

Facts on Virginia

FACTS ON VIRGINIA

Capitol Building, Richmond



Photo courtesy of the Governor's Office

The cornerstone for the Virginia Capitol Building was laid on August 18, 1785; the building was completed in 1792. Modeled after the Maison Carree at Nimes, France, the Capitol was the first public building in the United States to be built using the Classical Revival style of architecture. Thomas Jefferson designed the central section of the Capitol, its most outstanding feature being the interior dome, which is undetectable from the exterior; the wings were added in 1906 to house the Senate and House of Delegates. In 2007, in time to receive the Queen of England during the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown Settlement, the Capitol underwent an extensive restoration, renovation and expansion, including the addition of a state of the art Visitor's Center that will ensure that it remains a working capital well into the 21st Century. More information on the Capitol building can be found at <http://www.virginiacapitol.gov/>

Virginia was named for Queen Elizabeth I of England, the "Virgin Queen." Virginia is also known as the "Old Dominion." King Charles II of England gave it this name in appreciation of Virginia's loyalty to the crown during the English Civil War of the mid-1600s. The first permanent English settlement in America was established at Jamestown in 1607; in 1619, the Jamestown colonists established the first representative legislature in America. Virginia entered the Union on June 25, 1788, the tenth state to do so. Virginia and the following three states are designated as Commonwealths: Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. The Virginia state capitol is the second oldest working capitol in the United States, having been in continuous use since 1788.

The following eight U.S. Presidents were born in Virginia: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Zachary Taylor, and Woodrow Wilson, giving Virginia the nickname the "Mother of Presidents."

Virginia is also known as the "Mother of States." All or part of the following eight states were formed from western territory once claimed by Virginia: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Virginia is home to the country's largest port, Hampton Roads, and the second oldest college in America, The College of William and Mary, founded 1693 in Williamsburg. Virginia's Natural Wonders include the Natural Bridge, Natural Chimneys, Natural Tunnel, and Luray Caverns.

FACTS ON VIRGINIA

Population	8,001,024*
Rank in Country	12th
Density per Square Mile	199
Land Area (Square Miles)	42,774
Rank in Country	35th
Capital City	Richmond
Population	204,451
Rank in State	4th
Number of Counties	95
Number of Independent Cities	39
Number of Incorporated Towns	190
Congressional Delegation :	
U.S. Senators	2
U.S. Representatives	11
Electoral College Votes.....	13
State Legislature :	
Senators.....	40
Delegates	100
Ten Largest Counties:	
Fairfax	1,037,605
Prince William.....	379,166
Chesterfield.....	306,670
Loudoun	301,171
Henrico.....	296,415
Arlington	217,483
Stafford.....	124,166
Spotsylvania	120,977
Hanover.....	99,993
Albemarle	94,908

Ten Largest Cities:

Virginia Beach	433,575
Norfolk	233,333
Chesapeake	222,455
Richmond.....	204,451
Newport News.....	193,172
Alexandria.....	150,006
Hampton	144,236
Portsmouth.....	99,321
Roanoke.....	94,482
Suffolk	83,659

Ten Largest Towns:

Blacksburg	42,881
Leesburg	40,927
Herndon	22,241
Christiansburg	19,638
Vienna	15,215
Front Royal	14,573
Culpeper	14,044
Warrenton	9,059
Pulaski	8,937
Wytheville.....	8,225

*Total population according to the 2010 census information. All other numbers are according to the report issued in 2009.

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Official Emblems and Symbols:

State Flower..... Dogwood Blossom
State Tree..... Dogwood
State Bird..... Cardinal
State Dog..... Foxhound
State Fish..... Brook Trout
State Shell..... Oyster

State Beverage..... Milk
State Folk Dance..... Square Dancing
State Insect..... Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly
State Fossil..... Chesapacten Jeffersonius
State Motto..... *Sic Semper Tyrannis*
(Thus Always to Tyrants)
State Bat..... Virginia Big Eared Bat