Therese Owen

THE NEW TO UTAH KIT
2026-27 EDITION · SANDY, UTAH

New to Utah

A practical kit for moving to Sandy, Draper, South Jordan and the Silicon Slopes

02 Cost of living and Utah taxes

03 Utilities, city by city

04 Getting around

07 Your first-month checklist



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01
A welcome note

Welcome. Or almost welcome, if the boxes aren't packed yet.

I've lived in Utah my whole life, so I know these cities, these roads and a few of their quirks. This kit is the practical side of moving here for work. It covers what things cost, who to call for water, how long you have to register a car and how to look up a school for an address. It's the stuff that doesn't make it into the job offer.

Skim it now. Use the checklists when the move gets real. And you don't need every answer before we talk. That's sort of the point of talking.

Therese

THE 60-SECOND VERSION

- Utah's income tax is a flat **4.45%** for 2026.
- Sales tax is **7.45%** in Sandy, South Jordan and the Salt Lake County side of Draper. Groceries are taxed at **3%**.
- A primary residence gets a **45%** break on its taxable value for property tax.
- Once you're a Utah resident, you need a **Utah driver license** to drive. There's no grace period listed.
- Register your car within **60 days** of becoming a resident.
- Water, sewer and trash depend on the address. In Draper, even the water company can change from street to street.
- For schools, look up the address with the district. Don't rely on a listing.

02

Cost of living and Utah taxes

No mystery cost-of-living score here. You get the real rates, with the source for each, and room to plug in your own numbers.

Utah taxes at a glance (2026)

TAX	WHAT TO KNOW	RATE
State income tax	Flat rate, for tax years starting on or after Jan 1, 2026	4.45%
Sales tax, Sandy	Combined state and local rate, effective Oct 1, 2026	7.45%
Sales tax, South Jordan	Same	7.45%
Sales tax, Draper (Salt Lake County side)	Same	7.45%
Sales tax, Draper (Utah County side)	Same	7.35%
State share of sales tax	4.70% state rate plus 0.15% for Medicaid expansion, already included above	4.85%
Groceries	A set rate on grocery food, everywhere in Utah	3%
Restaurant meals	Sandy, South Jordan and Salt Lake County Draper	8.45%
Restaurant meals	Utah County Draper	8.35%

Property tax basics

- **The big one: the primary residential exemption.** Under Utah law, a primary residence is taxed on its value after a **45% reduction**.
- **Who qualifies, per Salt Lake County:** it has to be your primary home, lived in for at least **183 consecutive days** a year. Only **one** exemption per household in Utah.
- **Salt Lake County (Sandy, South Jordan, most of Draper):** the Assessor mails a verification letter only when the owner's mailing address doesn't match the property. No letter means nothing to file. Got a letter? Answer it.
- **Utah County (the Utah County side of Draper):** the Assessor's Residential Exemption page is where you declare a property primary or secondary when your address changes.
- **Your actual bill** depends on your home's value and the tax districts it sits in. Ask me for the current tax figure on any home we look at, rather than guessing from an average.

Housing costs, by city

CITY	MEDIAN MONTHLY OWNER COSTS, WITH A MORTGAGE	MEDIAN VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES
Sandy	$2,183	$614,100
Draper	$2,759	$784,800
South Jordan	$2,519	$650,500

U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, 2020 to 2024 American Community Survey. These are survey figures that owners reported, not today's prices. We'll pull current sales for any home you're considering.

Car costs at registration

When you register, you pay a statewide fee based on the vehicle's age, plus county fees and the registration fee.

PASSENGER CAR, TRUCK, SUV OR VAN MODEL YEAR	AGE-BASED FEE (2026)
2024 to 2026	$150
2021 to 2023	$110
2018 to 2020	$80
2015 to 2017	$50
2014 and older	$10

Other fees:

- **Corridor fee:** $10 per vehicle in Salt Lake and Utah counties.
- **Air pollution control fee:** $3 in Salt Lake County, $2 in Utah County. Electric vehicles are excluded.
- **Driver education fee:** $2.50 per vehicle.
- **New title:** $6.

Your base registration fee depends on the vehicle, so use the **DMV's Fee Estimator** for your total.

> **MOVING A CAR FROM ANOTHER STATE?**
>
> Utah's Tax Commission says new residents owe the age-based fee unless they already paid the property taxes or fees their old state charged for the current year. Keep that receipt handy.

03

Utilities, city by city

Set these up about two weeks before move-in, and keep the closing date in view. Providers below come from each city's own website.

Sandy

SERVICE	PROVIDER	HOW TO START
Water	Sandy City (inside city boundaries)	Call Sandy Utility Billing, (801) 568-7110
Garbage and recycling	Sandy City: one blue waste can and one green recycle bin are included	Same call
Storm water and street lights	Sandy City, billed monthly	Same call
Sewer	Most of Sandy: Sandy Suburban Improvement District. Southern Sandy: Jordan Basin Improvement District. The city also lists Midvalley Improvement District and Cottonwood Improvement District	Check your address with the district, or ask the seller which one bills them
Natural gas	Enbridge Gas Utah	**Enbridge's Utah start-service page**
Electricity	Rocky Mountain Power	**RMP's start-stop-move page**

Draper

SERVICE	PROVIDER	HOW TO START
Water	**Draper City or WaterPro (Draper Irrigation), depending on the address**	Enter the address in **Draper's Utility Services App** to see which one
Garbage and recycling	Ace Disposal, citywide since Aug 17, 2026, through a city contract	**Draper City sign-up**
Storm water	Draper City	**Draper City sign-up**
Sewer	Jordan Basin Improvement District	Call JBID, 801-571-1166
Natural gas	Enbridge Gas Utah	**Enbridge's Utah start-service page**
Electricity	Rocky Mountain Power	**RMP's start-stop-move page**

Draper Utility Billing: (801) 576-6302.

A DRAPER QUIRK WORTH KNOWING.

Draper has two water systems, the city's and WaterPro's, and which one you get depends on where the home sits. Check the exact address in the city's Utility Services App before you set anything up. Under Draper's city code, the property **owner** applies for water service. Renters can sign up for a courtesy copy of the bill.

South Jordan

SERVICE	PROVIDER	HOW TO START
Water	South Jordan City	Online Resident Utility Application, or in person at City Hall, 1600 W Towne Center Dr
Garbage and recycling	South Jordan City, collected by Ace Recycling and Disposal (96-gallon gray cans)	Same application
Sewer	Jordan Basin Improvement District (formerly South Valley Sewer District)	Call JBID, 801-571-1166
Natural gas	Enbridge	Enbridge's Utah start-service page
Electricity	Rocky Mountain Power	RMP's start-stop-move page

South Jordan City Hall: 801-446-HELP (4357).

Internet, anywhere

Look up the exact address on the FCC National Broadband Map to see who reports service there. Then compare plans directly with those providers.

Utility setup checklist

- [ ] Find the water provider for the exact address (Draper: use the city's app)
- [ ] Open water, garbage and recycling with the city
- [ ] Find the sewer district and open an account if it bills separately
- [ ] Start gas with Enbridge Gas Utah
- [ ] Start power with Rocky Mountain Power
- [ ] Check internet providers on the FCC map and book an install date
- [ ] Put the start date as your closing or possession date, not your arrival date



04

Getting around

I won't quote you drive times. Construction season and the first snow both have opinions about that. Here are the routes and stations, so you can test the real thing.

Snow-capped peaks over the Salt Lake valley. Photo: Quang Vuong / Pexels

Roads and rail by city

CITY	MAIN ROADS	TRAIN STATIONS
Sandy	I-15	TRAX Blue Line, with several stations including Sandy Civic Center and Crescent View
Draper	I-15. Bangerter Highway starts at I-15 in Draper and runs west, then north through the west side of the valley	FrontRunner Draper station. TRAX Blue Line ends at Draper Town Center and also stops at Kimballs Lane
South Jordan	I-15. Bangerter Highway. Mountain View Corridor (SR-85) on the west side	FrontRunner South Jordan station. TRAX Red Line starts at Daybreak Parkway, next to the University of Utah's South Jordan Medical Center

FrontRunner commuter rail runs Monday through Saturday. Trains come about every 30 minutes at weekday peak times, and every 60 minutes off-peak and on Saturdays. It stops in Lehi, American Fork, Draper and South Jordan, among others.

Where the big employers sit, relative to home

IF THE OFFICE IS IN	WHERE IT IS	ROUTES TO COMPARE
Draper (Redo, Rincon Research, The Point)	In Draper; Sandy is next door to the north	I-15, FrontRunner Draper, TRAX Blue Line
Cottonwood Heights (Breeze Airways, SoFi)	Borders Sandy to the north	Freeway and surface streets, both
West Jordan (Route 92 Medical)	Just north of South Jordan	Bangerter Highway and surface streets
Lehi (Texas Instruments)	South of Draper on I-15	I-15, FrontRunner Lehi

Test your commute

- [ ] Drive it on a weekday at your real start time, both directions
- [ ] Try the train once with **UTA's trip planner**
- [ ] Check **UDOT Traffic** for construction before you judge a route
- [ ] Map your whole week: work, groceries, the gym, the trailhead and the airport run



Foothills and the Salt Lake valley. Photo: Chris The Island / Pexels

05

Who's hiring nearby

Lehi gets the headlines, but plenty of new jobs are landing closer to Sandy, Draper and South Jordan.

EMPLOYER	WHERE	WHAT'S HAPPENING
Redo	Draper	Utah-founded e-commerce software company expanding in Draper. Projects 682 new jobs over five years.
Rincon Research	Draper	Defense engineering and research company, headquartered in Tucson, expanding in Draper. Projects 125 new jobs over 20 years.
University of Utah Health	The Point, Draper	Secured about 46 acres for a proposed future health campus. Expects about 2,500 staff once fully operational. Still a proposal, with no opening date announced.
Breeze Airways	Cottonwood Heights	Headquartered at Cottonwood Corporate Center. Projects 570 new jobs over 10 years.
SoFi Technologies	Cottonwood Heights	Digital financial services company expanding there. Plans 410 new jobs over 10 years.
Route 92 Medical	West Jordan	Stroke-treatment device company moving its headquarters from California. Plans 116 new jobs over five years.
Texas Instruments	Lehi	Building LFAB2, a second chip plant TI calls the largest investment in Utah history at $11 billion. Announced in 2023 with about 800 TI jobs.

These job counts are projections the companies gave the state over several years, not people already hired. Plans change, so check the latest from the employer.

06

Schools: how to look it up yourself

If schools are part of your decision, go to the official source for the exact address. Boundaries change, and a listing isn't the final word.

AREA	DISTRICT	WHERE TO LOOK UP AN ADDRESS
Sandy, and the Salt Lake County side of Draper	Canyons School District	**Canyons' School Boundaries page and Boundary Locator**
South Jordan	Jordan School District	**Jordan's Boundaries page**, with the School Boundary Look Up map. The 2026-27 school year runs Aug 18, 2026 to June 7, 2027
Utah County side of Draper	Alpine School District through June 30, 2027. **Aspen Peaks School District** from July 1, 2027	**Alpine's Registration and Enrollment page** now, and **Aspen Peaks' site** going forward
Anywhere in Utah	Utah State Board of Education	**USBE School Directory**

Three steps:

01 Confirm which county side the home is on (this matters most in Draper).

02 Enter the exact address in that district's boundary tool.

03 Call or visit the school, and ask the district about enrollment options.

You know what matters for your household. I'm happy to help you write your list of questions.

07
Your first-month checklist

Tick as you go. Some items depend on your situation, so skip what doesn't apply.

Before you arrive

- [ ] Set your USPS change of address (**moversguide.usps.com**)
- [ ] Book utilities for your possession date (see section 3)
- [ ] Gather documents for your driver license: proof of identity, Social Security number and Utah address, plus your current license

First week

- [ ] Walk the neighborhood and find your nearest grocery store, pharmacy and urgent care
- [ ] Drive your commute at rush hour, both ways
- [ ] Find your trash and recycling day on your city's site
- [ ] Save **UDOT Traffic** and the **DEQ air quality page** on your phone

Within your first month

- [ ] **Get your Utah driver license.** Once you're a resident, you need one to drive, and Utah doesn't list a grace period. Among other triggers, you count as a resident once you move here to make Utah home or take a job here (temporary assignments don't count).
  - Schedule an appointment online with the **Driver License Division**.
  - Bring your out-of-state license. It's surrendered when you apply.
  - Expect a 25-question open-book knowledge test and an eye test. You may also need a driving skills test.
  - The adult fee is $52. You get a temporary license the same day, and the card arrives by mail in about 4 to 6 weeks.

- [ ] **Register your vehicle.** Utah law says within 60 days of becoming a resident.
  - A VIN inspection is required for any vehicle titled in Utah for the first time.
  - In Salt Lake County for 2026, an emissions test is required for model years 2024, 2022 and 2020 back to 1996. Model years 2026, 2025, 2023, 2021 and 1995 and older don't need one this year.
  - Check the **DMV's Inspections page** for the Utah County rules.
- [ ] **Register to vote** at **vote.utah.gov**.
- [ ] **Get a Salt Lake County Library card.** Nearby branches:
  - Sandy: 10100 S Petunia Way
  - South Jordan: 10673 S Redwood Rd
  - Daybreak: 11358 Grandville Ave
  - Draper: 1136 E Pioneer Rd, closed for renovations through Dec 7, 2026
- [ ] **License your dog** with your city. South Jordan requires a license by 4 months of age, and Sandy and Draper have their own animal services pages.

When it applies

- [ ] **Bought a home?** Make sure the county knows it's your primary residence. In Salt Lake County, answer any verification letter. In Utah County, use the **Assessor's Residential Exemption page** if your address changed.
- [ ] **Brought a car from out of state?** Keep proof of any vehicle property tax or fees already paid to your old state this year.
- [ ] **Planning ski days?** Read **UDOT's Cottonwood Canyons traction law** before the first storm (see section 9).

NOTES



Summer trail, Big Cottonwood Canyon. Photo: Alex Moliski / Pexels

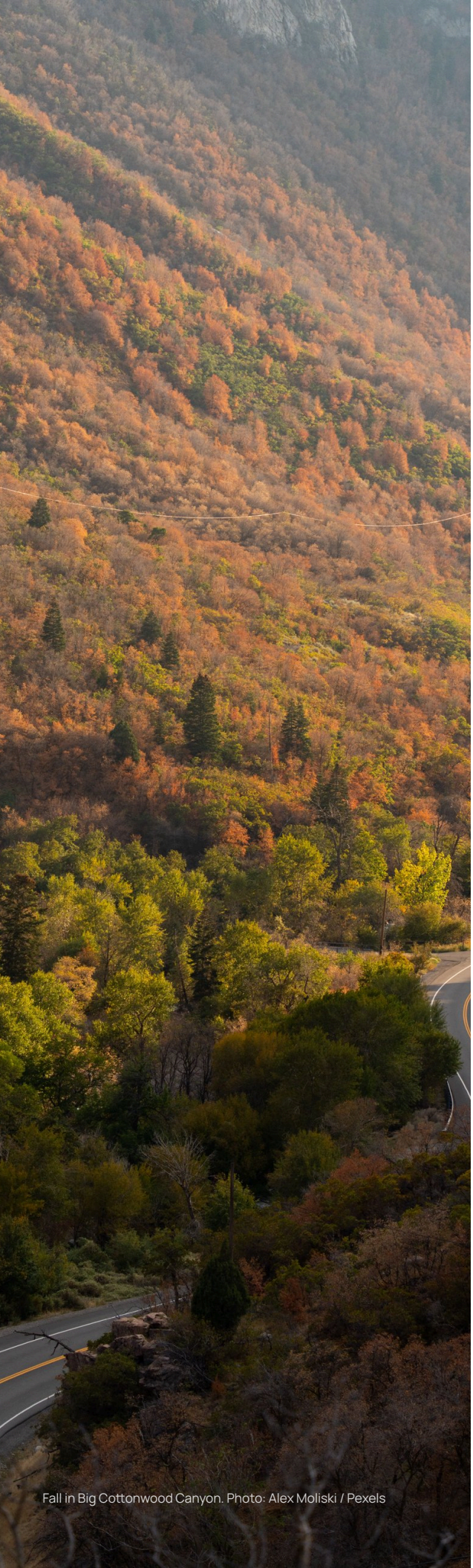
08

Local services and where to start

YOU NEED	START HERE
A contractor, plumber, electrician or HVAC tech	Check their license with Utah's **Division of Professional Licensing (DOPL)**, "Verify a License"
A handyman	Ask what work they're licensed for, then check DOPL
A family doctor or pediatrician	Your insurance plan's directory. For public health services, including immunizations, the **Salt Lake County Health Department** (385-468-4100)
A vet, or pet licensing	**Salt Lake County Animal Services** for adoption, licensing and clinic services. Your city also runs pet licensing
Parks, pools and rinks	**Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation**, plus your city's parks and recreation pages
Trails close to home	**Dimple Dell Regional Park** in Sandy: 630 acres and more than 15 miles of trails. Draper's trail system: the city lists 150+ miles of trails and 5,000 acres of open space
Books, rooms and programs	**Salt Lake County Library**
Movers	Get written estimates from more than one mover. For an interstate move, check that the mover is registered with the U.S. Department of Transportation

ASK ME FOR THE PEOPLE I TRUST.

Lenders, inspectors, movers, handymen, the HVAC tech who actually calls back. I'm happy to share names I'd send my own friends to. Just ask.



Fall in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Photo: Alex Moliski / Pexels

09

Weekends and winter, the honest version

Things to do nearby:

- **Sandy:** Real Salt Lake and the Utah Royals play at America First Field. Dimple Dell's trails run right through the city.
- **Draper:** Corner Canyon trails. On a rainy day, there's the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium.
- **South Jordan:** Oquirrh Lake in Daybreak. You can watch the Salt Lake Bees play baseball in Downtown Daybreak.

Scarves at the soccer game are optional. Cheering is not.

Winter, plainly:

- **Inversions:** in winter, cold air can get trapped in the valleys and hold pollution near the ground. Utah DEQ explains how it works. If anyone in your home has a heart or lung condition, plan for those days with your doctor.
- **Canyon driving:** when the beacons are flashing, Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons require at least 5/32-inch tire tread plus the right tires or traction devices for your vehicle. Check UDOT's traction law page before you head up.

10
How buying a home works here

01 **Talk with a lender early, and tell them about the new job.** Ask how a job change or a home you're selling affects your plan.

02 **Know your loan options.** My Buyer Loan Types page walks through cash, conventional, FHA and VA.

03 **Budget for the whole move,** including the time when you might be paying for two homes, plus taxes, insurance, HOA dues and upkeep.

04 **Compare every home with the same short list of questions,** and include the commute on that list.

05 **Buying from out of state? Don't skip the inspection.** A video tour can't show you everything.

06 **Protect your money.** Before you wire funds, call the title company at a number you know is real.

More on my site: the Buyers guide, the Moving to Utah page and the Communities page.

NOTES

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11
Let’s talk

You don’t need to have picked a city yet. Bring the office address, your timing and your questions. We'll sort out what needs a decision now and what can wait. Then we'll go see a few homes and drive the commute together.

Utah has been home my whole life, and I'd love to help it start feeling like home for you too.



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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

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General educational information, not legal, tax or lending advice. Your contract and circumstances determine the requirements. For legal or tax questions, speak with a qualified professional; your lender and title company can explain their parts of the process. Rates, fees and providers are from the official sources listed as of November 2026 and can change. Confirm current details before you rely on them. Equal Housing Opportunity.

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