

Unique Geography

Tennessee is located across two time zones and borders eight other states: Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Missouri. This geographic proximity supports Tennessee as a travel hub in the southeast United States, providing access to a variety of attractions and businesses. Additionally, the state benefits from a diverse array of geographic features, including large mountain ranges, rivers, and vast plains, as well as both urban and rural areas.

East to West Diversity – Mountains to Plains

Tennessee comprises a diverse geographical landscape that spans across the state, from the Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee to the plains of Middle and West Tennessee. The Smoky Mountains are a subset of the larger Appalachian Mountains and sit along the Tennessee-North Carolina border, attracting visitors and driving tourism activity for that part of the state. In 2020, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park recorded over 12 million visitors, making it the second-busiest year on record. Having an abundance of recreational activities has allowed cities in the region, including Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, to thrive. Gatlinburg-Pigeon Forge Airport (GKT) provides visitors with close access to these popular tourist destinations and generates a total economic impact of almost \$64 million for the state. The mountains also provide great lift conditions for the glider activity at Chilhowee Gliderport (92A), which is one of only two airports in Tennessee that support daily glider operations.

The mountains start to merge into plains in Middle and West Tennessee. Middle Tennessee supports growing industries such as tourism, healthcare, and education, and West Tennessee, with plains and rich soils, supports the strongest agriculture industry in Tennessee. With the Mississippi River along the west border, crops such as cotton, corn, wheat, sorghum, and soybeans grow aplenty. Airports such as Covington Municipal Airport (M04), Arnold Field (M31), Humboldt Municipal Airport (M53), and Everett-Stewart Regional Airport (UCY) support aerial agriculture operators in the region.

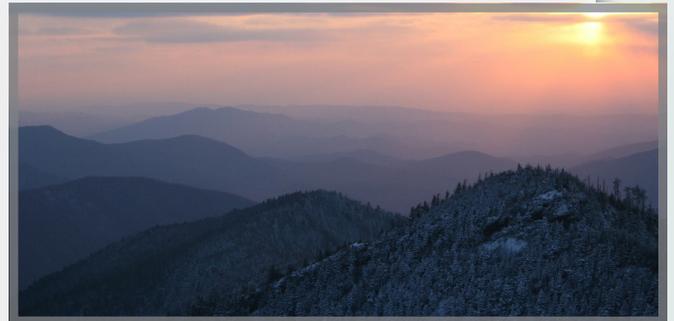


Photo: [Wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org)

Neighboring States – Tennessee’s Airports Remain Competitive

Spanning two time zones and bordering eight states, Tennessee attracts both in-state and out-of-state travelers. Three commercial service airports—Lovell Field (CHA), Memphis International Airport (MEM), and Tri-Cities Airport (TRI)—are within a 20-minute drive of neighboring states. While Lovell Field serves as the main airport for Chattanooga residents, it also attracts residents from northern Georgia and Alabama seeking lower parking costs, shorter lines, and less traffic. Similarly, Memphis International Airport attracts residents in neighboring Arkansas and Mississippi with six air carriers providing nonstop service to 23 destinations in the United States. All three airports are serviced by low-cost carriers, providing an extra incentive for out-of-state residents looking for competitive air travel options.

There are 47 airports in Tennessee that are within 20 miles of a state border. These airports serve both in-state and out-of-state residents in a competitive landscape by providing a diverse array of fuel, maintenance, and aircraft storage options, as well as exceptional customer service. Fayetteville Municipal Airport (FYM) is situated close to the rapidly-evolving economic region of North Alabama and prides itself on serving Alabama-based companies like Toyota, Mazda, Remington, and DaikyoNishikawa. Business traffic is easily accommodated on the airport’s 5,900-foot runway and two fixed-base operators. The competitive services combined with great customer service have enabled the airport to receive the Red Carpet Award and be recognized as “Governing Body of the Year” by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission in the year 2000.

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Urban and Rural Tennessee – No Matter Where, Tennessee’s Airports Provide Service

Tennessee offers a unique combination of urban life and rural settings. The urbanized lifestyle of the state is largely centered in the Middle Tennessee region, anchored by Nashville, one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. Known as “The Music City,” Nashville attracts millions of visitors to its rich musical heritage and attractions, including the Country Music Hall of Fame and the famed Grand Ole Opry. In 2019, Nashville hosted over 16 million visitors, which was six percent higher than the prior year. Additionally, the Nashville metropolitan area witnessed a 15.8 percent increase in population in 2019, 20 percent higher than the average United States rate. Nearby Murfreesboro has also seen tremendous growth. Known as the “Most Livable Town in Tennessee,” Murfreesboro is the largest suburb in Nashville and the sixth largest city in Tennessee. Murfreesboro Municipal Airport (MBT) supports general aviation (GA) needs for the area’s residents and businesses. In 2019, the airport recorded over 100,000 operations, making it one of the busiest GA airports in Tennessee.

In addition to the urban pockets, Tennessee’s rural settings reach every corner of the state. West Tennessee, with its fertile land supported by the nearby Mississippi River, serves as the focal point for a strong agriculture industry. Aerial agriculture application operators have thrived in the region due to its farmland for crops such as cotton, corn, wheat, sorghum, and soybeans. Russell Flying Services, an aerial applicator based out of Everett-Stewart Regional Airport (UCY), employs five people and generates nearly \$200,000 in economic impact for the state. The Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee present residents and visitors alike with a seemingly limitless amount of recreational activities like hiking trails, hunting, camping, fishing, and sightseeing. This activity helps to support more than 20 airports that are situated in and around the Smoky Mountains.

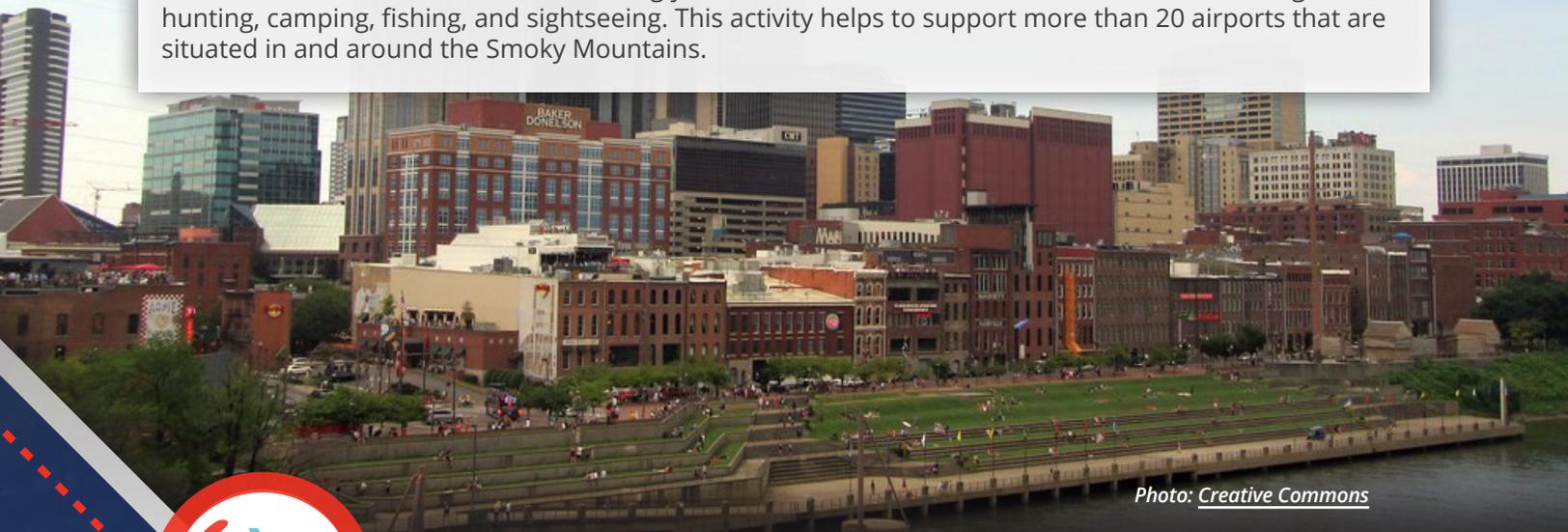


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Overview

From the mountainous region in the east that merges into the plains of Middle Tennessee and the fertile land in the west, Tennessee’s geography supports and promotes business and tourism activity within the state. Tennessee is also supported by eight neighboring states that provide additional economic impact and rely on Tennessee’s robust aviation system for air connectivity. Combined with the broad array of urban and rural settings across the state, Tennessee is well positioned as a major economic driver and travel hub to serve much of the southeast United States.