[Coordinates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system): [28.1°N 81.6°W](https://tools.wmflabs.org/geohack/geohack.php?pagename=Florida&amp;params=28.1_N_81.6_W_region%3AUS-FL_type%3Aadm1st_scale%3A3000000)

**Florida**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Florida** | |
| [**State**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._state) | |
| **State of Florida** | |
| [Flag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Florida) | [Seal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seal_of_Florida) |
| [Nickname(s):](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_nicknames) The Sunshine State | |
| [Motto(s):](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_and_territory_mottos) [In God We Trust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_God_We_Trust)[1]  [Anthem:](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_songs) "[Old Folks at Home](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Folks_at_Home)" and "[Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_(Where_the_Sawgrass_Meets_the_Sky))" | |
| Map of the United States with Florida highlighted | |
| **Country** | [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) |
| **Before statehood** [**Admitted to the Union**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_date_of_admission_to_the_Union#List_of_U.S._states) | [Florida Territory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Territory)  March 3, 1845 (27th) |
| [**Capital**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_capitals_in_the_United_States) | [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida) |
| [**Largest city**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states%27_largest_cities_by_population)  [**Largest metro**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Metropolitan_Statistical_Areas) | [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida)  [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) |
| **Government** | |
| * [**Governor**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor_of_Florida)[Ron DeSantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_DeSantis) ([R](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States))) * [**Lieutenant Governor**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lieutenant_Governor_of_Florida)[Jeanette Núñez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanette_N%C3%BA%C3%B1ez) (R)   [**Legislature**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislature)[Florida Legislature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Legislature)   * [**Upper house**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper_house)[Senate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Senate) * [**Lower house**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lower_house)[House of Representatives](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_House_of_Representatives)   [**U.S. senators**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_senators_from_Florida)[Marco Rubio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_Rubio) (R) [Rick Scott](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Scott) (R)  [**U.S. House delegation**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives)14 Republicans  13 Democrats ([list](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_congressional_delegations_from_Florida)) | |
| **Area** | |
| * **Total** | 65,757.70[2] sq mi |

**Florida** (/ˈflɒrɪdə/ ( [listen](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/36/En-us-Florida.ogg)),[10] Spanish pronunciation: [floˈɾiða]) is the southernmost contiguous [state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._state) in the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States). The state is bordered to the west by the [Gulf of Mexico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_of_Mexico), to the northwest by [Alabama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama), to the north by [Georgia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_(U.S._state)), to the east by the [Atlantic Ocean, and to the south by the Straits of Florida. The state's capital,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Straits_of_Florida) [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida)[, was established](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Straits_of_Florida)

[as such in 1823 by the second session of the territorial legislature.[11] . Florida is the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislative_Council_of_the_Territory_of_Florida) [22nd-most extensive](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_area) (65,755 sq mi or 170,300 km2), the [3rd-most populous](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_population) [(21,477,737 inhabitants),[12] and the 8th-most densely populated (384.3/sq mi or 148.4/km2) of the U.S. states.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population_density)

[Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida) is the [most populous municipality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_municipalities_in_Florida) in the [state and the largest city by area in the contiguous United States. The](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contiguous_United_States) [Miami metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) [is Florida's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contiguous_United_States) [most populous urban area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_urbanized_areas_in_Florida_(by_population)).

Florida's $1.0 trillion economy is the fourth largest in the United States.[13] If it were a country, Florida would be the 16th largest economy in the world, and the 58th [most populous as of 2018.[14] In 2017, Florida's per capita personal income was $47,684, ranking 26th in the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_GDP_per_capita_(nominal)) nation.[15] The unemployment rate in September 2018 was 3.5% and ranked as the 18th in the United States.[16] Florida exports nearly $55 billion in goods made in the state, the 8th highest among all states.[17] The [Miami metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) is by far the largest urban economy in Florida and the 12th largest in the United States with a GDP of $345 billion as of 2017.[18] This is more than twice the number of the next metro area, the [Tampa Bay Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay_Area), which has a GDP of $145 billion. Florida is home to 51 of the world's [billionaires](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billionaire) with most of them residing in [South Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida).[19]

The first European contact was made in 1513 by Spanish explorer [Juan Ponce de León](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_Ponce_de_Le%C3%B3n), who called it *la Florida* ([la floˈɾiða] "the land of flowers") upon landing there in the [Easter season](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter_season), known in Spanish as

[*Pascua Florida*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascua_Florida).[20] Florida was a challenge for the

European [colonial powers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonialism) before it gained statehood in the United States in 1845. It was a principal location of the [Seminole Wars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole_Wars) against the [Native Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States), and racial segregation after the [American Civil War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War).

Today, Florida is distinctive for its large [Cuban](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuba) expatriate community and high population growth, as well as for its increasing environmental issues. The state's economy relies mainly on tourism, agriculture, and [transportation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transportation_in_Florida), which developed in the late 19th century. Florida is also renowned for [amusement parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amusement_park), [orange crops, winter vegetables, the Kennedy Space Center, and as a popular destination for retirees. Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kennedy_Space_Center) [is the flattest state in the United States.[21] Lake Okeechobee is the largest freshwater](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Okeechobee) [lake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake) [in Florida.[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Okeechobee)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Area rank** | (170,312 km2)  [22nd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_area) |
| **Dimensions** | |
| * **Length** * **Width** | 447 mi (721 km)  361 mi (582 km) |
| **Elevation** | 100 ft (30 m) |
| **Highest elevation** | 345 ft (105 m) |
| ([Britton Hill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britton_Hill)[3][4]) |  |
| **Lowest elevation** | 0 ft (0 m) |
| (Atlantic Ocean[3]) |  |
| **Population** (2019) | |
| * **Total** * **Rank** * **Density** * **Density rank** * [**Median household income**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Household_income_in_the_United_States#Income_by_state) * **Income rank** | 21,477,737[5]  [3rd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_states_and_territories_of_the_United_States_by_population) 384.3/sq mi (121.0/km2)  [8th](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_states_and_territories_of_the_United_States_by_population_density)  $53,267[6]  40th |
| [**Demonym(s)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demonym) | Floridian, Floridan |
| **Language** | |
| * [**Official language**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_the_United_States) | English[7] |
| * [**Spoken language**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_the_United_States) | Predominantly |
|  | [English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_English) and |
|  | [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language_in_the_United_States)[8] |
| [**Time zones**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_zone) | |
| [**Peninsula and "Big**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bend_(Florida)) | UTC-05:00 |
| [**Bend" region**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bend_(Florida)) | ([Eastern](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Time_Zone)) |
| * **Summer (**[**DST**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daylight_saving_time)**)** | UTC-04:00 ([EDT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Daylight_Time)) |
| [**Panhandle**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Panhandle) **west of the** | UTC-06:00 ([Central](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Time_Zone_(North_America))) |
| [**Apalachicola River**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apalachicola_River) |  |
| * **Summer (**[**DST**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daylight_saving_time)**)** | UTC-05:00 ([CDT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Daylight_Time)) |
| [**USPS abbreviation**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_abbreviations#Postal_codes) | FL |
| [**ISO 3166 code**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISO_3166) | US-FL |
| [**Trad. abbreviation**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_abbreviations#Current_use_of_traditional_abbreviations) | Fla. |
| **Latitude** | 24° 27' N to 31° 00' N |
| **Longitude** | 80° 02' W to 87° 38' W |
| **Website** | [myflorida.com (htt p://myflorida.com)](http://myflorida.com/) |

Florida's close proximity to the ocean influences many aspects of [Florida culture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Florida) and daily life. Florida is a reflection of influences and multiple inheritance; [African](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American), [European](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_American), [indigenous](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_of_the_Americas), and [Latino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic_and_Latino_Americans) heritages can be found in the architecture and cuisine. Florida has [attracted many writers such as Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marjorie_Kinnan_Rawlings) [Ernest Hemingway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Hemingway) [and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marjorie_Kinnan_Rawlings) [Tennessee Williams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennessee_Williams)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marjorie_Kinnan_Rawlings) and continues to attract celebrities and athletes. It is internationally known for golf, tennis, auto racing, and [water sports](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_water_sports). Several beaches in Florida have turquoise and emerald-colored coastal waters.[23]

About two-thirds of Florida occupies a peninsula between the [Gulf of Mexico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_of_Mexico) and the [Atlantic Ocean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean). [Florida has the longest coastline in the contiguous United States, approximately 1,350 miles (2,170 km),](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contiguous_United_States) [not including the contribution of the many barrier islands.[24] Florida has a total of 4,510 islands that are](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrier_island) ten acres or larger in area.[25][26] This is the second- highest number of islands of any state; only [Alaska](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska) has more.[25] It is the only state that borders both the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. Much of the state is at or near sea level and is characterized by [sedimentary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sediment) soil. Florida has the [lowest high point](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_elevation) of any U.S. state. [The American alligator, American crocodile, American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_flamingo) [flamingo, Roseate spoonbill, Florida panther, bottlenose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_bottlenose_dolphin) [dolphin, and manatee can be found in Everglades National Park in the southern part of the state. The](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Everglades_National_Park) climate varies from [subtropical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subtropical) in the north to [tropical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical) in the south.[27] Along with [Hawaii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii), Florida is one of

only two states that have a [tropical climate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_climate), and is the only continental state that has both a tropical climate and a [coral reef](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_reef). The [Florida Reef](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Reef)[28] is the only living [coral barrier reef](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_reef) in the continental United States,[29] and the third-largest coral barrier [reef system in the world (after the Great Barrier Reef and Belize Barrier Reef).[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belize_Barrier_Reef)

[**Florida state symbols**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Florida_state_symbols)

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| **Living insignia** | |
| [**Amphibian**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_amphibians) | [Barking tree frog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyla_gratiosa) |
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| [**Gemstone**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_minerals%2C_rocks%2C_stones_and_gemstones) | [Moonstone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonstone_(gemstone)) |
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**History**

By the 16th century, the earliest time for which there is a historical record, major [Native American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States) groups included the [Apalachee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apalachee) of the [Florida Panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Panhandle), the [Timucua](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timucua) of northern and central Florida, the [Ais](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ais_people) of the central Atlantic coast, the [Tocobaga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tocobaga) of the [Tampa Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay) area, the [Calusa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calusa) of southwest Florida and the [Tequesta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tequesta) of the southeastern coast.

**European arrival**

Florida was the first region of the [continental United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_United_States) to be visited and settled by Europeans. The earliest known European explorers came with the Spanish [conquistador](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conquistador) [Juan Ponce de León](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_Ponce_de_Le%C3%B3n). Ponce de León spotted and landed on the peninsula on April 2, 1513. He named it [*La Florida*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Florida) in recognition of the verdant landscape and [because it was the Easter season, which the Spaniards called *Pascua Florida* (Festival of Flowers). The following day they came ashore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascua_Florida) to seek information and take possession of this new land.[31][32] The story that he was searching for the [Fountain of Youth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fountain_of_Youth) is mythical and appeared only long after his death.[33]

In May 1539, Conquistador [Hernando de Soto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hernando_de_Soto) skirted the coast of



Map of Florida, likely based on the expeditions of [Hernando de Soto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hernando_de_Soto) (1539–1543)

Florida, searching for a deep harbor to land. He described a thick wall of red mangroves spread mile after mile, some reaching as high as 70 feet (21 m), with intertwined and elevated roots making landing difficult.[34] The Spanish introduced [Christianity,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_in_the_United_States) cattle, horses, sheep, the Castilian language, and more to Florida.[35] Spain established several settlements in Florida, with varying degrees of success. In 1559, Don [Tristán de Luna y Arellano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trist%C3%A1n_de_Luna_y_Arellano) established a settlement at present-day [Pensacola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola%2C_Florida), making it the first attempted settlement in Florida, but it was mostly abandoned by 1561.

In 1565, the settlement of [St. Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine%2C_Florida) (San Agustín) was established under the leadership of admiral and governor [Pedro Menéndez de Avilés](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Men%C3%A9ndez_de_Avil%C3%A9s), creating what would become one of the oldest, continuously-occupied European settlements in the continental U.S. and establishing the first generation of Floridanos and the [Government of Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_colonial_governors_of_Florida).[36] Spain maintained strategic control over the region by [converting the local tribes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_missions_in_Florida)

to Christianity. The marriage between Luisa de Abrego, a free black domestic servant from Seville, and Miguel Rodríguez, a white Segovian, occurred in 1565 in St. Augustine. It is the first recorded Christian marriage in the continental United States.[37]

Some Spanish married or had unions with Pensacola, Creek or [African](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ethnic_groups_of_Africa) women, both slave and free, and their descendants created a mixed-race population of [mestizos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mestizo) and [mulattos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mulatto). The Spanish encouraged slaves from the southern British colonies to come to Florida as a refuge, promising freedom in exchange for conversion to [Catholicism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholicism). King [Charles II of Spain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_II_of_Spain) issued a royal proclamation freeing all slaves who fled to Spanish Florida and accepted conversion and baptism. Most went to the area around [St. Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine%2C_Florida), but escaped slaves also reached Pensacola. St. Augustine had mustered an all-black militia unit defending Spain as early as 1683.[38]

The geographical area of [Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Florida) diminished with the establishment of English settlements to the north and French claims to the west. The English attacked St. Augustine, burning the city and its cathedral to the ground several times. Spain built the [Castillo de San Marcos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castillo_de_San_Marcos) in 1672 and [Fort Matanzas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Matanzas) in 1742 to defend Florida's capital city from attacks, and to maintain its [strategic position in the defense of the Captaincy General of Cuba and the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Captaincy_General_of_Cuba) [Spanish West Indies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_West_Indies)[.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Captaincy_General_of_Cuba)



The [Castillo de San Marcos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castillo_de_San_Marcos). Originally white with red corners, its design reflects the colors and shapes of the [Cross of Burgundy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross_of_Burgundy) and the subsequent [Flag of Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Florida).

Florida attracted numerous Africans and African Americans from adjacent British colonies who sought [freedom from slavery. In 1738, Governor Manuel de Montiano established Fort Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose near St. Augustine, a fortified town for escaped slaves to whom Montiano granted citizenship and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Mose_Historic_State_Park) freedom in return for their service in the Florida militia, and which became the first free black settlement legally sanctioned in North America.[39][40]

[In 1763, Spain traded Florida to the Kingdom of Great Britain for control of Havana, Cuba, which had been captured by the British during the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Havana_(1762)) [Seven Years' War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Years%27_War)[. It was part of a large expansion of British territory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Havana_(1762)) following [their victory in the Seven Years' War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Britain_in_the_Seven_Years%27_War). A large portion of the Floridano population left, taking along most of the remaining indigenous population to Cuba.[41] The British soon constructed the King's Road connecting St. Augustine to [Georgia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Province_of_Georgia). The road crossed the [St. Johns River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Johns_River) at a narrow point called *Wacca Pilatka,* or the British name "Cow Ford", ostensibly reflecting the fact that cattle were brought across the river there.[42][43][44]

The British divided and consolidated the Florida [provinces (*Las Floridas*) into East Florida and West Florida, a division the Spanish government kept after](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_West_Florida) the brief British period.[45] The British government gave land grants to officers and soldiers who had fought in the [French and Indian War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_and_Indian_War) in order to encourage settlement. In order to induce settlers to move to Florida, reports of its natural wealth were published in England. A large number of British settlers who were described as being "energetic and of good character" moved to Florida, mostly coming from [South Carolina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina), [Georgia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_(U.S._state)) and England. There was also a group of settlers who came from the colony of



[East Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Florida) and [West Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Florida) in British period (1763–1783)

[Bermuda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bermuda). This would be the first permanent English-speaking population in what is now [Duval County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duval_County%2C_Florida), [Baker County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baker_County%2C_Florida), [St. Johns County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Johns_County%2C_Florida) and [Nassau County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nassau_County%2C_Florida). The British built good public roads and introduced the cultivation of sugar cane, indigo and fruits as well as the export of lumber.[46][47]

The British governors were directed to call general assemblies as soon as possible in order to make laws for the Floridas, and in the meantime they were, with the advice of councils, to establish courts. This was the first introduction of the English-derived legal system which Florida still has today, including [trial by jury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jury_trial), [habeas corpus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habeas_corpus) and county-based government.[46][47] Neither East Florida nor West Florida sent any representatives to Philadelphia to draft the [Declaration of Independence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Declaration_of_Independence). Florida remained a Loyalist stronghold for the duration of the [American Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Revolution).[48]

Spain regained both East and West Florida after Britain's defeat in the American Revolution and the subsequent [Treaty of Versailles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Versailles_(1783)) in 1783, and continued the provincial divisions until 1821.[49]

## Joining the United States; Indian removal

Defense of Florida's northern border with the United States was minor during the second Spanish period. The region became a haven for escaped slaves and a base for Indian attacks against U.S. territories, and the U.S. pressed Spain for reform.

Americans of [English descent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English-American) and Americans of [Scots-Irish descent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotch-Irish_Americans) began [moving into northern Florida from the backwoods of Georgia and South Carolina. Though technically not allowed by the Spanish authorities and the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina) Floridan government, they were never able to effectively police the border region and the backwoods settlers from the United States would continue to immigrate into Florida unchecked. These migrants, mixing with the already present British settlers who had remained in Florida since the British period, would be the progenitors of the population known as [Florida Crackers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Cracker).[50]



A [Cracker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_cracker) cowboy, 19th century

These American settlers established a permanent foothold in the area and

ignored Spanish authorities. The British settlers who had remained also resented Spanish rule, leading to a rebellion in 1810 and the establishment for ninety days of the so-called Free and Independent Republic of [West Florida on September 23. After meetings beginning in June, rebels overcame the garrison at Baton Rouge (now in](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baton_Rouge%2C_Louisiana) [Louisiana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louisiana)[), and unfurled the flag of the new republic: a single white star on a blue field. This](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baton_Rouge%2C_Louisiana) flag would later become known as the "[Bonnie Blue Flag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonnie_Blue_Flag)".

In 1810, parts of West Florida were annexed by proclamation of President [James Madison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Madison), who claimed the [region as part of the Louisiana Purchase. These parts were incorporated into the newly formed Territory of Orleans. The U.S. annexed the Mobile District of West Florida to the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territory_of_Orleans) [Mississippi Territory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi_Territory) [in 1812. Spain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territory_of_Orleans) continued to dispute the area, though the United States gradually increased the area it occupied. In 1812, a group of settlers from Georgia, with de facto support from the U.S. federal government, attempted to overthrow the Floridan government in the province of East Florida. The settlers hoped to convince Floridans to join their cause and proclaim independence from Spain, but the settlers lost their tenuous support from the federal government and abandoned their cause by 1813.[51]

[Seminoles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole) based in [East Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Florida) began raiding Georgia settlements, and offering havens for runaway slaves. The [United States Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army) led increasingly frequent incursions into Spanish territory, including the 1817–1818 campaign against the Seminole Indians by [Andrew Jackson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Jackson) that became known as the [First Seminole War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Seminole_War). The United States now effectively controlled East Florida. Control was necessary according to Secretary of

State [John Quincy Adams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Quincy_Adams) because Florida had become "a derelict open to the occupancy of every enemy, civilized or savage, of the United States, and serving no other earthly purpose than as a post of annoyance to them."[52]

Florida had become a burden to Spain, which could not afford to send settlers or garrisons. Madrid therefore decided to cede the territory to the United States through the [Adams–Onís Treaty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adams%E2%80%93On%C3%ADs_Treaty), which took effect in 1821.[53] President [James Monroe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Monroe) was authorized on March 3, 1821 to take possession of [East Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Florida) and [West Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Florida) for the United States and provide for initial governance.[54] [Andrew Jackson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Jackson), on behalf of the

U.S. federal government, served as a military commissioner with the powers of governor of the newly acquired territory for a brief period.[55] On March 30, 1822, the U.S. Congress merged [East Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Florida) and part of [West Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Florida) into the [Florida Territory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Territory).[56]

By the early 1800s, [Indian removal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_removal) was a significant issue throughout the southeastern U.S. and also in Florida. In 1830, the

U.S. Congress passed the [Indian Removal Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Removal_Act) and as settlement increased, pressure grew on the U.S. government to remove the Indians from Florida. Seminoles offered sanctuary to blacks, and these became known as the [Black Seminoles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Seminoles), and clashes between whites and Indians grew with the influx of new settlers. In 1832, the [Treaty of Payne's Landing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Payne%27s_Landing) promised to the Seminoles lands west of the Mississippi River if they agreed to leave Florida. Many Seminole left at this time.

Some Seminoles remained, and the U.S. Army arrived in Florida, leading to the [Second Seminole War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Seminole_War) (1835–1842). Following the war, approximately 3,000 Seminole and 800 Black Seminole were removed to [Indian Territory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Territory). A few hundred Seminole remained in Florida in the [Everglades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Everglades).

[On March 3, 1845, only one day before the end of President John Tyler's term in office, Florida became the 27th state,[57] admitted as](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Tyler) a [slave state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_state) and no longer a sanctuary for runaway slaves. Initially its population grew slowly.[58]

As European settlers continued to encroach on Seminole lands, the United States intervened to move the remaining Seminoles to the [West. The Third Seminole War (1855–58) resulted in the forced](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail_of_Tears)



A contemporaneous depiction of the [New River Massacre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Cooley#New_River_Massacre) in 1836



The Historic Call-Collins House, the Grove, is an antebellum plantation house built in the 1840s in Tallahassee, Florida.

[removal of most of the remaining Seminoles, although hundreds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail_of_Tears) of Seminole Indians remained in the Everglades.[59]

## Slavery, war, and disenfranchisement

American settlers began to establish cotton [plantations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plantations_in_the_American_South) in north Florida, which required numerous laborers, which they supplied by buying slaves in the domestic market. By 1860, Florida had only 140,424 people, of

whom 44% were enslaved. There were fewer than 1,000 free [African Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_black) before the American Civil War.[60]

On January 10, 1861, nearly all delegates in the Florida Legislature approved an ordinance of secession,[61][62] declaring Florida to be "a sovereign and independent nation"—an apparent reassertion to the preamble in Florida's Constitution of 1838, in which Florida agreed with Congress to be a "Free and

Independent State." Although not mentioning the issue of slavery, the ordinance declared Florida's secession from the [Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_(American_Civil_War)), allowing it to become one of the founding members of the [Confederate States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederate_States_of_America), a looser union of states.

The Confederacy received little help from Florida; the 15,000 men it offered were generally sent elsewhere. Instead of men and manufactured goods, Florida did provide salt and, more importantly, beef to feed the Confederate armies. This was particularly important after 1864, when the Confederacy lost control of the Mississippi River, thereby losing access to Texas beef.[63][64] The largest engagements in the state were the [Battle of Olustee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Olustee), on February 20,



The [Battle of Olustee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Olustee) during the [American Civil War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War), 1864

1864, and the [Battle of Natural Bridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Natural_Bridge), on March 6, 1865. Both were Confederate victories.[65] The war ended in 1865.

## Reconstruction era and end of the 19th century

Following the American Civil War, Florida's [congressional](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Congress) representation was restored on June 25, 1868, albeit forcefully after [Radical Reconstruction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radical_Reconstruction) and the installation of unelected government officials under the final authority of federal military commanders. After the [Reconstruction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_era) period ended in 1876, white Democrats regained power in the state legislature. In 1885, they created a new constitution, followed by statutes through 1889 that [disfranchised](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disfranchisement_after_Reconstruction_era) most blacks and many poor whites.[66]

In the pre-automobile era, railroads played a key role in the state's development, particularly in coastal areas. In 1883, the [Pensacola and Atlantic Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola_and_Atlantic_Railroad) connected Pensacola and the rest of the [Panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Panhandle) to the rest of the state. In 1884 the [South Florida Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida_Railroad) (later absorbed by [Atlantic Coast Line Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Coast_Line_Railroad)) opened full service to [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa). In 1894 the [Florida East Coast Railway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_East_Coast_Railway) reached [West Palm Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Palm_Beach); in 1896 it reached [Biscayne Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biscayne_Bay) near [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami). Numerous other railroads were built all over the interior of the state.

Until the mid-20th century, Florida was the least populous state in the [southern United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_United_States). In 1900, its population was only 528,542, of whom nearly 44% were African American, the same proportion as before the Civil War.[67] The [boll weevil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boll_weevil) devastated cotton crops.

[Forty thousand blacks, roughly one-fifth of their 1900 population levels in Florida, left the state in the Great Migration. They left due to](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Migration_(African_American)) [lynchings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lynching) [and racial violence, and for better opportunities in the North and the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Migration_(African_American)) [West.[68] Disfranchisement for most African Americans in the state persisted until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s gained federal legislation in 1965 to enforce protection of their constitutional](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Rights_Movement) suffrage.

## 20th- and 21st-century growth

Historically, Florida's economy has been based primarily upon agricultural products such as cattle, sugar cane, citrus fruits, tomatoes, and strawberries.

In 1925, the [Seaboard Air Line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seaboard_Air_Line) broke the FEC's southeast Florida monopoly and extended its freight and passenger service to West Palm Beach; two years later it extended passenger service to Miami.

Economic prosperity in the 1920s stimulated tourism to Florida and related development of hotels and resort communities. Combined with its sudden elevation in profile was the [Florida land boom of the 1920s](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_land_boom_of_the_1920s), which brought a brief period of intense land development. Devastating hurricanes in [1926](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1926_Miami_hurricane) and [1928](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1928_Okeechobee_hurricane), followed by

the [Great Depression](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression), brought that period to a halt. Florida's economy did not fully recover until the military buildup for World War II.

In 1939, Florida was described as "still very largely an empty State."[69] Subsequently, the growing availability of [air conditioning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air_conditioning), the climate, and a low cost of living made the state a haven. Migration from the [Rust Belt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rust_Belt) and the Northeast sharply increased Florida's population after 1945. In the 1960s, many refugees from Cuba fleeing [Fidel Castro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidel_Castro)'s communist regime arrived in Miami at the [Freedom Tower](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_Tower_(Miami)), where the federal government used the facility to process, document and provide medical and dental services for the newcomers. As a result, the Freedom Tower was also called the "Ellis Island of the South."[70] In recent decades, more migrants have come for the jobs in a developing economy.

With a population of more than 18 million, according to the 2010 census, Florida is the most populous state in the southeastern United States and the third-most populous in the United States.[71] The population of Florida has boomed in recent years with the state being the recipient of the largest number of out-of-state movers in the country as of 2019.[72] Florida's growth has been widespread, as cities throughout the state have grown since 2010.[73]



[People at the newly opened Don](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Don_CeSar) [Cesar Hotel in St. Pete Beach, Florida in 1928](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Pete_Beach%2C_Florida)



[Miami's Freedom Tower](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_Tower_(Miami))

After [Hurricane Maria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Maria) devastated [Puerto Rico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Rico) in September 2017, a large population of Puerto Ricans began moving to Florida to escape the widespread destruction. Hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans arrived in Florida after Maria dissipated, with nearly half of them arriving in Orlando and large populations also moving to Tampa, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach.[74]

# Geography

Much of Florida is on a peninsula between the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean and the [Straits of Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Straits_of_Florida). Spanning two [time zones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_zone), it extends to the northwest into a [panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salient_(geography)), extending along the northern Gulf of Mexico. It is bordered on the north by [Georgia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_(U.S._state)) and [Alabama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama), and on the west, at the end of the panhandle, by Alabama. It is the only state that borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. Florida also is the southernmost of the 48 contiguous states, [Hawaii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) being the only one reaching farther south. Florida is west of [The Bahamas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bahamas) and 90 miles (140 km) north of [Cuba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuba). Florida is one of the largest states east of the [Mississippi River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi_River), and only [Alaska](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska) and [Michigan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michigan) are larger in water area. The water boundary is 3 nautical miles (3.5 mi; 5.6 km) offshore in the Atlantic Ocean[75] and 9 nautical miles (10 mi; 17 km) offshore in the Gulf of Mexico.[75]

At 345 feet (105 m) [above mean sea level](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Above_mean_sea_level), [Britton Hill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britton_Hill) is the highest point in Florida and the lowest highpoint of any U.S. state.[76] Much of the state south of [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando%2C_Florida) lies at a lower elevation than northern Florida, and is fairly level. Much of the state is at or near sea level. However, some places such as [Clearwater](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clearwater%2C_Florida) have [promontories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promontory) that rise 50 to 100 ft (15 to 30 m) above the water. Much of Central and North Florida, typically 25 mi (40 km) or more away from the coastline, have rolling hills with elevations ranging from 100 to 250 ft (30 to 76 m). The highest point in peninsular Florida (east and south of the [Suwannee River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suwannee_River)), [Sugarloaf Mountain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sugarloaf_Mountain_(Florida)), is a 312-foot (95 m) peak in [Lake County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_County%2C_Florida).[77] On average, Florida is the flattest state in the United States.[21]

## Climate

The climate of Florida is tempered somewhat by the fact that no part of the state is distant from the ocean. North of [Lake Okeechobee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Okeechobee), the prevalent climate is [humid subtropical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humid_subtropical_climate) ([Köppen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6ppen_climate_classification): *Cfa*), while areas south of the lake (including the [Florida Keys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Keys)) have a true [tropical climate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_climate) (Köppen: *Aw*).[78] Mean high temperatures for late July are primarily in the low 90s Fahrenheit (32–34 °C). Mean low temperatures for early to mid January range from the low 40s Fahrenheit (4–

7 °C) in north Florida to above 60 °F (16 °C) from Miami on southward. With an average daily temperature of 70.7 °F

(21.5 °C), it is the warmest state in the U.S.[79][80]

In the summer, high temperatures in the state seldom exceed 100 °F (38 °C).



Florida is mostly low-lying and flat as this topographic map shows.

Several record cold maxima have been in the 30s °F (−1 to 4 °C) and record lows have been in the 10s (−12 to −7 °C). These temperatures normally extend at most a few days at a time in the northern and central parts of Florida. South Florida, however, rarely encounters

below freezing temperatures.[81] The hottest temperature ever

recorded in Florida was 109 °F (43 °C), which was set on June 29, 1931 in [Monticello](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monticello%2C_Florida). The coldest temperature was −2 °F (−19 °C), on February 13, 1899, just 25 miles (40 km) away, in Tallahassee.[82][83]

Due to its subtropical and tropical climate, Florida rarely receives measurable [snowfall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snow_in_Florida).[84] However, on rare occasions, a combination of cold moisture and freezing temperatures can result in snowfall in the farthest northern regions like [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville), [Gainesville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gainesville%2C_Florida) or



The state tree, [Sabal palmetto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabal_palmetto), flourishes in Florida's overall warm climate.

[Pensacola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola). [Frost](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frost), which is more common than [snow](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snow), sometimes occurs in the panhandle.[85] The USDA Plant [hardiness zones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardiness_zone) for the state range from zone 8a (no colder than 10 °F or −12 °C) in the inland western [panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_panhandle) to zone 11b (no colder than 45 °F or 7 °C) in the lower [Florida Keys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Keys).[86] [Fog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fog) also occurs all over the state or climate of Florida.[87]

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Average high and low temperatures for various Florida cities | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **°F** | **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **Apr** | **May** | **Jun** | **Jul** | **Aug** | **Sep** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** |
| [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida)[88] | 65/42 | 68/45 | 74/50 | 79/55 | 86/63 | 90/70 | 92/73 | 91/73 | 87/69 | 80/61 | 74/51 | 67/44 |
| [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami)[89] | 76/60 | 78/62 | 80/65 | 83/68 | 87/73 | 89/76 | 91/77 | 91/77 | 89/76 | 86/73 | 82/68 | 78/63 |
| [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando%2C_Florida)[90] | 71/49 | 74/52 | 78/56 | 83/60 | 88/66 | 91/72 | 92/74 | 92/74 | 90/73 | 85/66 | 78/59 | 73/52 |
| [Pensacola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola%2C_Florida)[91] | 61/43 | 64/46 | 70/51 | 76/58 | 84/66 | 89/72 | 90/74 | 90/74 | 87/70 | 80/60 | 70/50 | 63/45 |
| [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida)[92] | 64/39 | 68/42 | 74/47 | 80/52 | 87/62 | 91/70 | 92/72 | 92/72 | 89/68 | 82/57 | 73/48 | 66/41 |
| [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa%2C_Florida)[93] | 70/51 | 73/54 | 77/58 | 81/62 | 88/69 | 90/74 | 90/75 | 91/76 | 89/74 | 85/67 | 78/60 | 72/54 |

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| **°C** | **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **Apr** | **May** | **Jun** | **Jul** | **Aug** | **Sep** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** |
| [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida) | 18/6 | 20/7 | 23/10 | 26/13 | 30/17 | 32/21 | 33/23 | 33/23 | 31/21 | 27/16 | 23/11 | 19/7 |
| [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami) | 24/16 | 26/17 | 27/18 | 28/20 | 31/23 | 32/24 | 33/25 | 33/25 | 32/24 | 30/23 | 28/20 | 26/17 |
| [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando%2C_Florida) | 22/9 | 23/11 | 26/13 | 28/16 | 31/19 | 33/22 | 33/23 | 33/23 | 32/23 | 29/19 | 26/15 | 23/11 |
| [Pensacola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola%2C_Florida) | 16/6 | 18/8 | 21/11 | 24/14 | 29/19 | 32/22 | 32/23 | 32/23 | 31/21 | 27/16 | 21/10 | 17/7 |
| [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida) | 18/4 | 20/6 | 23/8 | 27/11 | 31/17 | 33/21 | 33/22 | 33/22 | 32/20 | 28/14 | 23/9 | 19/5 |
| [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa%2C_Florida) | 21/11 | 23/12 | 25/14 | 27/17 | 31/21 | 32/23 | 32/24 | 33/24 | 32/23 | 29/19 | 26/16 | 22/12 |

Florida's nickname is the "Sunshine State", but severe weather is a common occurrence in the state. Central Florida is known as the lightning capital of the United States, as it experiences more lightning strikes than anywhere else in the country.[94] Florida has one of the highest average precipitation levels of any state,[95] in large part because afternoon thunderstorms are common in much of the state from late spring until early autumn.[96] A narrow eastern part of the state including Orlando and Jacksonville receives between 2,400 and 2,800 hours of sunshine annually. The rest of the state, including Miami, receives between 2,800 and 3,200 hours annually.[97]

Florida leads the United States in tornadoes per area (when including [waterspouts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waterspout)),[98] but they do not typically reach the intensity of those in the [Midwest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midwest) and [Great Plains](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Plains). [Hail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hail) often accompanies the most severe thunderstorms.[99]

[Hurricanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_cyclone) pose a severe threat each year from June 1 to November 30, particularly from August to October. Florida is the most hurricane-prone state, with subtropical or tropical water on a lengthy coastline. Of the [category 4](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category_4_typhoon) or higher storms that have struck the United States, 83% have either hit Florida or Texas.[100]

From 1851 to 2006, Florida was struck by 114 hurricanes, 37 of them major—[category 3](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saffir%E2%80%93Simpson_scale) and above.[100] It is rare for a hurricane season to pass without any impact in the state by at least a tropical storm.[101]

[In 1992, Florida was the site of what was then the costliest weather disaster in U.S. history, Hurricane Andrew, which caused more than $25 billion in damages when it struck during August; it held that](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Andrew) distinction until 2005, when [Hurricane Katrina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Katrina) surpassed it, and it has since been surpassed by six other hurricanes. Andrew is currently the second costliest hurricane in Florida's history.[102]

## Fauna

Florida is host to many types of wildlife including:

Marine mammals: [bottlenose dolphin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_bottlenose_dolphin), [short-finned pilot whale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short-finned_pilot_whale), [North Atlantic right whale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Atlantic_right_whale), [West Indian manatee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Indian_manatee)

[Mammals: Florida panther, northern river otter, mink, eastern cottontail rabbit,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_cottontail_rabbit) [marsh rabbit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marsh_rabbit)[, raccoon, striped skunk, squirrel,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_cottontail_rabbit) [white-tailed deer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-tailed_deer), [Key deer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_deer), bobcats, [red fox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_fox), [gray fox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gray_fox), coyote, wild boar, [Florida black bear](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_black_bear), [nine-banded armadillos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nine-banded_armadillo), [Virginia opossum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_opossum)

[Reptiles: eastern diamondback and pygmy rattlesnakes, gopher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gopherus_polyphemus) [tortoise, green and leatherback sea turtles,[103] and eastern indigo snake. In 2012, there were about one million](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drymarchon) [American alligators](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_alligator) and 1,500 [crocodiles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_crocodile).[104] Birds: [peregrine falcon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peregrine_falcon),[105] [bald eagle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bald_eagle), [American flamingo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_flamingo),[106] [northern caracara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_caracara), [snail kite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snail_kite), [osprey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osprey), [white](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_white_pelican) [and brown pelicans, sea gulls, whooping and sandhill cranes, roseate spoonbill,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roseate_spoonbill) [American white ibis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_white_ibis)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roseate_spoonbill) [Florida scrub jay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_scrub_jay) [(state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roseate_spoonbill) [endemic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endemism)[),](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roseate_spoonbill) and others. One subspecies of wild turkey, [*Meleagris gallopavo*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meleagris_gallopavo), namely subspecies *osceola*, is found only in Florida.[107] The state is a wintering location for many species of eastern North American birds.

As a result of [climate change](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_change), there have been small numbers of several new species normally native to cooler areas to the north:



An [alligator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_alligator) in the [Florida Everglades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Everglades)



[West Indian manatee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Indian_manatee)

[snowy owls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snowy_owl), [snow buntings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snow_bunting), [harlequin ducks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlequin_duck), and [razorbills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Razorbill). These have been seen in the northern part of the state.[108]

Invertebrates: [carpenter ants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpenter_ants), termites, [American cockroach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_cockroach), [Africanized bees](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africanized_bee), the [Miami blue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_blue) butterfly, and the [grizzled mantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gonatista_grisea).

Florida also has more than 500 nonnative animal species and 1,000 nonnative insects found throughout the [state.[109] Some exotic species living in Florida include the Burmese python, green iguana, veiled chameleon,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veiled_chameleon) [Argentine black and white tegu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argentine_black_and_white_tegu)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veiled_chameleon) [peacock bass](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peacock_bass)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veiled_chameleon) [mayan cichlid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayan_cichlid)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veiled_chameleon) [lionfish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lionfish)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veiled_chameleon) [White-nosed coati](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-nosed_coati)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veiled_chameleon) [rhesus macaque](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhesus_macaque), [vervet monkey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vervet_monkey), [Cuban tree frog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban_tree_frog), [cane toad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cane_toad), [Indian peafowl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_peafowl), [monk parakeet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monk_parakeet), [tui parakeet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tui_parakeet), and many more. Some of these nonnative species do not pose a threat to any native species, but some do threaten the native species of Florida by living in the state and eating them.[110]

## Flora

There are about 3,000 different types of [wildflowers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wildflower) in Florida.[111] This is the third-most diverse state in the union, behind [California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California) and [Texas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas), both larger states.[112] In Florida, wild populations of [coconut palms extend up the East Coast from Key West to Jupiter Inlet, and up the West Coast from](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jupiter_Inlet) [Marco Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_Island) [to](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jupiter_Inlet) [Sarasota](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarasota)[. Many of](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jupiter_Inlet) the smallest coral islands in the [Florida Keys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Keys) are known to have abundant coconut palms sprouting from coconuts deposited by ocean currents. Coconut palms are cultivated north of south Florida to roughly Cocoa Beach on the East Coast and the Tampa Bay Area on the West Coast.[113]



[Red mangroves in Everglades National Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Everglades_National_Park)

On the east coast of the state, [mangroves](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mangroves) have normally dominated the coast from [Cocoa Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cocoa_Beach%2C_Florida) southward; [salt marshes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salt_marsh) from [St. Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine%2C_Florida) northward. From St. Augustine south to Cocoa Beach, the coast fluctuates between the two, depending on the annual weather conditions.[108] All three mangrove species flower in the spring and early summer. Propagules fall from late summer through early autumn. Florida mangrove plant communities covered an estimated 430,000 to 540,000 acres (1,700 to 2,200 km2) in Florida in 1981. Ninety percent of the Florida mangroves are in southern Florida, in [Collier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collier_County%2C_Florida), [Lee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_County%2C_Florida), [Miami-Dade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_County%2C_Florida) and [Monroe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monroe_County%2C_Florida) Counties.

## Florida Reef

The Florida Reef is the only living coral barrier reef in the continental United States.[114] It is also the third largest coral barrier [reef system in the world, after the Great Barrier Reef and the Belize Barrier Reef.[115] The reef lies a little bit off of the coast of the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belize_Barrier_Reef) [Florida Keys. A lot of the reef lies within John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, which was the first](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Pennekamp_Coral_Reef_State_Park) [underwater park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Underwater_park) [in the United](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Pennekamp_Coral_Reef_State_Park) States.[116] The park contains a lot of tropical vegetation, marine life, and seabirds. The Florida Reef extends into other parks and [sanctuaries as well including Dry Tortugas National Park, Biscayne National Park, and the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biscayne_National_Park) [Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Keys_National_Marine_Sanctuary)[.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biscayne_National_Park) Almost 1,400 species of marine plants and animals, including more



[Elkhorn coral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elkhorn_coral) near [Key Largo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_Largo)

than 40 species of [stony corals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stony_corals) and 500 species of fish, live on the Florida Reef.[117] The Florida Reef, being a delicate ecosystem like other coral reefs, faces many threats including [overfishing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overfishing), plastics in the ocean, [coral bleaching](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_bleaching), rising sea levels, and changes in [sea surface temperature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_surface_temperature).

## Environmental issues

Florida is a low per capita energy user.[118] It is estimated that approximately 4% of energy in the state is generated through renewable resources.[119] Florida's energy production is 6% of the nation's total energy output, while total production of pollutants is lower, with figures of 6% for [nitrogen oxide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nitrogen_oxide), 5% for [carbon dioxide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_dioxide), and 4% for [sulfur dioxide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulfur_dioxide).[119] Wildfires in Florida occur at all times of the year.[120]

All potable water resources have been controlled by the state government through five regional water authorities since 1972.[121]



[American flamingos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_flamingos) in [South Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida)

[Red tide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_tide) has been an issue on the southwest coast of Florida, as well

as other areas. While there has been a great deal of conjecture over the cause of the toxic algae bloom, there is no evidence that it is being caused by pollution or that there has been an increase in the duration or frequency of red tides.[122] Red tide is now killing off wildlife or [Tropical fish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_fish) and coral reefs putting all in danger.[123]

The [Florida panther](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_panther) is close to extinction. A record 23 were killed in 2009, mainly by automobile collisions, leaving about 100 individuals in the wild. The [Center for Biological Diversity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Center_for_Biological_Diversity) and others have therefore called for a special [protected area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protected_area) for the panther to be established.[124] [Manatees](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Indian_manatee) are also dying at a rate higher than their reproduction.[125] [American flamingos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_flamingos) are rare to see in Florida due to being hunted in the 1900s, where it was to a point considered completely extirpated. Now the flamingos are reproducing toward

making a comeback to [South Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida) since it is adamantly considered native to the state and also are now being protected.[126][127]

Much of Florida has an elevation of less than 12 feet (3.7 m), [including many populated areas. Therefore, it is susceptible to rising sea levels associated with](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Current_sea_level_rise) [global warming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_warming)[.[128] The Atlantic beaches](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Current_sea_level_rise) that are vital to the state's economy are being washed out to sea due to rising sea levels caused by climate change. The Miami beach area, close to the continental shelf, is running out of accessible offshore sand reserves.[129] Elevated temperatures can damage coral reefs, causing [coral bleaching](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_bleaching). The first recorded bleaching incident on the Florida Reef was in 1973. Incidents of bleaching have become more



An [American alligator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_alligator) and an invasive [Burmese python](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burmese_python) in Everglades National Park

frequent in recent decades, in correlation with a rise in [sea surface temperatures](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_surface_temperature). [White band disease](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_band_disease) has also adversely affected corals on the Florida Reef.[130]

## Geology

The Florida peninsula is a porous [plateau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plateau) of [karst](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karst) [limestone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Limestone) sitting atop [bedrock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedrock) known as the [Florida Platform](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Platform).

The largest deposits of [potash](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Potash) in the United States are found in Florida.[132] The largest deposits of [rock phosphate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phosphorite) in the country are found in Florida.[132] Most of this is in [Bone Valley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bone_Valley).[133]

Extended systems of underwater [caves](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cave), [sinkholes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinkholes) and [springs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_(hydrosphere)) are found throughout the state and supply most of the water used by residents.[134] The limestone is topped with [sandy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sand) soils deposited as ancient beaches over millions of years as global sea levels rose and fell. During the [last glacial period](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_glacial_period), lower sea levels and a drier



The [Florida Keys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Keys) as seen from a satellite.[131]

climate revealed a much wider peninsula, largely [savanna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temperate_grasslands%2C_savannas%2C_and_shrublands).[135] While there are sinkholes in much of the state, modern sinkholes have tended to be in West-[Central Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Florida).[136][137] Everglades National Park covers 1,509,000 acres (6,110 km2), throughout [Dade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_County%2C_Florida), [Monroe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monroe_County%2C_Florida), and [Collier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collier_County%2C_Florida) counties in Florida. The [Everglades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Everglades), an enormously wide, slow-flowing river encompasses the southern tip of the peninsula. Sinkhole damage [claims on property in the state exceeded a total of $2 billion from 2006 through 2010.[138] Winter Park Sinkhole, in central Florida, appeared May 8, 1981. It was approximately 350 feet (107 m) wide and 75 feet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter_Park%2C_Florida#The_Winter_Park_Sinkhole) (23 m) deep. It was notable as one of the largest recent sinkholes to form in the United States. It is now known as Lake Rose.[139] The [Econlockhatchee River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Econlockhatchee_River) (Econ River for short) is an 87.7-kilometer-long (54.5 mi)[140] north-flowing [blackwater](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackwater_river) tributary of the [St. Johns River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Johns_River), the longest river in the [U.S. state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._state) of Florida. The Econ River flows through [Osceola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osceola_County%2C_Florida), [Orange](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_County%2C_Florida), and [Seminole](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole_County%2C_Florida) counties in [Central Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Florida), just east [of the Orlando Metropolitan Area (east of State Road 417). It is a designated Outstanding Florida Waters.[141]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outstanding_Florida_Waters)

Earthquakes are rare because Florida is not located near any [tectonic plate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plate_tectonics) boundaries.[142]

## Regions



All of the 67 counties in Florida

### [Florida Panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Panhandle)

[Emerald Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerald_Coast) [Forgotten Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forgotten_Coast) [North Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Florida)

[Pensacola metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola_metropolitan_area) [Tallahassee metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee_metropolitan_area)

### [North Central Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Central_Florida)

[Big Bend](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bend_(Florida)) [Nature Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nature_Coast) [North Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Florida)

[Gainesville metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gainesville_metropolitan_area%2C_Florida)

### [Northeast Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_Florida)

[First Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Coast)

[Jacksonville metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_metropolitan_area) [North Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Florida)

### [Central West Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_West_Florida)

[Nature Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nature_Coast) [Tampa Bay Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay_Area) [Florida Suncoast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Suncoast)

### [Central Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Florida)

[Greater Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Orlando)

### Central East Florida

[Deltona–Daytona Beach–Ormond Beach metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deltona%E2%80%93Daytona_Beach%E2%80%93Ormond_Beach_metropolitan_area)

[Surf Coast/Fun Coast/Halifax Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halifax_area) [Space Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Coast)

[Treasure Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treasure_Coast)

### [Southwest Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southwest_Florida)

[Florida Heartland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Heartland) [Florida Everglades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Everglades) [Florida Suncoast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Suncoast)

[Sarasota metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarasota_metropolitan_area) [Ten Thousand Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Thousand_Islands)

### [South Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida)

[Everglades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glades_(Florida)) [Gold Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_Coast_(Florida)) [Florida Keys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Keys)

[Miami metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area)

# Demographics

## Population

The [United States Census Bureau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Census_Bureau) estimates that the population of Florida was 21,477,737 on July 1, 2019, a 14.24% increase since the [2010 United States Census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_Census).[144] The population of Florida in the 2010 census was 18,801,310.[145] Florida was the seventh fastest- growing state in the U.S. in the 12-month period ending July 1, 2012.[146] In 2010, the [center of population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Center_of_population) of Florida was located between [Fort Meade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Meade%2C_Florida) and [Frostproof](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frostproof%2C_Florida). The center of population has moved less than 5 miles (8 km) to the east and approximately 1 mile (1.6 km) to the north between 1980 and 2010 and has been located in [Polk County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polk_County%2C_Florida) since the [1960 census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_United_States_Census).[147] The population exceeded

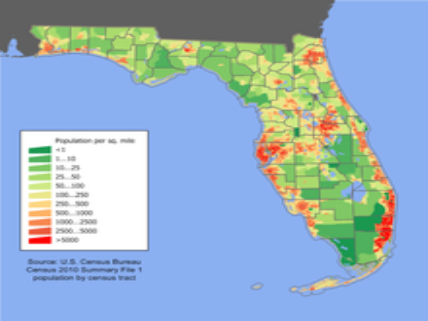
19.7 million by December 2014, surpassing the population of the state of [New York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_(state)) for the first time.[148][149] The Florida population was 21,477,737 residents or people according to the U.S. Census

Bureau's 2019 Population Estimates Program.[150]

Florida contains the highest percentage of people over 65 (17%).[151] There were 186,102 military retirees living in the state in 2008.[152] About two-thirds of the population was born in another state, the second highest in the U.S.[153]

In 2010, [undocumented immigrants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illegal_immigration) constituted an estimated 5.7% of the population. This was the sixth highest percentage of any U.S. state.[154][155] There were an estimated 675,000 illegal immigrants in the state in 2010.[156] Florida has banned [sanctuary cities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanctuary_city).[157]

A 2013 Gallup poll indicated that 47% of the residents agreed Florida is the best state to live in. Results in other states ranged from a low of 18% to a high of 77%.[158]



Florida's population density

**Historical population**

### Census Pop. %±

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [**1830**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1830_United_States_Census) | 34,730 | — |
| [**1840**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1840_United_States_Census) | 54,477 | 56.9% |
| [**1850**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1850_United_States_Census) | 87,445 | 60.5% |
| [**1860**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1860_United_States_Census) | 140,424 | 60.6% |
| [**1870**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1870_United_States_Census) | 187,748 | 33.7% |
| [**1880**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1880_United_States_Census) | 269,493 | 43.5% |
| [**1890**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1890_United_States_Census) | 391,422 | 45.2% |
| [**1900**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1900_United_States_Census) | 528,542 | 35.0% |
| [**1910**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1910_United_States_Census) | 752,619 | 42.4% |
| [**1920**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1920_United_States_Census) | 968,470 | 28.7% |
| [**1930**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1930_United_States_Census) | 1,468,211 | 51.6% |
| [**1940**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1940_United_States_Census) | 1,897,414 | 29.2% |
| [**1950**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1950_United_States_Census) | 2,771,305 | 46.1% |
| [**1960**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_United_States_Census) | 4,951,560 | 78.7% |
| [**1970**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1970_United_States_Census) | 6,789,443 | 37.1% |
| [**1980**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1980_United_States_Census) | 9,746,324 | 43.6% |
| [**1990**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1990_United_States_Census) | 12,937,926 | 32.7% |
| [**2000**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2000_United_States_Census) | 15,982,378 | 23.5% |
| [**2010**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_Census) | 18,801,310 | 17.6% |
| **Est. 2019** | 21,477,737 | 14.2% |

Sources: 1910–2010[143]

2019 Estimate[5]

**Florida racial breakdown**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Racial composition** | **1970**[159] | **1990**[159] | **2000**[160] | **2010**[161] | **2017**[162] |
| [Black or African American alone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American) | 15.3% | 13.6% | 14.6% | 16.0% | 16.8% |
| [Asian alone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_American) | 0.2% | 1.2% | 1.7% | 2.4% | 2.9% |
| [Hispanic or Latino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic_or_Latino_American) (of any race) | 6.6% | 12.2% | 16.8% | 22.5% | 24.9% |
| [Native American alone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States) | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.5% |
| [Two or more races](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiracial_American) | — | — | 2.3% | 2.5% | 2.1% |
| [White alone, not Hispanic or Latino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-Hispanic_whites) | 77.9% | 73.2% | 65.4% | 57.9% | 54.9% |
| [White alone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_American) | 84.2% | 83.1% | 78.0% | 75.0% | 77.6% |

[Hispanic and Latinos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic_and_Latino) of any race made up 22.5% of the population in 2010.[163] As of 2011, 57% of Florida's population younger than age 1 were minorities (meaning they had at least one parent who was not non-Hispanic white).[164]

## Cities and towns

[The largest metropolitan area in the state as well as the entire southeastern United States is the Miami metropolitan area, with about 6.06 million people. The](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) [Tampa Bay Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay_Area)[, with more than 3.02 million, is the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) [second largest; the Orlando metropolitan area, with more than 2.44 million, is third; and the Jacksonville metropolitan area, with more than 1.47 million, is fourth.[165]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_metropolitan_area)

[Florida has 22 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) defined by the United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Forty-three of Florida's 67 counties are in a MSA.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Office_of_Management_and_Budget)

The legal name in Florida for a city, town or village is "municipality". In Florida there is no legal difference between towns, villages and cities.[166]

Florida is a highly urbanized state, with 89 percent of its population living in urban areas in 2000, compared to 79 percent nationally.[167]

In 2012, 75% of the population lived within 10 miles (16 km) of the coastline.[168]

## Ancestry

In 2010, 6.9% of the population (1,269,765) considered themselves to be of only [American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_people) ancestry (regardless of race or ethnicity).[170][171] Many of these were of English or [Scotch-Irish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scots-Irish_American) descent; however, their families have lived in the state for so long they choose to identify as having "American" ancestry or do not know their ancestry.[172][173][174][175][176][177] In the 1980 [United States census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_census), the largest ancestry group reported in Florida was English with 2,232,514 Floridians claiming they were of English or mostly [English American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_American) ancestry.[178] Some of their ancestry went back to the original [thirteen colonies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteen_colonies).

As of 2010, those of (non-Hispanic white) European ancestry accounted for 57.9% of Florida's population. Out of the 57.9%, the largest groups were 12.0% [German](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germans) (2,212,391), 10.7% [Irish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_people) (1,979,058), 8.8%

English (1,629,832), 6.6% [Italian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italians) (1,215,242), 2.8% [Polish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_people) (511,229), and 2.7% [French](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_people) (504,641).[170][171]

[White Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_American) of all European backgrounds are present in all areas of the state. In 1970, non-Hispanic whites were nearly 80% of Florida's population.[179] Those of [English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_American) and [Irish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_American) ancestry are present in large numbers in all the urban/suburban areas across the state. Some native white Floridians, especially those who

have descended from long-time Florida families, may refer to themselves as "[Florida crackers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_cracker)"; others see the term as a derogatory one. Like whites in most other states of the southern U.S., they descend mainly from English and [Scots-Irish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scots-Irish_American) settlers, as well as some other [British American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_American) settlers.[180]

As of 2010, those of Hispanic or Latino ancestry accounted for 22.5% (4,223,806) of Florida's population. Out of the 22.5%, the [largest groups were 6.5% (1,213,438) Cuban, 4.5% (847,550) Puerto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Ricans)

[Rican, 3.3% (629,718)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Ricans) [Mexican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexicans)[, and 1.6% (300,414)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Ricans) [Colombian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombians).[182] Florida's [Hispanic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanics_in_the_United_States) population includes large [communities of Cuban Americans in Miami and Tampa, Puerto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Ricans_in_the_United_States)

[Ricans in Orlando and Tampa, and Mexican/Central American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Ricans_in_the_United_States) migrant workers. The Hispanic community continues to grow more affluent and mobile. Florida has a large and diverse Hispanic population, with Cubans and Puerto Ricans being the largest groups in the state. Nearly 80% of Cuban Americans live in Florida, especially South Florida where there is a long-standing and affluent

Cuban community.[183] Florida has the second largest Puerto Rican

population after New York, as well as the fastest-growing in the



[Cuban](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban_American) men playing dominoes in [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami)'s [Little Havana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Havana). In 2010, Cubans made up 34.4% of Miami's population and 6.5% of Florida's.[181][182]

nation.[184] Puerto Ricans are more widespread throughout the state, though the heaviest concentrations are in the Orlando area of Central Florida.[185]

[As of 2010, those of African ancestry accounted for 16.0% of Florida's population, which includes African Americans. Out of the 16.0%, 4.0% (741,879) were](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American) [West Indian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Indian) [or](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American) [Afro-Caribbean American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afro-Caribbean_American)[.[170][171][182]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American) During the early 1900s, [black people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_people) made up nearly half of the state's population.[186] In response to segregation, disfranchisement and agricultural depression, many African Americans migrated from Florida to northern cities in the [Great Migration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Migration_(African_American)), in waves from 1910 to 1940, and again starting in the later 1940s. They moved for jobs, better education for their children and the chance to vote and participate in society. By 1960, the proportion of African Americans in the state had declined to 18%.[187] Conversely, large numbers of northern [whites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_people) moved to the state. Today, large concentrations of black residents can be found in northern and central Florida. Aside from blacks descended from African slaves brought to the southern U.S., there are also large numbers of blacks of [West Indian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Indian_American), [recent African](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_immigration_to_the_United_States), and [Afro-Latino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Hispanic_and_Latino_Americans) immigrant origins, especially in the Miami/South Florida area.[188]

In 2016, Florida had the highest percentage of West Indians in the United States at 4.5%, with 2.3% (483,874) from [Haitian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haitians) ancestry, 1.5% (303,527) [Jamaican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jamaicans), and 0.2% (31,966) [Bahamian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahamians), with the other West Indian groups making up the rest.[189]

As of 2010, those of Asian ancestry accounted for 2.4% of Florida's population.[170][171]

## Languages

In 1988, English was affirmed as the state's [official language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Official_language) in the [Florida Constitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Constitution). [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language) is also widely spoken, especially as immigration has continued from Latin America.[190] Twenty percent of the population speak Spanish as their first language. Twenty-seven percent of Florida's population reports speaking a [mother language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_language) other than English, and more than 200 first languages other than English are spoken at home in the state.[191][192]

The most common languages spoken in Florida as a first language in 2010 are:[191]

73% English

20% Spanish

2% Haitian Creole

Other languages less than 1% each

**Religion in Florida (2014)**[193]

[Protestant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestant) 46%

[None](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irreligion) 24%

[Catholic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) 21%

Other [Christian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christians) 3%

[Jewish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish) 3%

Other faith 3%

## Religion

Florida is mostly [Christian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christians), although there is a large [irreligious](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irreligious) and relatively significant [Jewish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish) community. [Protestants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestantism) account for almost half of the population, but the [Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) is the largest single denomination in the state mainly due to its large [Hispanic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic) population and other groups like [Haitians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haitians). Protestants are very diverse, although [Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals and nondenominational Protestants are the largest groups. There is also a sizable](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nondenominational_Protestants) [Jewish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Jews) community in [South Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida). This is the largest

Jewish population in the [southern U.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_United_States) and the third-largest in the

U.S. behind those of [New York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_(state)) and [California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California).[194]

[In 2010, the three largest denominations in Florida were the Catholic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) [Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the United Methodist Church.[195]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Methodist_Church)

The [Pew Research Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew_Research_Center) survey in 2014 gave the following religious makeup of Florida:[196]

# Governance



Church of the Little Flower (Coral Gables, Florida)

The basic structure, duties, function, and operations of the government of the State of Florida are defined and [established by the Florida Constitution, which](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Constitution) establishes the basic law of the state and guarantees various rights and freedoms of the people. The state

[Hindu Temple of Florida,Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_Temple_of_Florida%2CTampa)

government consists of three separate branches: judicial, executive, and legislative. The legislature enacts bills, which, if signed by the [governor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor_of_Florida), become [law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Statutes).

Old and New [Florida State Capitol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_State_Capitol), [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida), East view

The [Florida Legislature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Legislature) comprises the [Florida Senate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Senate), which has 40 members, and the [Florida House of Representatives](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_House_of_Representatives), which has 120 members. The current governor of Florida is [Ron DeSantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_DeSantis). The [Florida Supreme Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Supreme_Court) consists of a chief justice and six justices.

Florida has 67 [counties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County_(United_States)). Some reference materials may show only 66 because [Duval County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duval_County%2C_Florida) is consolidated with the [City of Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_Jacksonville). There are 379 cities in Florida (out of

411) that report regularly to the Florida Department of Revenue, but there are other incorporated municipalities that do not. The state government's primary revenue source is sales tax. Florida does not

impose a personal [income tax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Income_tax). The primary revenue source for cities and counties is property tax; unpaid taxes are subject to [tax sales](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tax_sale), which are held (at the county level) in May and (due to the extensive use of online bidding sites) are highly popular.

There were 800 [federal corruption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Corrupt_Practices_Act) convictions from 1988 to 2007, more than any other state.[197]

## Elections history

From 1952 to 1964, most voters were registered Democrats, but the state voted for the Republican presidential candidate in every election except for [1964](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1964_United_States_presidential_election). The following year, Congress passed and President [Lyndon B. Johnson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyndon_B._Johnson) signed the [Voting Rights Act of 1965](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voting_Rights_Act_of_1965), providing for oversight of state practices and enforcement of constitutional voting rights for African Americans and other minorities in order to prevent the discrimination and disenfranchisement which had excluded most of them for decades from the political process.

From the 1930s through much of the 1960s, Florida was essentially a one-party state dominated by white conservative Democrats, who together with other Democrats of the "[Solid South](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solid_South)", exercised considerable control in Congress. They have gained slightly less federal money from national programs than they have paid in taxes.[198] Since the 1970s, conservative white voters in the state have largely shifted from the Democratic to the Republican Party. Though the majority of registered voters in Florida are Democrats.[199] It continued to support Republican presidential candidates through 2004, except in [1976](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1976_United_States_presidential_election) and [1996](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1996_United_States_presidential_election), when the Democratic nominee was from "[the South](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_United_States)".

In the [2008](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_United_States_presidential_election) and [2012](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012_United_States_presidential_election) presidential elections, [Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama) carried the state as a northern Democrat, attracting high voter turnout, especially among the young, Independents, and minority voters, of whom [Hispanics comprise an increasingly large proportion. 2008 marked the first time since 1944, when Franklin D. Roosevelt carried the state for the fourth time, that Florida was carried by a Northern Democrat for](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_D._Roosevelt) president.

The first post-[Reconstruction era](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_era) Republican elected to Congress from Florida was [William C. Cramer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_C._Cramer) in 1954 from Pinellas County on the Gulf Coast,[200] where demographic changes were underway. In this period, African Americans were still [disenfranchised](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disfranchisement_after_Reconstruction_era) by the state's constitution and discriminatory practices; in the 19th century, they had made up most of the Republican Party. Cramer built a different Republican Party in Florida, attracting local white conservatives and transplants from northern and midwestern states. In 1966, [Claude R. Kirk, Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_R._Kirk%2C_Jr) was elected as the first post-Reconstruction Republican governor, in an upset election.[201] In 1968, [Edward J. Gurney](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_J._Gurney), also a white conservative, was elected as the state's first post- reconstruction Republican US senator.[202] In 1970, Democrats took the governorship and the open US Senate seat, and maintained dominance for years.

Since the mid-20th century, Florida has been considered a [bellwether](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bellwether), voting for 15 successful presidential candidates since 1952. During such period, it has voted for a losing candidate only twice.[203]

In 1998, Democratic voters dominated areas of the state with a high percentage of racial minorities and transplanted white liberals from the northeastern United States, known colloquially as "snowbirds".[204] [South Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida) and the [Miami metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) are dominated by both racial minorities and white liberals. Because of this, the area has consistently voted as one of the most Democratic areas of the state. The Daytona Beach area is similar demographically and the city of Orlando has a large Hispanic population, which has often favored Democrats. Republicans, made up mostly of white conservatives, have dominated throughout much of the rest of Florida, particularly in the more rural and suburban areas. This is characteristic of its voter base throughout the [Deep South](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deep_South).[204]

[The fast-growing I-4 corridor area, which runs through Central Florida and connects the cities of Daytona Beach,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_Beach%2C_Florida) [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando%2C_Florida)[, and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_Beach%2C_Florida) [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa%2C_Florida)[/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_Beach%2C_Florida)[St. Petersburg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersburg%2C_Florida)[, has had a fairly even breakdown of Republican and Democratic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_Beach%2C_Florida) voters. The area is often seen as a merging point of the conservative northern portion of the state and the liberal southern portion, making it the biggest swing area in the state. Since the late 20th century, the voting results in this area, containing 40% of Florida voters, has often determined who will win the state in federal presidential elections.[205]

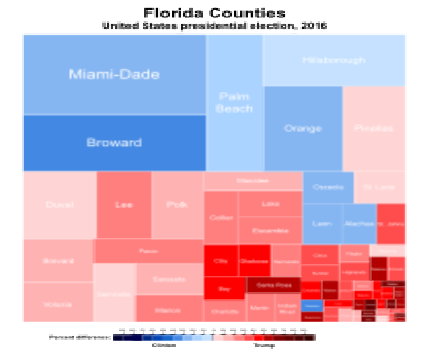
The Democratic Party has maintained an edge in voter registration, both statewide and in 40 of the 67 counties, including [Miami-Dade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_County%2C_Florida), [Broward](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broward_County%2C_Florida), and [Palm Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Beach_County%2C_Florida) counties, the state's three most populous.[206]

### Elections of 2000 to present

[In 2000, George W. Bush won the U.S. Presidential election by a margin of 271–266 in the Electoral College.[207] Of the 271 electoral votes for Bush, 25 were cast by electors from Florida.[208] The Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electoral_College_(United_States)) results were contested and a recount was ordered by the court, with the results settled in a [Supreme Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_the_United_States) decision, [Bush v. Gore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bush_v._Gore).

Reapportionment following the [2010 United States Census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_Census) gave the state two more seats in the House of Representatives.[209] The legislature's redistricting, announced in 2012, was quickly challenged in court, on the grounds that it had unfairly benefited Republican interests. In 2015, the Florida Supreme Court ruled on appeal that the congressional districts had to be redrawn because of the legislature's violation of the Fair District Amendments to the state constitution passed in 2010; it accepted a new map in early December 2015.

The political make-up of congressional and legislative districts has enabled Republicans to control the [governorship and most statewide elective offices, and 17 of the state's 27 seats in the 2012 House of Representatives.[210] Florida has been listed as a](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives_elections_in_Florida%2C_2012) [swing state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swing_state) [in Presidential elections since 1952, voting for](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives_elections_in_Florida%2C_2012) the losing candidate only twice in that period of time.[211]



[Treemap](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treemap) of the popular vote by county, 2016 presidential election

In the closely contested [2000 election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2000_United_States_presidential_election_in_Florida), the state played a pivotal role.[207][208][212][213][214][215] Out of more than 5.8 million votes for the two main contenders Bush and [Al Gore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Gore), around 500 votes separated the two candidates for the all-decisive Florida electoral [votes that landed Bush the election win. Florida's felony disenfranchisement law is more severe than most European nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felony_disenfranchisement) [or other American states. A 2002 study in the *American Sociological Review* concluded that "if the state's 827,000 disenfranchised felons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Sociological_Review) had voted at the same rate as other Floridians, Democratic candidate Al Gore would have won Florida—and the presidency—by more than 80,000 votes."[216]

In 2008, delegates of both the [Republican Florida primary election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States)_presidential_primaries%2C_2008#GOP_February_5_rule) and [Democratic Florida primary election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_(United_States)_presidential_primaries%2C_2008#Nullified_primaries) were stripped of half of their votes when the conventions met in August due to violation of both parties' national rules.

In the 2010 elections, Republicans solidified their dominance statewide, by winning the governor's mansion, and maintaining firm majorities in both houses of the state legislature. They won four previously Democratic-held seats to create a 19–6 Republican-majority delegation representing Florida in the federal House of Representatives.

In 2010, more than 63% of state voters approved the initiated Amendments 5 and 6 to the state constitution, to ensure more fairness in districting. These have become known as the Fair District Amendments. As a result of the [2010 United States Census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_Census), Florida gained two House of Representative seats in 2012.[209] The legislature issued revised congressional districts in 2012, which were immediately challenged in court by supporters of the above amendments.

The court ruled in 2014, after lengthy testimony, that at least two districts had to be redrawn because of gerrymandering. After this was appealed, in July 2015 the Florida Supreme Court ruled that lawmakers had followed an illegal and unconstitutional process overly influenced by party operatives, and ruled that at least eight districts had to be redrawn. On December 2, 2015, a 5–2 majority of the Court accepted a new map of congressional districts, some of which was drawn by challengers. Their ruling affirmed the map previously approved by [Leon County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_County%2C_Florida) Judge Terry Lewis, who had overseen the original trial. It particularly makes changes in South Florida. There are likely to be additional challenges to the map and districts.[217]

According to [The Sentencing Project](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sentencing_Project), the effect of Florida's felony disenfranchisement law is such that in 2014, "[m]ore than one in ten Floridians—and nearly one in four African-American Floridians—are [were] shut out of the polls because of felony convictions", although they had completed sentences and parole/probation requirements.[219]

In the [2016 United States Presidential](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_United_States_presidential_election_in_Florida) and [general elections](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_United_States_elections), the state leaned [Republican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States)). The state's [Democratic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_(United_States)) representation at the national level increased by one seat, but the overall state- wide composition was 16 Republicans to 11 Democrats. Floridians also voted 49.0% to 47.8% to elect [Donald Trump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump) over [Hillary Clinton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillary_Clinton) in the presidential election. With a 1.2% difference, this was the 5th closest presidential race that year, with only [Wisconsin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisconsin), [Michigan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michigan), [New Hampshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Hampshire) and [Pennsylvania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pennsylvania) being closer.

Voter Registration Totals as of December 31, 2019[218]

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Party** | | **Number of Voters** | **Percentage** |
|  | [Democratic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_(United_States)) | 4,986,520  (+10,625) | 36.83% |
|  | [Republican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States)) | 4,761,405  (+42,685) | 35.17% |
|  | [Unaffiliated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_(politician)) | 3,641,359  (+52,841) | 26.90% |
|  | Minor parties | 147,546  (+34,057) | 1.09% |
| **Total** | | **13,536,830**  **(+140,208)** | **100%** |
| \*Added between December 31, 2018 and  December 31, 2019. | | | |

In the [2018 Midterm Elections](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2018_United_States_elections), the ratio of Republican to Democratic representation fell from 16:11 to 14:13. The Senate race between Democratic incumbent [Senato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senator)r [Bill Nelson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Nelson) and former [Governo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor)r [Rick Scott](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Scott) was very close, with a 49.93% voting for the incumbent and 50.06% voting for the former governor. Republicans also held onto the governorship in a close race between Republican candidate [Ron DeSantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_DeSantis) and Democractic candidate [Andrew Gillum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Gillum), with 49.6% voting for the DeSantis and 49.3% voting for Gillum.

## Statutes

In 1972, the state made [personal injury protection](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_injury_protection) auto insurance mandatory for drivers, becoming the second in the nation to enact a [no-fault insurance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No-fault_insurance) law.[220] The ease of receiving payments under this law is seen as precipitating a major increase in insurance fraud.[221] Auto insurance fraud was the highest in the nation in 2011, estimated at close to $1 billion.[222] Fraud is particularly centered in the Miami-Dade metropolitan and Tampa areas.[223][224][225]

[Capital punishment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_punishment) is applied in Florida.[226] In 1995, the legislature modified Chapter 921 to provide that felons should serve at least 85% of their sentence.[227][228] Florida approved its [lottery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Lottery) by amending the constitution in 1984. It approved slot machines in Broward and [Miami-Dade County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_County) in 2004. It has

disapproved casinos (outside of sovereign [Seminole](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole) and [Miccosukee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miccosukee) tribal areas) three times: 1978, 1986, and 1994.[229] If a person committing a predicate felony directly contributed to the death of the victim then the person will be charged with murder in the first degree—felony murder which is a capital felony. The only two sentences available for that statute are life imprisonment and the death penalty.[230][231] If a person commits a predicate felony, but was not the direct contributor to the death of the victim then the person will be charged with murder in the second degree—felony murder which is a felony of the first degree. The maximum prison term is life.[230][231]



[Florida Supreme Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_Florida) Building

## Taxation

Tax is collected by the [Florida Department of Revenue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Department_of_Revenue).

# Economy

Total employment 2017

8,385,577

Total employer establishments 2017 557,308[234]

Florida's economy ranks among the largest in the world. As of 2018, the [gross state product](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_state_product) (GSP) is about $1.0 trillion,[235] the fourth

largest economy in the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States).[235] Florida is responsible for [5 percent of the United States' approximately $21 trillion gross domestic product (GDP). As of 2018, Florida's nominal GDP is](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_domestic_product) [larger than all but 15 countries.[236] In terms of Purchasing Power Parity, it is larger than all but 24 countries.[237] In the 20th century,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purchasing_Power_Parity) tourism, industry, construction, international banking, biomedical and life sciences, healthcare research, simulation training, aerospace and defense, and commercial space travel have contributed to the state's economic development.[238]

The five largest sectors of employment in Florida are: trade, transportation, and utilities; government; professional and business services; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality.[239] In output, the five largest sectors are: finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing, followed by professional and business services; government and government enterprises; educational services, health care, and social assistance; and retail trade.[240]



Launch of [Space Shuttle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Shuttle) [*Columbia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Shuttle_Columbia)

from the [Kennedy Space Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kennedy_Space_Center)



The [Brickell Financial District](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brickell_Financial_District) in Miami contains the largest concentration of international banks in the United States.[232][233]

In 2017, Florida became the United States' eighth largest exporter of trade goods. Florida's top countries for export are [Brazil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil), [Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada), [Mexico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexico), [Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany), and [Colombia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombia).[241] In 2017, Florida became the United States' tenth largest importer of trade goods. Florida imported US$75.4 billion worth of goods globally in 2017.

The value of Florida's imports equals 3.2% of United States' overall imported products for 2017. Florida's top countries for imports are [China](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China), [Mexico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexico), [Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada), [Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany), and [France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France).[242]

The [Miami Metropolitan Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Metropolitan_Area) has the highest GDP of all the metro areas in Florida with $344.9 billion in 2017.[18] This is more than twice the number of the next metro area, the [Tampa Bay Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay_Area), which has a GDP of $145.3 billion. The economy of Florida is driven almost entirely by its nineteen metropolitan areas. In 2004, they had a combined total of 95.7% of the state's domestic product.[243]

[Per capita GDP](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_GDP_per_capita) in 2017 was $39,842, ranking fortieth in the nation.[244] [Per capita income](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_locations_by_per_capita_income) varies widely by geographic region and profession. [North Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Florida) and the rural counties of the [Florida Panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Panhandle) are the most impoverished in the state. Florida has a [poverty rate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_in_the_United_States) of 14.0%, the seventeenth lowest of any state in the country. Many coastal cities include some of the wealthiest per-capita areas in the United States.

In 2018, there were more than 427,824 millionaires in the state, the fourth highest number in the nation.[245]

For 2018–19, the approved state budget is $88.7 billion, a 4.4% increase over the previous 2017–18 budget of $84.9 billion. *Chief Executive Magazine* named Florida the third "Best State for Business" in 2011.[246]

## Personal income

In 2017, Florida's [per capita personal income](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_GDP_per_capita_(nominal)) was $47,684, ranking 26th in the nation.[15] The state's unemployment rate in September 2018 was 3.5% and ranked as the 18th lowest in the United States.[16] Florida is one of seven states that do not impose a personal [income tax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Income_tax).

In 2017, Florida had a personal income of $1,000,624,065(in thousands of dollars). This personal income ranked 4th in the United States.[15]

Florida's constitution establishes a state [minimum wage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minimum_wage), which is adjusted annually for inflation. As of January 1, 2017, Florida's minimum wage was $5.08 for *tipped positions*, and $8.10 for *non-tipped* positions, which was higher than the federal rate of $7.25.[247]

Florida has two cities in the top 25 cities in the U.S. with the highest average credit card debt, [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Metropolitan_Area) and [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay_Area).[248]

The poverty rate in Florida is 14% in 2018. This is down from a peak of 17.1% in 2012.[249]

## Real estate

In the early 20th century, land speculators discovered Florida, and businessmen such as [Henry Plant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Plant) and [Henry Flagler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Flagler) developed railroad systems, which led people to move in, drawn by the weather and local economies. From then on, tourism boomed, fueling a cycle of development that overwhelmed a great deal of farmland.[250]

At the end of the third quarter of 2008, Florida had the highest mortgage delinquency rate in the U.S., with 7.8% of mortgages delinquent at least 60 days.[251] A 2009 list of national housing markets that were hard hit in the real estate crash included a disproportionate number in Florida.[252] The early 21st-century building boom left Florida with 300,000 vacant homes in 2009, according to state figures.[253] In 2009, the US Census Bureau estimated that Floridians spent an average 49.1% of personal income on housing-related costs, the third highest percentage in the U.S.[254]

In the third quarter of 2009, there were 278,189 delinquent loans, 80,327 foreclosures.[255] Sales of existing homes in February 2010 was 11,890, up 21% from the same month in 2009. Only two metropolitan areas showed a decrease in homes sold: [Panama City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panama_City_%E2%80%93_Lynn_Haven_%E2%80%93_Panama_City_Beach%2C_Florida_Metropolitan_Statistical_Area) and [Brevard County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Bay_%E2%80%93_Melbourne_%E2%80%93_Titusville%2C_Florida_Metropolitan_Statistical_Area). The average sales price for an existing house was $131,000, 7% decrease from the prior year.[256]

## Tourism

If you can't find something to do in Florida, you're just boring ...

— [Guy Fieri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_Fieri), [celebrity chef](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celebrity_chef), 2017[257]

Tourism makes up one of the largest sectors of the state economy, with nearly 1.4 million people employed in the tourism industry in

2016 (a record for the state, surpassing the 1.2 million employment from 2015).[258][259]

In 2015, Florida broke the 100-million visitor mark for the first time in state history by hosting a record 105 million visitors.[259][260] The state has set tourism records for eight consecutive years, most recently breaking the 120-million visitor mark for the first time in 2018 with

126.1 million visitors reported.[261]

Many beach towns are popular tourist destinations, particularly during winter and [spring break](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_break). Twenty-three million tourists visited Florida beaches in 2000, spending $22 billion.[262] The public has a right to beach access under the [public trust doctrine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_trust_doctrine), but some areas have access effectively blocked by private owners for a long distance.[263]

[Walt Disney World Resort in Bay Lake, Florida near](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bay_Lake%2C_Florida) [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando)



[PortMiami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PortMiami) is the world's largest cruise ship port.

[Amusement parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amusement_park), especially in the [Greater Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Orlando) area, make up a

significant portion of tourism. The [Walt Disney World Resort](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walt_Disney_World_Resort) is the most visited vacation resort in the world with more than 58 million visitors annually,[264] consisting of four [theme parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theme_park), 27 themed [resort hotels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resort), nine non-Disney hotels, two [water parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_park), four [golf courses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golf_course) and other recreational venues.[265] Other major [theme parks in the area include Universal Orlando Resort, SeaWorld Orlando and Busch Gardens Tampa.[266]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Busch_Gardens_Tampa)

Florida's many state parks and protected areas receive a lot of visitors as well with 25.2 million visitors visiting [Florida State Parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_State_Parks) in 2013.[267]

## Agriculture and fishing

Agriculture is the second largest industry in the state.[268] Citrus fruit, especially oranges, are a major part of the economy, and Florida produces the majority of citrus fruit grown in the United States. In 2006, 67% of all citrus, 74% of oranges, 58% of tangerines, and 54% of grapefruit were grown in Florida. About 95% of commercial orange production in the state is destined for processing (mostly as orange juice, the official [state beverage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_beverage)).[269]

[Citrus canker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citrus_canker) continues to be an issue of concern. From 1997 to 2013, the growing of citrus trees has declined 25%, from 600,000 acres (240,000 ha) to 450,000 acres (180,000 ha). [Citrus greening](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citrus_greening) disease is incurable. A study states that it has caused the loss of $4.5 billion between 2006 and 2012. As of 2014, it was the major agricultural concern.[270]

Other products include sugarcane, [strawberries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strawberry), [tomatoes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomato) and [celery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celery).[271] The state is the largest producer of [sweet corn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweet_corn) and [green beans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_beans) for the U.S.[272]

The Everglades Agricultural Area is a major center for agriculture. The [environmental impact of agriculture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_impact_of_agriculture), especially [water pollution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_pollution), is a major issue in Florida today.[273]

In 2009, fishing was a $6 billion industry, employing 60,000 jobs for sports and commercial purposes.[274]

The state has a near monopoly on [saw palmetto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saw_palmetto) berries, an alternative medicine used to treat [prostate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostate) and urinary disorders.[275]

## Industry

Florida is the leading state for sales of [powerboats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motorboat). Boats sales totaled $1.96 billion in 2013.[276]

## Mining

[Phosphate mining](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phosphate#Occurrence), concentrated in the [Bone Valley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bone_Valley), is the state's third-largest industry. The state produces about 75% of the phosphate required by farmers in the United States and 25% of the world supply, with about 95% used for agriculture (90% for fertilizer and 5% for livestock feed supplements) and 5% used for other products.[277]

After the watershed events of [Hurricane Andrew](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Andrew) in 1992, Florida began investing in economic development through the Office of Trade, Tourism, and Economic Development. Governor [Jeb Bush](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeb_Bush) realized that watershed events such as Andrew negatively impacted Florida's backbone industry of tourism severely. The [office was directed to target Medical/Bio-Sciences among others. Three years later, The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) announced it had chosen Florida for its newest expansion. In 2003, TSRI announced plans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scripps_Research_Institute) to establish a major science center in Palm Beach, a 364,000 square feet (33,800 m2) facility on 100 acres (40 ha), which TSRI planned to occupy in 2006.[278]

## Government

[Since the development of the federal NASA Merritt Island launch sites on Cape Canaveral (most notably Kennedy Space Center) in](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Cape_Canaveral_and_Merritt_Island_launch_sites) 1962, Florida has developed a sizable [aerospace industry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aerospace).

[Another major economic engine in Florida is the United States military. There are 24 military bases in the state, housing three](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_military) [Unified Combatant Commands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unified_Combatant_Command); [United States Central Command](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Central_Command) in [Tampa, United States Southern Command in Doral, and United States Special Operations Command in Tampa. Some 109,390 U.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Special_Operations_Command) military personnel stationed in Florida,[279] contributing, directly and indirectly, $52 billion a year to the state's economy.[280]



[One of the Cape Canaveral launch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Cape_Canaveral_and_Merritt_Island_launch_sites) [sites during the launch of SpaceX CRS-13 in 2017](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SpaceX_CRS-13)

In 2009, there were 89,706 federal workers employed within the state.[281] Tens of thousands more employees work for contractors who have federal contracts, including those with the military.

In 2012, government of all levels was a top employer in all counties in the state, because this classification includes public school teachers and other school staff. School boards employ nearly 1 of every 30 workers in the state. The federal military was the top employer in three counties.[282]

# Seaports

Florida has many seaports that serve container ships, tank ships, and cruise lines. Major ports in Florida include [Port Tampa Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Tampa_Bay) in Tampa, [Port Everglades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Everglades) in Fort Lauderdale, [Port of Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_of_Jacksonville) in [Jacksonville, PortMiami in Miami, Port Canaveral in Brevard County,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brevard_County%2C_Florida) [Port Manatee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Manatee) [in](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brevard_County%2C_Florida) [Manatee County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manatee_County%2C_Florida)[, and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brevard_County%2C_Florida) [Port of Palm Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_of_Palm_Beach)

in [Riviera Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riviera_Beach%2C_Florida). The world's top three busiest cruise ports are found in Florida with PortMiami as the busiest and Port Canaveral and Port Everglades as the second and third busiest.[283] Port Tampa

Bay meanwhile is the largest in the state, having the most tonnage.

[Port Tampa Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Tampa_Bay) is the largest port in Florida.

As of 2013, Port Tampa Bay ranks 16th in the United States by tonnage in domestic trade, 32nd in foreign trade, and 22nd in total trade. It is the largest, most diversified port in Florida, has an economic impact of more than $15.1 billion, and supports more than 80,000 jobs.[284][285]

# Health

There were 2.7 million [Medicaid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medicaid) patients in Florida in 2009. The governor has proposed adding $2.6 billion to care for the expected 300,000 additional patients in 2011.[286] The cost of caring for 2.3 million clients in 2010 was $18.8 billion.[287] This is nearly 30% of Florida's budget.[288] Medicaid paid for 60% of all births in Florida in 2009. The state has a [program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Medicaid_waiver) for those not covered by Medicaid.

[In 2013, Florida refused to participate in providing coverage for the uninsured under the Affordable Care Act, popularly called Obamacare. The Florida legislature also refused to accept additional Federal funding](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affordable_Care_Act) for Medicaid, although this would have helped its constituents at no cost to the state. As a result, Florida is second only to Texas in the percentage of its citizens without health insurance.[289]

# Architecture

[Florida has the largest collection of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne buildings, both in the United States and in the entire world,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Streamline_Moderne) most of which are located in the [Miami metropolitan area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area), especially [Miami Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Beach%2C_Florida)'s [Art Deco District](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Beach_Architectural_District), constructed as the city was becoming a resort destination.[290] A unique architectural design found only in Florida is the post-World War II [Miami Modern](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Modern_Architecture), [which can be seen in areas such as Miami's MiMo Historic District.[291]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MiMo_Historic_District)

Being of early importance as a regional center of banking and finance, the [architecture of Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architecture_of_Jacksonville) displays a wide variety of styles and design principles. Many of the state's earliest skyscrapers

[Miami Art Deco District](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Beach_Architectural_District), built during

the 1920s–1930s

were constructed in Jacksonville, dating as far back as 1902,[292] and last holding a state height record from

1974 to 1981.[293] The city is endowed with one of the largest collections of [Prairie School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prairie_School) buildings outside of the Midwest.[294] Jacksonville is also noteworthy for its collection of [Mid-Century modern](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid-Century_modern) architecture.[295]

Some sections of the state feature architectural styles including [Spanish revival](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Colonial_Revival_Style_architecture), [Florida vernacular](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_cracker_architecture), and [Mediterranean Revival](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_Revival_Style).[296][297] A notable collection of these styles can be found in [St. Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine%2C_Florida), the oldest continuously occupied European-established settlement within the borders of the United States.[298]

# Media

**Education**

Florida overall was ranked the 7th best state in America for educating students at all levels by [*U.S. News & World Report*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._News_%26_World_Report)in 2018.[299]

## Primary and secondary education

With an educational system made up of [public school](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_school) districts and independent [private institutions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Private_school), Florida had 2,833,115 students enrolled in 4,269 public primary, secondary, and [vocational](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational_education) schools in Florida's 67 regular or seven special [school districts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_districts) as of 2018.[300] [Miami-Dade County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_County_Public_Schools) is the largest of Florida's 67 regular



[Florida State University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_State_University), [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida)

districts with more than 350 thousand students and Jefferson is the smallest with less than one thousand students. Florida spent $8,920 for each student in 2016, and was 43rd in the nation in expenditures per student.[301]

Florida's primary and secondary school systems are administered by the [Florida Department of Education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Department_of_Education). School districts are organized within county boundaries. Each school district has an elected [Board of Education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Board_of_Education) that sets policy, budget, goals, and approves expenditures. Management is the responsibility of a [Superintendent of schools](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superintendent_(education)).

The [Florida Department of Education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Department_of_Education) is required by law to train educators in teaching [English for Speakers of Other Languages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_language_learning_and_teaching) (ESOL).[302]

## Higher education

[University of Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Florida), [Gainesville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gainesville%2C_Florida)

[The State University System of Florida was founded in 1905, and is governed by the Florida Board of Governors. During the 2010 academic year, 312,216 students attended one of these twelve universities. The](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Board_of_Governors) [Florida College System](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_College_System) comprises 28 public community and state colleges. In 2011–12, enrollment consisted of more than 875,000 students.[303] As of 2017, the [University of Central Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Central_Florida), with more than 64,000 students, is the [largest university by enrollment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_university_campuses_by_enrollment) in the United States.[304] Florida's first private university, [Stetson University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stetson_University), was founded in 1883. The [Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_Colleges_and_Universities_of_Florida) is an association of 28 private, educational institutions in the state.[305] This Association reported that their member institutions served more than 121,000 students in the fall of 2006.[306]

In 2016, Florida charged the second lowest tuition in the nation for four years, $26,000 for in-state students, to $86,000 for out-of-state students. This compares with an average of $34,800 nationally for in-state students.[307]

# Transportation

## Highways

Florida's highway system contains 1,495 mi (2,406 km) of interstate highway, and 10,601 mi (17,061 km) of non-interstate highway, such [as state highways and U.S. Highways. Florida's interstates, state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_State_Highway_System) [highways, and U.S. Highways are maintained by the Florida Department of Transportation.[308]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Department_of_Transportation)

In 2011, there were about 9,000 [retail gas stations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filling_station) in the state. Floridians consumed 21 million gallons of gasoline daily in 2011, ranking it third in national use behind California and Texas.[309] Motorists have the 45th lowest rate of car insurance in the U.S. 24% are uninsured.[310]



The [Sunshine Skyway Bridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunshine_Skyway_Bridge) over [Tampa Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay) is a part of Florida's [interstate system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_Highway_System).

Drivers between 15 and 19 years of age averaged 364 car crashes a year per ten thousand licensed Florida drivers in 2010. Drivers 70 and older averaged 95 per 10,000 during the same time frame. A spokesperson for the non-profit [Insurance Institute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Insurance_Institute_for_Highway_Safety) said that "Older drivers are more of a threat to themselves."[311]

Intercity bus travel, which utilizes Florida's highway system, is provided by [Greyhound](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greyhound_Lines), [Megabus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megabus_(North_America)), and [Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amtrak_Thruway_Motorcoach).

Before the construction of routes under the [Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Aid_Highway_Act_of_1956), Florida began construction of [a long cross-state toll road, Florida's Turnpike. The first section, from Fort Pierce south to the Golden Glades Interchange was completed in 1957. After a second section north through Orlando to](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Glades_Interchange) [Wildwood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wildwood%2C_Florida) (near present-day [The Villages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Villages%2C_Florida)), and a [southward extension](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homestead_Extension_of_Florida%27s_Turnpike) around Miami to [Homestead](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homestead%2C_Florida), it was finished in 1974.

Florida's primary interstate routes include:

 [I-4](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_4), which spans 133 miles, bisects the state, connecting [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa%2C_Florida), [Lakeland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lakeland%2C_Florida), [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando%2C_Florida), and [Daytona Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_Beach%2C_Florida), connecting with [I-75](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_75_in_Florida) in Tampa and I-95 in Daytona Beach.

 [I-10](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_10_in_Florida), which spans 362 miles in Florida, traverses the [panhandle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Panhandle), connecting [Pensacola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensacola%2C_Florida), [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee%2C_Florida), [Lake City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_City%2C_Florida), and [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida), with interchanges with I-75 in Lake City and I-95 in Jacksonville. It is the southernmost interstate in the United States terminating in [Santa Monica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa_Monica) with a total length of 2460 miles.

 [I-75](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_75_in_Florida), which spans 470 miles in Florida, enters the state near Lake City (45 miles (72 km) west of [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida)) and continues southward through [Gainesville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gainesville%2C_Florida), [Ocala](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocala%2C_Florida), Tampa's eastern suburbs, [Bradenton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bradenton%2C_Florida), [Sarasota](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarasota%2C_Florida), [Fort Myers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Myers%2C_Florida) and [Naples](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naples%2C_Florida), where it crosses the "[Alligator Alley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alligator_Alley)" as [a toll road to Fort Lauderdale before turning southward and terminating in Hialeah/Miami Lakes having interchanges with I-10 in Lake City and I-4 in Tampa. It is the second](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Lakes%2C_Florida) longest north south interstate with a total length of 1786 miles and terminates at the Canadian border at [Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sault_Ste._Marie%2C_Michigan).

 [I-95](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_95_in_Florida), which spans 382 miles in Florida, enters the state near Jacksonville and continues [along the Atlantic Coast through Daytona Beach, the Melbourne/Titusville, Palm Bay, Vero Beach,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vero_Beach%2C_Florida) [Fort Pierce](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Pierce%2C_Florida)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vero_Beach%2C_Florida) [Port Saint Lucie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Saint_Lucie%2C_Florida)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vero_Beach%2C_Florida) [Stuart](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stuart%2C_Florida)[,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vero_Beach%2C_Florida) [West Palm Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Palm_Beach%2C_Florida)[, and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vero_Beach%2C_Florida) [Fort Lauderdale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Lauderdale%2C_Florida)[, before](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vero_Beach%2C_Florida) terminating in [Downtown Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Downtown_Miami). It has interchanges with I-10 in Jacksonville and I-4 in Daytona Beach, and there are four auxiliary routes associated with the interstate. It is the longest north–south interstate with a total length of 1924 miles and terminates at the Canadian border northeast of [Houlton, Maine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houlton%2C_Maine).

## Airports

Florida has 131 public airports.[313] Florida's seven large hub and medium hub airports, as classified by the FAA,[314] are the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **City served** | **Code** | **Airport name** | **FAA**  **Category** | **Enplanements** |
| [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando%2C_Florida) | MCO | [Orlando International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando_International_Airport) | Large Hub | 21,565,448 |
| [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami) | MIA | [Miami International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_International_Airport) | Large Hub | 20,709,225 |
| [Fort Lauderdale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Lauderdale%2C_Florida) | FLL | [Fort Lauderdale– Hollywood Int'l Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Lauderdale%E2%80%93Hollywood_International_Airport) | Large Hub | 15,817,043 |
| [Tampa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa%2C_Florida) | TPA | [Tampa International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_International_Airport) | Large Hub | 9,548,580 |
| [Fort Myers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Myers%2C_Florida) | RSW | [Southwest Florida International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southwest_Florida_International_Airport) | Medium Hub | 4,364,224 |
| [West Palm Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Palm_Beach%2C_Florida) | PBI | [Palm Beach International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Beach_International_Airport) | Medium Hub | 3,110,450 |
| [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville%2C_Florida) | JAX | [Jacksonville International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_International_Airport) | Medium Hub | 2,701,861 |

## Intercity rail

[**Virgin Trains USA**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_Trains_USA) is a [diesel–electri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diesel-electric_train)c [higher-speed rail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Higher-speed_rail) [system.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Palm_Beach_station_(Virgin_Trains_USA))[315] [Currently service is only from West Palm Beach to](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Palm_Beach_station_(Virgin_Trains_USA)) [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_MiamiCentral) [through express intercity service, with](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Palm_Beach_station_(Virgin_Trains_USA)) a stop at Fort Lauderdale. The complete project is intended to connect Miami and South Florida to [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando), which requires a new line westward from the coast. It partially opened for passenger service between Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach on January 13, 2018, as the only privately owned and operated passenger railroad in the United States.[316] With a top speed of 125 mph

(201 km/h), Brightline will eventually be tied with [Amtrak](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amtrak)'s

[*Northeast Regional* and the MARC's Penn Line commuter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commuter_rail)



[Orlando International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando_International_Airport) is the busiest airport in the state with

* 1. million total passengers traveled in 2017.[312]



[Brightline](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_Trains_USA) train at [Fort Lauderdale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Lauderdale_station_(Virgin_Trains_USA))

[rail as the second fastest passenger train in](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commuter_rail) [North America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_America), after Amtrak's [*Acela Express*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acela_Express).

Florida is also served by [Amtrak](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amtrak), operating numerous lines throughout, connecting the state's largest cities to points north in the United States and Canada. The busiest Amtrak train stations in Florida in 2011 were: [Sanford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanford_(Amtrak_station)) (259,944), [Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando_(Amtrak_station)) (179,142), [Tampa Union Station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_Station_(Tampa%2C_Florida)) (140,785), [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_(Amtrak_station)) (94,556), and [Jacksonville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_(Amtrak_station)) (74,733).[317] [Sanford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanford%2C_Florida), in [Greater Orlando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Orlando), is the southern terminus of the [Auto Train](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auto_Train), which originates at [Lorton, Virginia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorton%2C_Virginia), south of Washington,

D.C. Until 2005, Orlando was also the eastern terminus of the [Sunset Limited](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunset_Limited), which travels across the southern United States via [New Orleans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Orleans), [Houston](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston), and [San Antonio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Antonio) to its western terminus of Los Angeles. Florida is served by two additional Amtrak trains (the [Silver Star](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver_Star_(Amtrak_train)) and the [Silver Meteor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver_Meteor)), which operate between New York City and Miami. [Virgin MiamiCentral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_MiamiCentral) in [Greater Downtown Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Downtown_Miami) and the [Miami Intermodal Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Intermodal_Center) near [Miami International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_International_Airport) are major hubs for [rapid transit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapid_transit), [commuter rail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commuter_rail), [intercity rail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intercity_rail), and [buses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bus).

## Public transit

[Miami: Miami's public transportation is served by Miami- Dade Transit that runs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_Transit) [Metrorail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Metrorail)[, a](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_Transit) [heavy rai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heavy_rail)[l](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_Transit) [rapid transit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapid_transit) system, [Metromover](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_Metromover), a [people mover](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People_mover) train system in [Downtown Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Downtown_Miami), and [Metrobus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_Transit#Metrobus), Miami's bus system.

Metrorail runs throughout [Miami-Dade County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami-Dade_County) and has two lines and 23 stations connecting to Downtown Miami's Metromover and [Tri-Rail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tri-Rail). Metromover has three lines and 21 stations throughout [Downtown Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Downtown_Miami). Outside of

[Miami-Dade County, public transit in the Miami metropolitan area is served by](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_metropolitan_area) [Broward County Transit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broward_County_Transit) and [Palm Tran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Tran); intercounty [commuter rail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commuter_rail) service is provided by [Tri-Rail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tri-Rail), with 18 stations including the region's three international airports.[318]



The [Miami Metrorail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Metrorail) is the state's only [rapid transit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapid_transit) system. About 15% of Miamians use public transit daily.

Orlando: Orlando is served by the [SunRail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SunRail) commuter train, which runs on a 32 miles (51 km) (61 miles (98 km) when complete) line including four stops in downtown. [Lynx bus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lynx_(Orlando)) serves the greater Orlando area in [Orange](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_County%2C_Florida), [Seminole](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole_County%2C_Florida), and [Osceola](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osceola_County%2C_Florida) counties.[319]

Tampa: Tampa and its surrounding area use the [Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillsborough_Area_Regional_Transit_Authority) system ("HART"). In addition, downtown Tampa has continuous trolley services in the form of a [heritage trolley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heritage_trolley) powered by [Tampa Electric Company](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Electric_Company). Pinellas County and St. Petersburg provide similar services through the [Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinellas_Suncoast_Transit_Authority) or "PSTA". The beaches of [Pinellas County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinellas_County%2C_Florida) also have a continuous trolley bus. Downtown St. Petersburg has a trolley system.[320][321]

Jacksonville: Jacksonville is served by the [Jacksonville Skyway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_Skyway), an automated people mover [monorail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monorail) connecting the [Florida State College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_State_College_at_Jacksonville) downtown campus, the Northbank central business district, Convention Center, and Southbank locations. The system includes eight stops connected by two lines. [JTA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_Transportation_Authority) bus has 180 vehicles with 56 lines.[322]

# Sports

Florida has three [NFL](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Football_League) teams, two [MLB](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Major_League_Baseball) teams, two [NBA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Basketball_Association) teams, two [NHL](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Hockey_League) teams, and one [MLS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Major_League_Soccer) team. Florida gained its first permanent [major-league professional sports team in 1966 when the American Football League added the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Football_League) [Miami Dolphins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Dolphins)[. Florida has given](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Football_League) professional sports franchises some subsidies in the form of tax breaks since 1991.[323]

[About half of all Major League Baseball teams conduct spring training in the state, with teams informally organized into the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_training) "[Grapefruit League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grapefruit_League)". Throughout MLB history, other teams have held spring training in Florida.

[NASCAR](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NASCAR) (headquartered in [Daytona Beach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_Beach%2C_Florida)) begins all three of its [major auto racing series in Florida at Daytona International Speedway in February, featuring the](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_International_Speedway) [Daytona 500](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_500)[, and ends all three](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_International_Speedway) Series in November at [Homestead-Miami Speedway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homestead-Miami_Speedway). Daytona also has the [Coke Zero Sugar 400](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coke_Zero_Sugar_400) NASCAR race weekend around [Independence Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence_Day_(United_States)) in July. The [24 Hours of Daytona](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/24_Hours_of_Daytona) is one of the [world's most prestigious endurance auto races. The Grand Prix of St. Petersburg and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Prix_of_St._Petersburg) [Grand Prix of Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Prix_of_Miami_(Indycar)) [have held](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Prix_of_St._Petersburg) [IndyCar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IndyCar) [races as](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Prix_of_St._Petersburg) well.

[American Airlines Arena](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Airlines_Arena) in [Miami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami)



[Marlins Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlins_Park) in [Little Havana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Havana)

Florida is a major golf hub. The [PGA of America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_Golfers%27_Association_of_America) is headquartered in [Palm Beach Gardens, the PGA Tour is headquartered in Ponte Vedra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponte_Vedra_Beach%2C_Florida) [Beach, and the LPGA is headquartered in Daytona Beach. The](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Players_Championship) [Players Championship, WGC-Cadillac Championship, Arnold Palmer Invitational,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Palmer_Invitational) [Honda Classic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honda_Classic) [and](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Palmer_Invitational) [Valspar Championship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valspar_Championship) [are](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Palmer_Invitational) [PGA Tour](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PGA_Tour) rounds.

Florida has teams in all the major league sports—National Football League, Major League Baseball, National Basketball Association, National Hockey League, and Major League Soccer Florida's most

recent major-league team, Orlando City, began play in MLS in 2015.[324]



[Daytona International Speedway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daytona_International_Speedway) is home to various auto racing events.

[The Miami Masters is an ATP World Tour Masters 1000 and WTA Premier tennis event, whereas the Delray Beach International Tennis Championships is an](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delray_Beach_International_Tennis_Championships) [ATP World Tour 250](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ATP_World_Tour_250) [event.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delray_Beach_International_Tennis_Championships)

Minor league baseball, [football](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_football), basketball, [ice hockey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice_hockey), soccer and [indoor football](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indoor_American_football) teams are based in Florida.[325] [Ben Hill Griffin Stadium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Hill_Griffin_Stadium) is the largest football stadium in Florida, the [12th largest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_NCAA_Division_I_FBS_football_stadiums) stadium in [American college football, and the 18th largest stadium in the world, as measured by its official seating capacity of 88,548—though, it has often held over 90,000 for Florida's home football games.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seating_capacity)

Florida's universities have a number of [collegiate sport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Collegiate_Athletic_Association) programs. Major college football programs include the [Florida State Seminoles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_State_Seminoles) and [Miami Hurricanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Hurricanes) of the [Atlantic Coast Conference](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Coast_Conference), and the [Florida Gators](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Gators) of the [Southeastern Conference](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southeastern_Conference).[326] Since 1996, Florida has added four additional programs to the ranks of Division I FCS: [UCF Knights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UCF_Knights), [South Florida Bulls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Florida_Bulls), [Florida Atlantic Owls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Atlantic_Owls) and [FIU Panthers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIU_Panthers).

# State symbols

The majority of the symbols were chosen after 1950; only the two oldest symbols—the [state flower](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_flower) (chosen in 1909), and the [state bird](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_birds) (chosen in 1927), and the [state nickname](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_nickname) (chosen in 1970)—are not listed in the 2010 [Florida Statutes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Statutes).[327]

[**Amphibian**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_amphibians): [Barking tree frog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyla_gratiosa)

[**Animal**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_mammals): [Florida panther](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_panther)

[**Anthem**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_songs): "[Florida (Where the Sawgrass Meets the Sky)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_(Where_the_Sawgrass_Meets_the_Sky))"

[**Beverage**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_beverages): [Orange juice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_juice) [**Bird**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_birds): [Northern mockingbird](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_mockingbird) [**Bird**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_birds): [American flamingo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_flamingo)

[**Festival**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Festival): "[Calle Ocho-Open House 8](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Havana#Calle_Ocho_Festival)"

### [Fish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_fish)

[**(fresh water)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_fish): [Florida largemouth bass](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_largemouth_bass)

### [Fish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_fish)

[**(salt water)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_fish): [Atlantic sailfish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_sailfish) [**Flower**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_flowers): [Orange blossom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_(fruit)) [**Fruit**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_foods): [Orange](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_(fruit))

[**Gem**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_minerals%2C_rocks%2C_stones_and_gemstones): [Moonstone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moonstone_(gemstone))

[**Horse**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_horse): [Florida Cracker Horse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_Cracker_Horse)

[**Insect**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_insects): [Zebra longwing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliconius_charithonia)

[In God We Trust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_God_We_Trust) motto on Florida license plate



[The Florida Panther is the state animal.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_mammals)

### [Mammal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_mammals)

[**(salt water)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_mammals): [Common bottlenose dolphin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_bottlenose_dolphin)

### [Mammal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_mammals)

[**(marine)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_mammals): [Florida manatee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida_manatee) [**Motto**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_motto): "[In God We Trust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_God_We_Trust)" [**Nickname**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_nicknames): The Sunshine State [**Palm Tree**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arecaceae): [Coconut palm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coconut_palm)

[**Pie**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_foods): [Key lime pie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_lime_pie)

[**Play**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Play_(theatre)): [*Cross and Sword*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross_and_Sword)[**Reptile**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_reptiles): [American alligator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_alligator) [**Reptile**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_reptile)

[**(salt water)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_reptile): [Loggerhead sea turtle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loggerhead_sea_turtle)

[**Rodeo**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodeo): [Silver Spurs Rodeo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver_Spurs_Rodeo)

[**Shell**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_shells): [Horse conch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triplofusus_papillosus)

[**Soil**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_soils): [Myakka soil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myakka_(soil))

[**Song**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_songs): "[Old Folks at Home](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Folks_at_Home)" [**State day/week**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Day): [Pascua Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascua_Florida) [**Stone**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_minerals%2C_rocks%2C_stones_and_gemstones): [Agatized coral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lace_agate)

[**Tortoise**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tortoise): [Gopher tortoise](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gopher_tortoise) [**Tree**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_trees): [Sabal palmetto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabal_palmetto) [**Wildflower**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wildflower): [Tickseed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coreopsis)

# Sister states

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sister jurisdiction** | **Country** | **Year**[328] |
| [Languedoc-Roussillon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languedoc-Roussillon) | France | 1989 |
| [Taiwan Province](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan_Province) | [Taiwan, R.O.C.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan) | 1992 |
| [Wakayama Prefecture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wakayama_Prefecture) | Japan | 1995 |
| [Western Cape](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Cape) | South Africa | 1995 |
| [Nueva Esparta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nueva_Esparta) | Venezuela | 1999 |
| [Kyonggi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gyeonggi-do) | South Korea | 2000 |

**Notable people**



[The Orange blossom is the state flower.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_flowers)



[Coconut palms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coconut_palms) like these in [Islamorada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamorada%2C_Florida) flourish in the Florida Keys.

# See also

[Index of Florida-related articles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Index_of_Florida-related_articles) [Outline of Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline_of_Florida)

# Notes

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[Florida Memory Project (http://www.floridamemory.com/)](http://www.floridamemory.com/) Over 300,000 photographs and documents from the State Library & Archives of Florida

Online collection of the Spanish Land Grants (https://web.archive.org/web/20130502174501/ht tp://floridamemory.com/collections/spanishlandgrants/)

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