

# The United States of America

Geography Area: 9,372,614 sq km Population: 253,887,000 The USA are situated in southern part of North America being the 4th largest state in the world after Russia, Canada and China; they border on Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean, Canada and the Pacific Ocean; USA have two lying off the continental part - Alaska and Hawaii The country can be divided into five parts: Appalachian Highlands (Mt. Mitchell - 2,037 m) Appalachian Plateau - river valleys Mississippi Basin (Interior Plains) Cordilleras - Rocky Mountains, Great Basin (Death Valley), Colorado Plateau (Grand Canyon) Cascade Range and Sierra Nevada (Mt. Whitney - 4,418 m) the highest peak is in Alaska - Mt. McKinley (6,194 m) Rivers: Mississippi, Missouri, Hudson, Colorado, Columbia, Rio Grande, Yukon Great Lakes: Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario Other lakes: Great Salt Lake Climate: varied - from the Arctic to the subtropical Capital town: Washington D. C. Other towns: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, San Diego, Detroit, Dallas, Phoenix, San Antonio, San Jose, Indianapolis, Baltimore, San Francisco States (first 13): Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming History The American continent was first discovered around the year 1000 by Vikings sailing under Leif Ericson (before them went to America people from Siberia over the Bering straight ,on October 12, 1492 discovered America Spanish mariner Christopher Columbus , the first colony was founded in Virginia at Jamestown in 1607 in 1620 the Mayflower brought 102 English men to Massachusetts, where they founded Plymouth colony; they were Puritans and called themselves Pilgrim Fathers; in October 1621 they celebrated their first harvest and called this day the day of Thanksgiving during next centuries were built up many colonies, e.g. French, German, Dutch, Irish first slaves were brought to Virginia in 1619 (it was forbidden in 1808) 1754 - Indian War - all land east of Mississippi was under British control 1773 - Boston Tea Party 1775 - the battle of Lexington - beginning of the war July 4, 1776 - Declaration of Independence (mainly written by Thomas Jefferson, 2nd Continental Congress) 1783 - the end of the War of Independence 1787 - the new Constitution (confederation was changed by federation) 1803 - Louisiana Purchase 1867 - Alaska was bought from Russia Civil War - 1861 - 1865 1863 - Emancipation Proclamation - granted freedom of slaves 1917 - USA entered the WWI and then W. Wilson participated on negotiation of peace treaty in Versailles Black Thursday - October 24, 1929 - stock market crash ' Great Depression December 7, 1941 - naval base of Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese ' USA entered the WWII founding of UNO, NATO 1963 - J. F. Kennedy was assassinated, 1968 - Robert Kennedy too 1968 - assassination of Martin Luther King, the black civil rights leader Vietnam War - 1961 - 1973 1973 - 1974 - the Watergate scandal (Richard Nixon) Gulf War - January 15 - February 28, 1991 11th September 2001 - attack on World Trade Center Political system the system of federal government of the USA was established by the Constitution which was ratified in 1788 and which consists of the Preamble, Articles I - VII and 26 Amendments to the Constitution; the Supreme Court proves unconstitutionality of law under the system of checks and balances there are three main branches: the Legislative (both houses of Congress), the Executive (the President and the Executive office) and the Judicial (the Supreme Court and Federal courts) the Congress (both the Senate and the House of Representatives) is responsible for drafting and passing laws, handling matters of national finance, ensuring the defense of the nation (with the President), regulating commerce, admitting new states to the Union the Senate is composed of 100 Senators, two for each state; they are elected to six-year terms by popular vote, however every two years is one third renewed; the Vice President is the official presiding officer of Senate; Senate must approve presidents appointments and ratify foreign treaties, try the President and can impeach him the House of

Representatives is composed of 435 Representatives (Congressman and women) who are elected on two-year terms; the number of Representatives is based on state population (the greatest number has California); is responsible for originating all bills relating to taxes the major political parties are Democratic and Republican the President is elected every 4 years, may serve maximum two terms in office, must be over 35 years old, born in USA and have lived for 14 years there; the President is Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, he appoints all ambassadors, ministers and consuls the Executive Office is President's personal staff, has 14 departments (Department of State, Treasury, Defense, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Energy and Veterans Affairs); includes number of independent agencies - the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Security Agency (NSA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) the Judiciary branch is composed of a three-level hierarchy: Federal districts courts (94), US courts of appeal (13), the US Supreme Court (eight Justices and Chief Justice) Economy the USA is a leader of world economy, so it's highly developed industry: manufacturing steel, car industry, electronics, machinery, clothing agriculture: corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, tobacco, cattle breeding, fruit, vegetables mineral resources: coal, copper, oil, gas, lead, uranium, gold, iron, mercury Washington DC Washington District of Columbia, the national capital of the USA, is situated on Potomac river and has population of 623,000 (conurbation 3,750,000) was established by Act of Congress in 1790, the place was chosen by President Washington himself and designed by French engineer Pierre L'Enfant the city has 4 quadrants with the Capitol in its center 1910 - the Height Buildings Act - no building is allowed to be higher than Capitol Washington has no industry, it's used only for government and as a seat of many international organizations, e.g. World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization of American states Congress and its buildings, White House, Pentagon Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial Arlington National Cemetery West and East Potomac Parks and Constitution Gardens National Air and Space Museum, National Gallery of Art, National Archives Opera House, Concert Hall, National Theater, Arena Stage, Ford's Theater Interesting places Detroit - headquarters of Ford, Chrysler and General Motors Mt. Rushmore - the mountain with colossal portrait heads of US Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt (carved by sculptor Gutzon Borghum) Las Vegas - Hollywood - the center of film industry the Grand Canyon Salt Lake