



RV TRIPGEN

The Complete Guide to
RV Travel in

Alabama

Speed limits, towing rules, NPS reservations, hurricane windows,
and everything else you need to know before you cross the state line.

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RV travel in Alabama

Alabama is an underrated Southern RV state. Gulf Coast beaches at Gulf Shores, the Civil Rights heritage trail through Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham, Civil War battlefields, and two national forests (Bankhead and Talladega) give you a coherent two-week loop without ever crossing the same road twice. Roads are well-paved and generally rig-friendly, fuel is cheap, and state parks operate full-hookup sites at reasonable rates. The catch is the climate: summer humidity is brutal, afternoon thunderstorms are near-daily June through August, and the state sits firmly in the southern reach of Tornado Alley with a primary spring season (Mar-May) and a secondary autumn season (Nov). Hurricane risk on the Gulf shoulder runs June through November.

Alabama by the numbers

Boondocking + dispersed sites	229
Established campgrounds	126
Dump stations	21
Propane refills	18
Potable water fill-ups	44
Laundromats	13
RV showers	14
Verified-bad spots (overnight prohibited)	13

Source: iOverlander community database (65% of Alabama spots verified in the last 24 months).

Driving rules

Interstate (cars)	70 mph
Interstate (trucks + towing)	70 mph
US/State highway (cars)	65 mph
US/State highway (towing)	55-65 mph (posted)
Built-up areas	25-35 mph (posted)
Drive on	Right
RV passenger seatbelts	Required for all front-seat occupants
Cell phone use while driving	Texting banned; hands-free recommended; full ban for novice drivers

Highways

RV-friendly corridors

Highway	Note
I-10	Gulf Coast corridor through Mobile. Big rigs, easy. Watch the Wallace Tunnel under the Mobile River -- 14 ft 5 in clearance, fine for standard RVs but no LPG-fueled vehicles permitted; use I-65 / Cochrane-Africatown bridge to bypass.
I-65	Mobile to Huntsville and north into Tennessee. Main north-south spine. Easy grades, plenty of fuel.
I-20	Birmingham across to Atlanta. Standard interstate, big rigs welcome.
I-59	Birmingham to Chattanooga via Gadsden. Climbs into the southern Appalachians; long grades but nothing dramatic.
I-85	Montgomery to the Georgia line. Easy.
US-72	Northern Alabama through Huntsville and the Shoals. Mostly four-lane divided. Good RV route.
US-43	Mobile to Tuscaloosa. Two-lane in stretches but well-paved.

RV-restricted segments

Segment	Restriction
Wallace Tunnel (I-10 under Mobile River)	14 ft 5 in clearance and -- critically -- no propane-powered or LPG-fueled vehicles permitted, including motorhomes running propane appliances with valves open. Many RVers detour via US-90 Bankhead Tunnel or I-65.
AL-33 / Bankhead NF back roads	Several forest-service spurs have weight-limited bridges and tight clearance under hardwood canopy. Stick to FS 208 and FS 224 in big rigs.
Cheaha State Park summit road (AL-281)	Steep grades, tight curves. Class C and trailers under 30 ft are fine; not for 40-ft motorhomes.
Coastal evacuation routes during hurricane warnings	I-65 northbound becomes contraflow during a mandatory evacuation. RVs are permitted but expect 12+ hour delays.

Mountain passes

Pass	Elevation	Note
Cheaha Mountain summit (AL-281)	2407 ft	Highest point in Alabama. Steep grades and tight curves; trailers under 30 ft only. Open year-round but icy in winter cold snaps.
Mount Cheaha approach (AL-49)	1800 ft	Standard two-lane climb. Fine for any rig.

National parks + monuments

National Park / Monument	Entry fee	Reservation note
Russell Cave NM	Free entry	No camping in the monument. Nearest RV camping at Goose Pond Colony (Scottsboro) or DeSoto State Park.
Little River Canyon NPRes	Free entry	No developed camping in the preserve. DeSoto State Park is adjacent and takes RVs to 50 ft.
Tuskegee Airmen NHS	Free entry	Day-use only. Nearest RV camping at Wind Creek State Park or Auburn KOA.
Tuskegee Institute NHS	Free entry	Day-use only. Same camping options as Tuskegee Airmen.
Horseshoe Bend NMP	Free entry	Day-use only. Wind Creek State Park 30 miles south takes big rigs with full hookups.
Selma to Montgomery NHT	Free (auto tour route)	Self-guided driving trail along US-80. No NPS camping; multiple state-park and commercial RV parks along the route.
Freedom Riders NM (Anniston)	Free entry	Day-use only. Nearest RV camping at Talladega NF (Coleman Lake / Pine Glen) or Cheaha State Park.
Birmingham Civil Rights NM	Free entry	Day-use only. Urban site; stay at Tannehill Ironworks State Park (30 miles west) for big rigs.
Natchez Trace Parkway (northern entry)	Free	Parkway runs from Nashville to Natchez; the AL portion (mileposts 308-341) passes through Colbert County. RV-friendly two-lane with no commercial services; tunnels and overpasses sized for standard rigs.

State parks

Alabama State Parks operate 21 parks, several with full-hookup RV sites: Gulf State Park (Gulf Shores, full hookups, beach access, reservable 11 months ahead), Wind Creek (Lake Martin, full hookups), Lake Guntersville, Joe Wheeler, DeSoto, Cheaha, Lakepoint, Oak Mountain (Birmingham), Frank Jackson. Reservable via alapark.com. Day-use \$4-6/vehicle, camping \$25-50/night for full hookups. Gulf State Park is the crown jewel and books up 11 months out for summer.

Boondocking + dispersed camping

BLM: No significant BLM land in Alabama. Public-land boondocking is effectively limited to national forests and a handful of WMAs (wildlife management areas) requiring a state hunting/fishing or WMA permit.

National Forest: William B. Bankhead NF (NW Alabama) and Talladega NF (split into the Talladega and Oakmulgee districts) both permit dispersed camping along forest roads with a 14-day stay limit. Bankhead's Sipsey Wilderness is hiker-only; the developed Brushy Lake and Corinth campgrounds take small RVs. Talladega's Coleman Lake and Pine Glen campgrounds take rigs to 40 ft. Tuskegee NF is small (11,000 acres) with limited dispersed options.

Stay limit: 14 days at any one location (federal rule, applies to BLM and NF dispersed).

Tribal lands

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians (federally recognised) operates land near Atmore in south Alabama, including Wind Creek Casino. Several state-recognised tribes (MOWA Choctaw, Cherokees of Southeast Alabama) hold smaller properties. Tribal land is sovereign; respect signage and avoid off-road exploration without permission.

Propane, dump stations, fuel

Propane: Plentiful in Birmingham, Mobile, Huntsville, Montgomery, and along all interstates. Tractor Supply, U-Haul, and most KOA / Good Sam parks fill on-site. Sparse in the Black Belt rural counties and along the western edge of the state -- fill before leaving I-65 or I-20 if heading to Bankhead NF or the Mississippi line.

Dump stations: Reasonably dense along I-10, I-65, and I-20. Most Alabama State Parks have free dump stations for registered guests; Flying J / Pilot truck stops have \$10-15 fee dumps. Gulf Shores area is well-served year-round. Bankhead and Talladega NF developed campgrounds have dumps but they close in winter (Nov-Mar) at higher elevations.

Fuel: Diesel and gas widely available along all interstates. Rural stretches in the Black Belt (US-80 west of Selma) and northern Bankhead NF area can run 30-40 miles between stations -- top up at the last interstate exit. Fuel prices typically among the lowest in the country; Mobile and Birmingham are reliably cheapest. Gulf Shores tourist-zone fuel runs 20-40 cents/gal higher in season.

Weather windows

Best months: March through May and October through early December. Daytime highs 65-85 F, nights cool, low humidity, fewer mosquitoes. Spring brings dogwoods and azaleas in bloom.

Avoid: July and August inland: 90-95 F with 80%+ humidity and near-daily afternoon thunderstorms. June through November carries hurricane risk on the Gulf Coast (Mobile / Gulf Shores / Dauphin Island). March through May is peak tornado season statewide; Alabama sits in the heart of Dixie Alley with violent overnight tornadoes a real possibility.

Climate caution

If a National Weather Service tornado watch upgrades to a warning while you're in your rig, get out and into a sturdy building or a low-lying ditch immediately. RVs offer zero tornado protection -- treat the warning as a get-out-now order, not a wait-and-see.

Emergency + road conditions

State patrol	Dial *HP (*47) from a cell phone, or 334-242-4128 for the Alabama State Troopers main line
Road conditions	https://algotraffic.com

How RV TripGen helps

We map your tornado-watch overnights

RV Tripgen flags any Alabama overnight stop during an active NWS tornado watch and surfaces nearby sturdy-shelter options (state-park bathhouses, fire halls) within driving distance.

Hurricane-evacuation route awareness

RV Tripgen knows the Gulf Coast contraflow plans for I-65 and US-31 and warns you if a planned overnight falls inside a mandatory-evacuation zone during an active named storm.