

MOVING TO HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

# The Rocket City Relocation Guide

*Arrive with a plan.*

A practical brief on neighborhoods, schools, commutes to Redstone Arsenal & Cummings Research Park, and what your housing budget really buys.

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# Welcome to the Valley

Congratulations on the move. Whether you're relocating for Redstone Arsenal, NASA, Cummings Research Park, the incoming U.S. Space Command, or a defense or tech employer, this guide is built to help you arrive with a plan. Most of my clients move here from out of state, so I've organized everything around the questions you're actually asking: where should we live, what's the commute, how are the schools, and what will our budget buy?

— *Christina Scarpelli, REALTOR®*

## The Rocket City, in brief

Huntsville pairs one of the nation's deepest concentrations of engineering and research talent with a cost of living that still leaves room to breathe — and it keeps growing as aerospace and defense work expands.

### THE ECONOMY

- ★ **Redstone Arsenal**  
The U.S. Army's sprawling installation — home to dozens of defense agencies and contractors.
- ★ **NASA Marshall Space Flight Center**  
Propulsion and launch-systems engineering at the heart of the space program.
- ★ **Cummings Research Park**  
One of the largest research and technology parks in the country — thousands of engineering and tech roles.
- ★ **U.S. Space Command**  
Its permanent headquarters is relocating to Redstone — roughly 1,400 jobs over the coming years (announced Sept 2025; first elements arrived in 2026).
- ★ **Major employers**  
Boeing, Blue Origin, and a deep bench of aerospace and defense firms.

**Room to breathe.** A cost of living below most tech hubs, strong schools, and mountains and rivers for the weekends — Monte Sano trails, the Tennessee River, and the U.S. Space & Rocket Center.

### BY THE NUMBERS

#### Why people stay

#### #1 → Top 10

Named the #1 Best Place to Live in the U.S. by U.S. News (2022) and a national top contender every year since.

#### ~9% below

Overall cost of living runs about 9% under the U.S. average.

#### ~\$300Ks

Metro median sale price sits in the low-\$300,000s (early 2026) — well below most tech hubs.

#### +1,400 jobs

U.S. Space Command HQ relocating to Redstone Arsenal over ~5 years.

#### #1 in AL

Alabama's largest city and one of the South's fastest-growing metros.

Figures as of early 2026 from public sources (U.S. News, Livability, Redfin, City of Huntsville). Market data changes — ask me for current numbers.

# Neighborhoods at a glance

Every area of the Valley has its own character. Here's a quick orientation — when we talk, I'll tailor a shortlist to your commute, schools, and budget.



**TOP PICK**

## Madison

Top-rated Madison City Schools (Bob Jones, James Clemens), newer homes, ~10–15 min to Research Park & Redstone's west gate. The #1 choice for many relocating families — expect a school-and-location premium.



**FOOTHILLS • GOLF**

## Hampton Cove / Owens Cross Roads

Golf-course living framed by the foothills — newer homes, quiet cul-de-sacs. About 15–25 min to the Arsenal's south side.



**ESTABLISHED**

## South Huntsville

Established neighborhoods close to Redstone's south gates — mature trees and convenient, everyday amenities.



**VALUE • NEW BUILD**

## Harvest

Affordable new construction northwest of the city — strong value with a manageable Research Park commute.



**LAND • SMALL TOWN**

## Meridianville

More home and land for the money just north along US-231 — newer subdivisions with a small-town feel.



**RIDGELINE**

## Monte Sano

Mountain living above the city — cooler air, state-park trails, and skyline views, minutes from downtown.



**HISTORIC • WALKABLE**

## Twickenham & Five Points

Historic, walkable districts near downtown — antebellum and Victorian homes in Twickenham; restored bungalows, cafés, and breweries in Five Points.



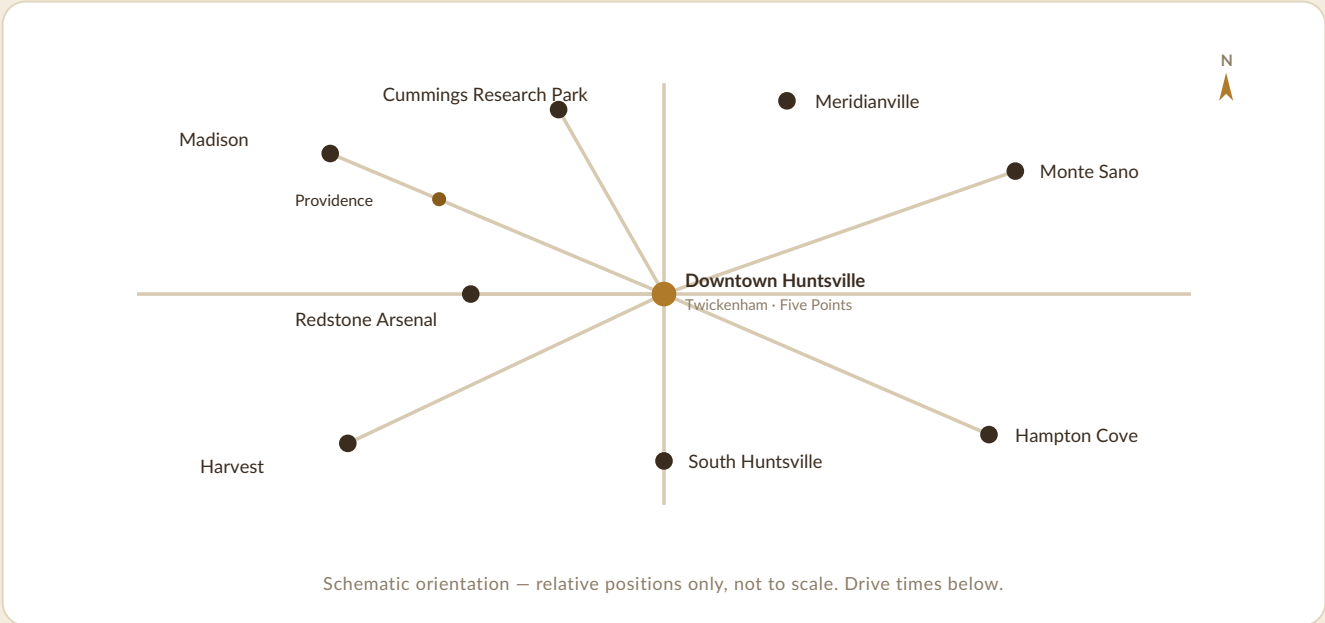
**NEW URBANIST**

## Providence

A walkable, new-urbanist village near Research Park — front porches, neighborhood parks, and a small town center.

Not sure where to start? Tell me your worksite (or gate), your timeline, and your must-haves, and I'll build a shortlist that fits — then refine it as we tour.

# Orientation & commute planner



## Approximate drive times

Typical, non-rush estimates – we'll refine them for your exact worksite or gate.

AREA	→ CUMMINGS RESEARCH PARK	→ REDSTONE (WEST GATE)
Madison	10–15 min	10–15 min
Providence	5–12 min	12–18 min
Harvest	15–22 min	18–25 min
South Huntsville	15–22 min	12–20 min
Hampton Cove	20–30 min	15–25 min
Meridianville	20–30 min	22–30 min
Monte Sano	18–25 min	18–28 min

# Schools, budget & military buyers

## Schools snapshot

- Madison City Schools**  
Consistently rank near the top in Alabama — a major draw for relocating families.
- Huntsville City Schools**  
Larger and varies by zone, with strong magnet and neighborhood options — always confirm the zone by the specific address.
- Madison County Schools**  
Serve the outlying areas like Harvest and Meridianville.

## Budget & cost of living

Huntsville's cost of living runs **about 9% below the national average**, and the metro's median sale price sits in the **low-\$300,000s** (early 2026). Housing spans a wide range — from accessible starter homes in Harvest and Meridianville to premium, top-school addresses in Madison and Hampton Cove.

When we connect, I'll pull current, neighborhood-level prices so your budget maps to the right areas — not a citywide average.

### MILITARY · PCS · VA BUYERS

#### Relocating on a PCS timeline

With Redstone, NASA, and Space Command here, a large share of buyers are active-duty, veterans, or eligible service members. I work with PCS timelines, gate access, and remote searches.

#### VA loans

\$0 down and no PMI — powerful in a competitive market.

#### Local lenders

I can refer VA-experienced lenders and line up financing with your closing.

#### Search remotely

Video tours and clear comparisons let you decide confidently before you arrive.

Note: I'm a REALTOR®, not a lender — this is general information, not financial advice.

# Your relocation timeline

05 · A SIMPLE CHECKLIST

1

3-6 MONTHS OUT

## Set the foundation

Get pre-approved, set your budget and must-haves, and start comparing neighborhoods.

2

2-3 MONTHS OUT

## Narrow the field

Focus on 2-3 areas by commute and schools, and begin live or video tours.

3

4-8 WEEKS OUT

## Make your move

Tour finalists, write an offer, and open escrow; schedule your inspection and appraisal.

4

2-4 WEEKS OUT

## Line it all up

Finalize financing, book movers, and transfer utilities and schools.

5

MOVE WEEK

## Welcome to the Rocket City

Final walk-through, close, and get your keys.

## Let's map your move

Tell me your employer or gate, your timeline, and your must-haves, and I'll build a neighborhood shortlist and a tour plan that fits — whether you're across town or across the country.

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