

Facts on Virginia

Capitol Building, Richmond



Photo provided by the Library of Virginia

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.

FACTS ON VIRGINIA

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.

Population	7,567,500
Rank in Country	12th
Density per Square Mile	191
Land Area (Square Miles)	39,597.8
Rank in Country	35th
Capital City	Richmond
Population	193,777
Rank in State	4th
Number of Counties	95
Number of Independent Cities	40
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.....	1,022,100
Prince William	355,300
Chesterfield.....	286,500
Henrico	283,300
Loudoun.....	252,300
Arlington	195,600
Stafford	117,300
Spotsylvania.....	114,000
Hanover.....	95,100
Albemarle.....	90,400

Ten Largest Cities:	
Virginia Beach.....	438,415
Norfolk.....	231,954
Chesapeake	218,968
Richmond.....	193,777
Newport News	179,899
Hampton	145,579
Alexandria.....	135,337
Portsmouth.....	100,165
Roanoke.....	92,631
Lynchburg.....	66,973
Ten Largest Towns:	
Blacksburg.....	39,130
Leesburg	36,269
Herndon	21,965
Christiansburg.....	17,926
Vienna	14,842
Front Royal	14,499
Culpeper.....	12,047
Pulaski	9,088
Warrenton	8,635
South Boston.....	8,115

FACTS ON VIRGINIA

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