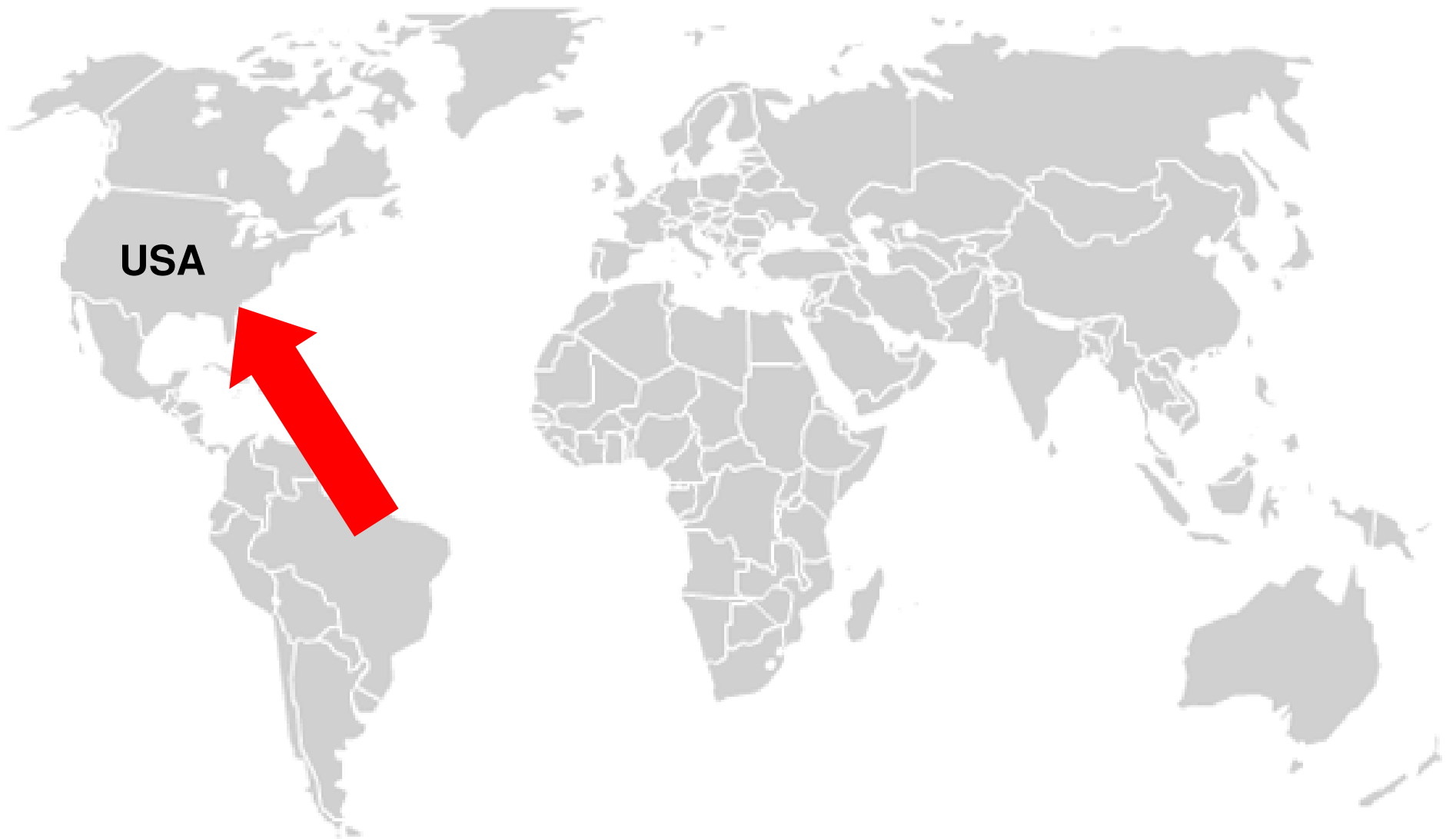


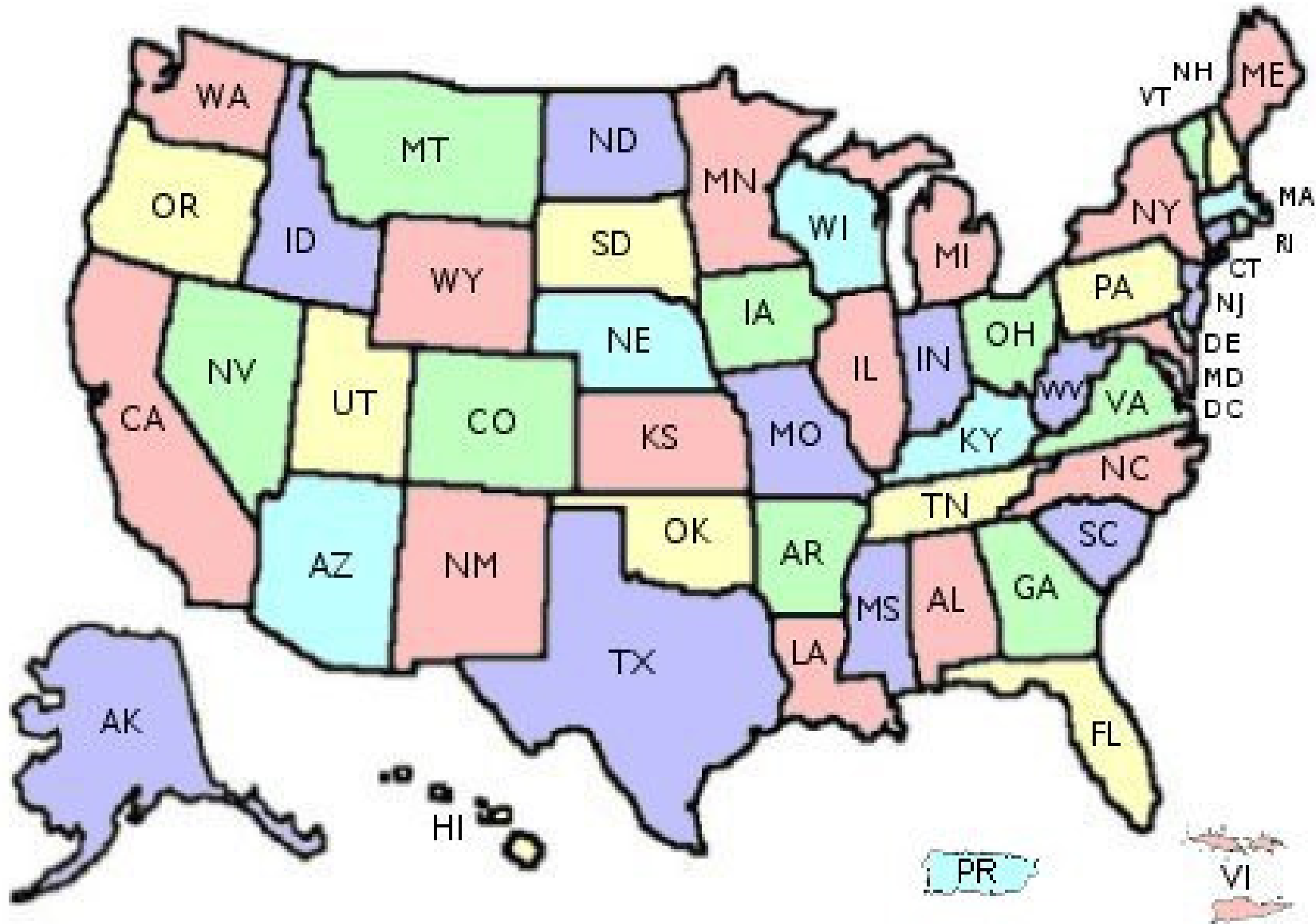
UNITED STATES



Geography



Geography



State History

- A **U.S. state** is any one of the fifty subnational entities of the United States of America that share sovereignty with the federal government.
- Shared sovereignty entitles an American to be a citizen both of the federal entity and of his or her state of domicile. However, state citizenship is very flexible, and no government approval is required to move between states .
- The United States Constitution allocates power between the two levels of government in general terms. By ratifying the Constitution, each state transfers certain sovereign powers to the federal government. Under the Tenth Amendment, all powers not explicitly transferred are retained by the states and the people. Historically, the tasks of public education, public health, transportation and other infrastructure have been considered primarily state responsibilities, although all have significant federal funding and regulation as well.
- States are free to organize their state governments any way they like, as long as they conform to the sole requirement of the U.S. Constitution that they have "a Republican Form of Government". In practice, each state has adopted a three branch system of government generally along the same lines as that of the federal government – though this is not a requirement.
- Since the establishment of the United States, the number of states has expanded from 13 to 50. New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union and forbidding a new state to be created out of the territory of an existing state or the merging of two or more states as one without the consent of both Congress and all the state legislatures involved.
- Today, there are very few U.S. territories left that might potentially become new states. The most likely candidate may be Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since 1917.
- Four of the states bear the formal title of commonwealth: Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. In these cases, this is merely a historically based name and has no legal effect.

Land and Climate



Climate

Climate **Extremes** for the United States

Temperature	Record	Date	Location
Maximum	134 degrees F.	July 10, 1913	Greenland Ranch, CA
Minimum	-80 degrees F.	January 23, 1971	Prospect Creek, AK
Maximum 24-hour change	100 degrees F.	January 23-24, 1916	Browning, MT
Snow			
Maximum 24-hour snowfall	75.8 inches	April 14-15, 1921	Silver Lake, CO
Maximum seasonal snowfall	1122.0 inches	1971-1972	Paradise RS, WA
Maximum snow cover	451 inches	March 11, 1911	Tamarack, CA
Rain			
Maximum 24-hour total	43.00 inches	July 25-26, 1979	Alvin, TX
Maximum annual total	704.83 inches	1982	Kukui, HI
Minimum annual total	0.0 inches	1929	Death Valley, CA
Longest dry spell	767 days	10/3/12 - 11/8/14	Bagdad, CA
Wind			
Maximum measured gust	231 mph	April 12, 1934	Mt. Washington, NH
Pressure			
Minimum	26.35 inches (hurricane)	September 2, 1935	Matecumbe Key, FL

Language

Approximately 337 languages are spoken or signed by the US population

- The United States does not have an official language; however, 82% of the population speaks English as a native language and 96% of the population of the U.S. speaks English "well" or "very well".
- The Spanish language is the second-most common language in the country, spoken by almost 13% of the population. In Puerto Rico, both Spanish and English have the status of official language, and in New Mexico laws are published in both languages.
- The United States holds the world's fifth largest Spanish-speaking population.
- According to the 2000 US census, people of German ancestry make up the largest single ethnic group in the United States, and the German language ranks fifth.
- Italian, Polish, and Greek are still widely spoken among populations descending from immigrants from those countries in the early 20th century.
- Starting in the 1970s and continuing until the mid 1990s, many people from the Soviet Union and later its constituent republics such as Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Uzbekistan have immigrated to the United States, causing Russian to become one of the minority languages in the United States.
- Tagalog and Vietnamese have over one million speakers in the United States, almost entirely within recent immigrant populations.
- There is also a small population of Native Americans who still speak their native languages, but these populations are decreasing, and the languages are almost never widely used outside of reservations.

Little known US Facts

- 1816 has been called the "**Year Without Summer.**" Canada and the northeastern U.S. experienced **cold and snow** throughout the summer months. An **erupting volcano** in the Dutch East Indies was to blame.
- Skylab**, the first American **space station**, fell to the earth in **thousands of pieces in 1979**. Thankfully most over the ocean.
- The **oldest capital city** in the U.S. is **Santa Fe**, New Mexico, founded in 1610.
- US Highway 550, near Durango and Silverton, **Colorado**, is called the **Million Dollar Highway** because it was paved with low grade gold ore in the road bed.
- The **largest meteorite crater** in the **world** is in **Winslow, Arizona**. 4,150 feet across and 150 feet deep.
- 150 residences in New York City got the first **televisions in 1936**. The **first program** NBC broadcast to them was a cartoon of **Felix The Cat!**
- The first **coast-to-coast telephone** line was established in 1914.
- The **crookedest street** in the world is **Snake Alley**, located in **Burlington, Iowa**.
- General Motors**, in 1954, became the **first corporation** in the U.S. to have **\$1 billion** net income.
- According to the U.S. Geological Survey, there are **140 towns and cities in the U.S.** that have the word "**Christmas**" in their names.
- Maine** is the only state in the lower 48 that touches only one other state.
- During the **Civil War**, more soldiers **died of disease** than they did from gunshots and fighting.
- The "largest" city in the United States is Juneau, Alaska. It covers about 3,000 square miles. That's larger than the state of Delaware. Jacksonville, Florida is the largest in the lower 48 at just over 800 square miles.