

## Minnesota History

Minnesota is a state in the Upper Midwest, Great Lakes, and northern regions of the United States. Minnesota was admitted as the 32nd U.S. state on May 11, 1858, created from the eastern half of the Minnesota Territory. The state has many lakes, and is known as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes". Its official motto is L'Étoile du Nord (French: Star of the North).

Minnesota is the 12th largest in area and the 22nd most populous of the U.S. states; nearly 55% of its residents live in the Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area (known as the "Twin Cities"). This area has the largest concentration of transportation, business, industry, education, and government in the state. Urban centers in "Greater Minnesota" include Duluth, Mankato, Moorhead, Rochester and St. Cloud.

The geography of the state consists of western prairies now given over to intensive agriculture; deciduous forests in the southeast, now partially cleared, farmed, and settled; and the less populated North Woods, used for mining, forestry, and recreation.

Thousands of years before Europeans arrived, Minnesota was inhabited by various indigenous peoples. French explorers, missionaries, and fur traders began exploring the region in the 17th century, encountering the Dakota and Ojibwe/Anishinaabe tribes. Much of what is now Minnesota was part of the vast French holding of Louisiana, which was purchased by the United States in 1803. Following several territorial reorganizations, Minnesota in its current form was admitted as the country's 32nd state on May 11, 1858.



Like many Midwestern states, it remained sparsely populated and centered on lumber and agriculture. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, many European immigrants, mainly from Scandinavia and Germany, began to settle the state, which remains a center of Scandinavian American and German American culture.

Minnesota's standard of living index is among the highest in the United States, and the state is also among the best-educated and wealthiest in the nation. In recent years, its economy has greatly diversified, shifting from traditional activities such as agriculture and resource extraction to services and finance. While Minnesota's population is still largely dominated by Scandinavian- and German-Americans, domestic migration and immigration from Asia, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America have broadened the demographics of the state.

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