickup, however in many rental instances, garbage pickup is provided as part of the rental agreement. It is free to drop off recycling goods at local recycling facilities.

Several large metropolitan areas also offer recycling services at the curbside or at various facilities located in and around the city. There is a long list of materials that can be recycled in Alabama - paper, plastic, aluminum, electronics - the list is long. Check with your local waste management provider or with a recycling center near you for more details on specific products and drop-off times.

Landfills in unincorporated areas are also available for larger loads of refuse that need to be dropped off. These are fee based and are determined by the weight of the load of garbage. Household items such as furniture may be dropped off here or in some cases curbside pickup is available in larger metro regions.

4.9 Shopping

Shopping in America is a favorite pastime. It is no different in Alabama. There are shopping centers of various sizes in nearly every town and city. Most major retailers are represented in Alabama. Metropolitan areas will offer the most shopping choices, with large indoor and outdoor malls filled with many retailers. Strip malls are very popular in the state - that is long stretches of storefronts facing the highway. These can be found nearly everywhere and usually are accompanied by large suburban housing communities nearby. Some of the more popular shopping centers include:

The Summit Birmingham

214 Summit Boulevard
Suite 150
Birmingham, AL 35243
(205) 967-0111 - Management Office Phone
www.thesummitonline.com

Riverchase Galleria Mall

3000 Riverchase Galleria
Birmingham, AL 35244
(205) 985-3020
www.riverchasegalleria.com

Bel Air Mall

3299 Bel Air Mall
Mobile, AL 36606
(251) 478-1893
www.shopatbelairmall.com

Tanger Outlet Center

2601 S. McKenzie St
Foley, AL 36535
(251) 943-9303
www.tangeroutlet.com

Madison Square Mall

5901 University Drive
Huntsville, AL 35806
(256) 837-0670
www.madisonsquaremall.com

The Shoppes of East Chase

7274 EastChase Parkway
Montgomery, AL 36117
Phone: (334) 279-6046
<http://www.theshoppesateastchase.com/>

Eastdale Mall

5501 Atlanta Highway
Montgomery, Alabama 36117
Phone: (334) 277-7380
www.eastdale-mall.com

Midtown Village

1800 McFarland Blvd
Tuscaloosa, AL
Phone: (866) 644-2521
www.midtownvillagetuscaloosa.com

University Mall

1701 McFarland Boulevard East,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35404
Phone: (205) 553-8414
www.university-mall.com

The Outlet Shops of Grand River

6200 Grand River Blvd East Suite 446
Leeds, AL 35094
(205) 699-3700 www.shopsograndriver.com

If farmer's markets and fresh produce are something you are interested in, a directory of farmer's markets can be found at www.fma.alabama.gov.

4.10 Churches & Religion

Religion in the United States

Religion in the United States has a history of diversity, due in large part to the nation's multicultural demographic makeup. Among "developed nations," the US is one of the most religious. According to a 2007 study by the Pew Research Center, the US was the only developed nation in the survey where a majority of citizens reported that religion played a "very important" role in their lives, an attitude similar to that found in its neighbors in Latin America.

Most U.S. adult citizens identify themselves as Christians (78.4%). The survey found 16.1% of the adult population to have no religious affiliation, still significantly less than in other post-industrial countries, such as the United Kingdom (44%) and Sweden (69%). Non-Christian religions (including Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and others) collectively make up about 4.7% of the adult population.

The U.S. religious marketplace is extremely volatile, with nearly half of American adults leaving the faith tradition of their upbringing to either switch allegiances or abandon

religious affiliation altogether, a new survey found February 25, 2008.

Alabama- Religions

The vast majority of congregations in the state belong in the category of Evangelical Protestants. As of 2000, the Southern Baptist Convention was still the fastest growing and the largest denomination within the state, with 1,380,121 adherents and 3,148 congregations, representing an increase of 83 congregations since 1990. The United Methodist Church claimed 327,734 adherents with 1,416 congregations, a decrease of 56 congregations since 1990. The Church of Christ was the 3rd-largest denomination with 119,049 adherents and 895 congregations. Roman Catholics in Alabama numbered 150,647 and there were an estimated 9,100 Jews. About 45.2% of the population was not counted as *members* of any religious organization.

How to find/find/join a church in Alabama

As discussed previously, there are many more choices of religion/churches compared to Germany. If you would like to join a church, we recommend you look up the local newspaper and just visit various church services in order to determine which you like the best. Also, please note that in the U.S. there is no “church tax” like in Germany. If you choose to join a church, you simply fill out a “membership form” and that’s how you belong to your church. Further, the churches here are mostly financed by private donations. If you consider donating to your church, this is tax-deductible.

In general, people in Alabama (and the U.S.) are far more involved in various church activities than people in Germany. Nearly everyone “belongs” to a church. Thus, a lot of social activities evolve around the church, especially if you have children (Kindergarten, Sunday School, Summer Programs etc.).

Other key findings

Historical traces of a [Bible Belt](#) in the South and a less religious West are still evident. Those with "no religion" constitute the largest "denomination" in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Wyoming. In contrast, the percentage of adults who adhere to "no religion" is below 10% in North and South Dakota, Nebraska, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee.

4.11 Public Transit

Alabama does not have a well-developed public transportation system. The major metropolitan areas usually offer bus service. Taxi service is available in most areas, however in smaller cities, one must call a cab service to arrange a pick up. Cabs typically do not ride the streets looking for customers in Alabama.

Along the coast, ferry service is available from Dauphin Island to Fort Morgan, linking extreme southern Mobile and Baldwin Counties.

There is no light rail in Alabama. Amtrak does serve some cities throughout the state, however.

Greyhound provides bus service for inter and intra state travel as well.

Some major metropolitan transit authorities include:

Major metropolitan transit authorities:

Birmingham - MAX (Metro Area Express)

<http://www.bjcta.org/>

Mobile - The Wave Transit System

<http://www.thewavetransit.com>

Huntsville - Shuttle Bus System

http://www.hsvcity.com/PublicTran/public_trans.php

Tuscaloosa - Tuscaloosa Transit Authority

<http://www.uatrolley.org/door/>

Megabus.com

<http://us.megabus.com/>

4.12 Educational System

The American school system is quite different from the German one. The American school system does not “differentiate horizontally;” that is, children with differing aptitudes are not at any time split into separate types of schools – such as college preparatory high school (“Gymnasium”), career-oriented high school (“Realschule”) or trade-oriented secondary school (“Hauptschule”) – instead they attend the grade level indicated by their age together. A three-tiered school system like in Germany, with “Gymnasium,” “Realschule,” and “Hauptschule,” does not exist in the USA. Instead, you have the elementary, middle and high school. The class groupings of students changes every year. The teachers are also specialized in a particular grade level and change every year. School attendance is mandatory from age seven years in Alabama. Parents have the option of having their children educated in public schools, private schools or through home school.

Elementary School

Children usually start school at age five in kindergarten, offered by the elementary schools as an introductory program before compulsory schooling at age seven in Alabama. Elementary schools include the grades from kindergarten (K-4) up to fourth, fifth, sixth or sometimes even through 8th grade (depending on the school district). Many children attend private learning or care programs before kindergarten (day care, nursery

school, preschool). These programs are offered by various elementary schools, churches or private organizations, and tuition and fees are charged.

The school day in public elementary school is generally around seven hours long, regardless of the children's age, and includes a lunch period in the school cafeteria. There is a charge for the meal. Although the school day does not generally end before 3 p.m., daily homework assignments are normal beginning in the first or second grade.

Public schools provide transportation via school bus only to children who live more than 1 mile away from the school. Otherwise each family is responsible for transporting their children to school.

Middle School

In many school districts, middle schools form the transitional link between elementary school and high school. Middle schools can include grades five through eight and sometimes ninth; however, the most typical includes sixth through eighth grades.

High School

High school is comprehensive school for secondary education comparable to the German comprehensive school ("Gesamtschule"). It includes the grades ninth through twelfth and concludes with a high school diploma. The high school diploma is generally the minimum qualification for subsequent studies at college or university.

The high school diploma is not equivalent to the German university-entrance diploma ("Abitur"). It is generally equated with a diploma from a trade-oriented high school ("Hauptschulabschluß") or at best from a career-oriented high school ("Realschulabschluß"), depending on the German province.

However, at some high schools beginning with the ninth grade there is the possibility to participate in the IB program (International Baccalaureate) that is generally recognized as equivalent. (Caution: Baden-Wuerttemberg and Lower Saxony recognize it only in part; Austria is very generous with its recognition.)

An alternate and generally better option for recognition of achievement equivalent to the German university-entrance diploma ("Abitur") is the successful participation in Advance Placement (AP) courses in five main subjects beginning in the eleventh grade. A minimum final grade of 3.0 is needed.

In addition, the ACT test minimum score 28 and the SAT test are also recognized as qualifications for university entrance. Unfortunately the decisions regarding this issue are determined by the individual German provinces and can therefore differ from one to another. One should always get in contact with the local secondary school authority before returning to Germany.

High school is an all-day school with a course-based system, that is, without fixed classes. Each pupil selects subjects and courses from those offered with the help of a

guidance counselor. At large high schools these offerings are extensive. In addition to required subjects such as English, mathematics and history, there are electives such as drama, computer science, psychology, journalism, automotive mechanics, marketing, dance or choral instruction to choose from. Outside of class pupils can also participate in school-sponsored activities such as the school newspaper, television station, theater, band, ROTC or orchestra.

Sports play a large role in high school. Typical sports offerings include American football, baseball, basketball, tennis and soccer. Pupils who are especially talented in sports are looked up to by their peers and supported by their teachers. Cheerleaders support the pupils and create an enthusiastic atmosphere at games.

A pupil's class schedule does not usually vary from day to day. Between classes there are several small breaks and a longer lunch break, typically a half hour. If a pupil's class schedule is not full, s/he must attend study hall. In study hall the pupil is supervised and can quietly work on homework assignments.

Instruction in grades one through five is generally similar to that included in the German educational program, and as a rule, reintegration into the German system does not present a problem.

Beginning in sixth grade, many schools switch to semester-based courses. Subjects are not taught continuously, which can negatively impact older pupils upon their return, especially in the natural sciences (physics, chemistry, biology). These deficits must then be made up with tutoring.

Class Levels

In high school, grade levels are generally designated with numbers and the pupils in the individual grade levels are given names:

Ninth graders are called freshmen
Tenth graders are called sophomores
Eleventh graders are called juniors
Twelfth graders are called seniors

The same designations are also used in the US colleges and universities for the first through the fourth year.

Promotion

Promotion from one grade level to the next occurs when the assigned class work has been successfully completed, without additional tests at some American schools. For every class passed there are credits. Accumulating the required number of credits allows a pupil to graduate. The grading system uses letters: A, B, C, D and F = fail. For every A the pupil receives 4 points, a B is worth 3 points, and so on. A pupil with a grade point average (GPA) of 4.0 is typically eligible for honors.

All pupils must pass a college admissions test if they want to attend university, and in many cases, also Advanced Placement tests (comparable to and in many cases equivalent to the German “Abitur”). Challenging courses (AP courses) specifically geared toward these tests are taken to prepare for them, which are equivalent to and sometimes exceed the German requirements.

It should be noted that each child’s immunization record must be presented when the child is enrolled in a school. Refer to immunization record!!! Immunizations can be obtained at the local health department for a nominal charge.

Public and Private Schools

Unlike most other industrialized countries, the United States does not have a centralized educational system on the national scale. Thus, K- 12 students in most areas have a choice between free tax-funded public schools, or privately-funded, private schools.

Although the public schools in the United States are all nonreligious, in the case of private schools one must differentiate between nonreligious and parochial schools. All three groups – public schools, nonreligious private schools and parochial private schools – are represented in all levels of the educational system, from elementary school to university. The public schools are free, whereas private schools require payment of tuition, in some cases a significant amount.

Importance of the public school districts

Because a large portion of school revenues come from local property taxes, public schools vary widely in the resources they have available per student. School districts are divided into zones of residential areas. At least in part because of how schools are funded, schools have varying reputations for quality and achievement. Public school pupils must attend the schools assigned to the zone in which they live. **It is therefore extremely important to know ahead of time into which school zone one moves.**

Curriculum decisions in public schools are made largely at the local and state levels; the federal government has limited influence. The financial situation of schools is therefore somewhat more heavily dependent on the tax revenues of their respective school districts. In most districts a locally elected school board runs schools.

Distinctive features in American Public High Schools

School supply lists are provided by the school before each school year begins. Often these supply lists can be found at the local Wal-Mart, other discount stores or on the school website. In the higher grades each student is assigned a locker for storing text books and supplies that are not immediately needed for class. In every high school there is a cafeteria and in some cases even a food court with name brand fast foods available. In most American schools, pupils must follow a dress code; some require uniforms; others simply ban specific types of clothes, such as jeans or T-shirts with writing on them. For safety reasons there are often security guards stationed at and patrolling within

the school grounds. Some schools also have metal detectors at entrance doors. In many schools only transparent backpacks are allowed to ensure that any weapons brought in are immediately visible.

Universities, Colleges and Other Higher Educational Institutions

Colleges and Universities

A high school diploma together with college admissions testing (ACT, SAT I, SAT II), letters of recommendation from teachers and an acceptable class rank in terms of GPA (e.g. top 10% -- similar to the German “numerus-clausus” system) are the typical requirements for post-secondary education, generally referred to as “college.” Some competitive colleges and universities also require successful performance on the AP tests. Students can study toward several degree levels, up to the doctorate level; generally most students stop with the completion of the first degree level, the Bachelor’s degree. Some degree programs require a final research thesis with an oral defense as well. In these cases, the student’s degree is awarded “with honors.” For exceptional effort (with or without honors) designations such “summa cum laude,” “magna cum laude,” “cum laude,” and “with distinction” are also noted on the degree.

Complete listing of public and private colleges and universities in Alabama

<http://www.ache.state.al.us/Content/CollegesUniversities/Directory.aspx>

Alabama’s Largest Universities

The University of Alabama (UA) (www.ua.edu) is one of the two largest universities in Alabama. Also known as the Crimson Tide, whose sports teams wear crimson red jerseys and whose battle cry is “Roll Tide!” The university not only improves the cityscape of Tuscaloosa but also enriches the cultural and social life of the region.

Auburn University is another of the largest universities in Alabama. It is home of the Auburn Tigers wearing blue and orange. Their battle cry is “War Eagle!” (www.auburn.edu).

A state wide athletic rivalry exists between these two universities and newcomers to the state are often asked which team they support, so it is advisable to choose one of the two soon after your arrival.

Four-Year Public Institutions in Alabama

Alabama A&M University; Alabama State University; Athens State University; Auburn University; Auburn University At Montgomery; Jacksonville State University; Troy University At Dothan; Troy University At Montgomery; The University Of Alabama; University Of Alabama At Birmingham; University Of Alabama In Huntsville; University Of Montevallo; University Of North Alabama; University Of South Alabama; University Of West Alabama.

Four-Year Private Institutions

Amridge University; Birmingham-Southern College; Concordia College; Faulkner

University; Huntingdon College; Judson College; Miles College; Oakwood University; Samford University; Spring Hill College; Stillman College; Talladega College; Tuskegee University; United States Sports Academy; University Of Mobile.

Two-Year Community, Technical and Vocational Institutions

Alabama Southern Community College; Bevill State Community College; Bishop State Community College; Calhoun Community College; Central Alabama Community College; Chattahoochee Valley Community College; Drake State Technical College; Enterprise State Junior College; Faulkner Community College; E.H. Gentry Technical School (AIDB); Gadsden State Community College; Jefferson Davis Community College; Jefferson State Community College; Lurleen B. Wallace Community College; Lawson State Community College; MacArthur State Technical College; Marion Military Institute; Northeast Alabama Community College; Northwest-Shoals Community College; Reid State Technical College; Shelton State Community College; Southern Union State Community College; Trenholm State Technical College; Wallace Community College (Dothan); Wallace State Community College (Hanceville); Wallace State Community College (Selma);

Medical Schools

University Of Alabama School Of Medicine, Birmingham, AL; University Of South Alabama College Of Medicine, Mobile, AL; Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dothan, AL.

Alabama Veterinary Medical Schools

Auburn University College Of Veterinary Medicine, Auburn, AL; Tuskegee University School Of Veterinary Medicine, Tuskegee, AL.

Alabama Law Schools

Cumberland School Of Law (Samford University), Birmingham, AL; Jones School Of Law (Faulkner University), Montgomery, AL, Miles College School of Law, Birmingham, AL; University Of Alabama School Of Law, Tuscaloosa, AL; Birmingham School of Law, Birmingham, AL.

4.13 Holidays

Alabama holidays include most of the typical holidays that the rest of the United States celebrates with few exceptions. There are two different types of holidays. One type is **federal** where all federal offices and many businesses are closed. Then there are **state** holidays where state run offices and some businesses are closed.

Typical holidays throughout the year include: January 1 (New Year); Martin Luther King's Birthday (third Monday in January); President's Day (third Monday in February); Memorial Day (fourth Monday in May) was also known as "Decoration Day," is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service; Independence Day (July 4); Labor Day (the first Monday of September) is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country; Columbus Day (second Monday in October), Veteran's Day (November 11); Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November) - Thanksgiving, or Thanksgiving Day, is a traditional North American holiday, which is a form of harvest festival; Christmas Day (December 25).

*Note: Although these holidays are not recognized by employers they are a part of American culture: Groundhogs Day (February 2): *Legend decrees that if the groundhog sees his shadow on February 2nd, six more weeks of winter weather will befall the world. If no shadow is apparent, we're in for the delights of an early spring;* Valentine's Day (February 14): *Every February 14, across the country, candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine.* Patrick's Day (March 17); April Fools' Day or All Fools' Day (April 1): Although not a holiday in its own right, it is a notable day celebrated in many countries on April 1. The day is marked by the commission of hoaxes and other practical jokes of varying sophistication on friends, family members, enemies and neighbors, or sending them on fools' errands, the aim of which is to embarrass the gullible. Good Friday, Easter and Easter Monday are not either official Federal nor State holidays due to the separation of church and state laws in the U.S.; Mother's Day (second Sunday in May); Flag Day, June 14 (the anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes) is 'Flag Birthday'; **German American Day** (October 6) the U.S. recognizes German Americans for their many contributions to our Nation. Halloween (October 31); Election Day (The Tuesday after the first Monday in November) in the United States is the day set by law for the selection of public officials by popular ballot.

4.14 Entertainment

Every major city in Alabama has some sort of night life offered. Local nightclubs, bars, and entertainment districts offer live music and dancing, billiards and other forms of entertainment. Mobile offers Dauphin Street, a street that is filled with partying in the evenings mainly on the weekends. Birmingham has the Lakefront District with several bars and eateries offering live music and club atmosphere. The university towns of Auburn and Tuscaloosa offer nightlife centered around the college crowd. Particularly during football season, these areas are usually very busy.

Due to local and state liquor and club laws, different areas have very different rules governing nightlife. Generally, bars and clubs require proof of identification for persons 21 and over, mark the entrant in some way for proof of ID check and reentry, require membership forms to be completed prior to entering, and usually close around 2am in most cities. Some areas allow for later and many close earlier than that. It is important to remain safe while out on the town, so check with your local city government office or with a bar or club for specific laws and policies.

Many music festivals occur throughout the year in Alabama. These offer full days of entertainment for the family, college crowd, tourists and visitors, or evening crowd. Some of the festivals are noted here:

Mobile Bay Fest

www.bayfest.com

Usually in September or October each year

City Stages Birmingham

www.citystages.com

Held in June of each year

Hangout Music Festival

<http://hangoutmusicfest.com/>

Held in May of each year

Huntsville Big Spring Jam

www.bigspringjam.org

Usually held in September

Montgomery Riverbend Brew Fest

<http://visitingmontgomery.com/calendar/event/riverbend-brew-fest-and-river-jam>

Usually held in May

If you prefer the symphony or theater, Alabama offers several options. The Mobile Saenger Theater is a spectacular historic theater in downtown Mobile that offers concerts for the entire family - from Broadway to symphony. Visit www.mobilesaenger.com for

events. Mobile also supports the Mobile Symphony Orchestra (www.mobilesymphony.org).

The Alabama Symphony Orchestra is located in Birmingham and plays a regular season at the Alys Stephens Center and the BJCC Concert Hall. The symphony plays throughout the state on special occasions. (www.alabamasymphony.org/)

Montgomery offers the Shakespeare Festival (<http://www.asf.net/index.aspx>) as well as the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra (<http://www.montgomerysymphony.org/index.aspx>).

Huntsville offers the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra (www.hso.org).

You will find that many area Universities and colleges offer varied and impressive musical entertainment options as well, from pop bands to symphony and opera.

4.15 Celebrations

It is common in the United States for families to celebrate certain events prior to their occurrence. These celebrations include new babies, weddings, birthdays, retirements, etc. These events are in varying scope and size. A baby shower is normally given at about the eighth month of pregnancy. Many times the family knows the sex of the baby and family and friends can give gender appropriate gifts. For weddings it has been a custom for many years that the groomsmen in the wedding party give the groom a "bachelor" party prior to the nuptials. It is also common for the bridesmaids to give the bride a bachelorette party. For all events, if an invitation is received, a response as to whether you are or are not planning on attending is customary. A gift is also customary. Many times people register at certain places, such as department stores, for items they would like to receive as a gift, and provide that information to you in the invitation (although proper etiquette suggests you avoid this).

The times of the celebrations are printed on the invitation and should be adhered too. A party in the U.S. typically lasts 2-3 hours.

4.16 Alcohol Sales

A **dry county** is a county in the United States whose government forbids the sale of alcoholic beverages. **Alcoholic beverage control (ABC) states**, generally have state monopoly over the wholesaling and/or retailing of some or all categories of alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine and distilled spirits. Alabama controls distilled spirits, but not beer and wine. However, many dry counties still allow for "private clubs" (often with low daily fees) to serve alcohol on the premises. Of the 67 counties in Alabama, 14 are completely dry, 12 are partially dry or "moist" (these counties contain cities that have voted to allow alcohol sales), and 41 are completely wet. Most of these states have an **Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC)** board and run package stores called **ABC stores**. Alabama is one of these states.

As a rule, grocery stores are licensed to sale beer and wine, as are wine stores in most communities.

How to choose or find liquor stores (package stores) Liquor stores are stores that sell liquor and other alcohol, such as beer and wine. Such stores may also sell mixed drink mixes, cocktail ingredients, malt liquor, and hard alcohol. Some liquor stores even have a wine consultant on hand to help you in your wine selection. You can find a liquor store just about anywhere, from suburban towns to inner cities.

[http://abcboard.alabama.gov/\(S\(j5rcvwrqucjqwtcmd5ddowx\)\)/default.aspx](http://abcboard.alabama.gov/(S(j5rcvwrqucjqwtcmd5ddowx))/default.aspx)

4.17 Etiquette “When in Rome do as the Romans do.”

1. **“Tip”** (gratuity) is the keyword for all kinds of services provided. The USA is a tipping country because service workers are not very highly paid. The tip is part of the payment and is only in limited cases a voluntary good deed. It is expected that one leaves the waiter a 15-20% tip (if paying by credit or debit card, there will usually be a section on the receipt to give a tip). **In addition:** If one is especially pleased with the service, a tip in the above amount is no recognition. Then one should increase the tip to 25% or more. On the other hand, if one is unsatisfied with the service, one can readily express this by reducing the tip amount.

While food servers are the most common recipients of tips, they are not the only ones who should receive gratuity for their efforts. Some others include: garbage men, barbers or hair salon workers, nail salon employees and a long list of others. Some services, such as mail carriers, are more conveniently tipped with a holiday “bonus” of sorts, usually between \$20 and \$50.

For a more extensive list on who to tip and how much, visit:

<http://www.tipping.org/tips/us.html>.

If you are still confused by the odd custom that is tipping, read the article “Who should I tip and how much?” at <http://lifehacker.com/5970143/who-should-i-tip-and-how-much> .

2. **Yawning:** Unlike in Central Europe, people do not always cover their mouth with a hand when yawning.
3. Use of public toilets is almost always free. However these facilities are often referred to as restrooms, the ladies’ room, the powder room or bathrooms.
4. Open containers of alcohol or alcohol containers in public (on the street) are prohibited, except in designated entertainment districts. Customers are permitted to remove one unsealed bottle of wine for consumption from the premises of a proprietor licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, if the customer has purchased and consumed a portion of the bottle of wine on the licensed premises. It is unlawful for a person to have alcoholic beverages in an open container in the passenger area of a motor vehicle on a public highway or right-of-way of a public highway in Alabama. Consider carefully whether to bring alcohol as a gift to the host of a dinner party, unless you know your host’s feelings on the subject; it is not always welcome.

DISTRIBUTION OF ALCOHOL TO MINORS (anyone under the age of 21), EVEN AS A GIFT, IS ILLEGAL. Unlike in Germany, authorities take an extremely strong stance on anyone who purchases or serves alcohol for anyone who is under 21, including hefty fines and lengthy jail time. With this in mind, store clerks and restaurants who sell to underage drinkers are also prosecuted heavily; therefore, they have adopted an attitude to rather be safe than sorry, and in most cases, will ask to see identification to prove you are of age, even if you are well over the legal age to drink! While this is normally just a formality, be aware that failure to produce identification can mean that you will not be able to purchase that beverage.

5. Observe the dress code included in invitations.
Casual refers to leisure clothing, including shorts and jeans.
Business casual = daily office-appropriate clothing, jacket and tie or suit not required.
Business attire = suit and tie or pants/skirt suit are expected.
Semi-formal = generally refers to a dark grey or black suit for men and an elegant dress for women.
Formal = Tuxedo for men, and elegant dress for women, including floor-length gowns.
6. In general when in public (supermarkets, department stores, museums, even at beach bars, etc.) the important body areas should be covered. Shoes and shirts are always expected (otherwise, no service).
7. Swimming in the nude is illegal in Alabama. Topless is taboo, usually also for small children. Small girls should wear a top.

8. Breast feeding and changing diapers in public are taboo. Most public restrooms have facilities for diaper changes.
9. Possession, distribution and use of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited and can lead to lengthy imprisonment.
10. Changing clothes in public (for example, on the beach) is considered creating a public nuisance and can be punishable, and not just with a fine.
11. Urinating in public (Austreten am Strassenrand) is prohibited and is also considered creating a public nuisance.
12. Mobile phones must always be turned off when going through Immigration.
13. Smoking is absolutely prohibited in airplanes, most public facilities and restaurants. Smoking is only allowed in designated areas.
14. In the USA, it is acceptable and usual to take home the uneaten portion of one's meal. This also applies in better restaurants. One requests a "To Go" container for this.
15. In the USA, almost all restaurants seat their guests; that is, you are led to a table rather than choosing your own. At the entrance there is usually a "Please wait to be seated" sign that makes this clear.
16. Americans mostly use their fork when eating. The knife is used only to cut what is being eaten into smaller pieces and then set aside. Similarly the left hand is usually under the table.
17. Unlike in European culture, having elbows on the dining table is considered rude. While European etiquette demands hands above the table, American culture puts the fork in the right hand and the left in the lap. If you are using a knife, use the knife in your right hand with the fork in your left, but switch back before eating what you have cut. In this manner, Americans mostly use their fork when eating. The knife is only used to cut what is being eaten into smaller pieces and then set aside.

One almost always is served ice water at the table, with unlimited refills and at no charge. It is acceptable for this to be your only beverage.
18. Often with non-alcoholic beverages, restaurants offer free refills; that is, you pay for the first serving but then receive further servings at no additional cost.
19. Although dinner is celebrated more and more as a social opportunity in the States, at the same time one does not remain in the dining room of a restaurant as long as in Germany.

One eats and then moves on to the bar or the lobby to chat. It is usually not appreciated if one remains at the table to talk for an extended time only ordering drinks, because it limits business for the restaurant. Therefore individual courses are quickly served (good service = fast service), which may seem rather hectic by European standards.

20. Topics for conversational small talk tend to include the following standard questions:

Did you have a good trip?

When did you get here?

Where are you from?

Is the hotel o.k.?

Do you like the city?

Have you been here before?

Other topics from daily life lend themselves as well: what happened today, hobbies, family, and of course the weather. If you are informed about football or baseball, you have it especially easy. **It is best not to get into conversation regarding sex, religion or politics!**

21. Most states, including Alabama, require headlight use when driving in the rain.
22. Make sure that you do not overdraw your American checking account. When a check is returned unpaid, your bank and the merchant to whom the check was written will both assess fees, typically around \$20 to \$40. Banks offer overdraft protection to avoid this.
23. If you will be driving, inform yourself of the American traffic rules and regulations. Don't forget: speed limits and alcohol limits are lower than in Germany. Punishments for speeding and driving under the influence can be harsh – high fines or even imprisonment!
24. Automobiles are essential for getting around in America, except in New York City and Washington, D.C., both of which have subway systems. It is not unusual for American families to own two automobiles, or more if the family has young drivers still living at home. It is important to know that seatbelts are to be worn at all times, and infants and young children are required to be restrained in car seats made for that purpose, under penalty of law.
25. Traffic enforcement - Police cars with their emergency lights on and/or their sirens on always remain behind the vehicle they are investigating. You should pull over and

- remain calm; turn on your right blinker and move to the right shoulder of the road. Don't stop in the middle of the street. Turn off your engine, keep your hands in view (on the steering wheel) and respond to the requests of the police officer (handing him documents, getting out of the vehicle if requested). Above all avoid hurried or awkward movements. Police enforcement can be a very anxious and intimidating experience, but remember that the stress works both ways: the officer is also on high alert, so any jerky or panicked movement be misconstrued.
26. If you should get a parking ticket or other traffic citation, please pay it! If you don't, you may find yourself taken into police custody on your next trip to the USA – and such an arrest can be a very unpleasant experience.
27. Some things have not changed in America since the days of the Wild West: men still hold doors open for women. This is not just done on very formal occasions, rather also normal in day-to-day situations. It is also common for one person in a group to hold a door that opens to the outside open while the rest of the group enters, for example going into a restaurant. Or when a couple leaves a restaurant and goes to get in the car: a man will often unlock the woman's door first (!), hold the passenger door open, allow her to get in and then close the door, before finally walking around the car and getting in himself. Chivalry lives in Alabama!
28. Although frowned upon in most of Europe, seeing chewing gum in the mouth is common, even in pictures, and is not considered rude.
29. Always be prepared to say grace alongside the guests at the dinner table, usually in the form of a small prayer or statement given with everyone holding hands and heads bowed (Also known as the "blessing"). Guests are rarely asked to say grace, however, as it usually falls to the head of the household.
30. Southern women will typically cover their mouths to speak or laugh when eating.

4.18 Southern Language

Without a doubt, Southerners have a unique way of talking that differentiates them from the rest of the English speaking world. Not only are their accents different, but their way of talking, their slang words, colloquialisms and even their rate of talk differs. Even within the South, there are variations on the Southern accent. An east-Tennessean doesn't have the same accent as a Texan, and the North Carolinian doesn't sound like the Georgian. There are easily as many subtle variations on the Southern accent as there are Southern states, but they all carry the "Southern brogue" that identifies these people as being from the South. See Appendix.

4.19 Volunteerism

The U.S., especially in the Southern U.S., volunteering is a way of life. The U.S. tax system allows individuals and corporations to deduct expenses incurred for volunteer work at tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations and entities. Alabamians are known for being very generous with donations and time to non-profit organizations. There are various ways to volunteer. For more information on this you may visit the United Way website for your section of the state, or search for volunteer opportunities in your area of the state.

4.20 German Restaurants, Clubs and Influence in Alabama

German Restaurants in Alabama

Birmingham Area

Das HAUS
2381 2nd Avenue N.
Birmingham, AL
(205) 907-9499
<http://dashausbham.com/>

Klinger's Bakery
621 Montgomery Hwy.
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216
(205) 823-4560
<http://www.klinglers.com/>

Daleville Area

The Castle Café
1 Sansbury St.
Daleville AL 36322

Karl's German Bakery
1391 Hwy 84
East Daleville, AL 36322
(334) 598-9022

Enterprise Area

German Schnitzel Haus
Remo Fischer
3 W Pointe Ct #F
Enterprise AL 36330

Huntsville Area

Hildegard's German Cuisine
2357 C Whitesburg Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35758
(256) 512-9776
<http://www.hildegardsgermancuisine.com/>

Schnitzel Ranch
1851 University Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35801
(256) 535-0840
www.urbanspoon.com/r/168/1429786/restaurant/Schnitzel-Ranch-Huntsville

Ol' Heidelberg
6125 University Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35806
Phone: (256) 922-0556
<http://olheidelberg.com/>

Café Berlin
964 Airport Rd. SW, Suite 3
Huntsville, AL 35802
(256) 880-9920
<http://www.cafeberlinhsv.com>

Mobile Area

LoDa Bier Garten
251 Dauphin Street Mobile AL
German Restaurant, Beer Garden, Bar & Grill
<http://www.lodabiergarten.com>

Osman's Restaurant
2579 Halls Mill Rd.
Mobile, AL 36606
(251) 479-0006
<http://www.osmansrestaurant.com>

Montgomery Area

Plantation House and Gardens
3240 Grandview Rd.
Millbrook, AL 36504
(334) 285-1466
<http://www.plantationhouseandgardens.com>

Tuscaloosa Area

Edelweiss German Bakery
2324 4th Street
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
(205) 343-6545

Grocery Stores

ALDI Grocery Stores, Whole Foods and World Market sell German food items. Bratwurst and other German sausages are popular, and are sold in many grocery stores.

German Clubs

FDSK German Culture Club 2318 2nd Ave N.
Birmingham AL 35203 508-660-2018

Friends of German Culture 8506 Louis Drive Huntsville AL 35802

The German Club of Auburn 8030 Haley Center Auburn AL 36849

Gesellschaft Mobile - Worms 2334 Dauphin Is. Parkway Mobile AL
36605

German Events/Settlements

Alabama Germany Partnership
<http://www.alabamagermany.org/events/>

Cullman, Alabama's German Village
<http://alabama.travel/road-trips/cullman-alabama-s-german-village>

Elberta German Sausage Festival
Elberta, AL
(251) 986-5805
<https://townofelberta.com/>

German WWII Prisoner of War Camps

During World War II, the state of Alabama was home to approximately 16,000 German prisoners of war (POWs) in 24 camps. The internment of these POWs significantly affected the social and economic history of Alabama.

Located in Aliceville, Pickens County, the Aliceville Museum and Cultural Arts Center opened in February 1995. The museum features

permanent exhibits on Camp Aliceville, a World War II German prisoner of war (POW) camp that operated from 1942 to 1945; the Aliceville Coca-Cola Bottling Company, which was active from 1910 to 1978; and an extensive collection of U.S. military uniforms and equipment.

Germany's National Memorial Day is remembered at Fort McClellan on November 16, 2014, during a ceremony at the German-Italian POW Cemetery. A reception normally follows the ceremony. It features German and Italian refreshments. Artifacts and memorabilia from the days when German and Italian Prisoners of War were kept at Fort McClellan are displayed. There are plans to remember when a POW Camp was open at Aliceville, AL. The U.S. military moved the POWs to Fort McClellan when the Aliceville camp was closed.
<http://alabama.travel/upcoming-events/german-italian-pow-memorial-day-at-fort-mcclellan>

5. Government & Issuance

5.1 Social Security

In America, Social Security primarily refers to a social insurance program providing social protection, or protection against socially-recognized conditions, including poverty, old age, disability, unemployment and others. When working in the United States, you will notice deductions on your paycheck for Social Security. With some exceptions, everyone working in the U.S. must pay into the Social Security program through employment. Depending on your residence and work status while living in Alabama, you may be subject to this tax.

You should contact the Social Security Administration office in your area upon arrival to obtain a Social Security Number or to determine your exemption status. You may locate an office at www.ssa.gov or by calling 1-800-772-1213. Interpreters are available for languages other than English.

The social security number is a very important number used by business and government in the U.S. It is used on employment applications, credit applications, driver's license applications and many other government documents. If you are remaining in the U.S. for an extended period of time, it is important to determine your need for a Social Security Card and Number as soon as possible.

If you retire in the U.S. after working and paying into the Social Security System, you may be eligible for benefits. The Social Security Administration mails information regarding your status on a regular basis. This information includes benefits received should you stop working at certain ages. It will also detail your contribution into the system and other important information for your beneficiaries.

5.2 Taxes

Taxes in the United States vary widely from locality to locality. Generally, there are three tiers of taxes - Federal, State, and Local (which include city and county).

Federal taxes include income tax, excise taxes (on such things as fuel), Medicare taxes (health insurance program for the elderly and disabled), and FICA (Social Security) taxes. All persons in the U.S., with few exceptions, must file a Federal Income Tax Return every year on or before April 15th.

State of Alabama taxes include income (also must be filed by April 15th each year), sales tax (including taxes on food), and 'sin taxes' including taxes on cigarettes and liquor.

Local governments impose sales taxes (including food) as well as property taxes for real property owned in Alabama. Some cities may also levy income taxes. Check with your employer's Human Resources department or with the tax assessor's office in your area for specific taxes you may be required to pay.

5.3 Automobile License

In order to drive in the State of Alabama, you must possess a valid driver's license. Persons 15 years of age can obtain a learner's permit with special restrictions imposed on the driver. At 16 years of age, a person can legally obtain a driver's license in the state of Alabama. Alabama requires a written and driving test be passed by all individuals seeking a license in the state. All drivers' licenses must be renewed every 4 years. As long as you renew prior to the expiration date of the license, no further testing is required for renewals. All persons driving a vehicle in Alabama are required to also have automobile insurance - proof of such must be kept in the vehicle at all times.

For individuals that cannot or do not wish to drive, it is recommended that you acquire a Non-Drivers license for identification purposes.

A license is required not only for driving in the state, but for purchasing alcohol, cigarettes and other age-restricted material. It is also used to gain entry in nightclubs and bars, as proof of age.

For full information on obtaining a license in Alabama, visit <http://www.alabama.gov/portal/secondary.jsp?id=transportation>

Please note that all motor vehicles are required to have a registration and tag. Vehicles purchased in Alabama must be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles and a tag must be affixed to the rear of the vehicle.

5.4 Recording Events (Birth, Death, Marriage, etc.) Standesamt

In the U.S., birth and death certificates are initiated by the physician attending the birth or death. Marriage licenses are obtained from the County Courthouse in your county of residence.

The legal age to marry in Alabama is 16. However, if you are 16 to 17, you may obtain a license if both parents are present with valid identification and they consent in writing. You must also present a copy of your birth certificate, certified by the State, County or other Foreign issued forms of identification. If you are 18, the only acceptable form of Identification is a copy of your birth certificate, certified by the State or County.

6. Doing Business in Alabama

Wirtschaft in Alabama

6.1 Overview

Historically, Alabama's economy has depended heavily on agriculture, coal, iron and steel, and heavy engineering. Birmingham, the largest city in the state, especially profited from rich iron ore deposits. In the sixties of the last century, the domestic steel industry declined. This made a radical restructuring of Alabama's economic basis necessary. The state began attracting clean industries and biotechnology companies and placed strong emphasis on research and education. At 20,000 employees, the University of Alabama at Birmingham is today by far the largest single employer in the state. However, if you take a closer look at industries, it is probably the automotive sector which now employs most people and has the most impressive growth figures.

Since 1996, Mercedes-Benz has been very successfully producing cars in Tuscaloosa. Their investment jump-started the automotive industry in Alabama; since then, four more car manufacturers have opened production facilities here. It is widely expected that Alabama will overtake Detroit as America's largest car producer in the near future. More than 100 European suppliers have followed and set up production in Alabama. The state's economy comes full circle with ThyssenKrupp opening a massive new steel plant north of Mobile, investing USD 3.7bn and bringing just under 3,000 new jobs to the region. Since its establishment, the ThyssenKrupp steel operations have been purchased by the world's largest steelmakers, ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel. ThyssenKrupp stainless operations were purchased by the Finnish company Outokumpu.

In 2012, Airbus officially announced the location of its United States manufacturing operation in Mobile, giving the European company its first factory on American soil and ushering in a new era of jet production in the historic port city. The \$600 million aircraft assembly plant will employ 1,000 at full employment.

Most of the German companies who operate facilities in Alabama are members of the AlabamaGermany Partnership (AGP). Also many local and regional companies and individuals who have business or cultural ties to Germany are members of the AGP. All members meet regularly at AGP events, and offer help and advice to one another. For many established companies, the AGP served as the springboard to economic success in the southeastern United States. Most of the following points can be quickly and easily solved with the assistance of the organization's members.

If you have decided to open a production facility in Alabama, your first step should be to establish contact with business development agencies in the region. They have information regarding possible sites and logistics. They also have all relevant financial information. Not only can you profit from low taxation; usually, you can take advantage

of business incentives, too. They can be quite substantial and may well be the decisive factor in choosing your site.

Alabama Department of Commerce, Montgomery <http://www.madeinalabama.com/>
Birmingham Business Alliance <http://birminghambusinessalliance.com/>
Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.huntsvillealabamausa.com/>
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce <http://mobilechamber.com/economic-development/>
Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce <http://www.montgomerychamber.com/>
Tuscaloosa Co. Ind. Dev. Authority: <http://www.tcida.com>

The legal form of your company governs a number of factors, such as your taxation level and payment periods, accounting or publication. It is well worth studying the available information on this subject. A host of publications are commercially available. You will also find relevant information on government agency websites. The incorporation of your company is done at the County Courthouse. We strongly advise becoming a member of your regional Chamber of Commerce (listed above) - this is the place where many business people come together on a regular basis.

Alabama Department of Revenue, Montgomery: <http://www.ador.state.al.us>
Alabama Administrative Office of Courts, Montgomery: <http://www.alacourt.gov>

If you run a production facility in Alabama you are faced with the question of where to recruit employees. The regional recruitment agencies will help you in finding the right staff. Should it be necessary to bring German workers over, there are three factors to be considered: how long the employee will stay in the USA, which position he or she will have, and whether the family will come to Alabama. Comprehensive information on all visa matters is available at the German embassy's website. Other excellent information sources are the German-American Chamber of Commerce (which is also very helpful with establishing business contacts and market research studies) and lawyers specializing in immigration law.

Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Washington DC:
<http://www.germany.info/relaunch/index.html>

Generalkonsulat der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Atlanta GA:
<http://www.germany.info/relaunch/info/missions/consulates/atlanta/atlanta.html>

Deutsch-Amerikanische Handelskammer, Atlanta GA: <http://www.gaccsouth.com>

The Alabama Small Business Development Center Network provides no-cost assistance to individuals that want to start their own business. The SBDC often works in conjunction with local chambers of commerce, and can offer one-on-one guidance for aspiring entrepreneurs: <http://asbdc.org>

7. Major City Guide and Tourist Information

Stadtfuehrer zu den wichtigsten Städten

Alabama's cities are as varied as its geography. Mountains to the north, beaches to the south, and a whole lot of wonderful scenery in between. Alabama has quite a varied list of attractions, from war to science and space exploration, and everything in between. Some major attractions are included below, sorted by major metropolitan areas. Comprehensive information can be found at <http://alabama.travel/>.

7.1 Alabama Beaches

The Wharf

4985 Wharf Pkwy.

Orange Beach, AL 36561

220-acre resort destination on Intracoastal Waterway. Stylish accommodations, upscale shopping, dining, spa, world-class marina, open air amphitheater.

Fort Morgan State Historic Site

110 Hwy. 180W

Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Construction began 1819, completed 1834. Large brick fort serviced the Civil War, Spanish-American War and both world wars. It played a major role during the Battle of Mobile Bay (1864). Museum details fort's history.

Gulf Beaches

3150 Gulf Shores Pkwy. (Visitor Information Center)

Gulf Shores, AL 36547

Enjoy 32 mi./50 km of breathtaking emerald gulf water and sugar-white sand.

Championship golf, fishing, dining and more. Beachfront accommodations and public beach access available.

Gulf State Park

20115 State Hwy. 135

Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Lakefront picnic area and boat launch, beach pavilion, 825-ft. fishing pier in gulf.

Waterville U.S.A.

906 Gulf Shores Pkwy. (AL Hwy. 59)

Gulf Shores, AL 36542

18-acre water/amusement park. Completely renovated water park plus roller coaster, Nascarts, Ejection Seat, laser tag, mini-golf, motion theater, kiddie rides, huge arcade.

Dauphin Island

Historic Fort Gaines

51 Bienville Blvd.

Dauphin Island, AL 36528

As Admiral Farragut's fleet of 14 frigates and four iron-clad monitors prepared to engage Forts Gaines and Morgan on August 5, 1864, Colonel Charles Anderson and his 800 Confederate troops were ordered to hold Fort Gaines at any cost. The Union monitor Tecumseh struck a torpedo and sank immediately. Seeing the screw propellers of the sinking Tecumseh turning in the air, Admiral Farragut bellowed, "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" Immediately after gaining safety in Mobile Bay, Farragut's attention turned upon Fort Gaines. On August 8, Fort Gaines surrendered.



Fort Gaines

Mobile Bay Ferry

918-B Bienville Blvd

Dauphin Island, AL 36528

Daily vehicle/passenger service from Dauphin Island to Fort Morgan.

Departures every 1 ½ hours.

The Estuarium, an aquarium at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab

101 Bienville Blvd.

Dauphin Island, AL 36528

Local habitats of Mobile's estuary: delta, bay, barrier islands and Gulf of Mexico.

Visual displays and interactive exhibits promise engaging educational experiences for all ages.

7.2 Auburn/Opelika Area

Auburn, a thriving community of approximately 54,000 residents, is located along Interstate 85 in east central Alabama. Auburn is in the River Heritage region of Alabama. Auburn University is located in downtown Auburn. During Auburn University home college football games, the town fills up with thousands of alumni and college football fans for a weekend of tailgating

<http://www.auburnalabama.org/ed/PDF/CommunityProfile.pdf>

<http://www.auburn.edu/>

7.3 Birmingham Area

Though Birmingham stands in the heart of the Deep South, it is not an Old South city. 1870 to 1880 was a time when railroads and land barons built a town that was named Birmingham, after England's industrial giant. Formally organized in 1871, the new town became a commercial hub, with railroads crisscrossing throughout the community. The new community sprang up, thrived and grew so quickly that many observers said it

happened "just like magic." Soon the nickname "The Magic City" was applied to Birmingham.

At the same time a profound movement toward diversification was afoot. The huffing and puffing of Birmingham's legendary iron and steel mills was gradually replaced by a work force of medical and engineering professionals. Today, Birmingham enjoys a balance of manufacturing and service-oriented jobs in a thriving work force.

<http://www.informationbirmingham.com/>

<http://birminghambusinessalliance.com/>

Alabama Splash Adventure

4599 Alabama Adventure Pkwy
Bessemer, AL 35022

Two parks consisting of more than 50 acres of rides, shows and attractions, Alabama Adventure is home of Splash Beach Water Park and Magic City USA Theme Park, Winner of Alabama's "2007 Attraction of the Year!" Whether it is rides, Slides, shows or attractions you're looking for, Alabama Adventure has it all!

American Village, Montevallo

3727 Alabama 119
Montevallo, AL 35115, USA
205-665-3535

<http://www.americanvillage.org>

American Village hosts a museum of ideas, visitors step onto the stage of American history and discover the power and drama of America's journey for independence and self-government. Highlights of the campus include early American period building inspired by historic sites, including a full-sized replica of the Oval Office, including an exact replica of the Resolute desk used by most Presidents since Rutherford Hayes. Memorial Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day are among the most meaningful days as the American Village commemorates the country's founding and the service and sacrifice of those who have defended it.

Barber Motorsports Park

6030 Barber Motorsports Pkwy
Birmingham, AL 35094
(205) 699-7275

<https://www.barbermotorsports.com/>

The **Barber Motorsports Park** is a 740 acres (300 ha) multi-purpose racing facility located on the eastern fringes of Birmingham, Alabama, USA near Leeds. It was built by George Barber, and includes the Barber Vintage Motorsport Museum. It has been the site of the IndyCar Series Grand Prix of Alabama since 2010 season.^{[1][2]} Barber is also the home of the North American Porsche Driving School and the Kevin Schwantz Motorcycle School.

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

520 16th St. N

Birmingham, AL 35203

State-of-art, multi-media facility housing exhibitions of historical events from post-World War I racial segregation to present-day racial progress.

Birmingham Museum of Art

2000 8th Ave. N

Birmingham, AL 35203-2278

Largest municipal museum in Southeast.

Permanent collection of 22,000+ objects dating from ancient to modern times, various cultures.

Highlights: African, Asian, European and American collections, outdoor sculpture garden, Wedgwood, Kress Collection. Terrace Café, museum store. More than 17,000 objects.



Birmingham Museum of Art

Birmingham Botanical Gardens

2612 Lane Park Rd.

Birmingham, AL 35223

Oldest municipally owned garden in Alabama. 67 acres containing more than 25 display gardens, largest clearspan greenhouse in Southeast. C. Beaty Hanna Horticulture & Environmental Center with plant diagnostic lab. Fine restaurant, gift shop, tours.

Southern Museum of Flight/Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame

4343 73rd St. N

Birmingham, AL 35206-3642

See F-4 Phantom, A-12 Blackbird, F-111 Aardvark, MIGs 15 & 21, helicopters, home-builts, photos, art, models. Follow Alabama aviation history through Hall of Fame plaques. Tuskegee Airmen & Women in Aviation exhibits. 60 restored aircraft.

Railroad Park

1600 1st Avenue South

Birmingham, AL 35233

Railroad Park is a 19 acre green space in downtown Birmingham that celebrates the industrial and artistic heritage of the city. Situated along 1st Avenue South between 14th and 18th Streets, the park is a joint effort between the City of Birmingham and the Railroad Park Foundation. Hailed as “Birmingham’s Living Room,” Railroad Park provides a historically rich venue for local recreation, family events, concerts and cultural events.

Oak Mountain State Park

200 Terrace Dr.

Pelham, AL 35124

18-hole golf course, demonstration farm, horseback riding stable, swimming, campsites, cabins, picnic shelters, fishing, marina, bike and hiking trails on 9940 beautiful acres.

Oak Mountain Amphitheatre

1000 Amphitheatre Rd.

Pelham, AL 35124

Outdoor concerts throughout summer.

Birmingham Zoo

2630 Cahaba Rd.

Birmingham, AL 35223

700 wild animals in heart of Birmingham. Explore Alabama in new Junior League of Birmingham-Hugh Kaul Children Zoo. See Alligator Swamp. Feed colorful parrots in Lorikeet Aviary. Experience African Savannah. Ride train, carousel.

Alabama Theatre for the Performing Arts

1817 3rd Ave. N

Birmingham, AL 35203

1927 movie palace maintained in original form. Built by Paramount, now functions as performing arts facility and houses largest Wurlitzer pipe organ in South.

McWane Science Center

200 19th St. N

Birmingham, AL 35203

See world wonders in action. Exciting science center offers hands-on exhibits, larger-than-life IMAX® films and extraordinary programs. Take a magnetic journey to a place as engaging as the human imagination.

Alys Robinson Stephens Performing Arts Center

1200 10th Ave. S

Birmingham, AL 35294

World's brightest performers in music, dance and live theater. Four venues designed to accommodate every artistic form. Located at the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

Vulcan Park and Museum

1701 Valley View Dr.

Birmingham, AL 35209

Vulcan Park is home to the world's largest cast iron statue and features spectacular panoramic views of Birmingham and opportunity to hear the story of Birmingham's past, present and promise for the future. Vulcan, the Roman god of fire and forge, was originally built in 1904 for the St. Louis World's Fair to represent Birmingham's iron industry. The newly renovated Vulcan Park sits atop Red Mountain with Vulcan standing 124 feet off the mountain on his original 1938 pedestal. A 10-acre urban green space surrounds the 56' high statue and open-air observation deck. Visitors find interactive exhibits and displays that give insight into the region's geology, history and industrial growth. Vulcan Park is also a unique, memorable location to host private events, both corporate and social. Groups welcome. Free parking and bus parking.

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church

1530 6th Ave. N.

Birmingham, AL 35203

Church, founded in 1873, is a significant part of Birmingham's Civil Rights District. Renovated structure is site of infamous 1963 bombing that killed 4 young girls and brought world condemnation of racial violence. The tragedy was a major turning point in the civil rights protest in Birmingham and became a rallying cry for unity throughout the country.

Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark

20 32nd St. N.

Birmingham, AL 35222

32-acre blast furnace plant where iron was made for nearly 100 years. Now museum of history and industry, and center for creation and exhibition of metal art.

7.4 Huntsville/Decatur & Cullman Area

First white resident and pioneer, John Hunt, for whom the city is named, built a cabin in 1805. Not long after, a town was established and flourished, becoming the largest in the Alabama Territory by 1819. The Alabama Constitution Village, a living museum today, commemorates historic events and the early way of life. During the 1840s and 50s, Huntsville was the center for cotton trading in the Tennessee Valley; merchants came from Virginia and the Carolinas. Many stayed and built mansions, some of which are still in existence and are open for tours.

Huntsville came into the space program in the 1950s while it was still a cotton market town. U.S. Senator John Sparkman brought a group of German rocket scientists to the city (Redstone Arsenal) to develop rockets for the U.S. Army. The group was headed by Wernher von Braun who designed the rocket that orbited America's first satellite, and later put the first astronauts on the Moon. The city remains today as one of the fastest growing technological centers in America, and is home to multi-national manufacturing companies, and anyone can be an "astronaut for a day."

<http://www.hellohuntsville.com/History.Cfm>

http://www.huntsvillealabamausea.com/newcomers/nc_brochure.pdf

Decatur/Morgan County

Nestled in the Tennessee River Valley, the city of Decatur boasts a rich and colorful history. Originally a river crossing for settlers west of the Appalachian Mountains, the town became known as Decatur on June 16, 1820. Decatur's richly storied past of opportunity, prosperity, diversity and determination has shaped the city that we are today – a Grand City on a Charming Scale.

http://decaturalabamausea.com/livework/decatur_now.html

Cullman/Cullman County

Cullman and Cullman County share a strong German heritage that springs from its founder, Col. John G. Cullman. Along with that sense of history and identity comes a strong work ethic and a pioneer spirit that is evident in the people of Cullman County, who strive to make everything here the very best it can be.

<http://www.cullmanchamber.org/>

<http://alabama.travel/road-trips/cullman-alabama-s-german-village>

Earlyworks Children's Museum

404 Madison St SE

Huntsville, AL 35801

256-564-8100

Earlyworks Children's Museum was designed for children. Hear stories from the Talking Tree, play a tune on the giant-sized instruments at the Alabama bandstand and try your hand at building in the Kidstruction Zone. Explore a 46-foot Keelboat, trade your wares at the General Store and try on 1800's clothing in the federal house. Pre-schoolers will enjoy exploring Biscuit's Backyard, a touch-and-learn area designed especially for them, which includes a garden, grocery store, water table and even karaoke!

Harmony Park Safari

431 Cloud's Cove Rd. SE

Huntsville, AL 35803

Federally licensed nature preserve of free-ranging exotic and endangered animals.

Remain in car for 2-mi./3.25-km route. Zebras, zebu, buffalo, camels, ostriches, pythons, rams, highlanders, alligators, water fowl, waterfalls and more. Antiques buildings.

Huntsville Botanical Garden

4747 Bob Wallace Ave.

Huntsville, AL 35805

Gift shop, tea room, picnic areas and pavilion. Seasonal Butterfly House, Spring Festival of Flowers, Scarecrow Trail and Galaxy of Lights from Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve. 112 acres of beautiful gardens and walking paths. The Gardens are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Madison County Nature Trail

5000 Nature Trail Rd.

Huntsville, AL 35803

72-acre park includes 17-acre lake. Fishing for youth under 16 or seniors over 60.

Walking trails, pavilion, chapel, picnic sites.

Monte Sano State Park

5105 Nolen Ave.

Huntsville, AL 35801

Located in center of Huntsville. 2140 natural acres provide 14 vacation cottages, improved camping, picnic areas & pavilions, hiking trails, playgrounds, flower gardens.

Point Mallard Park

P. O Box 1315

Decatur, Alabama 35602

256-341-4930

Point Mallard Park offers the great outdoors like you've never experienced it before. Hidden among North Alabama's wooded pines, the 750+-acre family park lets you stay in tune with nature 365 days a year. The park offers 18 holes on one of the South's best golf courses. You can stay in our 25-acre, wooded campground, visit America's first wave pool at our seasonal Waterpark, and/or cool off in the indoor ice skating rink!

US Space and Rocket Center

One Tranquility Basin

Huntsville, AL 35805

1800-63-SPACE

US Space and Rocket Center

The U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama is a museum operated by the government of Alabama, showcasing rockets, achievements, and artifacts of the U.S. space program. Sometimes billed as "Earth's largest space museum," astronaut Owen Garriott described the place as, "a great way to learn about space in a town that has embraced the space program from the very beginning."

Veterans Memorial Museum

2060-A Airport Rd.

Huntsville, AL 35801

The Veterans Memorial Museum, operated by the Alabama Center of Military History, is dedicated to promoting and disseminating the accomplishments of American military men and women. The emphasis is on participants of World War I and subsequent conflicts, whose survivors and families can use the Museum facilities to reminisce on their own experiences and those of parents, grandparents, and other close relatives. The Museum has been designated by the Alabama House of Representatives as the State of Alabama Veterans Memorial Museum. The Museum displays more than 30 historical military vehicles from World War I to the present, as well as tableaus, artifacts, and other memorabilia dating back to the Revolutionary War. The Veterans' Memorial Museum welcomes the participation of military and veterans' groups and individuals in making the Museum a valued educational and memorial attraction in North Alabama.

7.5 Mobile Area

Mobile is located in Southwest Alabama at the head of Mobile Bay, thirty one miles from the Gulf of Mexico. It is the second largest metropolitan area in Alabama and the State's major port. Known for its streets lined with massive live oaks, Mobile is a picturesque city at the mouth of the Mobile River at Mobile Bay, leading to the Gulf of Mexico. More than 600,000 residents live in the metropolitan area covering 2,828 square miles. In 30 minutes you can be on the sandy-white beaches of Dauphin Island, yet the mountains of northern Alabama are just a few hours' drive. Mobile's diversity is mirrored in a plethora of activities – from the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo to freshwater fishing, antique shopping to outlet bargains, baseball to football, museums to the modern IMAX Dome Theater, tee-time on the course to tea time at a historic plantation home, world-renowned Bellingrath Gardens to the Battleship USS ALABAMA, Dauphin Island Sailboat Regatta to greyhound racing, Mardi Gras to the Christmas parade of boats along Dog River – Mobile is a great place to live and work.

<http://www.ci.mobile.al.us/>

http://mobilechamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/2014_GuideToMobile_revised.pdf

Mardi Gras

Since 1703, Mobile has celebrated Mardi Gras, and is the site of the oldest annual Carnival celebration in the United States. Mobile was the first capital of French Louisiana (1702), and the festival began as a French Catholic tradition. Mardi Gras in Mobile has now evolved into a mainstream multi-week celebration with parades, debutant and society balls across the spectrum of cultures in Mobile, becoming school holidays for the final Monday and Tuesday of the celebration.

Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center and IMAX® Dome Theater

65 Government St.

Mobile, AL 36602

Science and adventure for groups of all ages. IMAX films, permanent and traveling exhibits.

Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Magnolia Grove

7001 Magnolia Grove Pkwy.

Mobile, AL 36618

3 courses: wetlands, creeks, streams, dense woods and large, sandy-white bunkers. Site of 1998 Nike Tour Championship, 1999–2003 LPGA Tournament of Champions and currently the Airbus LPGA Classic. Magnolia Grove was recently named one of the "Top 50 Public Courses" by *Golf World Magazine* readers. The Crossings and Falls courses are also listed in *Golf Digest's* "Places to Play" as two of the nation's great value courses and as "America's Top 50 Affordable Courses."

Mobile Botanical Gardens

5151 Museum Dr., Langan Park
Mobile, AL 36608

More than 100 acres of natural woodlands, cultivated gardens, display areas and Botanical Center where lectures, meetings and receptions are held. Fragrance and texture garden specially designed for physically challenged.

Bellingrath Gardens and Home

12401 Bellingrath Gardens Rd.
Theodore, AL 36582

65-acre estate garden blooms every day. 15-room museum home, bayou boardwalk. Southern Belle sightseeing river cruise. Magic Christmas in Lights. Café, gift shop.



Bellingrath Gardens & Home

Reese's Senior Bowl

151 Dauphin Street
Mobile, AL 36602
(251) 438-2276
srbowl@seniorbowl.com

Held each January, the Senior Bowl brings National Football League (NFL) coaches to Mobile to scout college seniors for NFL careers. Nearly every season, at least 30 percent of the league is comprised of players whose road to the NFL started in Mobile.

Mobile Opera

257 Dauphin St.
Mobile, AL 36602

Alabama's oldest Performing Arts Organization, founded in 1946. Located in the designated Downtown Arts District, the Josephine Larkins Music Center. Committed to education & community outreach through these programs: Crating Opera, Black History Program, Mobile Opera Developing Artist Program, Teen Night at the Opera, Young People's Student Matinee, Afternoon of Stars, & discounted tickets for students.



Bragg-Mitchell Mansion

Bragg-Mitchell Mansion

1906 Springhill Ave.
Mobile, 36607

One of Gulf Coast's grandest estates and most photographed building in Mobile today. 20-room mansion, built in 1855, offers visitors rare opportunity to glimpse life as lived in Old South. Available for rental.

Saenger Theatre

6 S. Joachim St.
Mobile, AL 36602

1976-seat theatre built in 1927. Former vaudeville and movie palace, now grand theater. Hosts national and international performers, Broadway musicals, orchestras and more.

Mobile Symphony

257 Dauphin St.
Mobile, AL 36602

The premiere producer of live symphonic music in the Gulf Coast, group serves the educational, economic, and development needs of the community.

Fort Conde Museum

150 S. Royal St.
Mobile, AL 36652

Partially reconstructed 1724 French fort in downtown Mobile. Period costumed guides. Demonstrations of cannon and musket firing. Mobile's official Welcome Center shares the site. Operated by The Museum of Mobile.



USS Alabama

USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park

2703 Battleship Pkwy.
Mobile, AL 36602

Explore mighty battleship, winner of 9 battle stars in World War II. See Mach 3 A-12 Blackbird super-secret spy plane and B-52 stratofortress Calamity Jane, submarine USS DRUM, an original plane that was used by the Tuskegee Airmen, plus 22 other aircraft and weaponry from all branches of the military.

Cathedral of The Immaculate Conception

2 S. Claiborne St.
Mobile, AL 36602

Roman basilica design, built on Spanish burial grounds in the heart of Mobile & Old Town. Features German art glass windows, bronze canopy over altar, 14 hand-carved statues.

Mobile-Tensaw River Delta

The Mobile Delta consists of approximately 20,323 acres of water just north of Mobile Bay. Second only to the Mississippi River Delta in size, the Mobile Delta is an environmental showplace that is 30 miles long and 12 miles wide. It covers more than 200,000 acres of swamps, river bottomlands and marshes. Congress named the Mobile

Delta a National Natural Landmark in 1974; fewer than 600 sites have received that honor. The Alabama Environmental Council considers the Delta as one of "[Alabama's Ten Natural Wonders](#)." Formed by the confluence of the [Alabama](#) and [Tombigbee](#) rivers, the Mobile Delta is a complex network of tidally influenced rivers, creeks, bays, lakes, wetlands, and bayous.

<http://www.outdooralabama.com/fishing/freshwater/where/rivers/delta/>

Mobile Bay's Eastern Shore

Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club and Spa

One Grand Blvd.

Point Clear, AL 36564-0639

Premiere resort of the Southeast (circa 1847). Converted to Confederate hospital during Civil War. 21st Alabama Infantry maintained garrison on grounds. Served as Marine training ground during WWII. Confederate Rest Cemetery on grounds. Completely renovated, the four-diamond AAA rated resort, features 3 ballrooms, renovated golf on RTJ Trail, European spa, children's fun camp.

Fairhope

Established in 1894 by a group of adventurous people who came together with a "fair hope of success." Fairhope is known as a pedestrian's paradise, and is home or a weekend retreat for many famous artists and authors. Fairhope has been recognized nationally and internationally for its environmental stewardship, beauty and quality of life. Fairhope continues to receive favorable notices in national magazines, including the Wall Street Journal, Southern Living, USA Today, The Smithsonian and Money Magazine. In 2010, Family Circle Magazine named Fairhope as one of the 10 best places to raise a family.

The Fairhope Single Tax Corp., near Point Clear, was founded in 1893 by Iowans seeking to put into practice the economic theories of Henry George. Incorporated under Alabama law in 1904, this oldest and largest of US single-tax experiments continues to lease land in return for the payment of a rent (the "single tax") based on the land's valuation; the combined rents are used to pay taxes and to provide and improve community services.

<http://www.cofairhope.com/>

7.6 Montgomery Area

Montgomery, the capitol of the State of Alabama, is located at the crossroads of Interstate 65 and Interstate 85, near the middle of the state. It is 88 miles to Birmingham and 163 miles to Atlanta, Georgia. Montgomery was chosen in 1846 to be the state capital. In 1861, Jefferson Davis was sworn in as the president of the Confederacy in Montgomery. This is also the place where Rosa Parks helped to usher in a time of great social change. 1965 was the time when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. finished his Selma to Montgomery march on the state capitol steps. The area has many firsts to its name, including the first electric streetcar system in 1886. The nation's first flight school for powered planes was established in 1910 by the Wright Brothers.

[Statistics & Facts](#) [Location](#) [Weather & Climate](#) [History & History-related items](#)

Montgomery [historical](#) events. [City Attractions](#) Montgomery [Government](#)

Montgomery [Chamber](#) of Commerce.

Alabama Shakespeare Festival

1 Festival Dr.

Montgomery, AL 36117-4605

Leading attraction in Montgomery. 6th largest Shakespeare theater in the world, with more than 200,000 visitors annually. Variety of classical and contemporary theatrical productions year-round.

National Center for the Study of Civil Rights & African American Culture at Alabama State University

1345 Carter Hill Rd.

Montgomery, AL 36106

Located on the campus of historic Alabama State University is a place for scholars, students, lay historians and all those interested in studying the modern Civil Rights Movement and Montgomery's place in it. The center documents and preserves memorabilia of the Civil Rights era, local black history and history of Alabama State University, which was the site of sit-ins and student protests during the 1960s era.

Alabama War Memorial and Wall of Honor

120 N. Jackson St.

Montgomery, AL 36104

Honoring war veterans from Alabama. Memorial is shrine dedicated by American Legion to those who offered their lives to preserve our security and safety. Highlights: 27 Alabamians awarded Congressional Medal of Honor.

Civil Rights Memorial Center

400 Washington Ave.

Montgomery, AL 36104

Learn about sacrifices and achievements of the Civil Rights movement, confront facts of contemporary injustices, hear stories of hate crime victims, examine your own biases.

Jasmine Hill Gardens and Outdoor Museum

3001 Jasmine Hill Rd.
Wetumpka, AL 36193

One of the oldest gardens in Alabama, Jasmine Hill has matured at 75-years. Filled with camellias, azaleas, flowering Japanese cherries and an abundance of other southern trees and shrubs, the 20-acre gardens also feature reproductions of Greek statuary and beautiful pools throughout.

The Dexter Parsonage Museum

303 S. Jackson St.
Montgomery, AL 36104

Parsonage provides public access to residence formerly occupied by Dr. Martin Luther King and his family (1954–1960). Interpretive Center chronicles history of era that led to Montgomery bus boycott and Civil Rights Movement.

First White House of the Confederacy

644 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, AL 36104

1835 Italianate-style house. Executive residence of President Jefferson Davis and family while the capitol of the Confederacy was in Montgomery. Furnished with original period pieces.

Troy University's Davis Theatre for the Performing Arts

251 Montgomery St.
Montgomery, AL 36102

Restored 1930s fine arts palace, owned by Troy State University Montgomery. Subscriber series comprised of touring productions from Broadway shows to concerts. Across street from Rosa Parks Museum and Montgomery Bus Boycott site.

Governor's Mansion

1142 S. Perry St.
Montgomery, AL 36104

This stately 1907 mansion is set amidst beautifully landscaped grounds. Since 1951, Alabama governors and families have lived in 17-room house.

Southern Homes and Gardens

3561 Wetumpka Hwy. and 8820 Vaughn Rd.
Montgomery, AL 36109

Take a stroll through Southern Homes' 100-acre wooded gardens and absorb the rich beauty that has made the area a mecca for gardening aficionados throughout the southeast. After your walk, stop in the 28,000 square-foot gift center and make your purchases from variety of wonderful gift items and collectibles, including Alabama clay, Auburn/Alabama throws, bird houses, mascot figures, and flags, as well as Fenton art glass, cook books, and more. A wide variety of indoor plants, seasonal blooming plants, annual bedding plants, shade trees, evergreens, shrubs, and a variety of roses, including hybrid teas, antique and English roses are also available.

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

One Museum Drive

Montgomery, AL 36117

Permanent collection includes examples of 19th- and 20th-century American paintings and sculpture, Southern regional art, Old Master prints and decorative arts. Also, home to ARTWORKS, a participatory art gallery and studio for children.

Rosa Parks Museum and Children's Wing

220 Montgomery St.

Montgomery, AL 36104

State-of-the-art museum depicting events that started the bus boycott and early Civil Rights movement. Interactive, multi-media presentation. Affiliate of Troy State University.

Montgomery Zoo

2301 Coliseum Pkwy.

Montgomery, AL 36110

40 acres featuring habitats from 5 continents with naturalistic, barrier-free exhibits for more than 600 animals. Enjoy dining at Overlook Cafe, visit gift shop, or take train ride around park.

Alabama State Capitol

600 Dexter Ave.

Montgomery, AL 36104

Jefferson Davis was sworn in as President of the Confederate States of America on Feb. 18, 1861. A star on the Capitol steps marks the inauguration.

St. John's Episcopal Church

113 Madison Ave.

Montgomery, AL 36104

Gothic-style church, designed by Wills & Dudley of New York, built in 1855. Oldest Episcopal church in Montgomery. Many interesting memorials, including pew of Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

St Peter's Catholic Church

219 Adams Ave

Montgomery, AL 36104

(334) 262-7304

St. Peter's was the first Catholic Church built in Montgomery. Since its beginning in 1834, the church has provided an active Catholic presence in Montgomery. From the eve of the Civil War to the dawning of the civil rights movement, St. Peter's location has enabled the church to be a witness to monumental events that have shaped Alabama and the nation's history.



Alabama State Capitol

7.7 Pell City Area

St. Clair County was created by the Alabama Territorial legislature on 1818 Nov. 20. It was named for Gen. Arthur St. Clair (Pennsylvania), a hero of the American Revolution. It is located in the north-central part of the state, and is bordered by Blount, Calhoun, Talladega, Shelby, and Jefferson counties. It encompasses 646 square miles. St. Clair is the only county in Alabama to have two county seats. Ashville, originally called St. Clairsville, was named for John Ash, a senator in the state's first General Assembly. Located in the northern part of the county, Ashville served as the county seat from 1821-1907. The Alabama Constitution of 1901 provided for Pell City in the southern part of the county to serve as the county seat for the Southern Judicial District of the county. A constitutional amendment in 1907 established Pell City, named for George H. Pell, an early settler, as the second county seat. Other towns and communities include Ragland and Springville. <http://www.archives.state.al.us/counties/stclair.html>

7.8 Tuscaloosa Area

Tuscaloosa is located along the banks of the Black Warrior River in West Central Alabama. Tuscaloosa is led by a Mayor/Council form of government and is home to over 90,000 residents, as well as a thriving business community.

Best known, perhaps, as the home of The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa is famous for its gridiron action and the home of the original Dreamland Barbeque.

In 1827 the state university was established at Tuscaloosa. On April 18, 1831, the University of Alabama began operations and enrolled 52 students. In 1860 the University of Alabama became a military university. In 1865, Union troops known as Croxton's Raiders burned all but four of the University's buildings. The city, which was named an All-America City by the National Civic League in 2002 is home to Mercedes-Benz U.S. International, which allows Tuscaloosa to have the only Mercedes-Benz Museum on the world outside of Germany.
<http://visittuscaloosa.com/>

Mercedes-Benz Visitor Center

22 Mercedes Dr.

Vance, AL 35490

The only Mercedes-Benz museum outside of Germany. Several vintage Mercedes vehicles on display. Reservations required for plant tours. Museum admission is free- there is a charge for the tour.

The University of Alabama

719 University Blvd.

Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Pleasant place to stroll and picnic. Various historic attractions and museums located throughout campus, including Paul W. Bryant Museum of UA football, Alabama Museum of Natural History and Gorgas House (admission charged to museums).

University of Alabama Arboretum

4801 Arboretum Way

Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

60-acre arboretum. 2.5 mi./4 km of walking trails focusing on native plants of Alabama.

Bryant-Denny Football Stadium

920 Paul W Bryant Dr.

Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Home to one of the best college football teams in the country, Bryant-Denny stadium has grown into an impressive and iconic arena. College football season usually runs from the end of August through early January, and games are played Saturday nights or evenings.

Tuscaloosa Museum of Art

1400 Jack Warner Pkwy NE, Tuscaloosa, AL

One of the greatest private collections of American Art, the museum is home to the Westervelt collection and is operated with the purpose of sharing with the community and promoting understanding of the arts in general.

Paul W. Bryant Museum

300 Paul W Bryant Dr, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

America as a country is in love with football. Alabama, especially, though they do not have a professional team, could be best described as a “football state.” The University of Alabama, located in Tuscaloosa, fields a world class team every year, and boasts a storied history of strong traditions and legendary teams. The Paul W. Bryant museum features this rich history, dating back to 1892.

Battle-Friedman House

1010 Greensboro Ave, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

This is a historic antebellum house in Tuscaloosa, which was the capital of Alabama at the time.

Located in the historic district, the house is now a museum of sorts, with a \$5 entry fee and tours daily.

8. Appendix Anhang

8.1 APG Board of Directors

8.2 German Companies in Alabama

8.3 Southern English Guide

8.1



AlabamaGermany Partnership 2014 Officers and Directors

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Executive Director

Tine Hoffmeister

8.2

German Companies in Alabama 2014

Company	City
abat USA	Birmingham
Airbus	Mobile
Aluminum Technology Schmid North America Inc.	Auburn
Aviagen Inc.	Athens
Aviagen Inc.	Huntsville
Aviagen Inc.	Munford
BASF	McIntosh
BASF Catalyst	Huntsville
Berg Spiral Pipe Corporation	Mobile
BHS-HARREX Inc.	Tuscaloosa
BLG Logistics Inc.	Vance
Bolta USA Inc.	Tuscaloosa
Borbet Alabama Inc.	Auburn
Borgers USA Corporation	Vance
Boysen USA Alabama, LLC	Brookwood
BremenInvest	Birmingham
Brielmaier, Inc.	Pinckard
Brose Tuscaloosa USA	Vance
CRH North America Inc.	Clanton
DIEHL Aerospace Inc.	Sterrett
Durawear Corporation	Birmingham
Eberspächer North America	Northport
Eissman Automotive North America Inc.	Pell City
Evonik Industries	Theodore
Farmer's Poultry Supply Inc.	Cullman
Fasco America	Muscle Shoals
Fresenius USA Inc.	Birmingham
FS Fehrer Automotiv GmbH	Gadsden
Gläser	Tuscaloosa
Hanson Concrete Products	Huntsville
Hanson Pipe & Precast	Pelham
Hanson Pipe & Precast	Tuscaloosa
Hanson Pipe & Products Inc.	Mobile
Hanson Pipe & Products Southeast	Flomaton
Hanson Pipe & Products Southeast Inc.	Montgomery
Hoerbiger Automotive Comfort Systems LLC	Auburn
Hyco International	Arab
IOLITEC	Tuscaloosa
Intergraph Gov. Solution	Madison
iSam North America	Mobile
Jenoptik Optical Systems Inc.	Huntsville
KAUTEX Textron Alabama	Vance

Kemmerich Metal Engineering	Auburn
Knauf Insulation	Lanett
Kommerling USA Inc.	Huntsville
Kostal Mexicana SA de CV	Vance
Lehigh Cement Company	Leeds
Lehigh Cement Company	Birmingham
Linde Gas LLC	Saraland
Linde Gas LLC	Decatur
Linde LLC	Lanett
Linde LLC	Cherokee
Linde LLC	Birmingham
MAHA USA LLC	Pinckard
Mauser USA LLC	Anniston
MB-technology NA LLC	Huntsville
MB-technology NA LLC	Tuscaloosa
Mercedes Benz US International Inc.	Vance
Oerlikon Balzers Coating USA Inc.	Pell City
Operon Biotechnologies Inc (H-A)	Huntsville
Polyamide High Performance	Scottsboro
Rausch & Pausch LP	Auburn
REHAU Automotive, LLC	Cullman
Rödl & Partner	Birmingham
SafeTweave, Inc	Scottsboro
Siemens Energy Inc.	Fort Payne
Siemens Industry Inc.	Decatur
Straehle + Hess USA Inc.	Auburn
Styrolution	Decatur
SurModics Pharmaceuticals Inc	Birmingham
ThyssenKrupp Steel Services	Woodstock
ThyssenKrupp System Engineering Inc.	Madison
TruBlue Logistics	Alabaster
Tube Technology Systems Inc.	Auburn
Turner Construction	Huntsville
TÜV Rheinland Industrial Solutions Inc.	Hoover
WKW Erbsloeh North America Inc.	Pell City
Wuerz Precision Technologies, LLC	Auburn
ZF Chassis Systems LLC	Tuscaloosa

8.3

13 Southern Sayings The Rest Of America Won't Understand

[Christina Sterbenz](#) and [Rylan Miller](#)

Language discrepancies naturally arise in different geographic regions, like the [raging “pop” vs. “soda” debate](#). But the South undoubtedly takes the cake. Conversations south of the Mason-Dixon line will befuddle anyone not born there. We chose 15 of the most ridiculous Southern sayings — and tried to explain them.

1. “We’re living in high cotton.”

Cotton has long been a key crop to the South’s economy, so every harvest farmers pray for tall bushes loaded with white fluffy balls in their fields. Tall cotton bushes are easier to pick and yield higher returns. If you’re living “in high cotton,” it means you’re feeling particularly successful or wealthy.

2. “She was madder than a wet hen.”

Hens sometimes enter a phase of “[broodiness](#)” — they’ll stop at nothing to incubate their eggs and get agitated when farmers try to collect them. Farmers used to dunk hens in cold water to “break” their broodiness.

You don’t want to be around a hormonal hen after she’s had an ice bath.

3. “He could eat corn through a picket fence.”

This describes someone with an unfortunate set of buck teeth. They tend to stick up and outward, like a horse’s teeth. Imagine a [horse eating a carrot](#), and you’ll get the picture.

4. “You can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.”

A pig’s ear may look soft, pink, and shiny, but you’re not fooling anyone by calling it your new Marc Jacobs bag. A Southerner might say this about her redneck cousin who likes to decorate his house with deer antlers.

5. “You look rode hard and put up wet.”

No, this isn’t Southern sexual innuendo. The phrase refers to a key step in horse grooming — when a horse runs fast, it works up a sweat, especially under the saddle. A good rider knows to walk the horse around so it can dry off before going back to the stable. A horse will look sick and tired if you forget this step, much like a person who misses sleep or drinks too much.

6. “He’s as drunk as Cooter Brown.”

[Cooter Brown](#) is an infamous character in Southern lore. Legend tells that he lived on the Mason-Dixon line — the border between the North and South — during the Civil War. To avoid the draft on either side, Cooter decided to stay drunk throughout the entire war, making him ineligible for battle.

Inebriated Southerners have measured their drunkenness by him ever since.

7. “She’s as happy as a dead pig in the sunshine.”

When a pig dies, presumably in a sty outside, the sun dries out its skin. This effect pulls the pig’s lips back to reveal a toothy “grin,” making it look happy even though it’s dead. This phrase describes a person who’s blissfully ignorant of reality.

8. “She’s got more nerve than Carter’s got Liver Pills.”

[Carters Products](#) started as a pill-peddling company in the latter part of the 19th century. Specifically, Carters repped its “Little Liver Pills” so hard a Southern saying spawned from the omnipresent advertisements.

Alas, the Federal Trade Commission forced the drug-group to drop the “liver” portion of the ad, claiming it was deceptive. Carter’s “Little Liver Pills” became Carter’s “Little Pills” in 1951, but the South doesn’t really pay attention to history. The phrase stuck.

9. “I’m finer than frog hair split four ways.”

Southerners mostly use this phrase to answer, “How are you?” Even those below the Mason-Dixon know frogs don’t have hair, and the irony means to highlight just how dandy you feel. The phrase reportedly originated in [C. Davis’ “Diary of 1865.”](#)

10. “He thinks the sun comes up just to hear him crow.”

On farms (not just in the South) roosters usually crow when the sun rises. Their vociferous habit wakes up the house, signaling time to work.

An extremely cocky rooster might think the sun rises simply because he crows. Similarly, an extremely cocky man might think the same when he speaks — and also that everyone should listen to him.

11. “That’s about as useful as tits on a bull.”

Only female dairy cows produce milk. Male cows are called bulls. And even if you could “milk anything with nipples,” bulls tend to be rather ornery. Good luck with that.

12. “That thing is all catawampus.”

[Catawampus](#) adj: askew, awry, cater-cornered.

Lexicographers don’t really know how it evolved, though. They speculate it’s a colloquial perversion of “cater-corner.” Variations include: catawampous, cattywampus, catty wonkus. The South isn’t really big on details.

13. “He’s got enough money to burn a wet mule.”

In 1929, then-Governor of Louisiana [Huey Long](#), nicknamed “The Kingfish,” tried to enact a five-cent tax on each barrel of refined oil to fund welfare programs. Naturally, Standard Oil threw a hissy fit and tried to impeach him on some fairly erroneous charges (including [attending a drunken party with a stripper](#)).

But Long, a good ole’ boy, fought back. He reportedly said the company had offered legislators as much as \$25,000 for their votes to kick him out of office — what he called “enough money to burn a wet mule.” We Northerners may not know what that means, but at least we know where it comes from.

Bonus: Bless Your Heart

Almost everyone knows Southern women drop this phrase constantly. But it might not mean what you think it means.

In reality, the phrase has little to do with religion and more to do with a passive-aggressive way to call you an idiot. Depending on your inflection, saying “bless your heart” can sting worse than any insult.

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/southern-sayings-2013-10#ixzz3CNSKvM5O>

Southern English Dictionary

This basic vocabulary guide to our language down here is offered as a gesture of our hospitality to visiting Northerners who truly want to be able to understand what it is that we're saying.

Ah - The pronoun "I." i.e., "Ah done did that."

Ah'd - Contraction of I would. i.e., "Ah'd ruther be out huntin'."

Ah'll - Contraction of I will. i.e., "Think Ah'll mosey on down to the lake fer sum fishin."

buggy - A shopping cart.

daid - Dead. i.e., "They had to bury Billy Bob's dog 'cause he wuz daid."

fat - A physical confrontation usually involving fists, but not always. i.e., "You youngins' best stop fatin' or I'm gonna whup your lil asses."

fer - For.

git - Get.

j'yoo - Did you? (Begins a question), i.e., "J'yoo go huntin' in Butcher Holler yesterday?"

mayrd - Married. i.e., "I heard that Bubba and Mary Jo got mayrd last week."

nanner puddin' - Bannana pudding.

Nawlins - Largest city in Louisiana. Known for it's jazz music and Mardi Gra Festival.

ruther - Rather.

snipe hunt - A practical joke that Southerners sometimes play on dumb Northerners.

sum - Some. i.e., "Want sum of my chewin' tabakki?"

tabakki - Tobacco.

thang - Thing.

thar - There.

ustacould - Used to be able to, i.e., "Bubba ustacould sing til' he got that frog in his throat."

whar - Where.

wuz - Was. i.e., "I wuz goin' to work today, but I think I'll lay out and go do sum fishin.'"

whup - To beat up. i.e., "Ifn's you knock my accent one more time, I'm gonna whup yore ass."

Also, it can be used in the context of making something: i.e., "I'm a gitten hungry, think ahl whup up sumthin' to eat.

yawl - Contraction for you all. Sometimes written as y'all.

yonder - Afar. At a great distance. i.e., "Hey look over yonder! Bubba's a fixin' to drive his four-wheeler through that bog.

Southern Language Usage Guide

This part of the Southern Language guide has been prepared to provide non-Southern people a guide to the peculiar way we Southrons paraphrase and colloquialise thangs down here.

The Proper Use of "Bless His/Her Heart" and "Swanee" (Original author unknown)

Someone once noted that a Southerner can get away with the most awful kind of insult just as long as it's prefaced with the words, "Bless her heart" or "Bless his heart." As in, "Bless his heart, if they put his brain on the head of a pin, it'd roll around like a BB on a six lane highway." Or, "Bless her heart, she's so bucktoothed, she could eat an apple through a picket fence."

There are also the sneakier ones that I remember from tongue clucking types of my childhood: "You know, it's amazing that even though she had that baby 7 months after they got married, bless her heart, it weighed 10 pounds!"

As long as the heart is sufficiently blessed, the insult can't be all that bad, at least that's what my Great Aunt Tiny (bless her heart, she was anything but tiny) used to say. I was thinking about this the other day when a friend was telling me about her new Northern friend who was upset because her toddler is just beginning to talk and he has a Southern accent. My friend, who is very kind and, bless her heart, cannot do a thing about those thighs of hers, was justifiably miffed about this. After all, this woman had CHOSEN to move to the South a couple of years ago. "Can you believe it?" said my friend. "A child of mine is going to be taaaalllllkkkin liiiike thiiiiissss."

Now, don't get me wrong. Some of my dearest friends are from the North, bless their hearts. I welcome their perspective, their friendships and their recipes for authentic Northern Italian food. I've even gotten past their endless complaints that you can't find good bagels down here.

The ones who really gore my ox are the native Southerners who have begun to act almost embarrassed about their speech. It's as if they want to bury it in the "Hee Haw" cornfield. We've already lost too much.

I was raised to swanee, not swear, but you hardly ever hear anyone say that anymore, I swanee you don't. And I've caught myself thinking twice before saying something is "right much"; "right close" or "right good" because non-natives think this is right funny indeed. I have a friend from Bawston who thinks it's hilarious when I say I've got to "carry" my daughter to the doctor or "cut off" the light. She also gets a giggle every time I am fixin to do somethin'. My personal favorite was uttered by my aunt who said, "Bless her heart, she can't help being ugly, but she could've stayed home."

To those of you who're still a little embarrassed by your Southernness: take two tent revivals and a dose of redeye gravy and call me in the morning. Bless your heart!

And to those of you who are still having a hard time understanding all this Southern stuff, bless your hearts, I hear they are fixin to have classes on Southernese as a second language!

Bye Bye Y'all!
Bless your hearts.