[Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef" \o "Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:About](/wiki/Template:About) [Template:Use mdy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_mdy_dates) [Template:Infobox U.S. state](/wiki/Template:Infobox_U.S._state) [Template:Infobox U.S. state symbols](/wiki/Template:Infobox_U.S._state_symbols)

**Tennessee** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en)) ([Template:Lang-chr](/wiki/Template:Lang-chr), *Tanasi*) is a [state](/wiki/U.S._state) located in the [southeastern region](/wiki/Southeastern_United_States) of the [United States](/wiki/United_States). Tennessee is the [36th largest](/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_area) and the [17th most populous](/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_population) of the [50 United States](/wiki/List_of_U.S._states). Tennessee is bordered by [Kentucky](/wiki/Kentucky) and [Virginia](/wiki/Virginia) to the north, [North Carolina](/wiki/North_Carolina) to the east, [Georgia](/wiki/Georgia_(U.S._state)), [Alabama](/wiki/Alabama), and [Mississippi](/wiki/Mississippi) to the south, and [Arkansas](/wiki/Arkansas) and [Missouri](/wiki/Missouri) to the west. The [Appalachian Mountains](/wiki/Appalachian_Mountains) dominate the eastern part of the state, and the [Mississippi River](/wiki/Mississippi_River) forms the state's western border. Tennessee's capital and second largest city is [Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee), which has a population of 601,222. [Memphis](/wiki/Memphis,_Tennessee) is the state's largest city, with a population of 653,450.<ref name=2013census>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The state of Tennessee is rooted in the [Watauga Association](/wiki/Watauga_Association), a 1772 frontier pact generally regarded as the first constitutional government west of the Appalachians.[[1]](#cite_note-1) What is now Tennessee was initially part of North Carolina, and later part of the [Southwest Territory](/wiki/Southwest_Territory). Tennessee was admitted to the Union as the 16th state on June 1, 1796. Tennessee was the last state to leave the [Union](/wiki/Union_(American_Civil_War)) and join the [Confederacy](/wiki/Confederate_States_of_America) at the outbreak of the [U.S. Civil War](/wiki/U.S._Civil_War) in 1861. Occupied by Union forces from 1862, it was the first state to be readmitted to the Union at the end of the war.<ref name=guide>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Tennessee furnished more soldiers for the Confederate Army than any other state, and more soldiers for the Union Army than any other Southern state.[[2]](#cite_note-2) Beginning during Reconstruction, it had competitive party politics, but a Democratic takeover in the late 1880s resulted in passage of [disfranchisement](/wiki/Disfranchisement_after_the_Reconstruction_Era) laws that excluded most blacks and many poor whites from voting. This sharply reduced competition in politics in the state until after passage of civil rights legislation in the mid-20th century.[[3]](#cite_note-3) In the 20th century, Tennessee transitioned from an agrarian economy to a more diversified economy, aided by massive federal investment in the [Tennessee Valley Authority](/wiki/Tennessee_Valley_Authority) and, in the early 1940s, the city of [Oak Ridge](/wiki/Oak_Ridge,_Tennessee). This city was established to house the [Manhattan Project's](/wiki/Manhattan_Project) uranium enrichment facilities, helping to build the [world's first atomic bomb](/wiki/Trinity_(nuclear_test)), which was used during [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II).

Tennessee has played a critical role in the development of many forms of American popular music, including [rock and roll](/wiki/Rock_and_roll), [blues](/wiki/Blues_music), [country](/wiki/Country_music), and [rockabilly](/wiki/Rockabilly).[Template:Citation needed lead](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed_lead) [Beale Street](/wiki/Beale_Street) in Memphis is considered by many to be the birthplace of the blues, with musicians such as [W.C. Handy](/wiki/W.C._Handy) performing in its clubs as early as 1909.[[4]](#cite_note-4)[Template:Citation needed lead](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed_lead) Memphis is also home to [Sun Records](/wiki/Sun_Records), where musicians such as [Elvis Presley](/wiki/Elvis_Presley), [Johnny Cash](/wiki/Johnny_Cash), [Carl Perkins](/wiki/Carl_Perkins), [Jerry Lee Lewis](/wiki/Jerry_Lee_Lewis), [Roy Orbison](/wiki/Roy_Orbison), and [Charlie Rich](/wiki/Charlie_Rich) began their recording careers, and where rock and roll took shape in the 1950s.[[5]](#cite_note-5)[Template:Citation needed lead](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed_lead) The [1927 Victor recording sessions](/wiki/Bristol_sessions) in [Bristol](/wiki/Bristol,_Tennessee) generally mark the beginning of the country music genre and the rise of the [Grand Ole Opry](/wiki/Grand_Ole_Opry) in the 1930s helped make [Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee) the center of the country music recording industry.<ref name=tehcwolfe>Charles Wolfe, [Music](http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=956). *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, 2002. Retrieved: November 25, 2009.</ref>[[6]](#cite_note-6)[Template:Citation needed lead](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed_lead) Three brick-and-mortar museums recognize Tennessee's role in nurturing various forms of popular music: the [Memphis Rock N' Soul Museum](/wiki/Memphis_Rock_N'_Soul_Museum), the [Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum](/wiki/Country_Music_Hall_of_Fame_and_Museum) in Nashville, and the International Rock-A-Billy Museum in Jackson. Moreover, the [Rockabilly Hall of Fame](/wiki/Rockabilly_Hall_of_Fame), an online site recognizing the development of rockabilly in which Tennessee played a crucial role, is based in Nashville.[Template:Citation needed lead](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed_lead)

Tennessee's major industries include agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. [Poultry](/wiki/Poultry), [soybeans](/wiki/Soybean), and [cattle](/wiki/Cattle) are the state's primary agricultural products,[[7]](#cite_note-7) and major manufacturing exports include chemicals, transportation equipment, and electrical equipment.[[8]](#cite_note-8) The [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](/wiki/Great_Smoky_Mountains_National_Park), the nation's most visited national park, is headquartered in the eastern part of the state, and a section of the [Appalachian Trail](/wiki/Appalachian_Trail) roughly follows the Tennessee-North Carolina border.[[9]](#cite_note-9) Other major tourist attractions include the [Tennessee Aquarium](/wiki/Tennessee_Aquarium) in [Chattanooga](/wiki/Chattanooga,_Tennessee); [Dollywood](/wiki/Dollywood) in [Pigeon Forge](/wiki/Pigeon_Forge,_Tennessee); the [Parthenon](/wiki/Parthenon_(Nashville)), the [Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum](/wiki/Country_Music_Hall_of_Fame_and_Museum), and [Ryman Auditorium](/wiki/Ryman_Auditorium) in Nashville; the [Jack Daniel's Distillery](/wiki/Jack_Daniel's) in [Lynchburg](/wiki/Lynchburg,_Tennessee); and Elvis Presley's [Graceland](/wiki/Graceland) residence and tomb, the [Memphis Zoo](/wiki/Memphis_Zoo), and the [National Civil Rights Museum](/wiki/National_Civil_Rights_Museum) in Memphis.

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[right|thumb|Monument near the ancient site of Tanasi in Monroe County](/wiki/Image:Tanasi-monument-cherokee-tennessee.jpg) The earliest variant of the name that became *Tennessee* was recorded by Captain [Juan Pardo](/wiki/Juan_Pardo_(explorer)), the Spanish explorer, when he and his men passed through an [American Indian](/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States) village named "Tanasqui" in 1567 while traveling inland from [South Carolina](/wiki/South_Carolina). In the early 18th century, British traders encountered a Cherokee town named [Tanasi](/wiki/Tanasi) (or "Tanase") in present-day [Monroe County, Tennessee](/wiki/Monroe_County,_Tennessee). The town was located on a river of the same name (now known as the [Little Tennessee River](/wiki/Little_Tennessee_River)), and appears on maps as early as 1725. It is not known whether this was the same town as the one encountered by Juan Pardo, although recent research suggests that Pardo's "Tanasqui" was located at the confluence of the [Pigeon River](/wiki/Pigeon_River_(Tennessee_–_North_Carolina)) and the [French Broad River](/wiki/French_Broad_River), near modern [Newport](/wiki/Newport,_Tennessee).[[10]](#cite_note-10) The meaning and origin of the word are uncertain. Some accounts suggest it is a [Cherokee](/wiki/Cherokee) modification of an earlier [Yuchi](/wiki/Yuchi) word. It has been said to mean "meeting place", "winding river", or "river of the great bend".[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) According to [James Mooney](/wiki/James_Mooney), the name "can not be analyzed" and its meaning is lost.[[13]](#cite_note-13) The modern spelling, *Tennessee*, is attributed to [James Glen](/wiki/James_Glen), the governor of South Carolina, who used this spelling in his official correspondence during the 1750s. The spelling was popularized by the publication of [Henry Timberlake's](/wiki/Henry_Timberlake) "[Draught of the Cherokee Country](/wiki/File:Draught_of_the_Cherokee_Country.jpg)" in 1765. In 1788, North Carolina created "[Tennessee County](/wiki/Tennessee_County,_Tennessee)", the third county to be established in what is now Middle Tennessee. (Tennessee County was the predecessor to current-day [Montgomery County](/wiki/Montgomery_County,_Tennessee) and [Robertson County](/wiki/Robertson_County,_Tennessee).) When a [constitutional convention](/wiki/Constitutional_convention_(political_meeting)) met in 1796 to organize a new state out of the [Southwest Territory](/wiki/Southwest_Territory), it adopted "Tennessee" as the name of the state.

### Nickname[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

Tennessee is known as the "Volunteer State", a nickname some claimed was earned during the [War of 1812](/wiki/War_of_1812) because of the prominent role played by volunteer soldiers from Tennessee, especially during the [Battle of New Orleans](/wiki/Battle_of_New_Orleans).[[14]](#cite_note-14) Other sources differ on the origin of the state nickname; according to the [Columbia Encyclopedia](http://www.bartleby.com/65/te/Tenn.html#17), the name refers to volunteers for the [Mexican–American War](/wiki/Mexican–American_War). This explanation is more likely, because [President Polk's](/wiki/James_K._Polk) call for 2,600 nationwide volunteers at the beginning of the [Mexican-American War](/wiki/Mexican-American_War) resulted in 30,000 volunteers from Tennessee alone, largely in response to the death of [Davy Crockett](/wiki/Davy_Crockett) and appeals by former Tennessee Governor and now Texas politician, [Sam Houston](/wiki/Sam_Houston).[[15]](#cite_note-15)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|300px|Map of Tennessee](/wiki/File:National-atlas-tennessee.PNG) Tennessee borders eight other states: [Kentucky](/wiki/Kentucky) and [Virginia](/wiki/Virginia) to the north; [North Carolina](/wiki/North_Carolina) to the east; [Georgia](/wiki/Georgia_(U.S._state)), [Alabama](/wiki/Alabama), and [Mississippi](/wiki/Mississippi) on the south; [Arkansas](/wiki/Arkansas) and [Missouri](/wiki/Missouri) on the [Mississippi River](/wiki/Mississippi_River) to the west. Tennessee ties Missouri as the state bordering the most other states. The state is trisected by the [Tennessee River](/wiki/Tennessee_River).

The highest point in the state is [Clingmans Dome](/wiki/Clingmans_Dome) at 6,643 feet (2,025 m).[[16]](#cite_note-16) Clingmans Dome, which lies on Tennessee's eastern border, is the highest point on the [Appalachian Trail](/wiki/Appalachian_Trail), and is the third highest peak in the United States east of the Mississippi River. The state line between Tennessee and North Carolina crosses the summit. The state's lowest point is the Mississippi River at the Mississippi state line (the lowest point in [Memphis](/wiki/Memphis), nearby, is at 195 ft (59 m)). The geographical center of the state is located in [Murfreesboro](/wiki/Murfreesboro,_Tennessee).

The state of Tennessee is geographically, culturally, economically, and legally divided into three [Grand Divisions](/wiki/Grand_Divisions_of_Tennessee): [East Tennessee](/wiki/East_Tennessee), [Middle Tennessee](/wiki/Middle_Tennessee), and [West Tennessee](/wiki/West_Tennessee). The state [constitution](/wiki/Tennessee_Constitution) allows no more than two justices of the five-member [Tennessee Supreme Court](/wiki/Tennessee_Supreme_Court) to be from one Grand Division and a similar rule applies to certain commissions and boards.

Tennessee features six principal physiographic regions: the [Blue Ridge](/wiki/Blue_Ridge_Mountains), the [Appalachian Ridge and Valley](/wiki/Ridge-and-Valley_Appalachians) Region, the [Cumberland Plateau](/wiki/Cumberland_Plateau), the [Highland Rim](/wiki/Highland_Rim), the [Nashville Basin](/wiki/Nashville_Basin), and the [Gulf Coastal Plain](/wiki/Gulf_Coastal_Plain). Tennessee is home to the most caves in the United States, with over 10,000 documented caves to date.[[17]](#cite_note-17)

### East Tennessee[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|left|Map of Tennessee highlighting](/wiki/File:Map_of_East_Tennessee_counties.png) [East Tennessee](/wiki/East_Tennessee) The Blue Ridge area lies on the eastern edge of Tennessee, bordering North Carolina. This region of Tennessee is characterized by the high mountains and rugged terrain of the western Blue Ridge Mountains, which are subdivided into several subranges, namely the [Great Smoky Mountains](/wiki/Great_Smoky_Mountains), the [Bald Mountains](/wiki/Bald_Mountains), the [Unicoi Mountains](/wiki/Unicoi_Mountains), the [Unaka Mountains](/wiki/Unaka_Range) and [Roan Highlands](/wiki/Roan_Highlands), and the [Iron Mountains](/wiki/Iron_Mountains).

The average elevation of the Blue Ridge area is 5,000 feet (1,500 m) above sea level. [Clingmans Dome](/wiki/Clingmans_Dome), the state's highest point, is located in this region. The Blue Ridge area was never more than sparsely populated, and today much of it is protected by the [Cherokee National Forest](/wiki/Cherokee_National_Forest), the [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](/wiki/Great_Smoky_Mountains_National_Park), and several federal wilderness areas and state parks.

[thumb|250px|](/wiki/File:Greene-county-bald-mtns-tn1.jpg)[Bald Mountains](/wiki/Bald_Mountains) Stretching west from the Blue Ridge for approximately [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) is the Ridge and Valley region, in which numerous tributaries join to form the Tennessee River in the [Tennessee Valley](/wiki/Tennessee_Valley). This area of Tennessee is covered by fertile valleys separated by wooded ridges, such as [Bays Mountain](/wiki/Bays_Mountain) and [Clinch Mountain](/wiki/Clinch_Mountain). The western section of the Tennessee Valley, where the depressions become broader and the ridges become lower, is called the [Great Valley](/wiki/Great_Appalachian_Valley). In this valley are numerous towns and two of the region's three urban areas, [Knoxville](/wiki/Knoxville,_Tennessee), the 3rd largest city in the state, and [Chattanooga](/wiki/Chattanooga,_Tennessee), the 4th largest city in the state. The third urban area, the [Tri-Cities](/wiki/Tri-Cities_(Tennessee)), comprising [Bristol](/wiki/Bristol,_Tennessee), [Johnson City](/wiki/Johnson_City,_Tennessee), and [Kingsport](/wiki/Kingsport,_Tennessee) and their environs, is located to the northeast of Knoxville.

The [Cumberland Plateau](/wiki/Cumberland_Plateau) rises to the west of the Tennessee Valley; this area is covered with flat-topped mountains separated by sharp valleys. The elevation of the Cumberland Plateau ranges from [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) above sea level.

East Tennessee has several important transportation links with Middle and West Tennessee, as well as the rest of the nation and the world, including several major airports and interstates. Knoxville's [McGhee Tyson Airport](/wiki/McGhee_Tyson_Airport) (TYS) and Chattanooga's [Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport](/wiki/Chattanooga_Metropolitan_Airport) (CHA), as well as the Tri-Cities' [Tri-Cities Regional Airport](/wiki/Tri-Cities_Regional_Airport) (TRI), provide air service to numerous destinations. [I-24](/wiki/Interstate_24_(Tennessee)), [I-81](/wiki/Interstate_81_(Tennessee)), [I-40](/wiki/Interstate_40_(Tennessee)), [I-75](/wiki/Interstate_75_(Tennessee)), and [I-26](/wiki/Interstate_26_(Tennessee)) along with numerous state highways and other important roads, traverse the Grand Division and connect Chattanooga, Knoxville, and the Tri-Cities, along with other cities and towns such as [Cleveland](/wiki/Cleveland,_Tennessee), [Athens](/wiki/Athens,_Tennessee), and [Sevierville](/wiki/Sevierville,_Tennessee).

### Middle Tennessee[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|left|Map of Tennessee highlighting](/wiki/File:Map_of_Middle_Tennessee_counties.png) [Middle Tennessee](/wiki/Middle_Tennessee)

West of the Cumberland Plateau is the [Highland Rim](/wiki/Highland_Rim), an elevated plain that surrounds the [Nashville Basin](/wiki/Nashville_Basin). The northern section of the Highland Rim, known for its high [tobacco](/wiki/Tobacco) production, is sometimes called the [Pennyroyal Plateau](/wiki/Pennyroyal_Plateau); it is located primarily in Southwestern Kentucky. The Nashville Basin is characterized by rich, fertile farm country and great diversity of natural wildlife.

Middle Tennessee was a common destination of settlers crossing the Appalachians from Virginia in the late 18th century and early 19th century. An important trading route called the [Natchez Trace](/wiki/Natchez_Trace), created and used for many generations by American Indians, connected Middle Tennessee to the lower [Mississippi River](/wiki/Mississippi_River) town of [Natchez](/wiki/Natchez,_Mississippi). The route of the Natchez Trace was used as the basis for a scenic highway called the [Natchez Trace Parkway](/wiki/Natchez_Trace_Parkway).

Some of the last remaining large [American chestnut](/wiki/American_chestnut) trees grow in this region. They are being used to help breed [blight](/wiki/Blight)-resistant trees.

Middle Tennessee is one of the primary state population and transportation centers along with the heart of state government. [Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee) (the capital), [Clarksville](/wiki/Clarksville,_Tennessee), and [Murfreesboro](/wiki/Murfreesboro,_Tennessee) are its largest cities. Fifty percent of the US population is within [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of Nashville.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Interstates I-24, I-40, and I-65 service the Division, meeting in Nashville.

### West Tennessee[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|left|Map of Tennessee highlighting](/wiki/File:Map_of_West_Tennessee_counties.png) [West Tennessee](/wiki/West_Tennessee) West of the Highland Rim and Nashville Basin is the [Gulf Coastal Plain](/wiki/Gulf_Coastal_Plain), which includes the [Mississippi embayment](/wiki/Mississippi_embayment). The Gulf Coastal Plain is, in terms of area, the predominant land region in Tennessee. It is part of the large geographic land area that begins at the [Gulf of Mexico](/wiki/Gulf_of_Mexico) and extends north into southern [Illinois](/wiki/Illinois). In Tennessee, the Gulf Coastal Plain is divided into three sections that extend from the [Tennessee River](/wiki/Tennessee_River) in the east to the [Mississippi River](/wiki/Mississippi_River) in the west.

The easternmost section, about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in width, consists of hilly land that runs along the western bank of the Tennessee River. To the west of this narrow strip of land is a wide area of rolling hills and streams that stretches all the way to the Mississippi River; this area is called the Tennessee Bottoms or bottom land. In Memphis, the Tennessee Bottoms end in steep bluffs overlooking the river. To the west of the Tennessee Bottoms is the [Mississippi Alluvial Plain](/wiki/Mississippi_Alluvial_Plain), less than 300 feet (90 m) above sea level. This area of lowlands, flood plains, and swamp land is sometimes referred to as [the Delta](/wiki/Mississippi_Delta) region. [Memphis](/wiki/Memphis_Tennessee) is the economic center of West Tennessee and the largest city in the state.

Most of West Tennessee remained Indian land until the [Chickasaw Cession of 1818](/wiki/Jackson_Purchase_(U.S._historical_region)), when the [Chickasaw](/wiki/Chickasaw) ceded their land between the Tennessee River and the Mississippi River. The portion of the Chickasaw Cession that lies in Kentucky is known today as the [Jackson Purchase](/wiki/Jackson_Purchase).

### Public lands[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|View from atop](/wiki/File:Clifftops4-7-07.jpg) [Mount Le Conte](/wiki/Mount_Le_Conte_(Tennessee)) in the [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](/wiki/Great_Smoky_Mountains_National_Park), April 2007 Areas under the control and management of the [National Park Service](/wiki/National_Park_Service) include the following:

* [Andrew Johnson National Historic Site](/wiki/Andrew_Johnson_National_Historic_Site) in [Greeneville](/wiki/Greeneville,_Tennessee)
* [Appalachian National Scenic Trail](/wiki/Appalachian_National_Scenic_Trail)
* [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](/wiki/Big_South_Fork_National_River_and_Recreation_Area)
* [Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park](/wiki/Chickamauga_and_Chattanooga_National_Military_Park)
* [Cumberland Gap National Historical Park](/wiki/Cumberland_Gap_National_Historical_Park)
* [Foothills Parkway](/wiki/Foothills_Parkway)
* [Fort Donelson National Battlefield](/wiki/Fort_Donelson_National_Battlefield) and [Fort Donelson National Cemetery](/wiki/Fort_Donelson_National_Cemetery) near [Dover](/wiki/Dover,_Tennessee)
* [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](/wiki/Great_Smoky_Mountains_National_Park)
* [Natchez Trace Parkway](/wiki/Natchez_Trace_Parkway)
* [Obed Wild and Scenic River](/wiki/Obed_Wild_and_Scenic_River) near [Wartburg](/wiki/Wartburg,_Tennessee)
* [Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail](/wiki/Overmountain_Victory_National_Historic_Trail)
* [Shiloh National Cemetery](/wiki/Shiloh_National_Cemetery) and [Shiloh National Military Park](/wiki/Shiloh_National_Military_Park) near [Shiloh](/wiki/Shiloh,_Hardin_County,_Tennessee)
* [Stones River National Battlefield](/wiki/Stones_River_National_Battlefield) and [Stones River National Cemetery](/wiki/Stones_River_National_Cemetery) near [Murfreesboro](/wiki/Murfreesboro,_Tennessee)
* [Trail of Tears National Historic Trail](/wiki/Trail_of_Tears_National_Historic_Trail)

Fifty-four state parks, covering some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) as well as parts of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and [Cherokee National Forest](/wiki/Cherokee_National_Forest), and [Cumberland Gap National Historical Park](/wiki/Cumberland_Gap_National_Historical_Park) are in Tennessee. Sportsmen and visitors are attracted to [Reelfoot Lake](/wiki/Reelfoot_Lake), originally formed by the [New Madrid earthquake](/wiki/New_Madrid_earthquake); stumps and other remains of a once dense forest, together with the lotus bed covering the shallow waters, give the lake an eerie beauty.

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|250px|Autumn in Tennessee. Roadway to Lindsey Lake in](/wiki/File:Roadway_in_David_Crockett_State_Park_(Autumn_2008_-_Horizontal_Image).jpg) [David Crockett State Park](/wiki/David_Crockett_State_Park), located a half mile west of [Lawrenceburg](/wiki/Lawrenceburg,_Tennessee). [thumb|250px|Chapman Highway (US-441) traversing](/wiki/File:Seymour-chilhowee-mtn-tn1.jpg) [Seymour](/wiki/Seymour,_Tennessee) during winter time Most of the state has a [humid subtropical climate](/wiki/Humid_subtropical_climate), with the exception of some of the higher elevations in the Appalachians, which are classified as having a [mountain temperate climate](/wiki/Oceanic_climate) or a [humid continental climate](/wiki/Humid_continental_climate) due to cooler temperatures.<ref name=Climate>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The [Gulf of Mexico](/wiki/Gulf_of_Mexico) is the dominant factor in the climate of Tennessee, with winds from the south being responsible for most of the state's annual precipitation. Generally, the state has hot summers and mild to cool winters with generous precipitation throughout the year, with highest average monthly precipitation generally in the winter and spring months, between December and April. The driest months, on average, are August to October. On average the state receives 50 inches (130 cm) of precipitation annually. Snowfall ranges from 5 inches (13 cm) in West Tennessee to over 16 inches (41 cm) in the higher mountains in East Tennessee.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Summers in the state are generally hot and humid, with most of the state averaging a high of around 90 °F (32 °C) during the summer months. Winters tend to be mild to cool, increasing in coolness at higher elevations. Generally, for areas outside the highest mountains, the average overnight lows are near freezing for most of the state. The highest recorded temperature is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) at [Perryville](/wiki/Perryville,_Tennessee) on August 9, 1930 while the lowest recorded temperature is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) at [Mountain City](/wiki/Mountain_City,_Tennessee) on December 30, 1917.

While the state is far enough from the coast to avoid any direct impact from a [hurricane](/wiki/Hurricane), the location of the state makes it likely to be impacted from the remnants of tropical cyclones which weaken over land and can cause significant rainfall, such as [Tropical Storm Chris in 1982](/wiki/Tropical_Storm_Chris_(1982)) and [Hurricane Opal in 1995](/wiki/Hurricane_Opal).[Template:Tropical Cyclone Rainfall in the Southeastern United States](/wiki/Template:Tropical_Cyclone_Rainfall_in_the_Southeastern_United_States) The state averages around 50 days of thunderstorms per year, some of which can be severe with large [hail](/wiki/Hail) and damaging winds. [Tornadoes](/wiki/Tornado) are possible throughout the state, with West and Middle Tennessee the most vulnerable. Occasionally, strong or violent tornadoes occur, such as the devastating [April 2011 tornadoes](/wiki/April_25–28,_2011_tornado_outbreak) that killed 20 people in North Georgia and Southeast Tennessee.[[20]](#cite_note-20) On average, the state has 15 tornadoes per year.[[21]](#cite_note-21) Tornadoes in Tennessee can be severe, and Tennessee leads the nation in the percentage of total tornadoes which have fatalities.[[22]](#cite_note-22) Winter storms are an occasional problem, such as the infamous [Blizzard of 1993](/wiki/Blizzard_of_1993), although [ice storms](/wiki/Ice_storm) are a more likely occurrence. [Fog](/wiki/Fog) is a persistent problem in parts of the state, especially in East Tennessee.

{| class="wikitable" "text-align:center;font-size:90%;"| | colspan="13" style="text-align:center;font-size:120%;background:#E8EAFA;"|Monthly Normal High and Low Temperatures For Various Tennessee Cities (F)[[23]](#cite_note-23)|- ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000001; height:17px;"| City ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Jan ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Feb ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Mar ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Apr ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| May ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Jun ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Jul ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Aug ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Sep ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Oct ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Nov ! style="background:#e5afaa; color:#000;"| Dec |- ! style="background:#c5dfe1; color:#000; height:16px;"| Bristol | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 44/25 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 49/27 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 57/34 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 66/41 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 74/51 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 81/60 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 85/64 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 84/62 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 79/56 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 68/43 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 58/35 | style="text-align:center; background:#c5dfe1; color:#000;"| 48/27 |- ! 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## Major cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

The capital is [Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee), though [Knoxville](/wiki/Knoxville,_Tennessee), [Kingston](/wiki/Kingston,_Tennessee), and [Murfreesboro](/wiki/Murfreesboro,_Tennessee) have all served as [state capitals](/wiki/List_of_capitals_in_the_United_States) in the past. [Memphis](/wiki/Memphis,_Tennessee) has the largest population of any city in the state. Nashville's 13-county [metropolitan area](/wiki/Metropolitan_area) has been the state's largest since c. 1990. [Chattanooga](/wiki/Chattanooga,_Tennessee) and Knoxville, both in the eastern part of the state near the Great Smoky Mountains, each has approximately one-third of the population of Memphis or Nashville. The city of [Clarksville](/wiki/Clarksville,_Tennessee) is a fifth significant population center, some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) northwest of Nashville. Murfreesboro is the sixth-largest city in Tennessee, consisting of some 108,755 residents. [Template:Largest cities](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

### Early history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|200px|right|](/wiki/File:Castalian_Springs_Braden_style_Warrior_gorget_HRoe_2012.jpg)[Mississippian-period](/wiki/Mississippian_culture) [shell gorget](/wiki/Shell_gorget), [Castalian Springs](/wiki/Castalian_Springs_Mound_Site), [Sumner County](/wiki/Sumner_County,_Tennessee) [thumb|right|200px|Reconstruction of](/wiki/File:Ftloudouninterior.jpg) [Fort Loudon](/wiki/Fort_Loudoun_(Tennessee)), the first British settlement in Tennessee

The area now known as Tennessee was first inhabited by [Paleo-Indians](/wiki/Paleo-Indians) nearly 12,000 years ago.[[24]](#cite_note-24) The names of the cultural groups that inhabited the area between first settlement and the time of European contact are unknown, but several distinct cultural phases have been named by archaeologists, including [Archaic](/wiki/Archaic_period_in_the_Americas) (8000–1000 BC), [Woodland](/wiki/Woodland_period) (1000 BC–1000 AD), and [Mississippian](/wiki/Mississippian_culture) (1000–1600 AD), whose chiefdoms were the cultural predecessors of the [Muscogee people](/wiki/Creek_people) who inhabited the Tennessee River Valley before Cherokee migration into the river's headwaters.

The first recorded European excursions into what is now called Tennessee were three expeditions led by [Spanish explorers](/wiki/Conquistador), namely [Hernando de Soto](/wiki/Hernando_de_Soto_(explorer)) in 1540, [Tristan de Luna](/wiki/Tristán_de_Luna_y_Arellano) in 1559, and [Juan Pardo](/wiki/Juan_Pardo_(explorer)) in 1567. Pardo recorded the name "Tanasqui" from a local Indian village, which evolved to the state's current name. At that time, Tennessee was inhabited by tribes of [Muscogee](/wiki/Creek_people) and [Yuchi](/wiki/Yuchi) people. Possibly because of European diseases devastating the Indian tribes, which would have left a population vacuum, and also from expanding European settlement in the north, the [Cherokee](/wiki/Cherokee) moved south from the area now called Virginia. As European colonists spread into the area, the Indian populations were forcibly displaced to the south and west, including all Muscogee and Yuchi peoples, the [Chickasaw](/wiki/Chickasaw) and [Choctaw](/wiki/Choctaw), and ultimately, the [Cherokee](/wiki/Cherokee) in [1838](/wiki/Cherokee_removal).

The first British settlement in what is now Tennessee was built in 1756 by settlers from the [colony of South Carolina](/wiki/Colony_of_South_Carolina) at [Fort Loudoun](/wiki/Fort_Loudoun_(Tennessee)), near present-day [Vonore](/wiki/Vonore,_Tennessee). Fort Loudoun became the westernmost British outpost to that date. The fort was designed by [John William Gerard de Brahm](/wiki/John_William_Gerard_de_Brahm) and constructed by forces under British Captain Raymond Demeré. After its completion, Captain Raymond Demeré relinquished command on August 14, 1757 to his brother, Captain Paul Demeré. Hostilities erupted between the British and the neighboring [Overhill Cherokees](/wiki/Overhill_Cherokee), and a siege of Fort Loudoun ended with its surrender on August 7, 1760. The following morning, Captain Paul Demeré and a number of his men were killed in an ambush nearby, and most of the rest of the garrison was taken prisoner.[[25]](#cite_note-25) In the 1760s, [long hunters](/wiki/Longhunter) from Virginia explored much of East and Middle Tennessee, and the first permanent European settlers began arriving late in the decade. The vast majority of 18th century settlers were English or of primarily [English descent](/wiki/English-American) but nearly 20% of them were also [Scotch-Irish](/wiki/Scotch-Irish_American).[[26]](#cite_note-26) These settlers formed the [Watauga Association](/wiki/Watauga_Association), a community built on lands leased from the [Cherokee](/wiki/Cherokee) peoples.

During the [American Revolutionary War](/wiki/Southern_theater_of_the_American_Revolutionary_War), Fort Watauga at [Sycamore Shoals](/wiki/Sycamore_Shoals) (in present-day [Elizabethton](/wiki/Elizabethton,_Tennessee)) was attacked (1776) by [Dragging Canoe](/wiki/Dragging_Canoe) and his warring faction of Cherokee who were aligned with the British Loyalists. These renegade Cherokee were referred to by settlers as the [Chickamauga](/wiki/Chickamauga_Indian). They opposed North Carolina's annexation of the [Washington District](/wiki/Washington_District,_North_Carolina) and the concurrent settling of the [Transylvania Colony](/wiki/Transylvania_(colony)) further north and west. The lives of many settlers were spared from the initial warrior attacks through the warnings of Dragging Canoe's cousin, [Nancy Ward](/wiki/Nancy_Ward). The frontier fort on the banks of the [Watauga River](/wiki/Watauga_River) later served as a 1780 staging area for the [Overmountain Men](/wiki/Overmountain_Men) in preparation to trek over the [Appalachian Mountains](/wiki/Appalachian_Mountains), to engage, and to later defeat the British Army at the [Battle of Kings Mountain](/wiki/Battle_of_Kings_Mountain) in [South Carolina](/wiki/South_Carolina).

Three counties of the Washington District (now part of Tennessee) broke off from North Carolina in 1784 and formed the [State of Franklin](/wiki/State_of_Franklin). Efforts to obtain admission to the [Union](/wiki/Perpetual_Union) failed, and the counties (now numbering eight) had re-joined North Carolina by 1789. North Carolina ceded the area to the federal government in 1790, after which it was organized into the [Southwest Territory](/wiki/Southwest_Territory). In an effort to encourage settlers to move west into the new territory, in 1787 the mother state of North Carolina ordered a road to be cut to take settlers into the Cumberland Settlements—from the south end of [Clinch Mountain](/wiki/Clinch_Mountain) (in East Tennessee) to French Lick ([Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee)). The Trace was called the "North Carolina Road" or "[Avery's Trace](/wiki/Avery's_Trace)", and sometimes "The Wilderness Road" (although it should not be confused with [Daniel Boone's](/wiki/Daniel_Boone) "[Wilderness Road](/wiki/Wilderness_Road_State_Park)" through the [Cumberland Gap](/wiki/Cumberland_Gap)).

### Statehood (1796)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

Tennessee was admitted to the Union on June 1, 1796 as the 16th state. It was the first state created from territory under the jurisdiction of the United States federal government. Apart from the former [Thirteen Colonies](/wiki/Thirteen_Colonies) only [Vermont](/wiki/Vermont) and [Kentucky](/wiki/Kentucky) predate Tennessee's statehood, and neither was ever a federal territory.[[27]](#cite_note-27) The state boundaries, according to the Constitution of the State of Tennessee, Article I, Section 31, stated that the beginning point for identifying the boundary was the extreme height of the Stone Mountain, at the place where the line of Virginia intersects it, and basically ran the extreme heights of mountain chains through the Appalachian Mountains separating North Carolina from Tennessee past the Indian towns of Cowee and Old Chota, thence along the main ridge of the said mountain (Unicoi Mountain) to the southern boundary of the state; all the territory, lands and waters lying west of said line are included in the boundaries and limits of the newly formed state of Tennessee. Part of the provision also stated that the limits and jurisdiction of the state would include future land acquisition, referencing possible land trade with other states, or the acquisition of territory from west of the Mississippi River.

During the administration of [U.S. President Martin Van Buren](/wiki/Martin_Van_Buren), nearly 17,000 Cherokees—along with approximately 2,000 black slaves owned by Cherokees—were uprooted from their homes between 1838 and 1839 and were forced by the U.S. military to march from "emigration depots" in Eastern Tennessee (such as [Fort Cass](/wiki/Fort_Cass)) toward the more distant [Indian Territory](/wiki/Indian_Territory) west of Arkansas.[[28]](#cite_note-28) During this relocation an estimated 4,000 Cherokees died along the way west.[[29]](#cite_note-29) In the [Cherokee language](/wiki/Cherokee_language), the event is called *Nunna daul Isunyi*—"the Trail Where We Cried." The Cherokees were not the only American Indians forced to emigrate as a result of the [Indian removal](/wiki/Indian_removal) efforts of the United States, and so the phrase "[Trail of Tears](/wiki/Trail_of_Tears)" is sometimes used to refer to similar events endured by other American Indian peoples, especially among the "[Five Civilized Tribes](/wiki/Five_Civilized_Tribes)". The phrase originated as a description of the earlier emigration of the [Choctaw](/wiki/Choctaw) nation.

### Civil War and Reconstruction[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) In February 1861, secessionists in Tennessee's state government—led by Governor [Isham Harris](/wiki/Isham_Harris)—sought voter approval for a convention to sever ties with the United States, but Tennessee voters rejected the referendum by a 54–46% margin. The strongest opposition to secession came from East Tennessee (which later tried to form a [separate Union-aligned state](/wiki/East_Tennessee_Convention)). Following the Confederate [attack upon Fort Sumter](/wiki/Battle_of_Fort_Sumter) in April and Lincoln's call for troops from Tennessee and other states in response, Governor Isham Harris began military mobilization, submitted an ordinance of secession to the General Assembly, and made direct overtures to the Confederate government. The Tennessee legislature ratified an agreement to enter a military league with the Confederate States on May 7, 1861. On June 8, 1861, with people in Middle Tennessee having significantly changed their position, voters approved a second referendum calling for secession, becoming the last state to do so.

Many major battles of the [American Civil War](/wiki/American_Civil_War) were fought in Tennessee—most of them Union victories. [Ulysses S. Grant](/wiki/Ulysses_S._Grant) and the [U.S. Navy](/wiki/U.S._Navy) captured control of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers in February 1862. They held off the Confederate counterattack at [Shiloh](/wiki/Battle_of_Shiloh) in April. Memphis fell to the Union in June, following a [naval battle](/wiki/Battle_of_Memphis) on the Mississippi River in front of the city. The Capture of Memphis and Nashville gave the Union control of the western and middle sections; this control was confirmed at the [Battle of Murfreesboro](/wiki/Battle_of_Stones_River) in early January 1863 and by the subsequent [Tullahoma Campaign](/wiki/Tullahoma_Campaign).

[thumb|250px|right|The](/wiki/Image:Battle_of_Franklin_II_1864.jpg) [Battle of Franklin](/wiki/Battle_of_Franklin), November 30, 1864 Confederates held East Tennessee despite the strength of Unionist sentiment there, with the exception of extremely pro-Confederate [Sullivan County](/wiki/Sullivan_County,_Tennessee). The Confederates, led by General James Longstreet, did attack General Burnside's Fort Sanders at Knoxville and lost. It was a big blow to East Tennessee Confederate momentum, but Longstreet won the Battle of Bean's Station a few weeks later. The Confederates besieged Chattanooga during the [Chattanooga Campaign](/wiki/Chattanooga_Campaign) in early fall 1863, but were driven off by Grant in November. Many of the Confederate defeats can be attributed to the poor strategic vision of General [Braxton Bragg](/wiki/Braxton_Bragg), who led the [Army of Tennessee](/wiki/Army_of_Tennessee) from [Perryville, Kentucky](/wiki/Battle_of_Perryville) to another Confederate defeat at Chattanooga.

The last major battles came when the Confederates invaded Middle Tennessee in November 1864 and were checked at [Franklin](/wiki/Battle_of_Franklin), then completely dispersed by [George Thomas](/wiki/George_Henry_Thomas) at [Nashville](/wiki/Battle_of_Nashville) in December. Meanwhile, the civilian [Andrew Johnson](/wiki/Andrew_Johnson) was appointed military governor of the state by President [Abraham Lincoln](/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln).

When the [Emancipation Proclamation](/wiki/Emancipation_Proclamation) was announced, Tennessee was mostly held by Union forces. Thus, Tennessee was not among the states enumerated in the Proclamation, and the Proclamation did not free any [slaves](/wiki/Slavery_in_the_United_States) there. Nonetheless, enslaved African Americans escaped to Union lines to gain freedom without waiting for official action. Old and young, men, women and children camped near Union troops. Thousands of former slaves ended up fighting on the Union side, nearly 200,000 in total across the South.

Tennessee's legislature approved an amendment to the state constitution prohibiting slavery on February 22, 1865.[[30]](#cite_note-30) Voters in the state approved the amendment in March.[[31]](#cite_note-31) It also ratified the [Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](/wiki/Thirteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution) (abolishing slavery in every state) on April 7, 1865.

In 1864, [Andrew Johnson](/wiki/Andrew_Johnson) (a War Democrat from Tennessee) was elected Vice President under Abraham Lincoln. He became President after Lincoln's assassination in 1865. Under Johnson's lenient re-admission policy, Tennessee was the first of the seceding states to have its elected members readmitted to the U.S. Congress, on July 24, 1866. Because Tennessee had ratified the [Fourteenth Amendment](/wiki/Fourteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution), it was the only one of the formerly secessionist states that did not have a military governor during the [Reconstruction](/wiki/Reconstruction_Era) period.

After the formal end of Reconstruction, the struggle over power in Southern society continued. Through violence and intimidation against freedmen and their allies, White Democrats regained political power in Tennessee and other states across the South in the late 1870s and 1880s. Over the next decade, the state legislature passed increasingly restrictive laws to control African Americans. In 1889 the General Assembly passed four laws described as electoral reform, with the cumulative effect of essentially disfranchising most African Americans in rural areas and small towns, as well as many poor Whites. Legislation included implementation of a poll tax, timing of registration, and recording requirements. Tens of thousands of taxpaying citizens were without representation for decades into the 20th century.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Disfranchising legislation accompanied [Jim Crow laws](/wiki/Jim_Crow_laws) passed in the late 19th century, which imposed segregation in the state. In 1900, African Americans made up nearly 24% of the state's population, and numbered 480,430 citizens who lived mostly in the central and western parts of the state.[[32]](#cite_note-32) In 1897, Tennessee celebrated its centennial of statehood (though one year late of the 1896 anniversary) with a great [exposition](/wiki/Tennessee_Centennial_and_International_Exposition_(1897)) in Nashville. A [full-scale replica](/wiki/Parthenon_(Nashville)) of the [Parthenon](/wiki/Parthenon) was constructed for the celebration, located in what is now Nashville's [Centennial Park](/wiki/Centennial_Park_(Nashville)).

### 20th century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|A group of workers at](/wiki/File:%22A_group_of_several_hundred_workers_at_Norris_Dam_construction_camp_site_during_noon_hour.%22_-_NARA_-_532734.jpg) [Norris Dam](/wiki/Norris_Dam) construction camp site. The TVA was formed as part of Roosevelt's [New Deal](/wiki/New_Deal) legislation. On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the thirty-sixth and final state necessary to ratify the [Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](/wiki/Nineteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution), which provided women the [right to vote](/wiki/Women's_suffrage). Disfranchising voter registration requirements continued to keep most African Americans and many poor whites, both men and women, off the voter rolls.

The need to create work for the unemployed during the [Great Depression](/wiki/Great_Depression), a desire for rural electrification, the need to control annual spring flooding and improve shipping capacity on the Tennessee River were all factors that drove the federal creation of the [Tennessee Valley Authority](/wiki/Tennessee_Valley_Authority) (TVA) in 1933. Through the power of the TVA projects, Tennessee quickly became the nation's largest public utility supplier.

During World War II, the availability of abundant TVA electrical power led the [Manhattan Project](/wiki/Manhattan_Project) to locate one of the principal sites for production and isolation of weapons-grade [fissile](/wiki/Fissile) material in East Tennessee. The [planned community](/wiki/Planned_community) of [Oak Ridge](/wiki/Oak_Ridge,_Tennessee) was built from scratch to provide accommodations for the facilities and workers. These sites are now [Oak Ridge National Laboratory](/wiki/Oak_Ridge_National_Laboratory), the [Y-12 National Security Complex](/wiki/Y-12_National_Security_Complex), and the East Tennessee Technology Park.

Despite recognized effects of limiting voting by poor whites, successive legislatures expanded the reach of the disfranchising laws until they covered the state. Political scientist [V. O. Key, Jr.](/wiki/V._O._Key,_Jr.) argued in 1949 that:

...the size of the [poll tax](/wiki/Poll_tax_(United_States)) did not inhibit voting as much as the inconvenience of paying it. County officers regulated the vote by providing opportunities to pay the tax (as they did in Knoxville), or conversely by making payment as difficult as possible. Such manipulation of the tax, and therefore the vote, created an opportunity for the rise of urban bosses and [political machines](/wiki/Political_machine). Urban politicians bought large blocks of poll tax receipts and distributed them to blacks and whites, who then voted as instructed.[[3]](#cite_note-3)

In 1953 state legislators amended the state constitution, removing the poll tax. In many areas both blacks and poor whites still faced subjectively applied barriers to voter registration that did not end until after passage of national civil rights legislation, including the [Voting Rights Act of 1965](/wiki/Voting_Rights_Act_of_1965).[[3]](#cite_note-3) Tennessee celebrated its bicentennial in 1996. With a yearlong statewide celebration entitled "Tennessee 200", it opened a new state park ([Bicentennial Mall](/wiki/Bicentennial_Mall_State_Park)) at the foot of Capitol Hill in [Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee).

The state has had major disasters, such as the [Great Train Wreck of 1918](/wiki/Great_Train_Wreck_of_1918), one of the worst train accidents in U.S. history,[[33]](#cite_note-33) and the [*Sultana*](/wiki/Sultana_(steamboat)) explosion on the Mississippi River near Memphis, the deadliest maritime disaster in U.S. history.[[34]](#cite_note-34)

### 21st century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

In 2002, businessman [Phil Bredesen](/wiki/Phil_Bredesen) was elected as the 48th [governor](/wiki/Governor_of_Tennessee). Also in 2002, Tennessee amended the [state constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Tennessee) to allow for the establishment of a [lottery](/wiki/Lotteries_in_the_United_States). Tennessee's [Bob Corker](/wiki/Bob_Corker) was the only freshman Republican elected to the [United States Senate](/wiki/United_States_Senate) in the [2006 midterm elections](/wiki/United_States_elections,_2006). The state constitution was amended to reject [same-sex marriage](/wiki/Same-sex_marriage). In January 2007, [Ron Ramsey](/wiki/Ron_Ramsey) became the first Republican elected as Speaker of the [State Senate](/wiki/Tennessee_State_Senate) since [Reconstruction](/wiki/Reconstruction_Era_of_the_United_States), as a result of the realignment of the Democratic and Republican parties in the South since the late 20th century, with Republicans now elected by conservative voters, who previously had supported Democrats.

In 2010, during the [2010 midterm elections](/wiki/United_States_elections,_2010), [Bill Haslam](/wiki/Bill_Haslam) succeeded Bredesen, who was term-limited, to become the 49th Governor of Tennessee. In April and May 2010, [flooding in Middle Tennessee](/wiki/2010_Tennessee_floods) devastated Nashville and other parts of [Middle Tennessee](/wiki/Middle_Tennessee). In 2011, parts of [East Tennessee](/wiki/East_Tennessee), including [Hamilton County](/wiki/Hamilton_County,_Tennessee) and [Apison](/wiki/Apison,_Tennessee) in [Bradley County](/wiki/Bradley_County,_Tennessee), were devastated by the [April 2011 tornado outbreak](/wiki/April_25–28,_2011_tornado_outbreak).

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:US Census population](/wiki/Template:US_Census_population)

The [United States Census Bureau](/wiki/United_States_Census_Bureau) estimates that the population of Tennessee was 6,600,299 on July 1, 2015, a 4.01% increase since the [2010 United States Census](/wiki/2010_United_States_Census).[[35]](#cite_note-35) The [center of population](/wiki/Center_of_population) of Tennessee is located in [Rutherford County](/wiki/Rutherford_County,_Tennessee), in the city of [Murfreesboro](/wiki/Murfreesboro,_Tennessee).[[36]](#cite_note-36) According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2015, Tennessee had an estimated population of 6,600,299, which is an increase of 50,947, from the prior year and an increase of 254,194, or 4.01%, since the year 2010. This includes a natural increase since the last census of 142,266 people (that is 493,881 births minus 351,615 deaths), and an increase from net migration of 219,551 people into the state. [Immigration](/wiki/Immigration_to_the_United_States) from outside the United States resulted in a net increase of 59,385 people, and migration within the country produced a net increase of 160,166 people. Twenty percent of Tennesseans were born outside [the South](/wiki/Southern_United_States) in 2008, compared to a figure of 13.5% in 1990.[[37]](#cite_note-37) In recent years, Tennessee has received an influx of people relocating from California, Florida, and several northern states for the low cost of living, and the booming healthcare and automobile industries. Metropolitan Nashville is one of the fastest-growing areas in the country due in part to these factors.

As of the 2010 census, the racial composition of Tennessee's population was as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Racial composition** | **1990**[**[38]**](#cite_note-38) | **2000**[**[39]**](#cite_note-39) | **2010**[**[40]**](#cite_note-40) | **2013 est.** |
| [White](/wiki/White_American) | 83.0% | 80.2% | 77.6% | 79.1% |
| [Black](/wiki/African_American) | 16.0% | 16.4% | 16.7% | 17.0% |
| [Asian](/wiki/Asian_American) | 0.7% | 1.0% | 1.4% | 1.6% |
| [Native](/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States) | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% |
| [Native Hawaiian](/wiki/Native_Hawaiian) and  [other Pacific Islander](/wiki/Pacific_Islander) | – | – | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| [Other race](/wiki/Race_and_ethnicity_in_the_United_States_Census) | 0.2% | 1.0% | 2.2% | - |
| [Two or more races](/wiki/Multiracial_American) | – | 1.1% | 1.7% | 1.7% |

In the same year 4.6% of the total population was of [Hispanic](/wiki/Hispanic_and_Latino_Americans) or Latino origin (they may be of any race).[[41]](#cite_note-41) [thumb|350px|right|Tennessee population density map, 2010](/wiki/Image:Tennessee_population_map.png) In 2000, the five most common self-reported ethnic groups in the state were: [American](/wiki/American_ancestry) (17.3%), [African American](/wiki/African_American) (13.0%), [Irish](/wiki/Irish_American) (9.3%), [English](/wiki/English_American) (9.1%), and [German](/wiki/German-American) (8.3%).[[42]](#cite_note-42) Most Tennesseans who self-identify as having [American ancestry](/wiki/American_ancestry) are of [English](/wiki/English_American) and [Scotch-Irish](/wiki/Scotch-Irish_American) ancestry. An estimated 21–24% of Tennesseans are of predominantly [English](/wiki/English_American) ancestry.[[43]](#cite_note-43)[[44]](#cite_note-44) In the 1980 census 1,435,147 Tennesseans claimed "English" or "mostly English" ancestry out of a state population of 3,221,354 making them 45% of the state at the time.[[45]](#cite_note-45) As of 2011, 36.3% of Tennessee's population younger than age 1 were minorities.[[46]](#cite_note-46) 6.6% of Tennessee's population were reported as under 5 years of age, 24.6% under 18, and 12.4% were 65 or older. Females made up approximately 51.3% of the population.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

On June 19, 2010, the [Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs](/wiki/Tennessee_Commission_of_Indian_Affairs) granted state recognition to six Indian tribes which was later repealed by the state's Attorney General because the action by the commission was illegal. The tribes were as follows:

* The [Cherokee](/wiki/Cherokee) Wolf Clan in western Tennessee, with members in [Carroll County](/wiki/Carroll_County,_Tennessee), [Benton](/wiki/Benton_County,_Tennessee), [Decatur](/wiki/Decatur_County,_Tennessee), [Henderson](/wiki/Henderson_County,_Tennessee), [Henry](/wiki/Henry_County,_Tennessee), [Weakley](/wiki/Weakley_County,_Tennessee), [Gibson](/wiki/Gibson_County,_Tennessee) and [Madison](/wiki/Madison_County,_Tennessee) counties.
* The [Chikamaka Band](/wiki/Chikamaka_Band), based historically on the South [Cumberland Plateau](/wiki/Cumberland_Plateau), said to have members in Franklin, Grundy, Marion, Sequatchie, Warren and Coffee counties.
* Central Band of Cherokee, also known as the Cherokee of [Lawrence County, Tennessee](/wiki/Lawrence_County,_Tennessee).
* United Eastern [Lenapee](/wiki/Lenape) Nation of [Winfield, Tennessee](/wiki/Winfield,_Tennessee).
* The Tanasi Council, said to have members in Shelby, Dyer, Gibson, Humphreys and Perry counties; and
* Remnant [Yuchi](/wiki/Yuchi) Nation, with members in Sullivan, Carter, Greene, Hawkins, Unicoi, Johnson and Washington counties.[[47]](#cite_note-47)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

The religious affiliations of the people of Tennessee as of 2014:[[48]](#cite_note-48)

* [Christian](/wiki/Christianity): 81%
  + [Evangelical Protestant](/wiki/Evangelicalism): 52%
    - [Baptist](/wiki/Baptists): 33%
    - [Restorationist](/wiki/Restorationism): 6%
    - [Non-denominational](/wiki/Nondenominational_Christianity): 4%
    - [Pentecostal](/wiki/Pentecostalism): 4%
    - [Presbyterian](/wiki/Presbyterianism): 2%
    - [Episcopalian](/wiki/Episcopal_Church_(United_States)): <1%
    - [Lutheran](/wiki/Lutheranism): <1%
    - [Methodist](/wiki/Methodism): <1%
  + [Mainline Protestant](/wiki/Mainline_Protestant): 13%
  + [Historically Black Protestant](/wiki/Historically_Black_Protestant): 8%
  + [Roman Catholic](/wiki/Catholic_Church_in_the_United_States): 6%
  + [Mormon](/wiki/Mormons): 1%
  + [Orthodox Christian](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church): <1%
  + Other Christian (includes unspecified "Christian" and "Protestant"): <1%
* [Islam](/wiki/Islam): 1%
* [Jewish](/wiki/Jews): 1%
* Other religions: 3%
* Non-religious: 14%
  + [Atheist](/wiki/Atheism): 1%
  + [Agnostic](/wiki/Agnosticism): 3%
  + Nothing in particular: 11%

The largest denominations by number of adherents in 2010 were the [Southern Baptist Convention](/wiki/Southern_Baptist_Convention) with 1,483,356; the [United Methodist Church](/wiki/United_Methodist_Church) with 375,693; the [Roman Catholic Church](/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church) with 222,343; and the [Churches of Christ](/wiki/Churches_of_Christ) with 214,118.[[49]](#cite_note-49) As of January 1, 2009, [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) (LDS Church) reported 43,179 members, 10 [stakes](/wiki/Stake_(Latter_Day_Saints)), 92 Congregations (68 wards and 24 branches), two missions, and two temples in Tennessee.[[50]](#cite_note-50) Tennessee is home to several Protestant denominations, such as the [National Baptist Convention](/wiki/National_Baptist_Convention,_USA,_Inc.) (headquartered in Nashville); the [Church of God in Christ](/wiki/Church_of_God_in_Christ) and the [Cumberland Presbyterian Church](/wiki/Cumberland_Presbyterian_Church) (both headquartered in Memphis); the [Church of God](/wiki/Church_of_God_(Cleveland,_Tennessee)) and The [Church of God of Prophecy](/wiki/Church_of_God_of_Prophecy) (both headquartered in [Cleveland](/wiki/Cleveland,_Tennessee)). The [Free Will Baptist](/wiki/Free_Will_Baptist) denomination is headquartered in [Antioch](/wiki/Antioch,_Tennessee); its main Bible college is in Nashville. The [Southern Baptist Convention](/wiki/Southern_Baptist_Convention) maintains its general headquarters in Nashville. Publishing houses of several denominations are located in Nashville.

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2011 Tennessee's real gross state product was $233.997 billion. In 2003, the [per capita personal income](/wiki/Per_capita_income) was $28,641, 36th in the nation, and 91% of the national per capita personal income of $31,472. In 2004, the [median household income](/wiki/Household_income_in_the_United_States) was $38,550, 41st in the nation, and 87% of the national median of $44,472.

For 2012, the state held an asset surplus of $533 million, one of only eight states in the nation to report a surplus.[[51]](#cite_note-51) Major outputs for the state include textiles, cotton, cattle, and electrical power. Tennessee has over 82,000 farms, roughly 59 percent of which accommodate beef cattle.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Although cotton was an early crop in Tennessee, large-scale cultivation of the fiber did not begin until the 1820s with the opening of the land between the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers. The upper wedge of the Mississippi Delta extends into southwestern Tennessee, and it was in this fertile section that cotton took hold. [Soybeans](/wiki/Soybean) are also heavily planted in West Tennessee, focusing on the northwest corner of the state.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Major corporations with headquarters in Tennessee include [FedEx](/wiki/FedEx), [AutoZone](/wiki/AutoZone) and [International Paper](/wiki/International_Paper), all based in Memphis; [Pilot Corporation](/wiki/Pilot_Corporation) and [Regal Entertainment Group](/wiki/Regal_Entertainment_Group), based in Knoxville; [Eastman Chemical Company](/wiki/Eastman_Chemical_Company), based in Kingsport; the North American headquarters of [Nissan Motor Company](/wiki/Nissan_Motor_Company), based in [Franklin](/wiki/Franklin,_Tennessee); [Hospital Corporation of America](/wiki/Hospital_Corporation_of_America) and [Caterpillar Financial](/wiki/Caterpillar_Inc.), based in Nashville; and [Unum](/wiki/Unum), based in Chattanooga. Tennessee is also the location of the [Volkswagen factory](/wiki/Volkswagen_Chattanooga_Assembly_Plant) in [Chattanooga](/wiki/Chattanooga,_Tennessee), a $2 billion [polysilicon](/wiki/Polysilicon) production facility by [Wacker Chemie](/wiki/Wacker_Chemie) in [Bradley County](/wiki/Bradley_County,_Tennessee), and a $1.2 billion polysilicon production facility by [Hemlock Semiconductor](/wiki/Hemlock_Semiconductor_Corporation) in [Clarksville](/wiki/Clarksville,_Tennessee).

Tennessee is a [right to work](/wiki/Right-to-work_law) state, as are most of its Southern neighbors. [Unionization](/wiki/Trade_union) has historically been low and continues to decline as in most of the U.S. generally. As of November 2011, the state had an unemployment rate of 8.4%.[[54]](#cite_note-54)

### Tax[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

The Tennessee [income tax](/wiki/Income_tax) does not apply to salaries and wages, but most income from [stock](/wiki/Stock), [bonds](/wiki/Bond_(finance)) and [notes receivable](/wiki/Notes_receivable) is taxable. All taxable dividends and interest which exceed the $1,250 single exemption or the $2,500 joint exemption are taxable at the rate of 6%. The state's [sales](/wiki/Sales_tax) and [use tax](/wiki/Use_tax) rate for most items is 7%. Food is taxed at a lower rate of 5.25%, but candy, dietary supplements and prepared food are taxed at the full 7% rate. Local sales taxes are collected in most jurisdictions, at rates varying from 1.5% to 2.75%, bringing the total sales tax to between 8.5% and 9.75%, one of the highest levels in the nation. [Intangible property](/wiki/Intangible_property) is assessed on the shares of stock of stockholders of any loan company, investment company, insurance company or for-profit cemetery companies. The assessment ratio is 40% of the value multiplied by the tax rate for the jurisdiction. Tennessee imposes an [inheritance tax](/wiki/Inheritance_tax) on decedents' estates that exceed maximum single exemption limits ($1,000,000 for deaths in 2006 and thereafter).[[55]](#cite_note-55)

### Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

Tourism contributes billions of dollars each year to the state's economy and Tennessee is ranked among the Top 10 destinations in the US.[[56]](#cite_note-56) In 2014 a record 100 million people visited the state resulting in $17.7 billion in tourism related spending within the state, an increase of 6.3% over 2013; tax revenue from tourism equaled $1.5 billion. Each county in Tennessee saw at least $1 million from tourism while 19 counties received at least $100 million (Davidson, Shelby, and Sevier counties were the top three). Tourism-generated jobs for the state reached 152,900, a 2.8% increase.[[56]](#cite_note-56) International travelers to Tennessee accounted for $533 million in spending.[[57]](#cite_note-57) In 2013 tourism within the state from local citizens accounted for 39.9% of tourists, the second highest originating location for tourists to Tennessee is the state of Georgia, accounting for 8.4% of tourists.[[58]](#cite_note-58)[Template:Rp](/wiki/Template:Rp) Forty-four percent of stays in the state were "day trips", 25% stayed one night, 15% stayed two nights, and 11% stayed 4 or more nights. The average stay was 2.16 nights, compared to 2.03 nights for the US as a whole.[[58]](#cite_note-58)[Template:Rp](/wiki/Template:Rp) The average person spent $118 per day: 29% on transportation, 24% on food, 17% on accommodation, and 28% on shopping and entertainment.[[58]](#cite_note-58)[Template:Rp](/wiki/Template:Rp)

Some of the top tourist attractions in the state are:[[59]](#cite_note-59) the [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](/wiki/Great_Smoky_Mountains_National_Park), [Graceland](/wiki/Graceland), the [Ryman Auditorium](/wiki/Ryman_Auditorium), the [Gaylord Opryland Resort](/wiki/Gaylord_Opryland_Resort_&_Convention_Center), [Lookout Mountain](/wiki/Lookout_Mountain), and the [Tennessee Aquarium](/wiki/Tennessee_Aquarium).

## Transportation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

### Interstate highways[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:Hernando_de_Soto_Bridge_Memphis.jpg) [Hernando de Soto Bridge](/wiki/Hernando_de_Soto_Bridge) spans the [Mississippi River](/wiki/Mississippi_River) in [Memphis](/wiki/Memphis,_Tennessee) [Interstate 40](/wiki/Interstate_40_in_Tennessee) crosses the state in a west-east orientation. Its branch interstate highways include [I-240](/wiki/Interstate_240_(Tennessee)) in Memphis; [I-440](/wiki/Interstate_440_(Tennessee)) in Nashville; [I-140](/wiki/Interstate_140_(Tennessee)) from Knoxville to Alcoa and [I-640](/wiki/I-640) in Knoxville. [I-26](/wiki/Interstate_26_in_Tennessee), although technically an east-west interstate, runs from the North Carolina border below [Johnson City](/wiki/Johnson_City,_Tennessee) to its terminus at [Kingsport](/wiki/Kingsport,_Tennessee). [I-24](/wiki/Interstate_24_in_Tennessee) is an east-west interstate that runs cross-state from Chattanooga to Clarksville. In a north-south orientation are highways [I-55](/wiki/Interstate_55_in_Tennessee), [I-65](/wiki/Interstate_65_in_Tennessee), [I-75](/wiki/Interstate_75_in_Tennessee), and [I-81](/wiki/Interstate_81_in_Tennessee). Interstate 65 crosses the state through Nashville, while Interstate 75 serves Chattanooga and Knoxville and Interstate 55 serves Memphis. Interstate 81 enters the state at Bristol and terminates at its junction with I-40 near [Dandridge](/wiki/Dandridge,_Tennessee). [I-155](/wiki/Interstate_155_(Missouri-Tennessee)) is a branch highway from I-55. The only spur highway of I-75 in Tennessee is [I-275](/wiki/Interstate_275_(Tennessee)), which is in Knoxville. When completed, [I-69](/wiki/Interstate_69_in_Tennessee) will travel through the western part of the state, from [South Fulton](/wiki/South_Fulton,_Tennessee) to Memphis. A branch interstate, [I-269](/wiki/Interstate_269) also exists from [Millington](/wiki/Millington,_Tennessee) to [Collierville](/wiki/Collierville,_Tennessee).

### Airports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

Major airports within the state include [Memphis International Airport](/wiki/Memphis_International_Airport) (MEM), [Nashville International Airport](/wiki/Nashville_International_Airport) (BNA), [McGhee Tyson Airport](/wiki/McGhee_Tyson_Airport) (TYS) in Alcoa, [Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport](/wiki/Chattanooga_Metropolitan_Airport) (CHA), [Tri-Cities Regional Airport](/wiki/Tri-Cities_Regional_Airport) (TRI), and [McKellar-Sipes Regional Airport](/wiki/McKellar-Sipes_Regional_Airport) (MKL), in Jackson. Because Memphis International Airport is the major hub for [FedEx Corporation](/wiki/FedEx_Corporation), it is the [world's largest air cargo operation](/wiki/World's_busiest_airport).

### Railroads[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

For passenger rail service, Memphis and [Newbern, Tennessee](/wiki/Newbern,_Tennessee), are served by the [Amtrak](/wiki/Amtrak) [City of New Orleans](/wiki/City_of_New_Orleans_(train)) line on its run between [Chicago](/wiki/Chicago), Illinois, and [New Orleans](/wiki/New_Orleans), Louisiana. Nashville is served by the [Music City Star](/wiki/Music_City_Star) [commuter rail](/wiki/Commuter_rail) service.

Cargo services in Tennessee are primarily served by [CSX Transportation](/wiki/CSX_Transportation), which has a [hump yard](/wiki/Hump_yard) in Nashville called Radnor Yard. [Norfolk Southern Railway](/wiki/Norfolk_Southern_Railway) operates lines in East Tennessee, through cities including Knoxville and Chattanooga, and operates a [classification yard](/wiki/Classification_yard) near Knoxville, the John Sevier Yard. [BNSF](/wiki/BNSF) operates a major [intermodal facility](/wiki/Intermodal_facility) in Memphis.

## {{anchor|Law\_and\_government}}Governance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Tennessee_State_Capitol_2009.jpg)[Tennessee State Capitol](/wiki/Tennessee_State_Capitol) in [Nashville](/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee) Tennessee's governor holds office for a four-year term and may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. The governor is the only official who is elected statewide. Unlike most states, the state does not elect the [lieutenant governor](/wiki/Lieutenant_governor_(United_States)) directly; the Tennessee Senate elects its Speaker, who serves as lieutenant governor.

The [Tennessee General Assembly](/wiki/Tennessee_General_Assembly), the state legislature, consists of the 33-member [Senate](/wiki/Tennessee_State_Senate) and the 99-member [House of Representatives](/wiki/Tennessee_House_of_Representatives). Senators serve four-year terms, and House members serve two-year terms. Each chamber chooses its own speaker. The speaker of the state Senate also holds the title of lieutenant-governor. Constitutional officials in the legislative branch are elected by a joint session of the legislature.

The highest court in Tennessee is the [state Supreme Court](/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_Tennessee). It has a [chief justice and four associate justices](/wiki/Tennessee_Supreme_Court_Justices). No more than two justices can be from the same Grand Division. The Supreme Court of Tennessee also appoints the [Attorney General](/wiki/Tennessee_Attorney_General), a practice that is not found in any of the other 49 states in the Union. Both the [Court of Appeals](/wiki/Tennessee_Court_of_Appeals) and the [Court of Criminal Appeals](/wiki/Tennessee_Court_of_Criminal_Appeals) have 12 judges.[[60]](#cite_note-60) A number of [local, circuit, and federal courts](/wiki/Courts_of_Tennessee) provide judicial services.

[Tennessee's current state constitution](/wiki/Tennessee_State_Constitution) was adopted in 1870. The state had two earlier constitutions. The first was adopted in 1796, the year Tennessee joined the union, and the second was adopted in 1834. The 1870 Constitution outlaws [martial law](/wiki/Martial_law#United_States_of_America) within its jurisdiction. This may be a result of the experience of Tennessee residents and other Southerners during the period of [military control](/wiki/American_Civil_War#Reconstruction) by Union (Northern) forces of the U.S. government after the [American Civil War](/wiki/American_Civil_War).

### Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) {| class="wikitable" style="float:right; font-size:95%;" |+ **Presidential elections results** |- style="background:lightgrey;" ! Year ! [Republican](/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States)) ! [Democratic](/wiki/Democratic_Party_(United_States))

|- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[2012](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2012) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**59.42%** *1,462,330* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 39.04% *960,709* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[2008](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2008) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**56.85%** *1,479,178* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 41.79% *1,087,437* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[2004](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2004) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**56.80%** *1,384,375* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 42.53% *1,036,477* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[2000](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2000) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**51.15%** *1,061,949* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 47.28% *981,720* |- | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|[1996](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1996) | style="background:#fff3f3;"| 45.59% *863,530* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|**48.00%** *909,146* |- | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|[1992](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1992) | style="background:#fff3f3;"| 42.43% *841,300* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|**47.08%** *933,521* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[1988](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1988) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**57.89%** *947,233* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 41.55% *679,794* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[1984](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1984) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**57.84%** *990,212* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 41.57% *711,714* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[1980](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1980) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**48.70%** *787,761* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 48.41% *783,051* |- | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|[1976](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1976) | style="background:#fff3f3;"| 42.94% *633,969* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|**55.94%** *825,879* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[1972](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1972) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**67.70%** *813,147* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 29.75% *357,293* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[1968](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1968) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**37.85%** *472,592* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 28.13% *351,233* |- | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|[1964](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1964) | style="background:#fff3f3;"| 44.49% *508,965* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"|**55.50%** *634,947* |- | style="background:#fff3f3;"|[1960](/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1960) | style="background:#fff3f3;"|**52.92%** *556,577* | style="background:#f0f0ff;"| 45.77% *481,453* |}

Tennessee politics, like that of most U.S. states, are dominated by the [Republican](/wiki/Republican_Party_(United_States)) and the [Democratic](/wiki/Democratic_Party_(United_States)) parties. Historian Dewey W. Grantham traces divisions in the state to the period of the American Civil War: for decades afterward, the eastern third of the state was Republican and the western two thirds voted Democrat.[[61]](#cite_note-61) This division was related to the state's pattern of farming, plantations and slaveholding. The eastern section was made up of yeoman farmers, but Middle and West Tennessee cultivated crops, such as tobacco and cotton, that were dependent on the use of slave labor. These areas became defined as Democratic after the war.

During Reconstruction, freedmen and former free people of color were granted the right to vote; most joined the Republican Party. Numerous African Americans were elected to local offices, and some to state office. Following Reconstruction, Tennessee continued to have competitive party politics. But in the 1880s, the white-dominated state government passed four laws, the last of which imposed a poll tax requirement for voter registration. These served to [disenfranchise](/wiki/Disfranchisement_after_Reconstruction_era) most African Americans, and their power in the Republican Party, the state, and cities where they had significant population was markedly reduced. In 1900 African Americans comprised 23.8 percent of the state's population, concentrated in Middle and West Tennessee.[[62]](#cite_note-62) In the early 1900s, the state legislature approved a form of commission government for cities based on at-large voting for a few positions on a Board of Commission; several adopted this as another means to limit African-American political participation. In 1913 the state legislature enacted a bill enabling cities to adopt this structure without legislative approval.[[63]](#cite_note-63) After disenfranchisement of blacks, the GOP in Tennessee was historically a sectional party supported by whites only in the eastern part of the state. In the 20th century, except for two nationwide Republican landslides of the 1920s (in 1920, when Tennessee narrowly supported [Warren G. Harding](/wiki/Warren_G._Harding) over Ohio Governor [James Cox](/wiki/James_M._Cox), and in 1928, when it more decisively voted for [Herbert Hoover](/wiki/Herbert_Hoover) over New York Governor [Al Smith](/wiki/Al_Smith), a Catholic), the state was part of the Democratic [Solid South](/wiki/Solid_South) until the 1950s. In that postwar decade, it twice voted for Republican [Dwight D. Eisenhower](/wiki/Dwight_D._Eisenhower), former Allied Commander of the Armed Forces during World War II. Since then, more of the state's voters have shifted to supporting Republicans, and Democratic presidential candidates have carried Tennessee only four times.

By 1960 African Americans comprised 16.45% of the state's population. It was not until after the mid-1960s and passage of the [Voting Rights Act of 1965](/wiki/Voting_Rights_Act_of_1965) that they were able to vote in full again, but new devices, such as [at-large](/wiki/At-large) commission city governments, had been adopted in several jurisdictions to limit their political participation. Former Gov. [Winfield Dunn](/wiki/Winfield_Dunn) and former U.S. Sen. [Bill Brock](/wiki/Bill_Brock) wins in 1970 helped make the Republican Party competitive among whites for the statewide victory. Tennessee has selected governors from different parties since 1970. Increasingly the Republican Party has become the party of white conservatives.

In the early 21st century, Republican voters control most of the state, especially in the more rural and suburban areas outside of the cities; Democratic strength is mostly confined to the urban cores of the four major cities, and is particularly strong in the cities of Nashville and Memphis. The latter area includes a large [African-American](/wiki/African-American) population.[[64]](#cite_note-64) Historically, Republicans had their greatest strength in East Tennessee before the 1960s. Tennessee's [1st](/wiki/Tennessee's_1st_congressional_district) and [2nd](/wiki/Tennessee's_2nd_congressional_district) congressional districts, based in the Tri-Cities and Knoxville, respectively, are among the few historically Republican districts in the South. Those districts' residents supported the Union over the Confederacy during the Civil War; they identified with the GOP after the war and have stayed with that party ever since. The 1st has been in Republican hands continuously since 1881, and Republicans (or their antecedents) have held it for all but four years since 1859. The 2nd has been held continuously by Republicans or their antecedents since 1859.

In the [2000 presidential election](/wiki/U.S._presidential_election,_2000), Vice President [Al Gore](/wiki/Al_Gore), a former Democratic [U.S. Senator](/wiki/United_States_Senate) from Tennessee, failed to carry his home state, an unusual occurrence but indicative of strengthening Republican support. Republican [George W. Bush](/wiki/George_W._Bush) received increased support in 2004, with his margin of victory in the state increasing from 4% in 2000 to 14% in 2004.[[65]](#cite_note-65) Democratic presidential nominees from Southern states (such as [Lyndon B. Johnson](/wiki/Lyndon_B._Johnson), [Jimmy Carter](/wiki/Jimmy_Carter), [Bill Clinton](/wiki/Bill_Clinton)) usually fare better than their Northern counterparts do in Tennessee, especially among split-ticket voters outside the metropolitan areas.

Tennessee sends nine members to the [US House of Representatives](/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives), of whom there are seven Republicans and two Democrats. Lieutenant Governor [Ron Ramsey](/wiki/Ron_Ramsey) is the first Republican speaker of the state Senate in 140 years. In the 2008 elections, the Republican party gained control of both houses of the Tennessee state legislature for the first time since Reconstruction. In 2008, some 30% of the state's electorate identified as independents.[[66]](#cite_note-66) The [*Baker v. Carr*](/wiki/Baker_v._Carr) (1962) decision of the [US Supreme Court](/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_the_United_States) established the principle of "[one man, one vote](/wiki/One_man,_one_vote)", requiring state legislatures to redistrict to bring Congressional apportionment in line with decennial censuses. It also required both houses of state legislatures to be based on population for representation and not geographic districts such as counties. This case arose out of a lawsuit challenging the longstanding rural bias of apportionment of seats in the Tennessee legislature.[[67]](#cite_note-67)[[68]](#cite_note-68)[[69]](#cite_note-69) After decades in which urban populations had been underrepresented in many state legislatures, this significant ruling led to an increased (and proportional) prominence in state politics by urban and, eventually, suburban, legislators and statewide officeholders in relation to their population within the state. The ruling also applied to numerous other states long controlled by rural minorities, such as Alabama, Vermont, and Montana.

### Law enforcement[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

#### State agencies[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

The state of Tennessee maintains four dedicated law enforcement entities: the [Tennessee Highway Patrol](/wiki/Tennessee_Highway_Patrol), the [Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency](/wiki/Tennessee_Wildlife_Resources_Agency) (TWRA), the [Tennessee Bureau of Investigation](/wiki/Tennessee_Bureau_of_Investigation) (TBI), and the [Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation](/wiki/Tennessee_Department_of_Environment_and_Conservation) (TDEC).

The Highway Patrol is the primary law enforcement entity that concentrates on highway safety regulations and general non-[wildlife](/wiki/Wildlife) state law enforcement and is under the jurisdiction of the [Tennessee Department of Safety](/wiki/Tennessee_Department_of_Safety). The TWRA is an independent agency tasked with enforcing all wildlife, boating, and fisheries regulations outside of state parks. The TBI maintains state-of-the-art investigative facilities and is the primary state-level criminal investigative department. Tennessee State [Park Rangers](/wiki/Park_Ranger) are responsible for all activities and law enforcement inside the Tennessee State Parks system.

#### Local government[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

Local law enforcement is divided between County Sheriff's Offices and Municipal Police Departments. Tennessee's Constitution requires that each County have an elected Sheriff. In 94 of the 95 counties the Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer in the county and has jurisdiction over the county as a whole. Each Sheriff's Office is responsible for warrant service, court security, jail operations and primary law enforcement in the unincorporated areas of a county as well as providing support to the municipal police departments. Incorporated municipalities are required to maintain a police department to provide police services within their corporate limits.

The three counties in Tennessee to adopt metropolitan governments have taken different approaches to resolving the conflict that a Metro government presents to the requirement to have an elected Sheriff.

* [Nashville/Davidson County](/wiki/Nashville-Davidson#Law_and_government) split law enforcement duties and authority between the Metro Sheriff and the Metro Police Chief. In this instance the Sheriff is no longer the chief law enforcement officer for Davidson County. The Davidson County Sheriff's duties focus on warrant service and jail operations. The Metropolitan Police Chief is the chief law enforcement officer and the Metropolitan Police Department provides primary law enforcement for the entire county.
* [Lynchburg](/wiki/Lynchburg,_Tennessee#Government)/[Moore County](/wiki/Moore_County,_Tennessee) took a much simpler approach and abolished the Lynchburg Police Department when it consolidated and placed all law enforcement responsibility under the sheriff's office.
* [Hartsville](/wiki/Hartsville,_Tennessee)/[Trousdale County](/wiki/Trousdale_County,_Tennessee), although the smallest county in Tennessee, adopted a system similar to Nashville's that retains the sheriff's office but also has a metropolitan police department.

#### Firearms[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Gun laws in Tennessee](/wiki/Gun_laws_in_Tennessee) regulate the sale, possession, and use of firearms and ammunition. Concealed carry and open-carry of a handgun is permitted with a Tennessee handgun carry permit or an equivalent permit from a reciprocating state. As of July 1, 2014, a permit is no longer required to possess a loaded handgun in a motor vehicle.[[70]](#cite_note-70)

#### Capital punishment[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

Capital punishment has existed in Tennessee at various times since statehood. Before 1913 the method of execution was hanging. From 1913 to 1915 there was a hiatus on executions but they were reinstated in 1916 when electrocution became the new method. From 1972 to 1978, after the Supreme Court ruled ([*Furman v. Georgia*](/wiki/Furman_v._Georgia)) capital punishment unconstitutional, there were no further executions. Capital punishment was restarted in 1978, although those prisoners awaiting execution between 1960 and 1978 had their sentences mostly commuted to life in prison.[[71]](#cite_note-71) From 1916 to 1960 the state executed 125 inmates.[[72]](#cite_note-72) For a variety of reasons there were no further executions until 2000. Since 2000, Tennessee has executed [six prisoners](/wiki/List_of_people_executed_in_Tennessee) and has 73 prisoners on death row (as of April 2015).[[73]](#cite_note-73) Lethal injection was approved by the legislature in 1998, though those who were sentenced to death before January 1, 1999, may request electrocution.[[71]](#cite_note-71)In May 2014 the Tennessee General Assembly passed a law allowing the use of the [electric chair](/wiki/Electric_chair) for [death row](/wiki/Death_row) executions when [lethal injection](/wiki/Lethal_injection) drugs are not available.[[74]](#cite_note-74)[[75]](#cite_note-75)

### Tribal[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

The [Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians](/wiki/Mississippi_Band_of_Choctaw_Indians) is the only federally recognized [Native American Indian tribe](/wiki/Tribe_(Native_American)) in the state. It owns [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in [Henning](/wiki/Henning,_Tennessee), which was placed into federal trust by the tribe in 2012. This is governed directly by the tribe.[[76]](#cite_note-76)[[77]](#cite_note-77)

## Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[thumb|upright|right|](/wiki/File:UT_Ayres_Hall_front.jpg) [University of Tennessee](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee), Knoxville [thumb|upright|right|](/wiki/File:Vandy-kirkland.jpg) [Vanderbilt University](/wiki/Vanderbilt_University), Nashville [thumb|upright|right|](/wiki/File:Halliburton.jpg) [Rhodes College](/wiki/Rhodes_College), Memphis [thumb|upright|right|](/wiki/File:WTN_PeepHoles_052.JPG) [Tennessee State University](/wiki/Tennessee_State_University), Nashville [thumb|upright|right|](/wiki/File:Kirskey_Old_Main.jpg) [Middle Tennessee State University](/wiki/Middle_Tennessee_State_University), Murfreesboro

Tennessee has a rich variety of public, private, charter, and specialized education facilities ranging from pre-school through university education.

### Colleges and universities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Public higher education is under the oversight of the [Tennessee Higher Education Commission](/wiki/Tennessee_Higher_Education_Commission) which provides guidance to two public university systems – the [University of Tennessee system](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee_system) and the [Tennessee Board of Regents](/wiki/Tennessee_Board_of_Regents). In addition a number of private colleges and universities are located throughout the state. [Template:Div col](/wiki/Template:Div_col)

* [American Baptist College](/wiki/American_Baptist_College)
* [Aquinas College](/wiki/Aquinas_College_(Tennessee))
* [The Art Institute of Tennessee – Nashville](/wiki/The_Art_Institute_of_Tennessee_–_Nashville)
* [Austin Peay State University](/wiki/Austin_Peay_State_University)
* [Baptist College of Health Sciences](/wiki/Baptist_College_of_Health_Sciences)
* [Belmont University](/wiki/Belmont_University)
* [Bethel College](/wiki/Bethel_University_(Tennessee))
* [Bryan College](/wiki/Bryan_College)
* [Carson–Newman University](/wiki/Carson–Newman_University)
* [Chattanooga State Community College](/wiki/Chattanooga_State_Community_College)
* [Christian Brothers University](/wiki/Christian_Brothers_University)
* [Cleveland State Community College](/wiki/Cleveland_State_Community_College)
* [Columbia State Community College](/wiki/Columbia_State_Community_College)
* [Crown College](/wiki/Crown_College_(Tennessee))
* [Cumberland University](/wiki/Cumberland_University)
* [Dyersburg State Community College](/wiki/Dyersburg_State_Community_College)
* [East Tennessee State University](/wiki/East_Tennessee_State_University)
* [Emmanuel Christian Seminary](/wiki/Emmanuel_Christian_Seminary)
* [Fisk University](/wiki/Fisk_University)
* [Freed–Hardeman University](/wiki/Freed–Hardeman_University)
* [Jackson State Community College](/wiki/Jackson_State_Community_College)
* [Johnson University](/wiki/Johnson_University)
* [King University](/wiki/King_University)
* [Knoxville College](/wiki/Knoxville_College)
* [Lane College](/wiki/Lane_College)
* [Lee University](/wiki/Lee_University)
* [LeMoyne–Owen College](/wiki/LeMoyne–Owen_College)
* [Lincoln Memorial University](/wiki/Lincoln_Memorial_University)
* [Lipscomb University](/wiki/Lipscomb_University)
* [Martin Methodist College](/wiki/Martin_Methodist_College)
* [Maryville College](/wiki/Maryville_College)
* [Meharry Medical College](/wiki/Meharry_Medical_College)
* [Memphis College of Art](/wiki/Memphis_College_of_Art)
* [Memphis Theological Seminary](/wiki/Memphis_Theological_Seminary)
* [Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary](/wiki/Mid-America_Baptist_Theological_Seminary)
* [Middle Tennessee State University](/wiki/Middle_Tennessee_State_University)
* [Milligan College](/wiki/Milligan_College)
* [Motlow State Community College](/wiki/Motlow_State_Community_College)
* [Nashville School of Law](/wiki/Nashville_School_of_Law)
* [Nashville State Community College](/wiki/Nashville_State_Community_College)
* [Northeast State Community College](/wiki/Northeast_State_Community_College)
* Nossi College of Art
* [O'More College of Design](/wiki/O'More_College_of_Design)
* [Pellissippi State Community College](/wiki/Pellissippi_State_Community_College)
* [Rhodes College](/wiki/Rhodes_College)
* [Roane State Community College](/wiki/Roane_State_Community_College)
* [Sewanee: The University of the South](/wiki/Sewanee:_The_University_of_the_South)
* [South College School of Pharmacy](/wiki/South_College_School_of_Pharmacy)
* [Southern Adventist University](/wiki/Southern_Adventist_University)
* [Southern College of Optometry](/wiki/Southern_College_of_Optometry)
* [Southwest Tennessee Community College](/wiki/Southwest_Tennessee_Community_College)
* [Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology](/wiki/Tennessee_College_of_Applied_Technology)
* [Tennessee State University](/wiki/Tennessee_State_University)
* [Tennessee Technological University](/wiki/Tennessee_Technological_University)
* [Tennessee Temple University](/wiki/Tennessee_Temple_University)
* [Tennessee Wesleyan University](/wiki/Tennessee_Wesleyan_University)
* [Trevecca Nazarene University](/wiki/Trevecca_Nazarene_University)
* [Tusculum College](/wiki/Tusculum_College)
* [Union University](/wiki/Union_University)
* [University of Memphis](/wiki/University_of_Memphis)
* [University of Tennessee system](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee_system)
  + [University of Tennessee](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee) (Knoxville)
    - [University of Tennessee Health Science Center](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee_Health_Science_Center) (Memphis)
    - [University of Tennessee Space Institute](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee_Space_Institute)
  + [University of Tennessee at Chattanooga](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee_at_Chattanooga)
  + [University of Tennessee at Martin](/wiki/University_of_Tennessee_at_Martin)
* [Vanderbilt University](/wiki/Vanderbilt_University)
* [Volunteer State Community College](/wiki/Volunteer_State_Community_College)
* [Walters State Community College](/wiki/Walters_State_Community_College)
* [Watkins College of Art, Design & Film](/wiki/Watkins_College_of_Art,_Design_&_Film)
* [Welch College](/wiki/Welch_College)
* [Williamson College](/wiki/Williamson_College) [[78]](#cite_note-78)