

New York

FAST FACTS

- **Nickname:** The Empire State
- **Statehood:** 1788; 11th state
- **Population (as of July 2015):** 19,795,791
- **Capital:** Albany
- **Biggest City:** New York
- **Abbreviation:** NY
- **State bird:** bluebird
- **State flower:** rose

HISTORY

Native Americans came to the area now called New York about 5,000 years ago. Thousands of years later, their descendants included Native American tribes such as the Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, and Seneca.

In 1624 the Dutch established a colony on what's now Manhattan Island called New Amsterdam. It was renamed New York once the British took control of the area in 1664.

But after the American Revolution in 1776, New York became a U.S. colony, then a state in 1788. One year later, George Washington was sworn in as the United States' first president in New York City, then the country's capital. (It would move to Washington, D.C., the next year, in 1790.)

On September 11, 2001, hijackers flew planes into the twin towers of New York City's World Trade Center; the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C.; and a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Learn more about the history-making attack and meet some of the heroes who helped save lives that day.

WHY'S IT CALLED THAT?

New York was named after the British Duke of York. Many experts believe it's nicknamed the Empire State because George Washington called New York "the seat of the Empire."



LEFT: NEW YORK STATE FLAG



RIGHT: NEW YORK STATE ICONS

GEOGRAPHY

New York is bordered by Canada and Lake Ontario in the north; Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the Atlantic Ocean in the south; Lake Erie in the west; and Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont in the east.

The St. Lawrence-Champlain Lowland runs along the edge of the Adirondack Mountains and the Canadian border. In this hilly area, you can see Lake Champlain and Thousand Islands, a collection of small islands that sit between New York and Canada.

The Adirondack Upland, known for the Appalachian Mountains and its forests, waterfalls, and lakes includes New York's highest peak, Mount Marcy. The Hudson-Mohawk Lowland contains much of the Hudson and Mohawk River valleys, and the Allegheny Plateau, stretching from Lake Erie along the border with Pennsylvania, includes the 11 Finger Lakes and the forested Catskill Mountains.

The Erie-Ontario Lowland is a plain dotted with oval-shaped mounds called drumlins. It reaches the shores of two Great Lakes: Erie and Ontario.

Stretching out toward the ocean is the Atlantic Coastal Plain. It includes the sandy beaches and bays of Staten Island and Long Island.

WILDLIFE

New York is home to large mammals such as black bears, bobcats, and moose, plus smaller mammals like weasels, raccoons, and skunks. Golden eagles, peregrine falcons, and wild turkeys are common birds, as well as blue jays, cardinals, and woodpeckers. Reptiles include snapping turtles, diamondback terrapins, and queen snakes. Also be on the lookout for amphibians such as the eastern hellbender, a 30-inch-long salamander.

You're likely to see oaks, pines, and sugar maples, the state tree. Flowers like azaleas, rhododendrons, and New England asters are all common.

NATURAL RESOURCES

New York is known for supplying construction materials such as limestone, salt, sand, and gravel. It's also one of the top states for garnets, though they're used for industrial purposes instead of jewelry. And New York is the only state that mines wollastonite, used for manufacturing ceramics and paints.

—Hear the roar of 750,000 gallons of water crashing down every second over Niagara Falls, which borders New York and Canada. You can even sail close enough to get soaked on a boat tour.

—New York City is the most populous city in the United States, with around 8.5 million residents. You can look down from the 86th floor of the Empire State Building, climb 377 steps to the Statue of Liberty's crown, and tour Ellis Island, where over 12 million immigrants entered the United States between 1892 and 1924.

—Famous New York residents include U.S. presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy.

—New York is the only state that borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes.



Times Square



Yankee Stadium