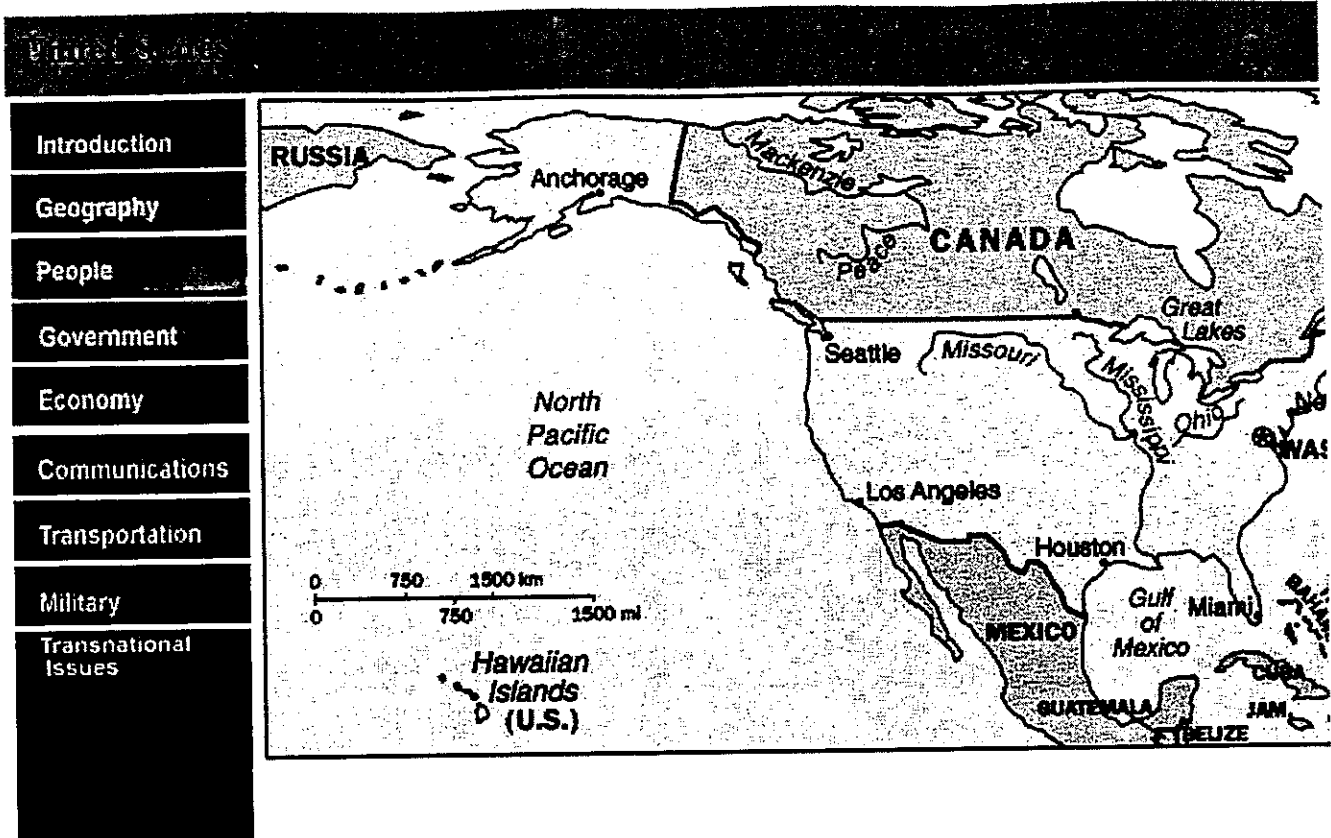


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United States

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Location: North America, bordering both the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean, between Canada and Mexico

Geographic coordinates: 38 00 N, 97 00 W

Map references: North America

Area:

total: 9,629,091 sq km

land: 9,158,960 sq km

water: 470,131 sq km

note: includes only the 50 states and District of Columbia

Area—comparative: about one-half the size of Russia; about three-tenths the size of Africa; about one-half the size of South America (or slightly larger than Brazil); slightly larger than China; about two and one-half times the size of Western Europe

Land boundaries:

total: 12,248 km

border countries: Canada 8,893 km (including 2,477 km with Alaska), Cuba 29 km (US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay), Mexico 3,326 km

note: Guantanamo Naval Base is leased by the US and thus remains part of Cuba

Coastline: 19,924 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 12 nm

continental shelf: not specified

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: mostly temperate, but tropical in Hawaii and Florida and arctic in Alaska, semiarid in the great plains west of the Mississippi River and arid in the Great Basin of the southwest; low winter temperatures in the northwest are ameliorated occasionally in January and February by warm chinook winds from the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains

Terrain: vast central plain, mountains in west, hills and low mountains in east; rugged mountains and broad river valleys in Alaska; rugged, volcanic topography in Hawaii

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Death Valley -86 m

highest point: Mount McKinley 6,194 m

Natural resources: coal, copper, lead, molybdenum, phosphates, uranium, bauxite, gold, iron, mercury, nickel, potash, silver, tungsten, zinc, petroleum, natural gas, timber

Land use:

arable land: 19%

permanent crops: 0%

permanent pastures: 25%

forests and woodland: 30%

other: 26% (1993 est.)

Irrigated land: 207,000 sq km (1993 est.)

Natural hazards: tsunamis, volcanoes, and earthquake activity around Pacific Basin; hurricanes along the Atlantic coast; tornadoes in the midwest; mud slides in California; forest fires in the west; flooding; permafrost in northern Alaska is a major impediment to development

Environment—current issues: air pollution resulting in acid rain in both the US and Canada; the US is the largest single emitter of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels; water pollution from runoff of pesticides and fertilizers; very limited natural fresh water resources in much of the western part of the country require careful management; desertification

Environment—international agreements:

party to: Air Pollution, Air Pollution-Nitrogen Oxides, Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic Treaty, Climate Change, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Marine Dumping, Marine Life Conservation, Nuclear Test Ban, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: Air Pollution-Volatile Organic Compounds, Biodiversity, Desertification, Hazardous Wastes

Geography—note: world's third-largest country (after Russia and Canada)

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Population: 270,311,756 (July 1998 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 22% (male 29,952,220; female 28,560,357)

15-64 years: 66% (male 88,113,895; female 89,399,501)

65 years and over: 12% (male 14,088,571; female 20,197,212) (July 1998 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.87% (1998 est.)

Birth rate: 14.4 births/1,000 population (1998 est.)

Death rate: 8.8 deaths/1,000 population (1998 est.)

Net migration rate: 3 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1998 est.)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

under 15 years: 1.05 male(s)/female

15-64 years: 0.99 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.7 male(s)/female (1998 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 6.44 deaths/1,000 live births (1998 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 76.13 years

male: 72.85 years

female: 79.58 years (1998 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.07 children born/woman (1998 est.)

Nationality:

noun: American(s)

adjective: American

Ethnic groups: white 83.4%, black 12.4%, Asian 3.3%, Amerindian 0.8% (1992)

Religions: Protestant 56%, Roman Catholic 28%, Jewish 2%, other 4%, none 10% (1989)

Languages: English, Spanish (spoken by a sizable minority)

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 97%

male: 97%

female: 97% (1979 est.)

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Country name:

conventional long form: United States of America

conventional short form: United States

abbreviation: US or USA

Data code: US

Government type: federal republic; strong democratic tradition

National capital: Washington, DC

Administrative divisions: 50 states and 1 district*; Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia*, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming

Dependent areas: American Samoa, Baker Island, Guam, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Islands, Navassa Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palmyra Atoll, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Wake Island

note: from 18 July 1947 until 1 October 1994, the US administered the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, but recently entered into a new political relationship with all four political units: the Northern Mariana Islands is a Commonwealth in political union with the US (effective 3 November 1986); Palau concluded a Compact of Free Association with the US (effective 1 October 1994); the Federated States of Micronesia signed a Compact of Free Association with the US (effective 3 November 1986); the Republic of the Marshall Islands signed a Compact of Free Association with the US (effective 21 October 1986)

Independence: 4 July 1776 (from England)

National holiday: Independence Day, 4 July (1776)

Constitution: 17 September 1787, effective 4 March 1789

Legal system: based on English common law; judicial review of legislative acts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President William Jefferson CLINTON (since 20 January 1993) and Vice President Albert GORE, Jr. (since 20 January 1993); *note*—the president is both the chief of state and head of government

head of government: President William Jefferson CLINTON (since 20 January 1993) and Vice President Albert GORE, Jr. (since 20 January 1993); *note*—the president is both the chief of state and head of government

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president with Senate approval

elections: president and vice president elected on the same ticket by a college of representatives who are elected directly from each state; president and vice president serve four-year terms; election last held 5 November 1996 (next to be held 7 November 2000)

election results: William Jefferson CLINTON elected president; percent of popular vote - William Jefferson CLINTON (Democratic Party) 49.2%, Bob DOLE (Republican Party) 40.7%, Ross PEROT (Reform Party) 8.4%, other 1.7%

Legislative branch: bicameral Congress consists of Senate (100 seats, one-third are renewed every two years; two members are elected from each state by popular vote to serve six-year terms) and House of Representatives (435 seats; members are directly elected by popular vote to serve two-year terms)

elections: Senate—last held 5 November 1996 (next to be held 2 November 1998); House of Representatives—last held 5 November 1996 (next to be held 2 November 1998)

election results: Senate—percent of vote by party—NA; seats by party—Republican Party 55, Democratic Party 45; House of Representatives—percent of vote by party—NA; seats by party—Republican Party 227, Democratic Party 205, independent 1, vacant 2

Judicial branch: Supreme Court, justices are appointed for life by the president with confirmation by the Senate

Political parties and leaders: Republican Party, Jim NICHOLSON, national committee chairman; Democratic Party, Steve GROSSMAN, national committee chairman; several other groups or parties of minor political significance

International organization participation: AfDB, AG (observer), ANZUS, APEC, AsDB, Australia Group, BIS, CCC, CE (observer), CP, EAPC, EBRD, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, FAO, G- 2, G- 5, G- 7, G- 8, G-10, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IEA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Inmarsat, Intelsat, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO, ITU, MINUGUA, MINURSO, MIPONUH, MTCR, NATO, NEA, NSG, OAS, OECD, OSCE, PCA, SPC, UN, UN Security Council, UNCTAD, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNIKOM, UNMIBH, UNOMIG, UNPREDEP, UNRWA, UNTSO, UNU, UPU, WCL, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WToO, WTrO, ZC

Flag description: thirteen equal horizontal stripes of red (top and bottom) alternating with white; there is a blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side corner bearing 50 small white five-pointed stars arranged in nine offset horizontal rows of six stars (top and bottom) alternating with rows of five stars; the 50 stars represent the 50 states, the 13 stripes represent the 13 original colonies; known as Old Glory; the design and colors have been the basis for a number of other flags including Chile, Liberia, Malaysia, and Puerto Rico

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Economy—overview: The US has the most powerful, diverse, and technologically advanced economy in the world, with a per capita GDP of \$30,200, the largest among major industrial nations. In this market-oriented economy, private individuals and business firms make most of the decisions, and government buys needed goods and services predominantly in the private marketplace. US business firms enjoy considerably greater flexibility than their counterparts in Western Europe and Japan in decisions to expand capital plant, lay off surplus workers, and develop new products. At the same time, they face higher barriers to entry in their rivals' home markets than the barriers to entry of foreign firms in US markets. In all economic sectors, US firms are at or near the forefront in technological advances, especially in computers and in medical, aerospace, and military equipment, although their advantage has narrowed since the end of World War II. The onrush of technology largely explains the gradual development of a "two-tier labor market" in which those at the bottom lack the education and the professional/technical skills of those at the top and, more and more, fail to get pay raises, health insurance coverage, and other benefits. The years 1994-97 witnessed moderate gains in real output, low inflation rates, and a drop in unemployment below 6%. Long-term problems include inadequate investment in economic infrastructure, rapidly rising medical costs of an aging population, sizable trade deficits, and stagnation of family income in the lower economic groups. The outlook for 1998 is for continued moderate growth, low inflation, and about the same level of unemployment. Two shadows for 1998 are the severe financial crises in East Asia and the exuberant level of stock prices in relation to corporate earnings.

GDP: purchasing power parity—\$8.083 trillion (1997 est.)

GDP—real growth rate: 3.8% (1997)

GDP—per capita: purchasing power parity—\$30,200 (1997 est.)

GDP—composition by sector:

agriculture: 2%

industry: 23%

services: 75% (1997 est.)

Inflation rate—consumer price index: 2% (1997)

Labor force:

total: 136.3 million (includes unemployed) (1997)

by occupation: managerial and professional 29.1%, technical, sales and administrative support 29.6%, services 13.5%, manufacturing, mining, transportation, and crafts 25.1%, farming, forestry, and fishing 2.7%

Unemployment rate: 4.9% (1997)

Budget:

revenues: \$1.579 trillion

expenditures: \$1.601 trillion, including capital expenditures of \$NA (1997)

Industries: leading industrial power in the world, highly diversified and technologically advanced; petroleum, steel, motor vehicles, aerospace, telecommunications, chemicals, electronics, food processing, consumer goods, lumber, mining

Industrial production growth rate: 3.9% (1997)

Electricity—capacity: 741.589 million kW (1995)

Electricity—production: 3.585 trillion kWh (1995)

Electricity—consumption per capita: 13,732 kWh (1995)

Agriculture—products: wheat, other grains, corn, fruits, vegetables, cotton; beef, pork, poultry, dairy products; forest products; fish

Exports:

total value: \$625.1 billion (f.o.b., 1996)

commodities: capital goods, automobiles, industrial supplies and raw materials, consumer goods, agricultural products

partners: Canada 22%, Western Europe 21%, Japan 11%, Mexico 8% (1995)

Imports:

total value: \$822 billion (c.i.f., 1996)

commodities: crude oil and refined petroleum products, machinery, automobiles, consumer goods, industrial raw materials, food and beverages

partners: Canada, 20%, Western Europe 18%, Japan 16.5%, Mexico 8% (1995)

Debt—external: \$862 billion (1995 est.)

Economic aid:

donor: ODA, \$9.721 billion (1993)

Currency: 1 United States dollar (US\$) = 100 cents

Exchange rates: British pounds (£) per US\$—0.6115 (January 1998), 0.6106 (1997), 0.6403 (1996), 0.6335 (1995), 0.6529 (1994), 0.6658 (1993); Canadian dollars (Can\$) per US\$—1.4408 (January 1998), 1.3846 (1997), 1.3635 (1996), 1.3724 (1995), 1.3656 (1994), 1.2901 (1993); French francs (F) per US\$—6.0836 (January 1998), 5.8367 (1997), 5.1155 (1996), 4.9915 (1995), 5.5520 (1994), 5.6632 (1993); Italian lire (Lit) per US\$—1,787.7 (January 1997), 1,703.1 (1997), 1,542.9 (1996), 1,628.9 (1995), 1,612.4 (1994), 1,573.7 (1993); Japanese yen (¥) per US\$—129.45 (January 1998), 120.99 (1997), 108.78 (1996), 94.06 (1995), 102.21 (1994), 111.20 (1993); German deutsche marks (DM) per US\$ - 1.8167 (January 1998), 1.7341 (1997), 1.5048 (1996), 1.4331 (1995), 1.6228 (1994), 1.6533

(1993)

Fiscal year: 1 October—30 September

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Telephones: 182.558 million (1987 est.)

Telephone system:

domestic: a large system of fiber-optic cable, microwave radio relay, coaxial cable, and domestic satellites carries conventional telephone traffic; a rapidly growing cellular system carries mobile telephone traffic throughout country

international: 24 ocean cable systems in use; satellite earth stations—61 Intelsat (45 Atlantic Ocean and 16 Pacific Ocean) (1990 est.), 5 Intersputnik (Atlantic Ocean region), and 4 Inmarsat (Pacific and Atlantic Ocean regions)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 4,987, FM 4,932, shortwave 0

Radios: 540.5 million (1992 est.)

Television broadcast stations: 1,092 (in addition, there are about 9,000 cable TV systems)

Televisions: 215 million (1993 est.)

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Railways:

total: 240,000 km mainline routes (nongovernment owned)

standard gauge: 240,000 km 1.435-m gauge (1989)

Highways:

total: 6.42 million km

paved: 3,903,360 km (including 88,400 km of expressways)

unpaved: 2,516,640 km (1996 est.)

Waterways: 41,009 km of navigable inland channels, exclusive of the Great Lakes

Pipelines: petroleum products 276,000 km; natural gas 331,000 km (1991)

Ports and harbors: Anchorage, Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Chicago, Duluth, Hampton Roads, Honolulu, Houston, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Port Canaveral, Portland (Oregon), Prudhoe Bay, San Francisco, Savannah, Seattle, Tampa, Toledo

Merchant marine:

total: 286 ships (1,000 GRT or over) totaling 9,627,000 GRT/13,257,000 DWT

ships by type: bulk 15, container 79, chemical tanker 15, roll-on/roll-off 28, liquefied gas tanker 13, cruise/passenger 3, tanker 94, tanker tug-barge 12, other 27

note: in addition, there are 192 government-owned vessels (1997 est.)

Airports: 14,574 (1997 est.)

Airports—with paved runways:

total: 5,167

over 3,047 m: 181
2,438 to 3,047 m: 218
1,524 to 2,437 m: 1,280
914 to 1,523 m: 2,450
under 914 m: 1,038 (1997 est.)

Airports—with unpaved runways:

total: 9,407
over 3,047 m: 1
2,438 to 3,047 m: 6
1,524 to 2,437 m: 164
914 to 1,523 m: 1,686
under 914 m: 7,550 (1997 est.)

Heliports: 109 (1997 est.)

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Military branches: Department of the Army, Department of the Navy (includes Marine Corps), Department of the Air Force
note: the Coast Guard falls under the Department of Transportation, but in wartime reports to the Department of the Navy

Military manpower—military age: 18 years of age

Military manpower—availability:
males age 15-49: 69,672,519 (1998 est.)

Military manpower—fit for military service:
males: NA

Military manpower—reaching military age annually:
males: 1,990,912 (1998 est.)

Military expenditures—dollar figure: \$267.2 billion (1997 est.)

Military expenditures—percent of GDP: 3.4% (1997 est.)

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Disputes—international: maritime boundary disputes with Canada (Dixon Entrance, Beaufort Sea, Strait of Juan de Fuca, Machias Seal Island); US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay is leased from Cuba and only mutual agreement or US abandonment of the area can terminate the lease; Haiti claims Navassa Island; US has made no territorial claim in Antarctica (but has reserved the right to do so) and does not recognize the claims of any other nation; Marshall Islands claims Wake Island

Illicit drugs: consumer of cocaine shipped from Colombia through Mexico and the Caribbean; consumer of heroin, marijuana, and increasingly methamphetamines from Mexico; consumer of high-quality Southeast Asian heroin; illicit producer of cannabis, marijuana, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and methamphetamines; drug money-laundering center

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