

California History

California is a state in the Pacific Region of the United States. With 39.5 million residents across a total area of about 163,696 square miles, California is the most populous U.S. state and the third largest by area. The state capital is Sacramento. Los Angeles is California's most populous city, and the country's second-most populous, after New York City. California also has the nation's most populous county, Los Angeles County, and its largest county by area, San Bernardino County. California's economy, with a gross state product of \$3.0 trillion, is the largest sub-national economy in the world. If it were a country, California would be the fifth-largest economy in the world.

California shares a border with Oregon to the north, Nevada and Arizona to the east, and the Mexican state of Baja California to the south. The state's diverse geography ranges from the Pacific Coast in the west to the Sierra Nevada mountain range in the east, and from the redwood and Douglas fir forests in the northwest to the Mojave Desert in the southeast. The Central Valley, a major agricultural area, dominates the state's center. Although California is well-known for its warm Mediterranean climate, the large size of the state results in climates that vary from moist temperate rainforest in the north to arid desert in the interior, as well as snowy alpine in the mountains. Over time, drought and wildfires have become more frequent.

What is now California was first settled by various Native Californian tribes before being explored by European expeditions during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Spanish Empire then claimed and conquered it. In 1804 it was included in Alta California province, within Spanish New Spain Viceroyalty. The area became a part of Mexico in 1821 following its successful war for independence but was ceded to the United States in 1848 after the Mexican–American War. The western portion of Alta California was then organized and admitted as the 31st state on September 9, 1850. The California Gold Rush starting in 1848 led to dramatic social and demographic changes, with large-scale emigration from the east and abroad with an accompanying economic boom.



California culture is considered a global trendsetter in popular culture, communication, information, innovation, environmentalism, economics, politics, and entertainment. As a result of the state's diversity and migration, California integrates foods, languages, and traditions from other areas across the country and around the globe. It is considered the origin of the American film industry, the hippie counterculture, fast food, beach and car culture, the Internet, and the personal computer, among others. The San Francisco Bay Area and the Greater Los Angeles Area are widely seen as centers of the global technology and entertainment industries, respectively. California's economy is very diverse: 58% of it is based on finance, government, real estate services, technology, and professional, scientific, and technical business services. Although it accounts for only 1.5% of the state's economy, California's agriculture industry has the highest output of any U.S. state.

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