



Michigan in Brief: Information About the State of Michigan

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Michigan Facts

State Name: Michigan

Name Origin: Derived from the Indian words "Michi-gama" meaning "large lake."

Nickname: "The Wolverine State"

Statehood: January 26, 1837 (26th)

Capital: Lansing, since 1847

State Motto: Si Quaeris Peninsulam Amoenam Circumspice -- "If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look about you."

Population: According to the 2000 Census, the population of Michigan is 9,938,444 (8th). The cities with the largest population:

Detroit	951,270
Grand Rapids	197,800
Warren	138,247
Flint	124,943
Sterling Heights	124,471
Lansing	119,128
Ann Arbor	114,024
Livonia	100,545

Area:

- 56,809 square miles of land
- 1,305 square miles of inland water
- 38,575 square miles of Great Lakes water area
- 3,288 miles of Great Lakes shoreline
- Length: 456 miles
- Width: 386 miles
- Northwest to Southeast corner: 456 miles
- 11,037 inland lakes

Representatives in U.S. Congress: 16

State Senators: 38

State Representatives: 110

State Symbols

Flower: Apple Blossom (Joint Resolution 10 of 1897)

Bird: Robin (House Concurrent Resolution 30 of 1931)

Tree: White Pine (Act 7 of 1955)

Stone: Petoskey Stone (Act 89 of 1965)

Gem: Chlorastrolite (Act 56 of 1972)

Fish: Brook Trout (Act 5 of 1988)

Soil: Kalkaska Soil Series (Act 302 of 1990)

Reptile: Painted Turtle (Act 281 of 1995)

Game Mammal: White-tailed Deer (Act 15 of 1997)

Wildflower: Dwarf Lake Iris (Act 454 of 1998)

Great Seal and State Flag

Michigan's current State Flag and Great Seal were adopted by the Legislature in 1911, and reflect the ideas and design of Lewis Cass, second Governor of the Michigan Territory from 1813-1831.

Michigan's great animals are depicted on the Great Seal, with the elk on the left and the moose on the right supporting the shield. The Latin motto "Tuebor" translates as "I will protect".

Written below the shield is the inscription, "Si Quaeris Peninsulam Amoenam Circumspice, If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look about you." This reference was to the Lower Peninsula, because the Upper Peninsula was not added until after the Seal was adopted in 1837. It was in compensation for the loss of a strip of land on our southern border, which was obtained by Ohio when Congress recognized Michigan as a state.

Shown above the shield with the eagle is the motto of the United States - "E Pluribus Unum" (out of many, one).

The interior of the shield has a sun rising over a lake. This scene calls attention to a man standing on a peninsula. The figure has his right hand raised, symbolizing peace. He holds a rifle in his left hand, meaning that he also stands ready to defend the state and nation.

Selected Dates in Michigan History

- 1622** French explorers Étienne Brulé, and his companion Grenoble, are probably the first white men to see Lake Superior.
- 1668** Fathers Jacques Marquette and Claude Dablon establish the first mission at Sault Sainte Marie.
- 1701** Detroit is founded as Fort Pontchartrain by Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac.
- 1715** The French establish Fort Michilimackinac at the Straits of Mackinac.
- 1760** The French surrender Fort Pontchartrain to the British, ending French rule in Detroit.
- 1763** During the Indian wars in the area, Pontiac leads a 135-day siege of Detroit. Indians capture all the forts in Michigan, except Detroit.
- 1787** The (Northwest) Ordinance of 1787 defines the procedure for obtaining statehood in the Northwest Territory, of which Michigan is a part.
- 1792** Under the British Parliament's Constitutional Act, the first election is held in Michigan.
- 1796** The British evacuate Detroit and abandon their posts on the Great Lakes.
- 1805** The Michigan Territory is created, with Detroit designated as the seat of government. William Hull is appointed as governor. Detroit is destroyed by fire.
- 1812** Detroit and Fort Mackinac are surrendered to the British during the War of 1812.
- 1813** American forces reenter Detroit. Lewis Cass is appointed military and civil governor of the Michigan Territory.
- 1819** The Treaty of Saginaw cedes nearly 6 million acres of Indian lands to Michigan settlers. Michigan sends a delegate to Congress.
- 1828** The Territorial Capitol is built at Detroit for a cost of \$24,500.
- 1835** The Toledo War ensues over the Michigan-Ohio boundary. Michigan was not admitted to the Union because she would not surrender her claim to the Toledo strip. The area was finally surrendered in exchange for the western section of the Upper Peninsula.
- 1835** The First Constitutional Convention. Stevens T. Mason is inaugurated as the first Governor.
- 1837** Michigan is admitted to the Union as the twenty-sixth state.
- 1841** The University of Michigan is moved from Detroit to Ann Arbor.
- 1842** Copper mining operations begin near Keweenaw Point.
- 1844** Iron ore is discovered in the Upper Peninsula at Negaunee.
- 1847** A law is passed by the State Legislature to locate the State Capital "in the township of Lansing, in the county of Ingham."
- 1854** The Republican Party is organized at Jackson.
- 1855** The ship canal at Sault Ste. Marie opens.

- 1861-1865** Over 90,000 Michigan men are mustered into service during the Civil War.
- 1879** The new State Capitol is dedicated in Lansing; the structure cost \$1,510,130.
- 1908** The Ford Model T is first manufactured.
- 1910** The first primary election in Michigan is held.
- 1920** Detroit's WWJ begins commercial broadcasting of regular programs, the first such radio station in the United States.
- 1930** The Detroit-Windsor Tunnel opens to automobile traffic.
- 1935** In the midst of the Great Depression, the United Automobile Workers of America (UAW) is organized in Detroit.
- 1941** Auto plants are converted to the production of war materials, helping Michigan become known as the "Arsenal of Democracy."
- 1957** The five-mile long Mackinac Bridge opens on November 1.
- 1959** Berry Gordy, Jr. founds Motown Records in Detroit.
- 1963** The new State Constitution is ratified at the April election.
- 1967** Riots erupt in Detroit amidst racial tensions.
- 1974** Gerald R. Ford of Grand Rapids becomes the 38th President of the United States.
- 1976** Throwaway bottles are banned by a referendum vote.
- 1977** The Renaissance Center is dedicated, marking a revival of downtown Detroit.
- 1980** The Republican National Convention is held in Detroit.
- 1981** The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum are dedicated in Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, respectively.
- 1987** Michigan celebrates 150 years of statehood.
- 1989** The Michigan Library and Historical Center is dedicated in Lansing.
- 1992** Michigan State University hosts the third and final Presidential debate. The State Capitol building is fully restored and rededicated.
- 1992** A constitutional amendment is adopted limiting the number of terms an official can serve as governor or as a federal or state Senator or Representative.
- 1998** The J. L. Hudson's building in Detroit is demolished. Chrysler Corporation merges with the German auto company Daimler-Benz, forming DaimlerChrysler.
- 2001** Detroit celebrates its 300th anniversary.

People

Following the prehistoric inhabitants, Michigan's residents were the tribal groups of Ojibwa, Ottawa and Potawatomi Native Americans. The first Europeans were the French and French-Canadians in the 1600s and early 1700s, followed by the British in the late 1700s. The great waves of immigration into Michigan began in the early 1800s, as New Englanders moved into Michigan's southern counties in large numbers. Attracted to the state's lumber, mining, and automobile industries, at least forty national and ethnic groups arrived in sizeable numbers during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Dutch, Germans and Poles were among the largest of these later groups.

In more recent migrations many African-Americans, Asians, Near Eastern and people of Spanish origin have made Michigan their home. So many ethnic groups are present in the state that weekly Ethnic Festivals in Detroit begin in May and continue through September each year.

Today's population of 9,938,444 is a highly centralized one. Thirty-five of the 83 counties have populations of over 50,000 and 20 have over 100,000 people. All but two of these counties are in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula. Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties alone account for over 40 percent of the state's total population.

Industry

The three largest income-producing industries in Michigan are manufacturing, tourism and agriculture. The total workers in the Michigan labor force number 5,731,330 (State Profile, 2001).

Manufacturing. The state will always be associated with the automobile, and Michigan leads the nation in automobile manufacturing. In addition to transportation-related items, Michigan manufactures a wide variety of products. These include non-electric machinery, furniture and appliances, cereal, baby food, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and lumber. The number of workers in manufacturing jobs totals 1,021,510 (State Profile, 2001).

Tourism. The tourist business is one of Michigan's largest income producers. In 1997, domestic tourist activity in the state reached a spending level of \$9.5 billion, helping make Michigan one of the largest travel states in the United States. (Travel Michigan). At one time, tourism was primarily a summer season activity, along with several weeks of bird and deer hunting. Winter brings skiing, skating, ice fishing, small game hunting and snowmobiling. Spring still means trout and bass fishing and getting the boat ready for summer and its traditional sports.

Sightseeing at both historic and natural landmarks continues to increase. Among the best known tourist attractions are the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, Detroit's auto plants, Cranbrook, the State Capitol, Holland's Tulip Festival and Windmill Island, Sleeping Bear Dunes, the Straits area (with Fort Michilimackinac, the Mackinac Bridge and Mackinac Island), the Soo Locks, Isle Royale, the Porcupine Mountains, Pictured Rocks and Tahquamenon Falls.

Agriculture. In spite of urban expansion into farm acres, the state still has approximately 53,000 farms with a total of some 10,400,000 acres (Michigan Agricultural Statistics 1999-2000). The state ranks first nationally in the production of red tart cherries, dry beans, blueberries, pickling cucumbers, and potted Easter lilies and geraniums.

In addition to beans and wheat, principal field crops are oats, hay, corn, rye, potatoes, soybeans and sugarbeets. The state is a major producer of apples, plums, peaches, grapes, mushrooms, sweet cherries, fresh-market and processing vegetables, and has long been a major supplier of spearmint.

Michigan ranked 9th nationally in milk production in 1999, accounting for 3.4% of U.S. production.

Livestock in Michigan in 1999 totaled 1,010,000 cattle, 68,000 sheep and 980,000 swine. Total value of production from eggs, broilers and other chickens was over \$60 million in 1999. In 1999, the state's 68,000 sheep yielded 445,000 pounds of wool.

Government

Michigan's government follows the federal plan of three branches - executive, legislative and judicial. In both the executive and legislative branches, elected state officials are limited in the number of terms they can serve in particular positions.

Executive Branch. The Constitution of 1963 provided that the chief executive officer, the governor (and lieutenant governor), be elected for 4 years, and that the executive branch be grouped into no more than 20 administrative departments. The governor's chief responsibility is to enforce state laws and maintain order. He submits a suggested legislative program and a proposed budget to the legislature. He appoints certain officials to various state boards and commissions with the consent of the Senate. Most state employees work under a comprehensive Civil Service plan.

Legislative Branch. Michigan's bicameral legislature consists of a 38 member Senate elected for 4-year terms and a 110 member House of Representatives elected for 2 years. The lieutenant governor acts as president of the Senate; members of the majority party elect the Speaker of the House. Because of the large number of bills introduced at each session, the legislature exercises its law-making function through a system of standing committees and with the assistance of the bipartisan legislative council.

Judiciary. The State Supreme Court is Michigan's highest court. It has final jurisdiction over other courts in the state. Immediately below it is the Court of Appeals, established by the 1963 Constitution as an intermediate appellate court between the Supreme Court and lower courts.

Circuit Courts have original jurisdiction over major civil and criminal cases. The state is divided into 57 judicial circuits, each of which consists of from one to four counties. There are 78 Probate Courts which handle juvenile matters, guardianships, wills and estates. Courts of limited jurisdiction such as the Court of Claims were provided for in the 1963 Constitution.

Public Act 154 of 1968 established a new District Court system which replaced justices of the peace and most municipal courts. There currently are 101 district courts and six municipal courts remain.

Resources

Mineral Resources. From 1845 to 1877, Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula mines produced more native copper ore than any other mining area in North America. The quantity of Michigan's native copper was unsurpassed in the world. These easily mined copper deposits have been greatly exhausted, and Michigan's last copper mine closed in October 1995. Michigan's Lake Superior region also has geologic formations containing large concentrations of iron. Most surface iron now has been depleted, requiring the use of underground mines. Today, only one company perform the costly extracting of iron from two mines located in the Upper Peninsula (Michigan Manual 1999-2000).

Oil and gas fields are found in 63 of Michigan's 83 counties. Over the years, more than 1.2 billion barrels of oil and 4.5 trillion cubic feet of gas have withdrawn from Michigan's rock formations.

Water Resources. Michigan's water resources provide her with a mild climate, a ready source of power and transportation, and a growing tourist industry. The state's two peninsulas are almost surrounded by four of the Great Lakes: Huron, Michigan, Erie and Superior. Michigan has 11,037 inland lakes, of which the largest is Houghton Lake, with an area of 31.3 square miles. Torch Lake, the second largest, is also the deepest, reaching a 297 foot depth at one point. Lake Gogebic is the largest lake in the Upper Peninsula.

Michigan has 36,350 miles of rivers, most of which are not very long. Generally they flow through shallow valleys. In the Lower Peninsula, there are many rapids but only one major waterfall, Ocqueoc Falls. In the Upper Peninsula where the streams flow over upthrust rocky strata, there are about 150 waterfalls, the largest being Tahquamenon Falls.

The Saginaw River is only 20 miles long, but with its tributaries is the largest drainage system in the state. The Grand River has the second largest drainage basin and is the longest in actual length. Other important streams include the Muskegon and the AuSable Rivers, famed in logging days, now noted fishing streams. Three short rivers are vital to the economy of the state; the Detroit, St. Clair and St. Mary's River, with its Soo Locks, carry the world's goods between the Great Lakes.

Forests. About 50% of the state's total land area is covered with 19.3 million acres of forests, two-thirds of which is birch, aspen and oak. Michigan timberland, or forest lands capable of producing commercial timber, accounts for 18.6 million acres of forest land, representing the fifth-largest timberland acreage in the continental United States. Softwoods cover 25% and hardwoods 75% of the timberland. From an economic perspective, forest-based industries, recreation and tourism support 200,000 jobs statewide and contribute over \$12 billion to the state's economy.

Wildlife. The wildlife of Michigan has from the earliest period been a major asset of the state. The fur-bearing animals brought the French and British while the game provided food and clothing for the pioneers. Michigan still has a wealth of big game, small game, fowl and fish. The white-tailed deer and black bear are probably the most common large animals; some moose and timber wolves live on Isle Royale. Coyotes, bobcats and red fox are other animals in both peninsulas.

Rabbits and squirrels are the chief small game animals in Michigan. Other small animals include opossum, mink, otter, muskrat, skunk and porcupine.

Three hundred fifty-one species of birds have been found in Michigan. Ruffed grouse or partridge, ring-necked pheasant and sharptail grouse are important game birds. Waterfowl are also important - many ducks, geese and loons live in or migrate through Michigan.

Land birds outnumber waterfowl in numbers of species with nearly 200 species of nongame land birds found in the state. The Jackpine or Kirtland's warbler is Michigan's own bird since the plains of Oscoda and Crawford Counties are its only breeding grounds.

Michigan's Great Lakes location and large number of lakes and streams have given her a wealth of fish life. Of the 149 types of native fishes, about 25 species are pursued for sport. Lake trout and whitefish have been important food fish to Native Americans before the arrival of white men - brook, brown and rainbow trout are popular game fish. Since being introduced, coho and chinook salmon have rapidly become important game fish.

Education

Michigan's educational system dates back to its first Constitution, which provided for a superintendent to develop a state system of public education. That system of primary grades, grammar schools, high schools and state universities continues to provide the basis for Michigan's education.

Education is compulsory for all Michigan children from 6 to 16 years of age. In 2000, there were 1,743,264 pupils enrolled in 555 public elementary and secondary school districts with 104,456 classroom teachers (QED State School Guide, 18th ed.).

The state university system dates back to territorial days when the University of Michigan was chartered in 1817. Its successor, the present University of Michigan, was established in Ann Arbor in 1837. In 1855, Michigan pioneered in agricultural education when it started a state agricultural college (now Michigan State University). It was the first Land Grant College under the Morrill Act.

The 15 public four-year higher education institutions enrolled 256,905 students in fall 1999, while 54 private colleges reported 84,974 students (Michigan Information Center). The 28 public community colleges enrolled 193,190 students in fall 2000 (Michigan Community College Association).

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