

# **SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR RALEIGH NEWCOMERS**

*Courtesy of* [NewsBuzzRaleigh.com](http://NewsBuzzRaleigh.com)

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RALEIGH**

**Lorilyn Bailey**

# Welcome to Raleigh!

I grew up in Rochester, New York, and moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, nearly three decades ago.

In this 17-page guide, you'll find information, advice, and resources that I would provide to any friend moving to North Carolina.

It covers:

- Triangle terms
- College-related terms
- Your New Hometown
- Voting, Licensing, and Utilities
- School System
- Do's and Don'ts
- Getting Around
- Thrift Shops
- Farmers Markets
- Making Friends
- Heat
- Snow Survival Tips
- Storms and Power Outages
- Parks and Greenways

Enjoy!

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## Triangle Terms

Newcomers often get these terms confused.

- **Raleigh/Durham** - This is pretty much a **useless term** that only people from outside of the area use. The centers of each city are about 30 minutes from each other. But each city has its own separate government, school system, and culture. If speaking about a city, use the name of the city. If speaking about the general area, say, “the Triangle.”
- **RDU** - This is the **airport**. It is also centrally located and is near RTP. It stands for Raleigh/Durham, but do not refer to the Triangle as "RDU." If you do say "RDU," people will think you're talking only about the airport.
- **RTP** - This stands for “**Research Triangle Park**.” It is basically a very large business park with its own zip code and is centrally located in the Triangle. When you say "RTP," do not say "the" RTP. Their website (rtp.org) refers to it as "The Research Triangle Park," but no one ever says "the RTP." It's just "RTP."
- **The Triangle** - This term **defines Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill, Cary, and the surrounding small towns**. It is so named because Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill form a triangle.

## College-related Terms

If you follow sports, you already know the terms below. If you don't, then this chart may help eliminate any confusion.

College Name	Referred to as:	Main Location	Athletic Nickname	Mascot/Animal	Color
<b>Duke University</b>	Duke	Durham	Blue Devils	blue devil	Deep royal blue
<b>North Carolina Central University</b>	Central or NCCU	Durham	Eagles	eagle	Maroon
<b>North Carolina State University</b>	State	Raleigh	Wolfpack	wolf	Red
<b>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</b>	UNC	Chapel Hill	Tar Heels	Bighorn ram	Medium bright blue (“Carolina blue”)
<b>Wake Forest University</b>	Wake Forest University is <b>not</b> in the nearby town of Wake Forest. It moved in 1956 to Winston-Salem.				

# Your New Hometown

**Census Quick Facts:** <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/raleighcitynorthcarolina>

**Wikipedia:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raleigh,\\_North\\_Carolina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raleigh,_North_Carolina)

**Visit Raleigh:** <http://visitraleigh.com>

## Voting and Local Leadership

Many people are so busy that they have little time to learn about their local leaders. But the reality is that it's **vital** for all citizens to know who is making the decisions for everyone in Raleigh and why.

**Don't assume that if you vote for a leader who belongs to your own political party that the leader will make decisions that match your values. Recent history shows that has not been the case in Raleigh.**

**The following resources are highly recommended for keeping up to date:**

**NewsBuzz Raleigh** – Our weekly online newspaper; coverage includes city council news as well as links to hundreds of resources. <http://www.newsbuzzraleigh.com>

**City of Raleigh Politics** – This private Facebook group is operated by the founder of NewsBuzz Raleigh. Most Facebook groups ban politics, even though the decisions of our political leaders affect us all. This is a place for you to learn about the issues and leaders in your new city. Everyone in the Triangle is invited to join.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/852836921731362>

**Livable Raleigh** – This non-profit group is made up of engaged volunteers who work to honor citizen voices, establish good governance, and celebrate healthy, vibrant neighborhoods. Their website is full of informative articles. <http://livableraleigh.com>

**City of Raleigh** – Livestreams of City Council meetings:  
<https://youtube.com/user/cityofraleigh>



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## Voting, Licensing, and Utilities

When you move to a new city, you need to update your voter registration, your license and vehicle registration, and start up your utilities. Here's a handy list to help you do that.

TASK	SOURCE	WEBSITE	PHONE
<b>VOTER Registration</b>	Wake County	<a href="https://www.wakegov.com/living-visiting/register-vote">https://www.wakegov.com/living-visiting/register-vote</a>	919-404-4040
<b>LICENSE and VEHICLE Registration</b>	State of North Carolina	<a href="https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/help/moving/Pages/new-residents.aspx">https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/help/moving/Pages/new-residents.aspx</a>	919-715-7000
<b>INTERNET</b>	Assorted	<a href="https://broadbandnow.com/North-Carolina/Raleigh">https://broadbandnow.com/North-Carolina/Raleigh</a>	Assorted
<b>ELECTRIC</b>	Duke Energy	<a href="https://www.duke-energy.com/home/start-stop-move">https://www.duke-energy.com/home/start-stop-move</a>	800-452-2777
<b>GAS</b>	Dominion Energy	<a href="https://www.dominionenergy.com/north-carolina-gas/start-stop-service">https://www.dominionenergy.com/north-carolina-gas/start-stop-service</a>	877-776-2427
<b>WATER SERVICES, GARBAGE PICKUP</b>	City of Raleigh	<a href="https://raleighnc.gov/services/doing-business/start-or-stop-utility-services#paragraph--216861">https://raleighnc.gov/services/doing-business/start-or-stop-utility-services#paragraph--216861</a>	919-996-3245
<b>SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</b>	Wake County	<a href="https://www.wcpss.net/Page/33753">https://www.wcpss.net/Page/33753</a>	919-805-3030
<b>Raleigh Politics Facebook group</b>	Raleigh	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/RaleighPolitics">http://www.facebook.com/groups/RaleighPolitics</a>	--

## School System

Raleigh schools are part of the **Wake County school system**, which also includes schools in Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Wendell, Willow Spring, and Zebulon.

**Wake County Public School System homepage:** <https://www.wcpss.net/>

**List of Schools:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Wake\\_County\\_Schools](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wake_County_Schools)

**Wiki entry:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wake\\_County\\_Public\\_School\\_System](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wake_County_Public_School_System)

## Do's and Don'ts in Raleigh

- Do not say "we did it better up North" (or wherever you came from). However, feel free to make Raleigh a better place.
- Do obey the dog tethering and leash laws:  
<https://raleighnc.gov/safety/content/Police/Articles/Dogtethering.html>
- Do enjoy the Triangle and its surrounding towns. This is a vibrant area with lots of things to do, including sports, plays, concerts, festivals, and lots of restaurants. If you moved from a much larger city, sometimes you may need to look a little harder than what you're used to.
- There is a noise ordinance between 11 pm and 7 am, so do be quiet. 😊
- Do not litter.
- Children are often taught to use adults' first names with "Ms." or Mr.," so don't be surprised if a neighbor child calls you "Mr. Kevin" or "Ms. Emily" (or whatever). If you have children, it's a sweet tradition to continue.



## Area Codes

There are **two** area codes in the Triangle area: 919 and 984. Here is the history of area codes in our area: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Area\\_codes\\_919\\_and\\_984](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Area_codes_919_and_984)

# Getting Around

## Tips about Places:

- Street names are sometimes confusing. You may find some street names and area names on MapQuest and Google Maps that haven't been used in years.
- There are a few instances of streets with the same name that are a few blocks away from each other.
- You need to be specific in street names: For example, **New Hope Road** is not the same as **New Hope Church Road** in Raleigh, and there are multiple "New Hope Church Roads" in the Triangle.
- **440** - This is the original beltline (highway) that circles Raleigh. Do not say "the 440." It's just "440" or "the beltline." When people say "Inside the beltline," they mean the 440 beltline.

More info about 440:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate\\_440\\_\(North\\_Carolina\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_440_(North_Carolina))

- **540** - This highway is newer and is farther out than 440. It will eventually encircle the entire Raleigh area. Do not say "the 540." It's just "540."

More info about 540:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate\\_540\\_and\\_North\\_Carolina\\_Highway\\_540](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_540_and_North_Carolina_Highway_540)

- **The Beach** - We don't call it the "shore." The "beach" can be any spot along the coast, including Wilmington, Atlantic Beach, or the Outer Banks (Nag's Head, Kitty Hawk, etc.). Generally, though, in the Triangle, when you say "the beach," people are usually talking about the Wilmington or Atlantic Beach areas. Some refer to it as "Down East." If you're going to the Outer Banks, say, "Outer Banks."



## Driving:

You'll be driving with people from around the country who have made Raleigh their home. Different areas of the country have different driving habits.

To be safe while driving, follow these tips:

- **Be nice.** Let the other driver merge into your lane.
- **Don't speed.**
- Assume the other driver **won't** stop at stop signs. But you should always come to a complete stop and look in all directions before proceeding.
- Use your **turn signals** when turning and when changing lanes.
- Loud mufflers (and music) are against the law, and **you risk having your car towed if you violate that law.**
- As mentioned previously, **if it snows, don't drive at all if you can.** It will usually melt by the next day.
- **Don't litter.**

Parking downtown can be tricky: <http://www.exploreraleigh.org/free-parking-in-downtown-raleigh/>

## Shopping and Dining

- Be kind, **very kind**, to ALL service personnel, including cashiers, salespeople, wait staff, and anyone working in a store, restaurant, hospital, doctor's office, or similar venue that serves the public.
- If you order "tea" in a restaurant, you will most likely receive iced sweet tea. If you want hot tea or unsweetened iced tea, be specific about what you want.
- Southerners tend to be more soft-spoken than people from some other areas of the country. Be aware of the volume of your voice and adjust it downward if necessary.
- If you are having a problem, the squeakiest and loudest wheel will **not** always get the fastest or best oil. It will, instead, simply increase everyone's stress level.

In a calm, even tone, explain your problem and thank the person profusely for their help in assisting you. If that doesn't work, calmly ask to talk to a manager. If that doesn't work, take a deep breath, leave the store, and never return again. Then share your experience on Yelp.com.



- If you want to buy liquor, you must buy it at a state-controlled “ABC Store.” Beer and wine, however, can be found in grocery stores.
- Food Network lists these foods as favorites in North Carolina:  
<https://www.foodnetwork.com/restaurants/packages/best-food-in-america/photos/what-to-eat-north-carolina>
- Fortunately, there are several Asian restaurants in Raleigh:  
[https://www.yelp.com/search?find\\_desc=Asian+Restaurant&find\\_loc=Raleigh%2C+NC](https://www.yelp.com/search?find_desc=Asian+Restaurant&find_loc=Raleigh%2C+NC)

## Thrift Shops

Shopping at thrift shops helps charities, saves you money, and keeps goods out of landfills. Raleigh has many good thrift shops.

Two favorites are:

- **ReTails Thrift Shop**  
<https://animalkind.org/retails/>
- **North Raleigh Ministries**  
They have two thrift shops:  
Stony Brook Thrift Shoppe and  
Harvest Plaza Thrift Shoppe  
<https://northraleighministries.com/thrift/>

Other thrift shops to explore:

**HANDmeUPS**  
<http://www.handmeupsthrift.org>  
Raleigh, NC

**Dorcascary Thrift Shop**  
<http://www.dorcascary.org>  
Cary, NC

**A-Z Thrift Shop**  
<https://altriangle.org/a-z-thrift-shop/>  
Raleigh, NC



## Farmers' Markets

### What's in Season Chart:

<http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/availabilitychart.pdf>

**North Carolina State Farmers Public Market** (*Large market, open all year, with several areas*)

1201 Agriculture St

Raleigh, NC

<http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/facilities/markets/raleigh/>

Video of the market made in 2013 by Lorilyn Bailey:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Awq7GVTEEUM>

**Midtown Farmers Market** (*Small market in upscale shopping area*)

4160 Main at North Hills St · in North Hills (shopping area)

Raleigh, NC

<https://midtownfarmers.com/>

### Nearby farmers markets:

- Apex Farmers Market  
<https://www.apexfarmersmarket.com/>
- Cary Downtown Farmers Market  
<http://www.caryfarmersmarket.com>
- Holly Springs Farmers Market  
<https://www.hollyspringsnc.us/319/Farmers-Market>
- Wake Forest Farmers Market  
<https://www.wakeforestmarket.org/>



## Making Friends

The one thing that you will have in common with many Raleigh residents is that they are not natives of Raleigh. According to a 2018 News & Observer article, more than half of the population of Wake County was born outside of North Carolina.

One way to meet people is to find a group that matches your interests on Meetup.com. If you don't find one, you can start one. <http://www.meetup.com>

Another way is to be a volunteer. Here are two options to check out:

### Volunteer Match

<https://www.volunteermatch.org>

### Volunteer Raleigh

<https://raleighnc.gov/Community/content/CommServices/Articles/VolunteerRaleigh.html>

You may also want to join social media and see if your neighborhood is represented on NextDoor or has a Facebook group.

## Heat

Raleigh usually has mild winters, and sometimes it doesn't even snow. Summer is very hot and humid.

In other parts of the country, you may not use air conditioning except during the summer months. In Raleigh, it's not uncommon to use it from March to November.

Many people escape in the summer to the cooler mountain areas of Asheville (about 4 hours away), or enjoy the beach by going east to the Outer Banks area (3 to 4 hours away) or south to Wilmington and other areas (about 2 hours away).



## Snow Survival Tips



*A rare snowfall in Raleigh*

It rarely snows in the Triangle. **You will not be able to drive in it here in the same way that you do where it snows frequently.**

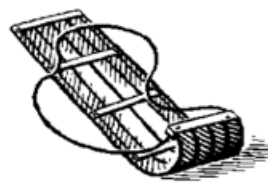
Because it snows so infrequently, the City of Raleigh does not spend its money on snow removal equipment and salt, so although they try their best with a slushy salt mixture they apply to the roads, if it snows, it's still dangerous to drive because the roads are still slippery.

Usually, schools, stores, airports, and workplaces shut down when it snows – even when it's just a dusting of snow. **Stay off the roads unless you have an essential job.** Enjoy your day at home.

When it snows, even if it's a small amount, don't be surprised when all the local TV stations interrupt normal programming for hours and send their reporters out across the Triangle to describe what the snow on the ground looks like.

You may hear people say “snow drops” instead of “snowflakes,” and “snow is pouring.” You will also hear people say “snow scraping” for “snow plowing.” Some people think it's okay to eat snow. It really isn't.

Many people think the word “toboggan” is a long sled, but for some in North Carolina, it is a knit cap.



Do not worry about shoveling the snow. It is rare if it doesn't melt within a day or two. If you buy a snow shovel, it might be several years before you use it again.

While the snow is still on the ground, you or your children should take the opportunity to make "snow angels," build a snowman, or slide down a snowy slope on a piece of a cardboard box. Take photos. It may be your last chance to have fun in snow for many years.



## Storms and Power Outages

Hurricanes, snowstorms, and ice storms are **rare** in Raleigh. But they happen. The most memorable storms between 1954 to 2020 in Raleigh are:

- **Hurricane Hazel in 1954:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane\\_Hazel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Hazel)
- **Hurricane Fran in 1996:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane\\_Fran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Fran)
- **Ice Storm of 2002:**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North\\_Carolina\\_ice\\_storm\\_of\\_2002](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Carolina_ice_storm_of_2002)
- **Hurricane Florence in 2018:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane\\_Florence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Florence)

There are often power outages during hurricanes. Ice storms can also cause outages when snow-covered tree limbs fall on power lines.

### Hurricane Tips:

1. **Important advice** everyone needs to follow:



If you use generators, pressure washers, grills, camp stoves, or similar items, to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, **USE THEM OUTDOORS ONLY, at least 20 feet from the house, and NOT in a garage or a carport.** (*Entire families have DIED when these items have been used inside or in a garage or carport.*)

2. **Identify a place in your house to gather** in case of a hurricane or tornado. (It is not unusual for a hurricane to spawn a tornado.) Your gathering space should be in the middle of your dwelling, at its lowest point, and away from windows.

### Planning for Power Outages

Plan ahead and have the following on hand:

- non-refrigerated food to last at least three days
- manual can opener
- flashlights and batteries
- battery-operated candles
- battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- first-aid kit
- medications for several days
- matches
- instant coffee (or put coffee in a thermos the night before) to avoid caffeine headaches
- Have babies or pets? Have enough food and supplies for them as well.



As mentioned earlier, if you use a **generator**, **IT MUST ONLY BE USED OUTSIDE, at least 20 feet from the house, and NOT in a garage or carport.** Be sure to use the correct type of fuel.

If power is out, a generator is often used to keep a refrigerator/freezer working so that food is not spoiled.

If you don't have a gas stove, you may want to use a **camp stove** which **also MUST ONLY BE USED OUTSIDE, at least 20 feet from your dwelling, and NOT in a garage or carport.** Again, be sure to use the correct type of fuel, and be sure you have matches.

**Do NOT use portable flameless chemical heaters indoors.** It's also a good idea to have a **carbon monoxide detector** in your house if you have gas heat or you're using a generator (to be sure no carbon monoxide from the generator outside is getting inside).

If you can, fill up your car with gas before a weather event that may cause power outages. Also charge your phones, laptops, and other electronic devices.

In Raleigh, there have been **no problems with the water supply** during power outages. However, if you're on a **well** and not on city water, you should fill your tub with water for toilet flushing and fill other containers in your home with water for drinking and cleaning.

Using candles is **not** a good idea. They greatly increase your chances of a fire in your home.

### **Suggested Reading about Power Outages**

The American Red Cross recommends having an emergency kit:

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/survival-kit-supplies.html>

What You Need to Know When the Power Goes Out Unexpectedly:

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/poweroutage/needtoknow.html>

Useful products when the power goes out: <https://www.bobvila.com/slideshow/15-things-you-should-have-at-the-ready-in-case-the-power-goes-out-579466>

## **Parks and Greenways**

The City of Raleigh's website summarizes it well:

***“There are more than 200 parks in Raleigh featuring classes and programs, art centers, athletic facilities, community centers, lakes, nature preserves, dog parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, greenway trails, historic sites, open spaces, and more!”***

Learn where they are and what they offer: <https://raleighnc.gov/services/parks>

### **Greenways:**

Note: It's better not to walk alone on the greenways. Bring a friend.

<https://raleighnc.gov/find-a-trail>

### **Dog Parks:**

Raleigh has 7 dog parks.

<https://raleighnc.gov/services/parks/dog-park>





# Welcome Home!