



United States

Skyscrapers and canyons, jazz and barbecue: fifty states that stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific and far beyond.

AT A GLANCE

Facts to know

CAPITAL

Washington D.C.

POPULATION

About 342 million (U.S. Census Bureau estimate for July 2025: 341.8 million)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

English. A presidential executive order made it the official language in March 2025, but as of 2026 no federal law sets an official language: Congress has never passed one

CURRENCY

United States dollar (USD), divided into 100 cents

AREA

About 9.8 million km², including lakes, rivers and coastal waters

GOVERNMENT

Federal presidential republic of 50 states and a federal district, Washington D.C. (constitution written in 1787, in force since 1789)

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Denali in Alaska, 6,190 m, the highest peak in North America. Since January 2025 the federal government officially calls it Mount McKinley, while the State of Alaska uses the name Denali

LONGEST RIVER

The Missouri and the Mississippi, each about 3,770 km. Sources disagree on which is longer. Together they form the fourth-longest river system in the world

NEIGHBOURS

Canada and Mexico by land. Across the sea, Russia lies in the Bering Strait, where the US and Russian Diomedes Islands are about 3.8 km apart, and Cuba lies about 150 km south of Key West, Florida

DRIVES ON THE

Right

CALLING CODE

+1 (shared with Canada and several Caribbean countries)

A 45-minute trip to United States

Everything you need is in this pack. No preparation beyond printing. Adapt the timing to your group.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 0 to 5 min | Welcome. Show the map page and find United States together. Ask: who has been there, or knows someone from there? |
| 5 to 15 min | Read the facts at a glance, then three moments from the story: 1050: Cahokia grows into a great city; 1830: The Indian Removal Act; 1969: Apollo 11 lands on the Moon. |
| 15 to 25 min | At the table: talk about Hamburger and Texas smoked brisket. Idea: bring a small taste (bread, cheese, fruit, tea) if your kitchen can help. |
| 25 to 30 min | Say it like a local: practise "Hi, how are you doing?" (Hello (a greeting, not a real question about your health)), "Good, thanks. And you?" (The usual short answer to 'How are you doing?'), "How's it going?" (A casual hello). Everyone says them together. |
| 30 to 40 min | Quiz: read the questions aloud, or play the big-screen version at https://preview.worldstroll.com/countries/united-states/group . No scores needed. |
| 40 to 45 min | Talk about it (questions page), then stamp or sign everyone's passport page. |

You will need

- This printed pack (one per table, or one each)
- Pens for the quiz
- Optional: a world map or globe, a small tasting, music from the country

United States and its cities



- Washington D.C. (District of Columbia (a federal district, not part of any state)): The Capitol and the White House, The National Mall and its memorials, The Smithsonian museums
- New York City (New York): Times Square and Broadway theatres, Central Park, The Statue of Liberty
- Boston (Massachusetts): The Freedom Trail through revolutionary sites, The Boston Tea Party of 1773, Clam chowder
- Philadelphia (Pennsylvania): Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, The Philly cheesesteak, The birthplace of American independence
- Chicago (Illinois): Skyscrapers such as the Willis Tower, Deep-dish pizza, The start of old Route 66
- New Orleans (Louisiana): Jazz, Mardi Gras, Gumbo and Creole cooking
- Miami (Florida): Beaches and Art Deco buildings, Little Havana and Cuban culture, The gateway to the Everglades
- San Antonio (Texas): The Alamo, The River Walk, Tex-Mex food
- Flagstaff (Arizona): The gateway to the Grand Canyon, Lowell Observatory, where Pluto was discovered, Historic Route 66
- Seattle (Washington State): The Space Needle, Pike Place Market, Coffee culture
- San Francisco (California): The Golden Gate Bridge, Cable cars, Alcatraz and Chinatown

- Los Angeles (California): Hollywood and the film industry, Beaches such as Santa Monica, Year-round sunshine

A short history of United States

The story of the United States begins with the Native American peoples who lived here for thousands of years. Spanish, French, Dutch and English colonists arrived from the 1500s, and enslaved Africans were brought by force. Thirteen British colonies won their independence and wrote a constitution that is still in use. The young country grew across the continent, often at the expense of Native nations, fought a civil war that ended slavery, and in the 20th century became a world power, while Americans kept struggling to make equal rights real for all.

1050 Cahokia grows into a great city

From about 1050, Cahokia, near today's St. Louis, grew into the largest city of the Mississippian culture, with perhaps 10,000 to 20,000 people, though estimates vary widely. Its great earthen mound, Monks Mound, is the largest earthwork built before Columbus north of Mexico, and the site is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

1565 Spain founds St. Augustine

On 8 September 1565 the Spanish admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded St. Augustine in Florida, on land where the Timucua people lived. It is the oldest continuously inhabited European-founded settlement in the contiguous United States.

1607 The English found Jamestown

In May 1607 English settlers sent by the Virginia Company of London built James Fort on the James River in Virginia. Jamestown became the first permanent English settlement in the Americas, after earlier attempts such as Roanoke had failed.

1619 Enslaved Africans arrive in Virginia

In late August 1619 a group of Africans, captured from a slave ship, were brought to the Virginia colony. They are the first recorded Africans in the Virginia colony. Slavery grew over the next two centuries, above all on the plantations of the South, and lasted until 1865.

1620 The Mayflower reaches Cape Cod

In November 1620 the ship Mayflower, with 102 passengers now known as the Pilgrims, anchored off Cape Cod after about ten weeks at sea. They founded Plymouth Colony in today's Massachusetts, and their

harvest feast of 1621 is remembered as the 'first Thanksgiving'.

1776 The Declaration of Independence

On 4 July 1776 the Second Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, adopted the Declaration of Independence, in which the Thirteen Colonies broke away from Britain. The Revolutionary War went on until 1783, and 4 July is still celebrated as Independence Day.

1787 The Constitution is written

From May to September 1787 delegates met at Independence Hall in Philadelphia and wrote the Constitution, which came into force in 1789. It is often described as the oldest written national constitution still in use.

1803 The Louisiana Purchase

In 1803 the United States bought the huge Louisiana Territory from France for 15 million US dollars. The land stretched from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and nearly doubled the size of the country.

1830 The Indian Removal Act

In May 1830 Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. In the years that followed, tens of thousands of Native Americans, including the Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), Seminole, Chickasaw and Choctaw, were forced to leave their homelands in the Southeast. Thousands died on the way, and these forced marches west are remembered as the Trail of Tears.

1861 The Civil War begins

Seven Southern states, where slavery was central to the economy, broke away in 1860 and 1861 and formed the Confederacy. The war began on 12 April 1861, when Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina, and four more states then joined the Confederacy. About 700,000 soldiers died, making it the deadliest war in American history.

1865 The Civil War ends and slavery is abolished

In April 1865 General Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House, and days later President Lincoln was assassinated. In December 1865 the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, abolishing slavery throughout the country.

1869

The transcontinental railroad is completed

On 10 May 1869 a ceremonial 'golden spike' joined the Central Pacific and Union Pacific lines at Promontory Summit, Utah. Trains could now run from Omaha to Sacramento, and a journey across the country took days instead of months.

1920

Women win the right to vote

In August 1920 the Nineteenth Amendment came into effect, after decades of campaigning by women such as Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt. It says that the right to vote cannot be denied because of sex.

1941

The attack on Pearl Harbor

On 7 December 1941 Japanese aircraft attacked the US Navy base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The United States, neutral until then, entered the Second World War the next day.

1964

The Civil Rights Act

On 2 July 1964 the Civil Rights Act became law. It banned discrimination based on race, colour, religion, sex or national origin, and ended legal segregation in schools and public places. It followed years of peaceful protest by the civil rights movement, including the 1963 March on Washington.

1969

Apollo 11 lands on the Moon

On 20 July 1969 the Apollo 11 lunar module landed on the Moon. Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on its surface, followed by Buzz Aldrin, while Michael Collins stayed in orbit.

What people eat in United States

American food is a mix of Native American, European and African traditions, with later influences from Latin America, Asia and many other places. Corn, turkey, squash and cranberries are native to the Americas. Most Americans eat three meals a day: breakfast, a quick lunch around midday and dinner, the main meal, in the early evening. The big idea to remember is that food is regional: New England has chowders and lobster, the South has barbecue, cornbread and gumbo, and Texas and the Southwest have Tex-Mex cooking. On the fourth Thursday of November, families across the country share a Thanksgiving dinner of roast turkey.

Hamburger

Claimed by several towns, now eaten everywhere

A patty of grilled or fried ground beef in a soft round bun, usually with lettuce, tomato, onion, pickles, ketchup and mustard. With a slice of cheese on top it becomes a cheeseburger.

Texas smoked brisket

Texas

A large cut of beef brisket cooked slowly for many hours over wood smoke until it is tender, then sliced and often served on butcher paper with white bread, pickles and onion. In Texas, barbecue usually means beef.

Carolina pulled pork

North Carolina and South Carolina

Pork shoulder, or sometimes a whole pig, smoked slowly until the meat can be pulled apart by hand, then served in a bun or on a plate with coleslaw. In the Carolinas, barbecue means pork.

New England clam chowder

New England, especially Boston

A thick, creamy soup of clams, potatoes, onion and salt pork or bacon, made with milk or cream and served with small oyster crackers. Its rival, Manhattan clam chowder, is red, because it uses tomatoes instead of milk.

Lobster roll

New England, especially Maine and Connecticut

Chunks of cooked lobster meat piled into a toasted, buttered hot dog bun. The warm Connecticut style is dressed with melted butter, while the cold style common in Maine

uses a little mayonnaise, sometimes with celery.

Gumbo

Louisiana

A rich, dark stew made with a roux (flour cooked slowly in fat), the 'holy trinity' of onion, celery and green pepper, and seafood, chicken or sausage. It is thickened with okra or filé powder, made from dried sassafras leaves, and served over rice.

Chicago deep-dish pizza

Chicago, Illinois

A pizza baked in a deep round pan, with a tall crust, a thick layer of cheese and fillings, and chunky tomato sauce on top instead of underneath. It is eaten with a knife and fork.

Philly cheesesteak

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Thin slices of beef, often rib-eye, fried on a griddle with onions and topped with melted cheese, all in a long crusty roll.

Thanksgiving roast turkey

All of the United States, on the fourth Thursday of November

A whole turkey roasted in the oven and served with stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes and green beans, followed by pumpkin pie. Many of these foods are native to the Americas. For safety, the thickest part of the turkey, and any stuffing, must reach 74°C (165°F) on a food thermometer.

Cornbread

The South, from Native American cooking

A quick bread made with cornmeal, baked in a hot pan (often cast iron) until golden and crusty. It is served warm with butter, next to barbecue, chili, beans or greens.

Pancakes with maple syrup

All of the United States, a favourite breakfast

Thick, fluffy pancakes, served in a stack with butter and maple syrup, often with bacon, sausages or fresh berries. Small ones are called 'silver dollar' pancakes.

Apple pie

All of the United States, from an old English recipe

A double-crust pie filled with sliced apples, sugar and cinnamon, served warm, often with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, which Americans call 'à la mode'. Some people eat it with a slice of sharp cheddar cheese.

Key lime pie

The Florida Keys

A tangy pie of Key lime juice, egg yolks and sweetened condensed milk in a crumbly biscuit (graham cracker) crust, topped with whipped cream or meringue. Most recipes today bake the filling briefly, which also makes the eggs safe to eat.

Chocolate chip cookies

Massachusetts, now eaten everywhere

Crisp at the edges and soft in the middle, these butter and brown sugar cookies are dotted with pieces of chocolate. They are the most popular cookie in the United States.

GOOD MANNERS

At the table

- In a sit-down restaurant, a tip of 15 to 20 percent of the bill before tax is normal. The tip is usually not included, so check the bill.
- Many Americans cut their food with the knife in the right hand, then put the knife down and move the fork to the right hand to eat. Keeping the fork in the left hand, the European way, is also perfectly fine.
- Burgers, hot dogs, pizza slices, ribs and fried chicken are usually eaten with your hands at casual meals.
- Portions are often large. It is normal to ask for a 'to-go box' and take what you have not eaten home with you.
- At Thanksgiving and at many family meals, someone may say grace, a short prayer of thanks, before eating. Wait quietly until it is finished.

New England clam chowder

A thick, creamy soup of clams, potatoes, onion and salt pork or bacon, made with milk or cream and served with small oyster crackers. Its rival, Manhattan clam chowder, is red, because it uses tomatoes instead of milk.

Ingredients

- 1 kg fresh clams in their shells, scrubbed, or 2 tins (about 280 g each) of chopped clams with their juice
- 100 g smoked bacon, diced
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 sticks of celery, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 500 g waxy potatoes, peeled and cut into 1.5 cm cubes
- 250 ml clam juice or fish stock
- 250 ml whole milk
- 250 ml single (light) cream
- 1 bay leaf and a few sprigs of fresh thyme
- Salt and black pepper
- Oyster crackers or plain crackers, to serve

Method

1. If you use fresh clams, first throw away any with cracked shells or that do not close when tapped. Put the rest in a large pan with 250 ml water, cover and cook over a high heat for 5 to 8 minutes, until they open. Throw away any that stay closed. Take the clams out of their shells, chop them roughly and strain the cooking liquid through a fine sieve.
2. In a large pan, fry the bacon over a medium heat until it is crisp. Add the onion and celery and cook gently for 5 minutes, until soft.
3. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute. Slowly pour in the clam cooking liquid (or the juice from the tins) and the clam juice or stock, stirring all the time.
4. Add the potatoes, bay leaf and thyme. Simmer for about 15 minutes, until

the potatoes are tender.

5. Pour in the milk and cream and heat gently. Do not let it boil, or the milk may curdle.
6. Add the clams and warm them for 2 to 3 minutes only, so they stay tender. Remove the bay leaf and thyme, season with salt and pepper, and serve with crackers.

Cornbread

A quick bread made with cornmeal, baked in a hot pan (often cast iron) until golden and crusty. It is served warm with butter, next to barbecue, chili, beans or greens.

Ingredients

- 150 g fine or medium cornmeal (polenta also works)
- 125 g plain flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar (optional)
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- Half a teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 300 ml buttermilk
- 60 g butter, melted, plus a little extra for the pan

Method

1. Put a 23 to 25 cm cast-iron frying pan or a metal cake tin in the oven and heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan).
2. In a large bowl, mix the cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt.
3. In another bowl, beat the eggs with the buttermilk and the melted butter.
4. Pour the wet mixture into the dry one and stir just until combined. A few lumps are fine.
5. Carefully take the hot pan out of the oven with oven gloves, add a knob of butter and swirl it around. Pour in the batter; it should sizzle.
6. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until golden and a skewer pushed into the middle comes out clean. Leave for 5 minutes, then cut into wedges and serve warm.

Pancakes with maple syrup

Thick, fluffy pancakes, served in a stack with butter and maple syrup, often with bacon, sausages or fresh berries. Small ones are called 'silver dollar' pancakes.

Ingredients

- 190 g plain flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- Half a teaspoon of salt
- 300 ml milk
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons melted butter, plus a little for the pan
- Butter and maple syrup, to serve

Method

1. In a large bowl, mix the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.
2. In a jug, whisk the milk, egg and melted butter together.
3. Pour the wet mixture into the dry one and stir gently just until there is no dry flour left. The batter should be thick and a little lumpy; do not beat it smooth.
4. Heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and wipe it with a little butter. Pour in about 60 ml of batter for each pancake.
5. Cook for about 2 minutes, until bubbles appear on top and the edges look dry, then flip and cook for 1 to 2 minutes more, until golden and cooked through.
6. Keep the pancakes warm in a low oven while you cook the rest. Serve in stacks with butter and maple syrup.

Apple pie

A double-crust pie filled with sliced apples, sugar and cinnamon, served warm, often with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, which Americans call 'à la mode'. Some people eat it with a slice of sharp cheddar cheese.

Ingredients

- 2 sheets of ready-rolled shortcrust pastry (about 320 g each), or homemade pastry
- 1 kg tart, firm apples, such as Granny Smith, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 100 g sugar
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon and a pinch of nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 20 g butter, in small pieces
- 1 egg, beaten, for glazing

Method

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan). Line a 23 cm pie dish with one sheet of pastry, leaving a little hanging over the edge.
2. In a large bowl, mix the apples with the sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and lemon juice.
3. Pile the apples into the dish, heaped a little in the middle, and dot with the butter.
4. Cover with the second sheet of pastry. Trim the edges, press them together and crimp with your fingers or a fork. Cut 4 or 5 small slits in the top so steam can escape, and brush with beaten egg.
5. Bake for 20 minutes, then turn the oven down to 180°C (160°C fan) and bake for 35 to 40 minutes more, until the crust is golden and the juices bubble through the slits. Cover the edges with foil if they brown too fast.
6. Leave to cool for at least 2 hours so the filling can set. Serve warm or at room temperature, with vanilla ice cream or a slice of cheddar.

Chocolate chip cookies

Crisp at the edges and soft in the middle, these butter and brown sugar cookies are dotted with pieces of chocolate. They are the most popular cookie in the United States.

Ingredients

- 115 g butter, softened
- 100 g soft light brown sugar
- 50 g white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 190 g plain flour
- Half a teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
- Half a teaspoon of salt
- 170 g chocolate chips or chopped dark chocolate
- 50 g chopped walnuts (optional; leave them out for anyone with a nut allergy)

Method

1. Heat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan) and line two baking trays with baking paper.
2. Beat the butter with both sugars until light and creamy, then beat in the egg and vanilla.
3. Mix the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt, and stir them into the butter mixture. Stir in the chocolate and the nuts, if using.
4. Put rounded tablespoons of dough on the trays, about 5 cm apart. This makes about 24 cookies.
5. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes, until golden at the edges but still pale in the middle. Leave on the trays for 5 minutes, then move to a rack to cool.
6. Do not eat the raw dough: raw flour and raw egg can carry harmful bacteria, and only baking makes them safe.

Useful phrases

Hi, how are you doing?

hy, how ur yuh DOO-in · Hello (a greeting, not a real question about your health)

Good, thanks. And you?

GOOD, thanks. and YOO · The usual short answer to 'How are you doing?'

How's it going?

HOWZ it GO-in · A casual hello

Howdy!

HOW-dee · Hello

Nice to meet you.

NICE tuh MEET yuh · Pleased to meet you

Excuse me.

ik-SKYOOZ mee · Sorry, may I get past, or may I ask you something?

Where's the restroom?

WAIRZ thuh REST-room · Where is the toilet?

For here or to go?

fer HEER er tuh GO · Will you eat it here or take it away?

Can I get the check, please?

kun eye GET thuh CHEK, pleez · May I have the bill, please?

Is the tip included?

iz thuh TIP in-KLOO-did · Has a service charge already been added?

Can I get a refill?

kun eye get uh REE-fill · Could you fill my glass or cup again?

How much is it with tax?

how MUCH iz it with TAKS · What is the full price including sales tax?

Sounds good.

SOWNDZ GOOD · Yes, I agree, that is fine

No problem.

NO PRAH-blum · You're welcome, it was no trouble

I'll take a rain check.

ile TAYK uh RAYN chek · Not now, thank you, but I would like to another time

Y'all

YAWL · You all, all of you

Have a nice day!

hav uh NICE DAY · Goodbye and good wishes

Take care!

tayk KAIR · Goodbye, look after yourself

Things you might not know

1. Yellowstone, created by law on 1 March 1872, is widely considered the first national park in the world. More than half of the world's geysers are found there, including Old Faithful.
2. The United States bought Alaska from Russia in 1867 for 7.2 million US dollars, or about two cents per acre.
3. In the Bering Strait, the US island of Little Diomedé and the Russian island of Big Diomedé are about 3.8 km apart. The International Date Line runs between them, so the Russian island is almost a day ahead.
4. The Statue of Liberty was a gift from the people of France. Gustave Eiffel, who later built the Eiffel Tower in Paris, designed the iron framework that holds it up.
5. The 13 stripes of the flag stand for the 13 colonies that declared independence, and the 50 stars for today's 50 states. The 50-star flag was adopted in July 1960, after Hawaii became a state, and as of 2026 it is the longest-used version of the flag.
6. The bald eagle has been on the Great Seal of the United States since 1782, but it only became the official national bird by law in December 2024.
7. The words of the national anthem, 'The Star-Spangled Banner', were written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key after he watched the British bombard Fort McHenry in Baltimore. Congress made it the national anthem only in 1931.
8. Route 66, the famous 'Mother Road', opened in 1926 and ran about 3,940 km from Chicago to Santa Monica in California. It was removed from the highway system in 1985, but long stretches survive as Historic Route 66, and 2026 is its 100th anniversary.
9. The highest point in the contiguous United States, Mount Whitney (4,421 m), and the lowest point in North America, Badwater Basin in Death Valley (86 m below sea level), are both in California, only about 135 km apart.
10. Juneau, the capital of Alaska, has no road connecting it to the rest of the state or to the contiguous United States. People and goods arrive by plane or by boat.
11. Counting its territories, the United States uses nine standard time zones.

The 48 contiguous states alone have four: Eastern, Central, Mountain and Pacific.

12. The Missouri and the Mississippi are almost exactly the same length, about 3,770 km each, and sources disagree on which one is longer. Together they form the fourth-longest river system in the world.
13. Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November, a date fixed for the whole country in 1941. It recalls the Pilgrims' harvest feast of 1621 at Plymouth.

TALK ABOUT IT

Questions for the group

- Have you ever been to the United States, or has someone in your family? What do you remember?
- Have you ever tasted Hamburger or Texas smoked brisket? What is a dish you remember from a trip?
- The Civil Rights Act (1964). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- Apollo 11 lands on the Moon (1969). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- Have you seen Statue of Liberty, in person or in pictures? Which famous place would you most like to see?
- If you could spend one day in any city of the United States, which would it be and why?

QUIZ

How well do you know United States?

Circle the right answer. The answers are on the last page.

1. Who wrote the words of 'The Star-Spangled Banner'?

- A) Thomas Jefferson
- B) George Washington
- C) Benjamin Franklin
- D) Francis Scott Key

2. In which building were the Declaration of Independence adopted and the Constitution written?

- A) The Alamo
- B) The Lincoln Memorial
- C) The White House
- D) Independence Hall

3. On which date did Congress adopt the Declaration of Independence?

- A) 4 July 1776
- B) 11 November 1783
- C) 4 July 1787
- D) 7 December 1776

4. How many states make up the United States?

- A) 50
- B) 48
- C) 13
- D) 52

5. What is the name of the Golden Gate Bridge's famous colour?

- A) International Orange
- B) Sunset Pink
- C) California Gold
- D) Fire Engine Red

6. In the Bering Strait, a US island and a Russian island lie about 3.8 km apart.

- A) True
- B) False

7. In most American shops, the price on the shelf does not include sales tax.

- A) True
- B) False

8. Travellers from Visa Waiver Program countries need which online approval before flying to the United States?

- A) eTA
- B) A Schengen visa
- C) ESTA
- D) ETIAS

9. Which city is nicknamed the Windy City?

- A) Chicago
- B) Boston
- C) Los Angeles
- D) Miami

10. Who was the first person to walk on the Moon, during the Apollo 11 mission in 1969?

- A) John Glenn
- B) Buzz Aldrin
- C) Neil Armstrong
- D) Michael Collins

11. Apple pie was invented in the United States.

- A) True
- B) False

12. The bald eagle was made the official national bird of the United States by a law signed in December 2024.

- A) True
- B) False

Quiz answers

1. D) Francis Scott Key

Francis Scott Key wrote them in 1814, after watching the British bombard Fort McHenry in Baltimore.

2. D) Independence Hall

Independence Hall in Philadelphia, a World Heritage Site since 1979. The White House was not finished until 1800.

3. A) 4 July 1776

The Declaration was adopted on 4 July 1776 in Philadelphia, which is why the Fourth of July is Independence Day.

4. A) 50

There are 50 states, plus the federal capital district, Washington D.C. The 48 contiguous states lie between Canada and Mexico, and the original colonies numbered 13.

5. A) International Orange

International Orange, chosen by the architect Irving Morrow. The bridge opened in 1937.

6. True

True. Little Diomedes (US) and Big Diomedes (Russia) are about 3.8 km apart, with the International Date Line between them.

7. True

True. Sales tax is added at the till and depends on the state and city, so you pay more than the label shows.

8. C) ESTA

ESTA, the Electronic System for Travel Authorization. Apply on the official website at least 72 hours before you travel. ETIAS is for Europe and eTA for Canada.

9. A) Chicago

Chicago is the Windy City. It lies on the shore of Lake Michigan.

10. C) Neil Armstrong

Neil Armstrong stepped out first, followed by Buzz Aldrin, while Michael Collins stayed in orbit around the Moon.

11. False

False. Apple pie recipes were first written down in England in the 14th century, but the saying 'as American as apple pie' made it an American symbol.

12. True

True. It has been on the Great Seal since 1782, but a law making it the official national bird was signed only in December 2024.

United States visa page

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Next stops

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