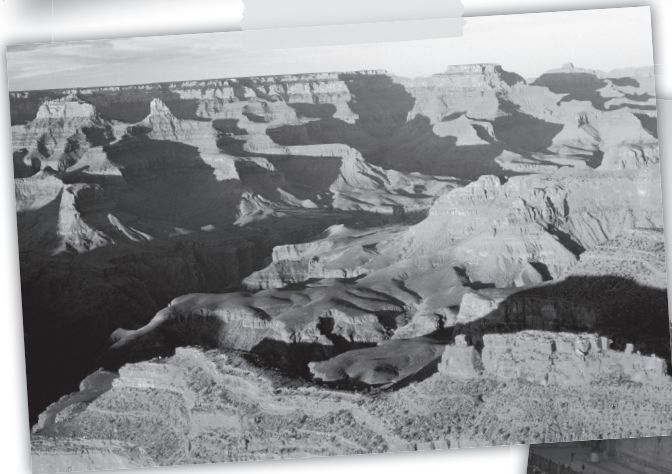


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PASSPORT SERIES

NORTH AMERICA



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*All statistics are based on information from 2010.

** For further information on pronunciations, research foreign language dictionaries and/or the Internet.

METRIC CONVERSIONS

The purpose of this page is to aid in the conversion of measurements in this book from the English system to the metric system. Note that the tables below show two types of ounces. Liquid ounces measure the volume of liquids and have therefore been converted into milliliters. Dry ounces measure weight and have been converted into grams. Because dry substances such as sugar and flour may have different densities, it is advisable to measure them according to weight rather than volume. The measurement unit of the cup has been reserved solely for liquid, or volume, conversions.

Conversion Formulas				
when you know	formula	to find		
		when you know	formula	to find
teaspoons	× 5	milliliters	× .20	teaspoons
tablespoons	× 15	milliliters	× .60	tablespoons
fluid ounces	× 29.57	milliliters	× .03	fluid ounces
liquid cups	× 240	milliliters	× .004	liquid cups
U.S. gallons	× 3.78	liters	× .26	U.S. gallons
dry ounces	× 28.35	grams	× .035	dry ounces
inches	× 2.54	centimeters	× .39	inches
square inches	× 6.45	square centimeters	× .15	square inches
feet	× .30	meters	× 3.28	feet
square feet	× .09	square meters	× 10.76	square feet
yards	× .91	meters	× 1.09	yards
miles	× 1.61	kilometers	× .62	miles
square miles	× 2.59	square kilometers	× .40	square miles
Fahrenheit	$(^{\circ}\text{F} - 32) \times \frac{5}{9}$	Celsius	$(^{\circ}\text{C} \times \frac{9}{5}) + 32$	Fahrenheit

Equivalent Temperatures

32°F = 0°C (water freezes)
 212°F = 100°C (water boils)
 350°F = 177°C
 375°F = 191°C
 400°F = 204°C
 425°F = 218°C
 450°F = 232°C

Common Cooking Conversions

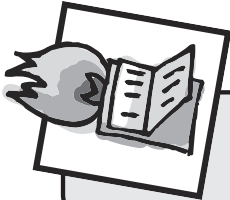
1/2 cup = 120 milliliters
 12 fluid ounces = 354.88 milliliters
 1 quart (32 ounces) = 950 milliliters
 1/2 gallon = 1.89 liters
 1 Canadian gallon = 4.55 liters
 8 dry ounces (1/2 pound) = 227 grams
 16 dry ounces (1 pound) = 454 grams

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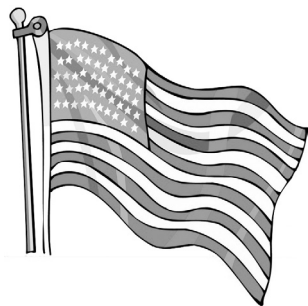
WELCOME TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!

Welcome to the United States, the most multicultural nation in the world. Although relatively young in comparison to many other countries, the United States is powerful. It has one of the world's biggest economies and the largest military force. Thousands of people from all over the globe make the United States their home each year. The country was founded by people seeking freedom, with a Constitution that guarantees basic rights to all of its citizens. Freedom continues to be its core value.



FAST FACTS

- Official Name:** United States of America
- Location:** North America, between Canada and Mexico; the east coast borders the North Atlantic Ocean; the west coast borders the North Pacific Ocean.
- Population:** 310,232,863 (2010 estimate)
The United States is the world's third-largest country by population (after China and India).
- Capital City:** Washington, DC (District of Columbia)
- Area:** 3,794,066 square miles
The United States is the world's third-largest country by size (after Russia and Canada). It is about half the size of Russia, about three-tenths the size of Africa, and about half the size of South America. It is slightly larger than China and more than twice the size of the European Union.
- Major Languages:** English: 82.1%
Spanish: 10.7%
- Major Religion:** Christianity
- Currency:** The dollar; 100 cents = 1 dollar
- Climate:** Mostly temperate; the climate is tropical in Hawaii and Florida, arctic in Alaska, semi-arid in the Great Plains west of the Mississippi River, and arid in the Great Basin of the Southwest.
- The Land:** The United States feature a vast central plain with mountains in the west and hills and low mountains in the east. There are rugged mountains and broad river valleys in Alaska and rugged volcanic land in Hawaii.
- Type of Government:** Constitution-based federal republic with a strong democracy
The 50 states have a degree of self-government – voters choose their representatives.
- Type of Government:** Constitution-based federal republic with a strong democracy
The 50 states have a degree of self-government – voters choose their representatives.

Flag:

The U.S. flag is called *Old Glory*. It has 13 equal horizontal stripes of red and white, representing the 13 original colonies. There is a blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side corner (the side closest to the flag pole) with 50 white, five-pointed stars. The stars represent the 50 states.

National Bird: Bald Eagle

National Flower: Rose

Motto: "In God We Trust"

Natural Environment

The United States is made up of 48 states on the North American continent. It also includes Alaska, which is separated from the U.S., mostly by Canada, and Hawaii, which is on an archipelago (a chain of islands) in the central Pacific, southwest of North America. The United States encompasses many natural environments and habitats found all over the world: mountains, forests, deserts, plains, tropics, coastal land, and the arctic.

Climate and Extreme Weather

The climate is:

- tropical in Hawaii and Florida
- hot and dry in the Southwest
- rainy and temperate in the Pacific Northwest
- temperate to hot and humid in the South and Southeast
- hot to temperate to cold with four defined seasons in the Midwest and East
- temperate to polar in Alaska

Each part of the United States has its own extreme weather. The entire Pacific Basin is subject to tsunamis, volcanoes, and earthquakes. The dry and hot southern part of the West Coast is subject to wild fires and mud slides. Hurricanes are a threat along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts. The Midwest and Southeast have tornadoes and flooding. The permafrost in northern Alaska prevents major development there.

Plants and Animals

The United States is one of the world's most biodiverse countries. It would take several pages to list the 18,800 species of plants, 400 species of mammals, 750 species of birds, 500 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 91,000 species of insects that live there! Here are some highlights of the abundant flora you'll find in the United States:

- Complex forests in the East
- Everglades in the subtropical wilderness in Florida—a vast habitat of marshes and prairies that supports tropical trees, plants, and wildlife
- Grasslands on the Great Plains
- Southwestern deserts of sage brush, cacti, and wildflowers
- Ancient evergreens in the Pacific Northwest
- Giant sequoia trees in California

Grizzly bears are one of the largest land mammals in the United States. Most are found in Alaska, though some 1,200 still populate the lower 48 states. Black bears, smaller than grizzlies, exist all across the continent. They frequently raid campsites and garbage cans looking for food. The coyote is about half the size of a wolf and is also found all over the country, although it's usually associated with the Southwest. America has one species of large cat, called the mountain lion, cougar, puma, or panther. Some are in the Florida Everglades National Park, but most live in the West, where it's not uncommon to see them coming down for a drink from a backyard pool or loping along a hiking trail.

One creature always associated with the United States is the mighty and endangered buffalo. There were millions of them on the Great Plains in the 19th century before they were slaughtered for their hides, for sport, and for money. New herds are now being built up. You can see them in places such as Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming) and Badlands National Park (South Dakota).



Buffalo



A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The Indigenous People

The history of the United States begins with the indigenous people who migrated to North America from Asia 12,000 to 40,000 years ago. Some of these groups spread throughout America. They became the ancestors to the North American Native American tribes as well as the Eskimos (the Yupik and Inuit) of Alaska. They lived peacefully and practiced hunting, fishing, and farming.

Early Explorers

Contrary to what many people believe, Christopher Columbus was *not* the first European to reach North America. The Vikings got to modern-day Canada about 500 years before Columbus reached the continent.

However, Columbus's contact with the indigenous people of the Bahamas in 1492 paved the way for the European settlement that followed. It also opened the door for new animals from Europe, like horses, hogs, and cattle.

British Settlement

The English created their first successful settlements in what are now Virginia and Massachusetts. They established Virginia Colony at Jamestown in 1607 and the Plymouth Colony in 1620. The Puritans (commonly called Pilgrims) who sailed from England on the *Mayflower* and landed at Plymouth were seeking freedom of worship. They suffered incredible hardship during their first winter. They were aided by Native Americans, but only 53 of the 102 voyagers were left to celebrate the first Thanksgiving. The feast, which occurred in 1621, lasted three days (yes, it included turkey)! People in the United States still celebrate Thanksgiving with a harvest feast every fourth Thursday of November—and they still eat turkey!

The Great Migration

The Puritans established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1628 around present-day Boston and Salem. (The Plymouth Colony was annexed to it in 1691.) Between 1630 and 1640, about 20,000 settlers arrived there. By 1678, the English population of New England had swelled to 60,000 in a period called the Great Migration. The promise of prosperity and freedom became what is still referred to in the United States as *the American Dream*.

Many of the new immigrants were indentured servants who had to work for an employer for several years in exchange for food, clothing, and shelter. About two-thirds of all Virginia immigrants between 1630 and 1680 were indentured servants. By the 1700s, African slaves were pouring into the country to meet the demand for laborers.

While European settlers brought their enthusiasm and willingness to work hard, they also brought diseases such as smallpox. Millions of indigenous people died of these new diseases.

Birth of a Nation

Great Britain had many colonies in North America and the West Indies. The 13 colonies that became the original states were founded between 1607 and 1733, and their populations grew quickly. They had to pay British taxes, but they had no representatives in Britain's Parliament. This meant the British government was free to tax the colonists however much it wished and for whatever it wished. It's no surprise that the colonists began to protest!

In the last half of the 18th century, these 13 colonies rejected the British government's authority and monarchy. They formed self-governing states and joined together to fight for their independence. The American Revolutionary War against the British lasted from 1775 to 1781. On July 4, 1776, the 13 states formed a provisional government and issued the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. People still celebrate this event in the United States every Fourth of July.

The Americans won the Revolutionary War in 1781. With the Treaty of Paris in 1783, the British recognized the 13 states' independence. The United States was born!

The American Constitution, which was adopted in 1787, established the supreme law of the land as well as the three branches of government. George Washington, leader of the American army during the Revolution, became the first president of the United States under the new Constitution. He is called the father of his country.

A Nation Divided

Importing slaves from Africa became illegal in 1808, even though Southern plantation owners relied heavily on slave labor. The issue of slavery divided the country when eleven Southern slave states withdrew from the Union.

The Civil War that resulted from this split was one of America's greatest tragedies. It lasted from 1861 until 1865. Under the leadership of President Abraham Lincoln, the Northern Union of free states defeated the Southern Confederacy. But the defeat came at great cost to all. More than 600,000 soldiers died of battle wounds or disease. The South had particularly devastating losses, including homes, towns, animals, and crops. President Lincoln was assassinated in 1865 by actor John Wilkes Booth, who was strongly against abolishing slavery.

The country reunited, and Reconstruction took place for several years after the Civil War. Some would argue that the rift between the North and the South is still not fully healed. Segregation between African Americans and Whites in Southern states extended well into the 20th century. Although the 13th Amendment to the Constitution outlawed slavery in 1865, racial segregation was not legally outlawed until the Civil Rights Act of 1964.