



**Arriving in Houston:
A Special Introductory Document by the
Office of Graduate Studies and Trainee Affairs (OGSTA)**

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About Houston

We are delighted that you are considering Houston. Below you will find just some of the local information you will need to get settled in our city.

At 8,778 square miles, the Greater Houston Area covers more ground than any other major city in America. In fact, Houston is as large as the entire countries of Israel and El Salvador. That's a lot of space filled with a vast number of educational, business, cultural, and recreational opportunities. Houston is America's fourth largest city. Also containing over 80 foreign consulates, it is the third largest consular corps in the nation. A closer look reveals more.

The natural beauty of Houston is enhanced by its proximity to several waterways. Called the Bayou City, Houston is home to more than ten winding waterways that not only irrigate the lush landscape, but serve as green spaces for fitness and nature enthusiasts. Several lakes and bays also provide pleasant scenes of fun in the sun as well as a feast for the eyes.

Beyond beauty, it is the business opportunities provided by Houston's waterways that are the primary reasons for the city's existence. The Port of Houston still thrives today, thanks to the dredging of Buffalo Bayou to form the famous Houston Ship Channel, connecting the city with the Gulf of Mexico. The port area is just one of the many business districts that have branched out from the inner city. Other areas such as the Uptown/Galleria area, Greenway Plaza, Interstate-10's Energy Corridor and the Texas Medical Center are booming with economic development and services for residents. Public transportation and Houston's excellent freeway system connect Houston's 4 million-plus people to a revitalized and thriving downtown business and entertainment district.

Houston's strong economy has brought with it a diverse population, which has worked to enhance high standards of excellence in two critical areas — education and worship. The Houston area consistently leads all of Texas in the number of exemplary schools, and because of our cultural diversity, the Houston Independent School District — just one of the many school districts in the area — serves students who speak dozens of languages.

The international city is also home to forty-live religions, from African Methodist to Zoroastrian. For all the far-reaching influences brought together in Houston, neighbors still share a common goal — the quality of life found in close-knit communities located within one metropolitan melting pot.



Weather and Your Clothing

Summers in Houston are generally hot and humid. Winters are mild. A couple of thick sweaters, a coat and a pair of gloves should be ample for the winter months. Light cotton casual wear is recommended for most months. You also will need to prepare for rainy weather. For more information on the climate, [visit the Weather Channel website](#).

Links for Local News and Weather

- [Houston Public Media](#)
- [KTRK-13 ABC News](#)
- [KHOU 11 News \(CBS\)](#)
- [KPRC 2 News \(NBC\)](#)
- [Fox 26 News Houston](#)
- [Houston Chronicle \(Local Newspaper\)](#)

Helpful Local Websites

There are also many helpful websites like:

- [The Houston, TX Official Website](#)
- [Visitor Information for Houston](#)
- [Things To Do In Houston](#)
- [Here is Houston](#)
- [Houston Metro](#) (Mass Transit Service)
- [Houston Kids Out and About](#) (For Kids Activities)
- [The Texas Medical Center](#)
- [Learn more about so many aspects of American Life](#)

Traveling To and Through Houston

If you arrive at either Houston airport (Bush Intercontinental Airport or Hobby) you can use the [Super Shuttle](#), *Phone: (800) 258-3826*, for the trip from the airport to the city of Houston. This will cost about \$27.00. Ticket desks are located at the south side baggage claim of each terminal. You should logon and make your arrangements prior to your arrival, so a shuttle bus will be waiting for you upon your arrival. Should you arrive late, you may wish to take a taxi to your destination if you have a room reserved, or you may stay overnight at a hotel in the airport area. It is not advisable to arrive in Houston late at night without an arranged place to stay. Some hotels in the airport vicinity provide free transportation from the airport to the hotel—visit the **City of Houston Convention Bureau information**. You may take a taxi to your hotel in Houston for \$40-\$50. The drive into downtown Houston from Intercontinental Airport takes about 45 minutes.

These are some Houston taxi companies you might wish to call:

- [Yellow Cab](#), *Phone: (713) 236-1111*
- Liberty Cab Company, *Phone: (713) 695-6700*
- Fiesta Cab Company, *Phone: (713) 225-2666*
- SuperShuttle, *Phone: 1 800 Blue Van (258-3826)*
- LoneStar Cab *Phone: (713) 444-4444*

A taxi from Hobby Airport to the Medical Center area costs approximately \$35 (flat rate). Should you desire to spend the night in the Hobby Airport vicinity, two hotels nearby are Red Roof Inn and Howard Johnson Hotel. Call the hotel from the airport and ask for the hotel shuttle bus.

Taxi fare (cost) is registered on a meter, and fares are fixed according to distance traveled. An additional charge may apply for heavy luggage such as trunks. There is no charge for a regular suitcase. Taxi drivers are customarily tipped about 15% of the fare.

Hotels, Hostels & Dormitories

Information on area hotels is also available at various Houston visitor web sites. Write or call ahead to make reservations. All prices are subject to change. 17% taxes are added to all hotel rates. Most hotels require paid reservations in advance or a major credit card account number. Unpaid reservations are usually lost after 6:00 p.m., unless the hotel is notified in advance of your late arrival plans.

Most hotels have free swimming pools and a 24-hour coffee shop or restaurant. Some have free shuttle bus services. Some allow children to stay at no extra charge. The term “double” usually means two double beds. A “single” usually costs less for a couple. The cost of a “single” and a charge for an extra person may be less than that for the “double.”

Near Houston Bush Intercontinental Airport:

Holiday Inn - Airport - 1522 JFK Boulevard, Houston, TX 77032. Tel.: 281-449-2311 or Toll Free number 1-800-465-4329. Single or double rooms weekday \$149 - 164/night; weekend \$75 - 89/night, plus tax. Complimentary shuttle to airport (4:30AM-Midnight) and Deer Park Mall.

Doubletree Hotel Intercontinental - 15747 JFK Blvd., Houston, TX 77032. Tel: 281-848-4000. Room prices range from \$169 to \$199/night, plus tax.

Near Hobby Airport:

Econo Lodge Hobby Airport - 8381 Broadway Street, Houston, TX 77061. Tel: 713-645-1333. The average price of a room is \$69/night, plus tax. Free continental breakfast.

Days Inn Hobby Airport - 1505 College Ave., Houston, TX 77587. Tel: 713-946-5900. Room prices range from \$45.90 to \$64/night, plus tax.

Hilton Hobby Airport - 8181 Airport Blvd., Houston, TX 77061. Tel: 713-645-3000. Rooms cost between \$119 and \$139/night, plus tax.

Youth Hostel/Dormitory available at these locations:

*(**Note: Hostels in the US may not be comparable to those in Europe)*

Houston International Hostel - 5302 Crawford at Oakdale, Houston, TX 77004. Tel.: 713-523-1009. Registration is between 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. or 5:00 – 11:00 p.m., or by arrangement. Call only during office hours. Reservations are available, but not required. It is located at a reasonable walking distance to Rice.

International House Dormitory - 2719 Capitol Ave, Houston, TX 77003. Tel.: 713-237-8443. Space is limited. Call in advance. However, safety is a concern in downtown Houston, especially in the evening.

Housing Information

Apartments and rooms for rent far from the medical center may be less expensive than those nearby. Public transportation may be a problem with the more distant locations, however. If you do not own a car, you should find out about bus routes before selecting a place to live. For more information on public transportation, please visit [Metro Houston's website here](#).

Rates vary according to location, neighborhood, amenities provided, age, and condition of the complex. The average one bedroom unfurnished (without furniture, but with appliances) apartment near campus costs approximately \$750-\$1650 a month. Renting with furniture adds approximately \$300 more per month. An unfurnished two-bedroom apartment has an average cost of approximately \$950-\$1500. Utilities (gas, electricity and telephone) are usually charged separately and add approximately \$175 to your monthly costs. Students often prefer to share an apartment in order to save money. Occasionally, rooms in homes are available at a lower cost.

The standard apartment lease is for a period of six or twelve months. A small number of apartments also provide short-term leases, either furnished or unfurnished. You will be expected to pay a deposit of approximately \$500 when you sign a lease on an apartment in addition to paying the first and last month's rent in advance. If you break your lease or damage the apartment, you will lose your deposit. Be very careful before signing anything. Get advice from "old" students and from your academic department. Be sure to get as much information as you can before you sign in a contract. Read your lease carefully!

In the U.S., furnished apartments do not include bed linens, towels, silverware, dishes, or kitchen utensils (pots and pans). Basic items will cost you \$350 or more to purchase. Be sure to include “garage sales” and discount stores in your search in order to save money on many household items.

Additional Resources

KAREN REICHEK - REALTOR

Martha Turner/Sotheby's International Realty

Email: kreichkek@marthaturner.com

Marthaturner.com

Mobile: 713-826-6527

Other Phone: 713-558-3326

- Free service, highly recommended, has helped many international scholars

- [Nino Properties](#)
- [UMoveFree Site](#)
- [Houston Apartments](#)
- [Apartments.com](#)
- [Adobo Apartment Locator](#)
- [Apartmentlist.com](#)
- [ApartmentGuide.com](#)
- [A1 Apartment Locators](#)
- [Apartment Wiz](#)
- [Apartment Gurus](#)

Common Abbreviations & Descriptive Terms

The following abbreviations and descriptive terms are commonly used in “For Rent” and “For Sale” ads in newspapers and magazines:

AC/H = Air-conditioning and Heat

BR or BDR = Bedroom

BA or BTH = Bathroom

½ BA or BTH = Bathroom with no shower or bathtub.

Util. = Utilities include gas, electric and water.

TH = Townhouse.

W/D = Washer/dryer; W/D conn. = Washer/Dryer connections (washer and dryer can be used in the apartment).

Dep. = Deposit. (This is an extra months’ rent or less. This is a security deposit to make sure you pay for any damage done while you live in the apartment. If you leave the apartment the way you find it, after your lease is finished, you should be refunded the money.)

First/Last = First and/or Last months’ rent is required as part of the deposit.

“3/2/2” = 3 bedroom, 2 bathrooms, 2 car garage. In a house or apartment ad, when you see two or three numbers separated by slashes, the first number always indicates the number of bedrooms; the second number is the number of bathrooms; and the third number (if there is one) indicates how many cars will fit into the garage.

Sq. ft. = Square Feet. The size of apartments and houses is usually given in square feet. One (1) square foot equals 0.09 square meters; 1 square meter equals 10.76 square feet. There are several websites available that will convert square feet to square meters, such as this [metric-to-customary measurement converter](#).

[The local classifieds can be found here](#). The Sunday edition has the most listings.

[Apartment Guide](#). Also available as a free book at the entrance of convenience and grocery stores

[Homestore.com](#)

[Move Apartment Locations](#)

Here is Houston; The Guide to Living in Houston – This “Newcomer and Relocation Journal” is published by the Greater Houston Partnership. It includes information on all aspects of life in Houston, including moving to Houston, renting an apartment, buying a house, neighborhoods, retail, dining, education, health care, entertainment, etc. It can be purchased for \$3.00 from:

The Greater Houston Partnership
1200 Smith, Suite 700, Houston TX, 77002-4400,
Phone: 713-844-3600
Fax: 713-844-0200
Web: <https://www.houston.org>

Additionally, we have a Facebook resource that aids in people relocating to Houston to find roommates (as well as overall updates on our Trainee Association). To access the resources, [please click here](#).

Utilities

FOR ELECTRICITY: RELIANT ENERGY H L&P – Tel.: 713-207-7777. Deposits range from \$80-\$400 and up, depending on size of apartment. Deposits can be waived if co-signer can be found who will be responsible for amount of deposit if you do not pay the final bill. You may also get the deposit waived if you can show a ‘letter of credit’ from your previous U.S. utility service with which you did business for at least one year. The letter of credit must show no more than 2 late payments. Finally, there is an \$8.00 service fee, which will be charged on your first bill. HL&P requires at least 24 hours notice before it can turn on your electricity. You can [find their website here](#).

FOR GAS: ENTEX – Tel.: 1-800-752-8036. A deposit of between \$45 - \$120 (could be more expensive) is paid to the service technician, who turns on the gas. (The charge is based on average bill for the residence.) There is a \$7.81 activation charge on the first bill. You can [find CenterPoint’s website here](#).

TELEPHONE/INTERNET: AT&T– visit (<https://www.att.com/>) or Comcast (<http://xfinity.comcast.net>). If telephone outlets are available in the house or apartment, the basic installment fee is \$55.00-\$75.00. There are additional charges for special services such as call waiting, or for faster connection speeds. Discounted rates are available if you have an account for both telephone and internet. Please check with your apartment complex to see if there are any restrictions on the telephone or internet provider you may have. Applicants for phone service and/or internet must fill out a credit application, listing the name of a sponsoring individual and 2 personal references with their phone numbers. On the application you may be asked to give a U.S. Social Security number and a Texas ID or Driver’s License number. If you don’t have a Social Security number, you may be able to provide your passport ID number.

CELL PHONES: All cell phone companies operate in the Houston area, you might try any of the following:

- [T-Mobile](#)
- [Verizon Wireless](#)
- [AT&T Wireless](#)
- [Cricket Wireless](#)
- [Sprint Wireless](#)

Shopping and Amenities

Sales Tax

A sales tax is added to the cost of some purchases in some states and cities. Income generated from sales taxes is used to support various state and city-run programs, such as highway maintenance, public education, and law enforcement. So the final price of an item is not the ticketed price, but that price plus the relevant sales tax.

Food

There are three general kinds of food stores: "supermarkets" "neighborhood stores," and "convenience stores." A supermarket is a large store, which sells groceries, paper goods, kitchen supplies, and health and beauty aids. Neighborhood stores and convenience stores are smaller, have far fewer non-food items, usually have longer hours of business, and charge some-what higher prices. Convenience stores usually sell gasoline and some automobile supplies as well as a limited range of foods. Most people do nearly all their food shopping at the supermarket most convenient for them, and go to neighborhood stores or convenience stores only to buy one or two items needed quickly.

Foods from your country may not be available in the supermarket, but they may be available from a specialty food store. Ask other visitors here from your country where they buy such foods. A partial listing of restaurants and supermarkets is below:

Local Eateries: Houston Inner Loop

American

Benjy's – 2424 Dunstan Rd., Houston, TX 77005
Tiny's No. 5 – 3636 Rice Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
The Union Kitchen – 4057 Bellaire Blvd. Houston, TX 77025
Black Walnut Café – 5510 Morningside Dr. Houston, TX 77005
Elevation Burger – 3819 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77098
Pappadeaux Seafood Co. – 2525 S. Loop W. Fwy., Houston, TX 77054
Smash Burger– 7811 Main St. Suite 400, Houston, TX 77025
59 Diner– 3801 Farnham St, Houston, TX 77098

Coffee/Cafés

Croissant Brioche French Bakery & Café – 2435 Rice Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
Starbucks – 2520 University Blvd. Houston, TX 77005

French

La Madeleine – 6205 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77005
Le Peep – 6128 Village Pkwy. Houston, TX 77005
Sweet Paris – 2420 Rice Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
The French Corner – 1104 Old Spanish Trail Houston, TX 77054
Café Rabelais – 2442 Times Blvd. Houston, TX 77005

Indian

Bombay Brasserie – 2414 University Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
Shiva India Restaurant – 2514 Times Blvd. Houston, TX 77005

Italian

Candelari's – 2617 W Holcombe Blvd. Houston, TX 77020
Prego Italian Cuisine – 2520 Amherst St. Houston, TX 77005
Fellini Caffè – 5211 Kelvin Dr, Houston, TX 77005
D'Amico's – 5510 Morningside Dr. #140 Houston, TX 77005
Fred's Italian Corner – 2278 W. Holcombe Blvd. Houston, TX 77030
Star Pizza-2111 Norfolk St. Houston, TX 77098

Mexican

Goode Company Taqueria – 4902 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77098
Molina's Cantina – 3801 Bellaire Blvd. Houston, TX 77025
Torchy's Tacos – 2400 Times Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
Marco's Mexican Restaurant-8216 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77054
Pappasito's-2515 S. Loop W. Fwy. Houston, TX 77054

Sweets

The Chocolate Bar – 2521 University Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
Cloud 10 Creamery – 5216 Morningside Dr. Houston, TX 77005
Dessert Gallery – 3600 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77098
Tiff's Treats-1333 Old Spanish Trail Houston, TX 77054

Sushi

Kubo's Sushi Bar & Grill – 2414 University Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
Kata Robata – 3600 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77098

Tea Houses

British Isles – 2366 Rice Blvd. Houston, TX 77005
Rosinka Wine and Tea House – 2509 Rice Blvd. Houston, TX 77005

Local Supermarkets: Houston Inner Loop

Super Target – 8500 S. Main St. Houston, TX 77025
Kroger Grocery – 7747 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77030
H-E-B – 5225A Buffalo Speedway Houston, TX 77005
H-E-B – 6055 South Fwy. Houston, TX 77004
Randall's – 3131 W. Holcombe Blvd. Houston, TX 77025
Fiesta Mart – 8130 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77054
Whole Foods – 4004 Bellaire Blvd. Houston, TX 77025
Whole Foods – 2955 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77098
Fresh Foods – 2617 W. Holcombe Blvd. Houston, TX 77025
H-E-B Central Market – 3815 Westheimer Rd. Houston, TX 77027
Wal-Mart 9555 S. Post Oak Rd. Houston, TX 77096

Local Drug Stores: Houston Inner Loop

CVS Pharmacy – 2266 W. Holcombe Blvd. (Holcombe Blvd. & Greenbriar Dr.) Houston, TX 77030
CVS Pharmacy – 7900 S. Main St. (Main St. & Kirby Dr.) Houston, TX 77030
CVS Pharmacy – 6011 Kirby Dr. Houston, TX 77005
CVS Pharmacy – 4700 Kirby Dr. (Kirby Dr. & U.S. Highway 59) Houston, TX 77098
Walgreens Pharmacy – 5202 Almeda Rd. Houston, TX 77004
Walgreens Pharmacy – 2605 W. Holcombe Blvd. (Holcombe Blvd. & Kirby Dr.) Houston, TX 77025
Walgreens Pharmacy – Scurlock Tower, 6560 Fannin St #260 Houston, TX 77030

Furniture

Buying furniture for a new apartment can be a large undertaking, so this section includes extensive information on places to look for less expensive furniture. Furniture stores, department stores, and second-hand stores all sell furniture. In addition, used furniture is often available from private individuals who have "garage sales" at their homes or who advertise the items they wish to sell in the classified section of the newspaper.

Discount Furniture

Discount furniture is new furniture that is sold at a reduced price because it was damaged in shipping, or because it represents the remnants of a style or model of furniture that is no longer being produced, or for some other similar reason. It is usually higher priced and better quality than used furniture. Some local furniture dealers may stock discount furniture. Furniture that is new but not yet painted (unfinished) can be purchased in many discount stores.

Rental Furniture

Rental furniture is available, but requires a monthly payment and may be more expensive than buying if you are here for 6 months or more. For example, a one-bedroom package may cost \$99 plus tax and insurance totaling \$117 per month. Look in the phone book Yellow Pages for listings of many furniture rental and lease companies. The advantage is they will deliver and come and get it when you are finished with it

Banking & Financial Resources

You are free to open a banking account at any bank of your choosing. In deciding on a bank, keep visit bank websites and/or call different banks to see which bank offers the best plans and has convenient locations:

Websites for some Houston banks:

- **Bank of America**
- **Chase**
- **Amegy Bank**
- **Sterling Bank**
- **Wells Fargo**

Information on creating a budget, how to write checks, and other general financial tips [can be found here](#).

Savings Accounts

Money that you want to save can be kept in a savings account where it will earn a modest interest. Many banks do require that a minimum balance be kept. If the balance falls below the minimum, then the bank will charge you a fine or penalty. If a customer has a savings account and a checking account in the same bank, then the customer can transfer money from one account to another. Usually, a customer will keep a larger amount in their savings and withdraw it when they really need it. It is less for day-to-day expenses and more for emergencies. Banks will offer various types of savings accounts. A brochure and customer service representative should be able to help you decided which one is best for your needs.

Checking Accounts

People open checking accounts in order to pay for their everyday expenses in a quick and easy way. It is usually both convenient and safe. People usually mail checks to pay expenses such as rent, telephone and utilities. Like savings accounts, banks offer different types of accounts based on different needs of the customer, particularly how many checks will be written each month and what the minimum monthly balance will be. Paying by check is particularly helpful because it helps keep a record of payments you have made. When opening an account, use your passport as identification and use your name as it appears on the passport to avoid confusion.

Money Orders

While you are waiting to open a checking account, or if you have a problem opening a checking account, you can obtain a money order by going to the customer service counter of the post office or grocery store for a money order. You give them cash and in turn they give you a special check for the specific amount you requested. There are two copies; the top official check and the bottom copy/receipt. You should fill out the payee and then keep the copy. The post office or

grocery store will charge you a fee for doing this service. It is usually between 50 cents and 2.00 dollars. This is both safe and easy.

ATM Cards / Debit Cards

The automatic teller machine is a computerized machine through which bank customers can make deposits or withdrawals at any time of the day or night. To operate an ATM, the customer needs a card that is issued by the bank. You must sign the back of the card. Some banks issue the card instantaneously. Other banks will mail the card to you. You will usually receive it a week or two after opening your account. You will receive a PIN (Personal Identification Number) in the mail as well, though not in the same envelope as the ATM (or Debit) card. There are ATM machines outside of banks, in grocery stores and on campus. If you use ATM machines from places other than your own bank's machines, you could be charge a fee. CAUTION: USING ATM MACHINES AT NIGHT, PARTICULARLY WHEN THEY ARE OUTSIDE CAN BE DANGEROUS. IF YOU MUST GET MONEY, GO TO AN ATM LOCATED IN A MALL OR GROCERY STORE. HAVE A LOOK BEHIND YOU BEFORE YOU START YOUR TRANSACTION.

Debit cards are similar but can be used to pay for transactions at most stores, restaurants, and gas stations. They are obtained from the bank where you have your account. They debit money from your checking or savings account. You can also use a debit card to get cash from an ATM or from a store once you have made a purchase. Sometimes the debit card is referred to as a check card because it allows you to do the same thing as writing a check but with the convenience of electronic transactions. Some banks offer a combination debit and credit card. This means that once your checking account funds have been used, it becomes a credit card that loans you the money.

Check your credit history and bank records frequently. Look for signs of inaccurate or suspicious activity.

How to Write a Check

Here are the steps to follow when writing a check:

1. Write the date on which you are "Issuing" or writing the check.
2. Write the name of the person or business to whom you are making the payment (use the WHOLE LINE or draw a line after the writing so nobody else can alter or add to it.)
3. Write the dollar amount in numerals (i.e. \$20.53) and put the first number right after the dollar sign. Do not leave room for someone else to add a number to it (e.g. \$420.53).
4. Begin writing on the far left and fill in the entire line with the name of the store or person to whom the check is going to be paid.
5. On the next line, write out the dollar amount (Twenty Dollars and 53/100). Follow the same guidelines as stated above, to avoid people altering your check.
6. Sign your name as it is printed on the check.
7. Note the purpose of the check in the lower left hand corner. If you have an account number for a bill you may put the number here, or use it to remind yourself later what the payment was for (i.e.groceries).

For more tips and helps on writing a check, go to:

For more information on relocating to Houston, go to: <http://www.heritagetexas.com/relocation/>

Employment Taxes

Employment taxes are a fundamental part of working in Houston. There are many terms and nuances associated with keeping up with and filing income taxes annually. While Houston Methodist **does not offer** any tax advice, any tax preparation services, nor any recommendations for tax preparation, we have provided for you a resource of frequently asked questions, (and the answers to said questions) in regard to **income taxes as it pertains to Houston Methodist specifically** at the following (internal) link: http://www.tmh.tmc.edu/hr/hrwebsite/Payroll/Documents/FAQ_NRA.pdf.

Driver Licenses

The [Texas Department of Transportation](#) is the place to find all the necessary information on getting your Texas Driver License.

An individual can legally drive with a valid, unexpired driver license from another state or country for up to 90 days after moving to Texas.

NOTE: The individual **must apply** in person at any driver license office for a Texas driver license within those 90 days to continue driving legally. An unexpired driver license from another U.S. state, U.S. territory or a Canadian province must be surrendered to DPS when applying for a Texas driver license.

The [Texas Driver's Handbook](#) is available online or at any driver license office to help individuals qualify for a Texas driver license.

Individuals who hold a valid, unexpired driver license from another U.S. state or U.S. territory, or from Canada, France, South Korea or Germany (the countries Texas has license reciprocity agreements with), do not have to take the knowledge or driving tests.

Individuals who hold a valid, unexpired learner license from Canada, France, South Korea or Germany have to take the driving test but not the knowledge test.

Individuals who hold a driver license from any country other than the U.S., Canada, France, South Korea or Germany must take the knowledge and driving tests because Texas does not have reciprocity agreements with other countries.

Individuals applying for their first Texas driver license must:

- Gather documents that verify their **identity, Social Security Number**, U.S. citizenship or **lawful presence** status, and **Texas residency**.
- Complete the **application**. (Must be submitted in-person to a Driver License office.)
- Provide proof of Texas vehicle registration and liability insurance for all vehicles registered in the individual's name.
- Apply in person at any **driver license office** and bring the required documents and **fees**.
- Pass the knowledge and driving tests, unless exempt. (Read about **testing in other languages**.)

You can find the list of documents needed to apply for a Texas Driver License [here](#).