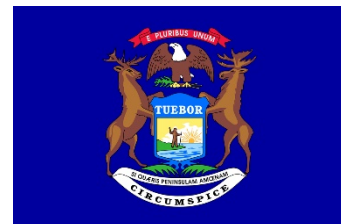


## Michigan History

Michigan is a state in the Great Lakes and Midwestern regions of the United States. Its name originates from the Ojibwe word *mishigami*, meaning "large water" or "large lake". With a population of just under 10 million, Michigan is the tenth most populous of the 50 United States, with the 11th most extensive total area. Its capital is Lansing, and its largest city is Detroit. Metro Detroit is among the nation's most populous and largest metropolitan economies.

Michigan is the only state to consist of two peninsulas. The Lower Peninsula is often noted as being shaped like a mitten. The Upper Peninsula (often called "the U.P.") is separated from the Lower Peninsula by the Straits of Mackinac, a five-mile channel that joins Lake Huron to Lake Michigan. The Mackinac Bridge connects the peninsulas. The state has the longest freshwater coastline of any political subdivision in the world, being bounded by four of the five Great Lakes, plus Lake Saint Clair. Michigan also has 64,980 inland lakes and ponds.

The area was first occupied by a succession of Native American tribes over thousands of years. Inhabited by Natives, Métis, and French explorers in the 17th century, it was claimed as part of New France colony. After France's defeat in the French and Indian War in 1762, the region came under British rule. Britain ceded this territory to the newly independent United States after Britain's defeat in the American Revolutionary War. The area was part of the larger Northwest Territory until 1800, when western Michigan became part of the Indiana Territory. Michigan Territory was formed in 1805, but some of the northern border with Canada was not agreed upon until after the War of 1812. Michigan was admitted into the Union in 1837 as the 26th state, a free one. It soon became an important center of industry and trade in the Great Lakes region and a popular immigrant destination in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



Although Michigan developed a diverse economy, it is widely known as the center of the U.S. automotive industry, which developed as a major economic force in the early 20th century. It is home to the country's three major automobile companies (whose headquarters are all within the Detroit metropolitan area). While sparsely populated, the Upper Peninsula is important for tourism thanks to its abundance of natural resources, while the Lower Peninsula is a center of manufacturing, forestry, agriculture, services, and high-tech industry.

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