

Librarian's Shelf by Rachelle McPhillips

### Travel the World from A to Z at Your Library

When we talk about going places, Columbus Public Library is the best place to start. Library cards provide us with endless destinations in the past, present, and future.

With your library card and internet access, you can use [www.cplconnect.us](http://www.cplconnect.us) to travel the country from the comfort of home thanks to AtoZ the USA. This database is an unmatched resource for information about the people, culture, geography, government, history, indigenous peoples, food, and symbols of the US states and the United States itself.

AtoZ the USA is a comprehensive one-stop resource that answers so many questions. It is the equivalent of 20 large reference books, so we are pleased to offer it to our patrons. The database covers 110 topics for each state, territory, and the District of Columbia, and 118 topics for the USA as a country.

I checked out the information AtoZ the USA provides for Nebraska and was distracted reading about famous people connected to our state in the "Biographies" section. Visit this portion of the AtoZ the USA site during your next coffee break and brush up on some Nebraska history. While you are there, check out the unofficial state dish and get some inspiration for dinner tonight.

My oldest son has traveled out of the country a couple of times and is planning another trip for next year. I cannot tag along with him, but I can travel virtually to the places he goes thanks to AtoZ the World. From the same company that compiles state information, AtoZ the World is an unmatched breadth and depth of content covering world history, cultures, languages, foods, religions, and much more.

The "Culture and Society" section prepares travelers for customary greetings. If you are planning to make friends in Italy, for instance, it might be helpful to know that friends greet each other with kisses to both cheeks, and you can avoid awkward nose-bumping by always starting on the left. It was not exactly clear whose left, so maybe observe the locals before making too many friends.

AtoZ the World can also prepare you for taboo topics to avoid. While it might be customary to criticize a football program here, it will not be welcomed if you try to visit with Italians about the shortcomings of their soccer teams.

When you feel confident you can avoid those taboo topics and potentially awkward conversations, use your library card to log into Mango Languages. Impress your hosts with everything from salutations and small talk to opinions and popular culture – just remember to leave out criticisms about their soccer teams.

Mango utilizes its proprietary methodology, engaging interface, and easy, intuitive interactive tools to deliver practical conversational skills and valuable cultural insight for new languages. Lessons include strategically placed memory-building exercises to help users remember what they are learning, in addition to critical thinking exercises, which help them to intuitively understand the language and adapt it to similar conversations.

From Nebraska to Italy and everywhere in between and beyond, whether you are traveling virtually or preparing to visit in person, you can go to all the places with help from your library card.

For questions about obtaining a library card or using any of our services, stop in at 2419 14<sup>th</sup> Street or call us at 402-564-7116, option 2.