



[History](#) [Biography](#) [Geography](#) [Science](#) [Games](#)

[Geography](#) >> [US States](#) >> [Florida History](#)

## Florida



**Capital:** Tallahassee

**Population:** 21,299,325 (Source: 2012 U.S. Census)

**Major Cities:** Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Orlando, Hialeah, Tallahassee

**Borders:** [Alabama](#), [Georgia](#), Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** \$777,164 million (2012 U.S. Department of Commerce)

**Key Industries:**

Agriculture including oranges, other citrus fruits, sugarcane, corn, green beans, and tomatoes

Tourism, banking, aerospace, biotechnology, and electronics

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**How Florida got its name:** Florida was named by Spanish Explorer Ponce de Leon. He called the land *Pascua Florida*, which means *Flowery Easter*.



Click on map for larger view

## Florida State Symbols

**State Nickname:** Sunshine State

**State Slogan:** Visit Florida; MyFlorida.com

**State Motto:** In God we trust (1868)

**State flower:** Orange blossom

**State bird:** Mockingbird

**State fish:** Largemouth bass (fresh water), Atlantic Sailfish (salt water)

**State tree:** Sabal Palm

**State mammal:** Florida panther, Manatee, Bottle-nosed dolphin

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**State foods:** Orange Juice, Key Lime Pie, Oranges

## Becoming a State

**Date admitted:** Monday, March 3, 1845

**Number admitted:** 27

**Prior Name:** Florida Territory

**Postal Abbreviation:** FL



## The Geography of Florida

**Total Size:** 53,927 sq. miles (source: 2003 Census)

**Geographical Low Point:** Atlantic Ocean at Sea Level (source: U.S. Geological Survey)

**Geographical High Point:** Britton Hill at 345 feet, located in the county/subdivision of Walton (source: U.S. Geological Survey)

**Central Point:** Located in Hernando County approx. 12 miles north-northwest of Brooksville (source: U.S. Geological Survey)

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**Counties:** 67 (source: National Association of Counties)

**Bodies of Water:** Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean, Tampa Bay, Lake Okeechobee, St. Johns River, Suwannee River, Caloosahatchee River, Lake Tohopekaliga, Lake George

## Famous People

- Faye Dunaway - Actress
- Chris Evert - Professional tennis player
- Debbie Harry - Singer for the group Blondie
- Chipper Jones - Baseball player
- Roy Jones, Jr. - Championship boxer
- Jim Morrison - Lead singer for the Doors
- Tom Petty - Singer and songwriter
- Sidney Poitier - Actor
- Philip Randolph - Civil rights activist
- Bob Ross - Painter
- Emmitt Smith - Professional football player
- Vanilla Ice - Rapper
- Bubba Watson - Golfer

## Fun Facts

- You can see the Space Shuttle launch from Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Florida.
- Ponce de Leon was hoping to find the Fountain of Youth when exploring in Florida.
- St. Augustine, Florida was founded in 1565 and is the oldest permanent city in the United States.
- Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida is the number one tourist destination in the world.
- Florida is sometimes called the Alligator State because of all the alligators that live there. Also, the University of Florida's mascot is the Gator. This is where Gatorade was first invented.
- The highest rate of lightning strikes in the US is in Clearwater, FL.
- You may think that Florida is the southernmost state in the US, but Hawaii is actually further south.
- The highest average temperature in the US is in Key West.
- There are two rivers in Florida that both have the same name! They are both called Withlacoochee.

## Professional Sports Teams

- Florida Panthers - NHL (hockey)
- Jacksonville Jaguars - NFL (football)
- Miami Dolphins - NFL (football)
- Miami Heat - NBA (basketball)
- Miami Marlins - MLB (baseball)
- Orlando Magic - NBA (basketball)
- Tampa Bay Buccaneers - NFL (football)
- Tampa Bay Rays - MLB (baseball)
- Tampa Bay Lightning - NHL (hockey)

[Geography](#) >> [US States](#)>> [Florida History](#)

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[Entrepreneurs](#)

[Explorers](#)

[Inventors and Scientists](#)

[Women Leaders](#)

[World Leaders](#)

[US Presidents](#)

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[Colonial America](#)

[American Revolution](#)

[Industrial Revolution](#)

[American Civil War](#)

[Westward Expansion](#)

[The Great Depression](#)

[Civil Rights Movement](#)

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[1900 to Present](#)  
[US Government](#)  
[US State History](#)

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[Ancient Greece](#)  
[Ancient Mesopotamia](#)  
[Ancient Rome](#)  
[Middle Ages](#)  
[Islamic Empire](#)  
[Renaissance](#)  
[Aztec, Maya, Inca](#)  
[French Revolution](#)  
[World War 1](#)  
[World War 2](#)  
[Cold War](#)  
[Art History](#)

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