

Module: The United States and Canada
Topic Content: Major Regions of the United States

Major Regions of the United States



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Menu



The United States can be roughly divided into four major regions, based primarily on physical location and economic activity: the Northeast, the South, the Midwest, and the West. Click each button to learn more.

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Northeast



The Northeastern United States includes nine states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Northeast occupies the smallest land area of the four major regions; however, it is also the most densely populated. Click each point on the map to learn more.

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Boston, Massachusetts

Click each point on the map to learn more

Boston, Massachusetts



- Harbor site on Atlantic coast
- One of the oldest cities in the U.S.
- Center for trade
- Capital of Massachusetts
- Home of Harvard and MIT

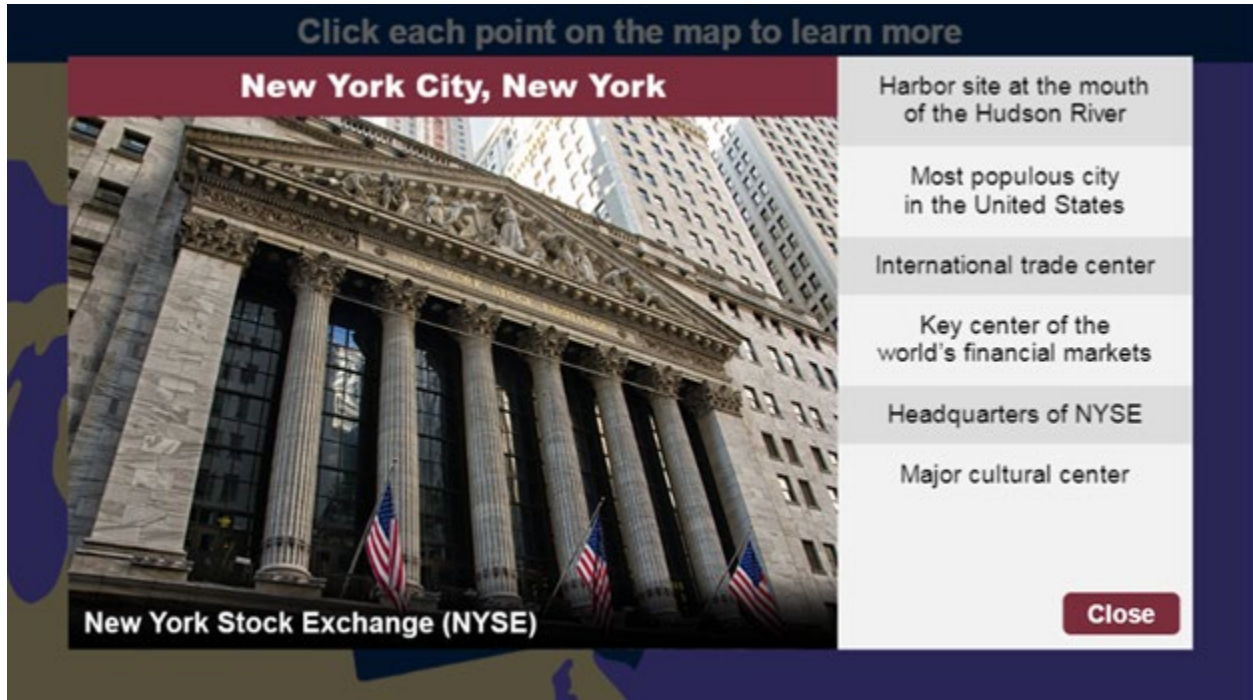
Close

Boston, Massachusetts is located at a harbor site on the north Atlantic coast. It is one of the oldest cities in the United States, and functions as a trade center and the state capital of Massachusetts. Boston also functions as an education center, since it is the home of important educational institutions like Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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New York City, New York

Click each point on the map to learn more



New York City, New York

- Harbor site at the mouth of the Hudson River
- Most populous city in the United States
- International trade center
- Key center of the world's financial markets
- Headquarters of NYSE
- Major cultural center

New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)

Close

New York City is located at a harbor site at the mouth of the Hudson River. It is the most populous city in the United States. New York City is an international trade center, and functions as a key center of the world's financial markets. This is because many banking and financial institutions, like the New York Stock Exchange, are headquartered in the city. The city is also a cultural center that is home to Broadway theaters and some of the most well-known museums in the world.

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Click each point on the map to learn more

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



- Confluence site in Eastern Pennsylvania
- Most populous city in Pennsylvania
- Sixth most populous city in the United States
- Former state capital
- Temporarily served as the national capital
- Center for culture, education and trade

Close

Philadelphia is located in eastern Pennsylvania at the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers. It is the most populous city in Pennsylvania, and the sixth most populous city in the United States. Philadelphia was founded as the state capital of Pennsylvania, and even served as a temporary capital of the United States while Washington, D.C. was being built. Although the city no longer functions as the state capital, Philadelphia remains an important center for culture, education, and trade.

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



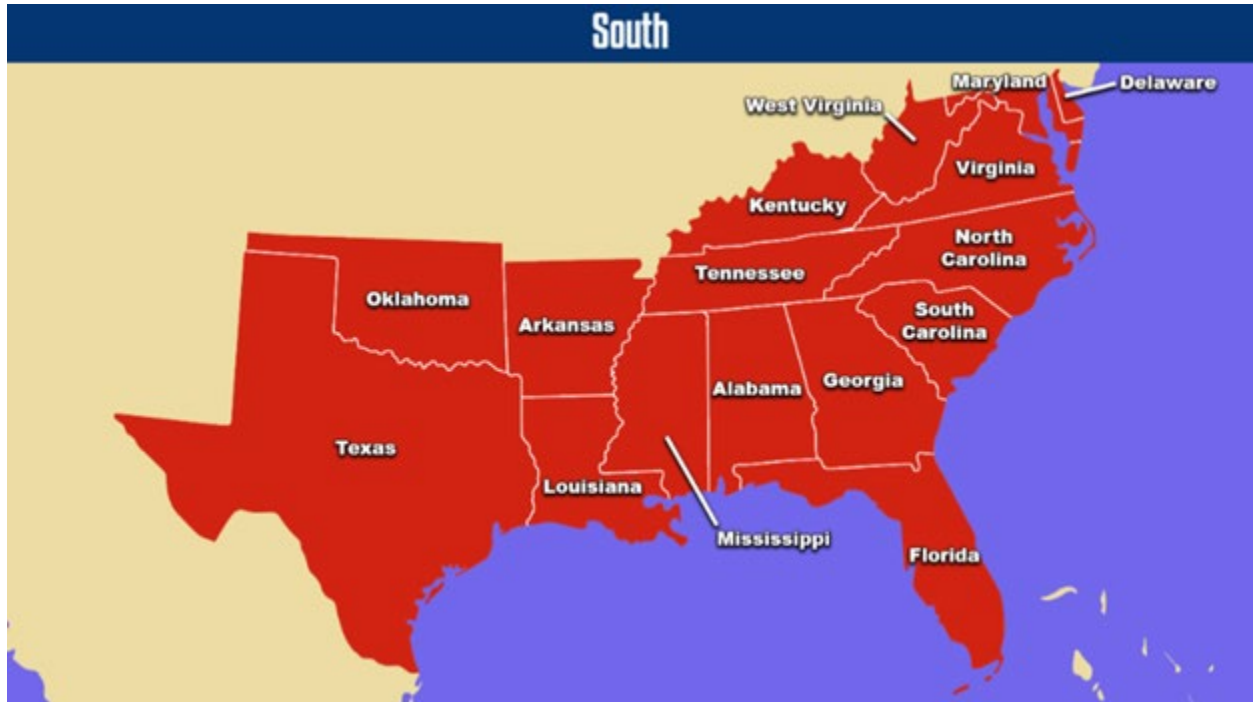
- Confluence site
- Founded as a defensive fort
- Became a center for transportation and trade
- Formerly a major center for steel manufacturing
- Part of the Rust Belt
- Healthcare, finance, and technology industries

Close

Pittsburgh was founded on a confluence site in western Pennsylvania. This site was chosen as a defensive position for Fort Pitt, which eventually became the city of Pittsburgh. As the city grew, the rivers that were initially used for defense were used for transportation and trade. Pittsburgh was once a major steel manufacturing center; however, this industry declined in the late-twentieth century, and the city became part of the Northeastern Rust Belt. In response, Pittsburgh successfully shifted its economy to industries in healthcare, finance, and technology.

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South



The Southern United States includes sixteen states: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma. The economy of the South was once heavily reliant on agriculture, but the late-twentieth century saw a rise in manufacturing, technology, tourism, and financial industry. Click each point on the map to learn more.

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Atlanta, Georgia

An information card for Atlanta, Georgia. At the top, it says "Return to Menu" in a dark red bar. Below that, the title "Atlanta, Georgia" is in a white bar. The main image shows a panoramic view of the Atlanta skyline with a large highway interchange in the foreground. To the right of the image is a list of facts in a light gray box. At the bottom right of the box is a red "Close" button.

Atlanta, Georgia

In the southern Appalachian Mountain region

Founded in the 1800s where two railroads met

Remains an important transportation center

Home to the busiest airport in the world

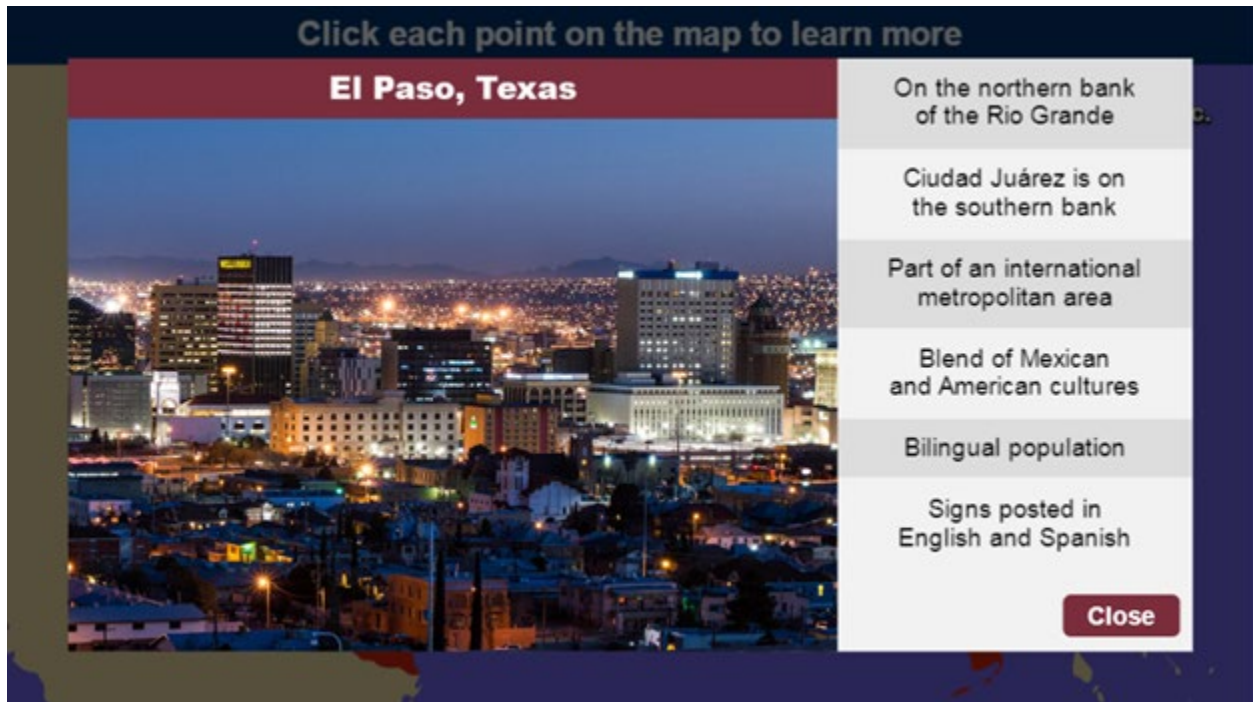
Cultural center and state capital of Georgia

Close

Atlanta, Georgia is located in the southern Appalachian Mountain region along the Eastern Continental Divide. The city of Atlanta was founded as a transportation hub in the 1800s, at a location where two railroads met. The city has remained an important center for transportation, as it is home to the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, which is considered the busiest airport in the world. Atlanta also functions as a cultural center and the state capital of Georgia.

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El Paso, Texas




El Paso, Texas is located on the northern bank of the Rio Grande, which acts as a natural border for southern Texas and northern Mexico. The Mexican city of Ciudad Juárez is located across the Rio Grande, on the southern bank. When combined, these two cities form a larger international metropolitan area. The close proximity of these cities has resulted in a blend of Mexican and American cultures. Most of the population is bilingual, and many signs are posted in English and Spanish.

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Houston, Texas

Click each point on the map to learn more

Houston, Texas



Harbor site on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico

Most populous city in the Southern region

Fourth most populous city in the United States

Petroleum, healthcare, and aerospace industries

International trade center

Cultural center with a diverse population

Close


Houston, Texas is located at a harbor site on the northwestern coast of the Gulf of Mexico. It is the most populous city in the Southern region, and the fourth most populous city in the United States. Houston has a booming economy that includes the petroleum, healthcare, and aerospace industries. The Port of Houston allows the city to function as an international trade center. The city is also a cultural center, with a diverse population and large museum and theater districts.

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Washington, D.C.

Click each point on the map to learn more

Washington, D.C.



U.S. Capitol Building

- Formal name is the District of Columbia
- Fall line site on the Potomac River
- Situated between Maryland and Virginia
- Capital of the United States
- Has many famous landmarks and monuments

Close

Washington, D.C., formally known as the District of Columbia, is located on a fall line site on the Potomac River. Situated between the states of Maryland and Virginia, Washington, D.C. functions as the capital of the United States. The city is home to many famous landmarks, such as the Washington Monument, the U.S. Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

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Midwest




The Midwestern United States includes twelve states: Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota. Agriculture is a major contributor to the Midwestern economy. In fact, large parts of the Midwest are known as America's Wheat Belt. Click each point on the map to learn more.

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Chicago, Illinois

Click each point on the map to learn more

Chicago, Illinois



- On the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan
- Most populous city in the Midwest
- Third most populous city in the United States
- Major trade center and transportation hub
- Important cultural center

Close

Chicago, Illinois is located on the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan. It is the most populous city in the Midwest, and the third most populous city in the United States. The city functions a major trade center, and is a transportation hub for shipping, railroads, and airlines. Chicago is also considered a cultural center, featuring renowned architecture, festivals, museums, and theaters.

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Detroit, Michigan

Click each point on the map to learn more

Detroit, Michigan



- On the Detroit River
- Has access to the entire Great Lakes region
- Important transportation hub and trade center
- Center of American automotive industry
- Economy remains strong despite financial struggles

Close


Detroit, Michigan is located on the Detroit River, which connects Lake Huron and Lake Erie. This site gives Detroit access to the entire Great Lakes region, making the city an important transportation hub and trade center. Detroit is best known as the center of the American automotive industry, as Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors are all headquartered in the city. Although the city has struggled financially in recent years, large parts of its economy remain strong.

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St. Louis, Missouri

Click each point on the map to learn more

St. Louis, Missouri



Confluence site of Mississippi and Missouri Rivers

Important trade center for the Midwest

Home of the Gateway Arch

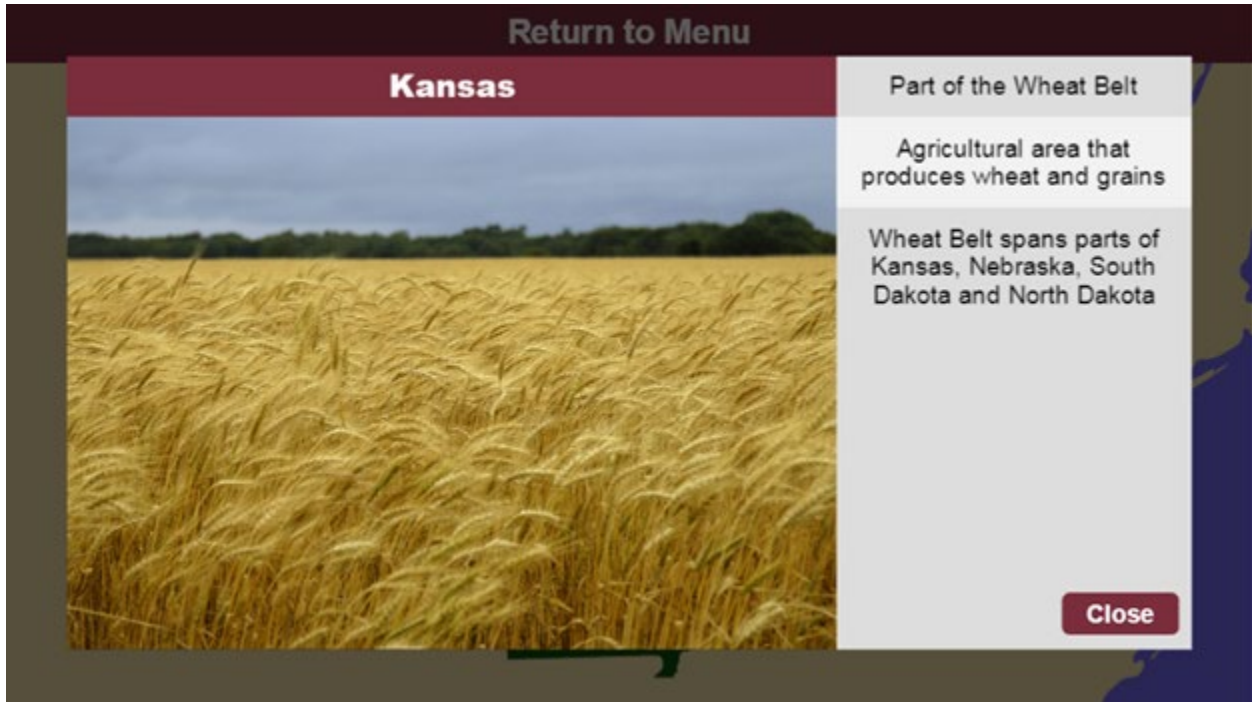
Gateway Arch

Close

St. Louis, Missouri is located at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. This location has allowed the city to function as an important trade center for the Midwestern region. The city is arguably best known for the Gateway Arch, which was built as a monument to the westward expansion of the United States.

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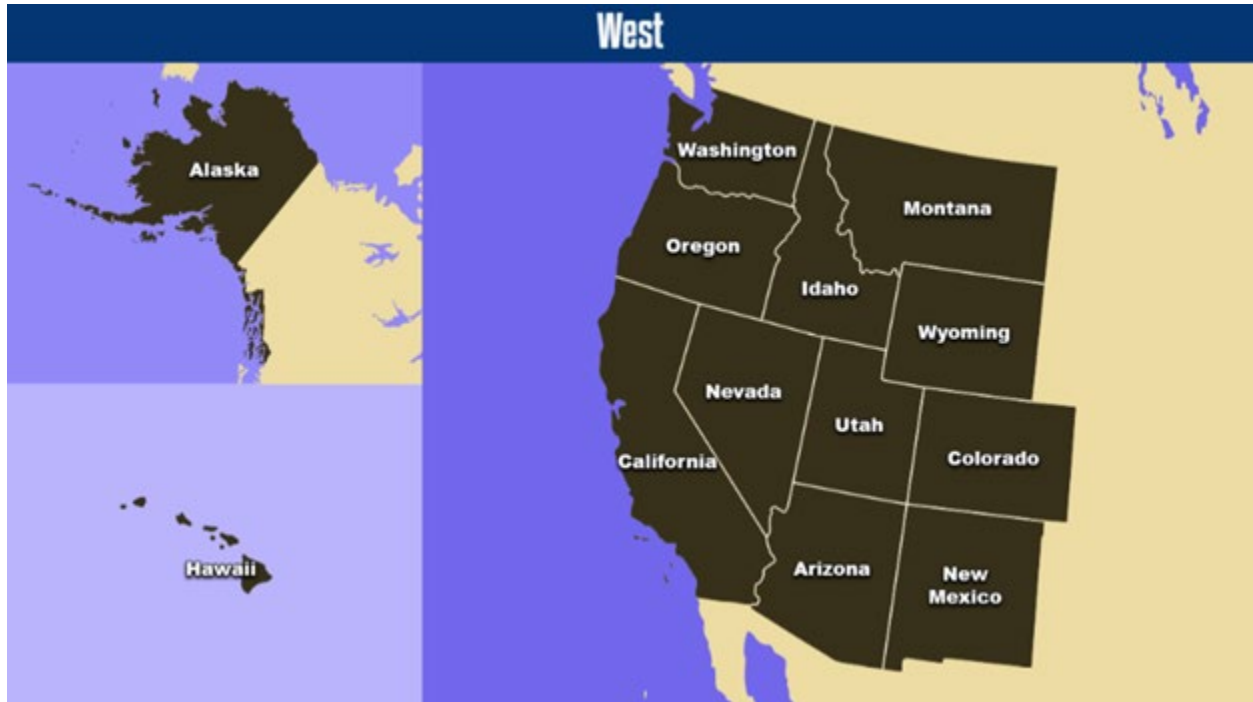
Kansas



The state of Kansas is considered part of the Wheat Belt, also known as America's Breadbasket. The Wheat Belt is a regional label given to the rural agricultural areas that primarily produce wheat and other grains. In the Midwest, the Wheat Belt spans large parts of Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota.

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West



The Western United States includes thirteen states: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, Alaska, and Hawaii. The West occupies the largest land area of the four major regions. Click each point on the map to learn more.

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Los Angeles, California

Click each point on the map to learn more

Los Angeles, California



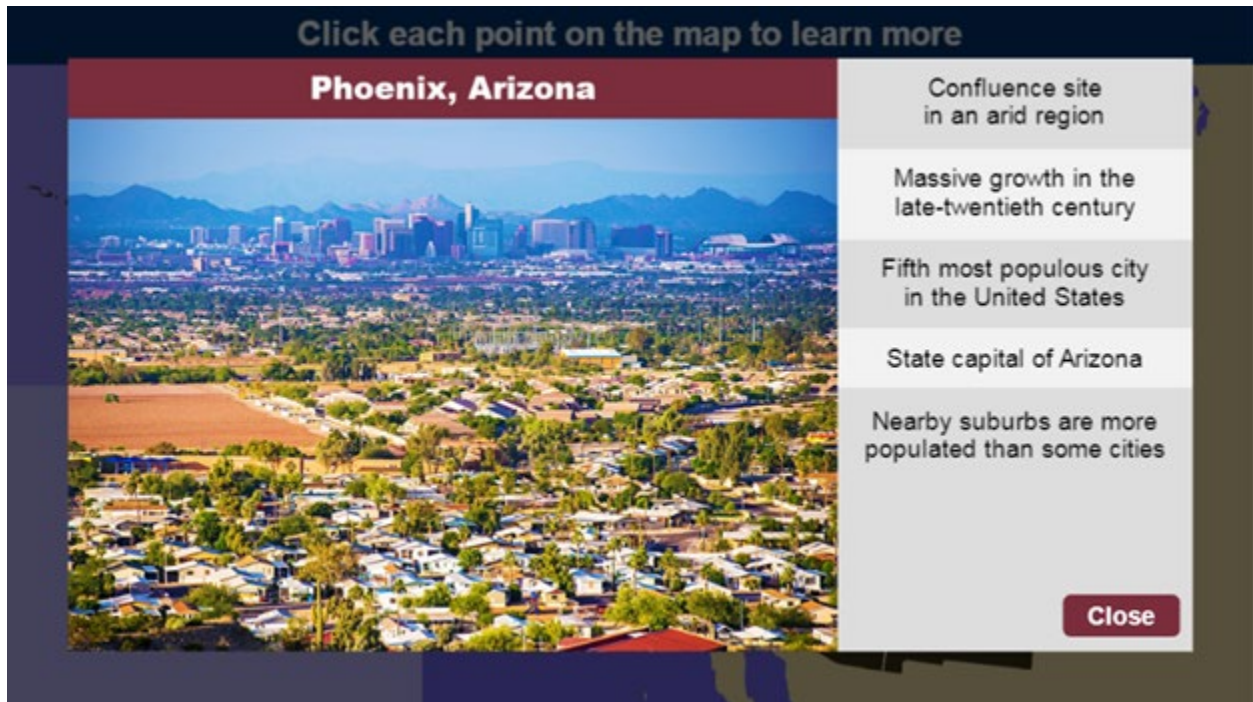
- On a coastal basin on the Pacific coast
- Established by Spanish settlers
- Ceded to the U.S. in 1848
- Second most populous city in the United States
- Center of the nation's entertainment industry
- Center for transportation, trade, and tourism

Close

Los Angeles is located on a coastal basin in Southern California, along the Pacific coast. The city was initially established by Spanish settlers, and was a part of Mexico until it was ceded to the U.S. in 1848. Los Angeles is the second most populous city in the United States, and as the home of Hollywood, is the center of the nation's entertainment industry. The city also functions as a center for transportation, trade, and tourism.

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Phoenix, Arizona



Phoenix, Arizona is located at a confluence site, providing the city with water in an otherwise arid region. The city was founded as a small agricultural community, but experienced massive economic and population growth in the late-twentieth century. Now, it is the fifth most populous city in the United States, and the capital of Arizona. Phoenix's growth has also influenced the surrounding area. For instance, Mesa, Arizona is a suburb of Phoenix; however, this community actually has a larger population than major cities like Atlanta, Miami, and Pittsburgh.

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San Francisco, California

Click each point on the map to learn more

San Francisco, California



Harbor site on Pacific coast

Established by Spanish settlers

Became a part of U.S. after Mexican-American War

California Gold Rush in 1849 increased the population

Center for trade, culture, transportation, and tourism

Most famous landmark is the Golden Gate Bridge

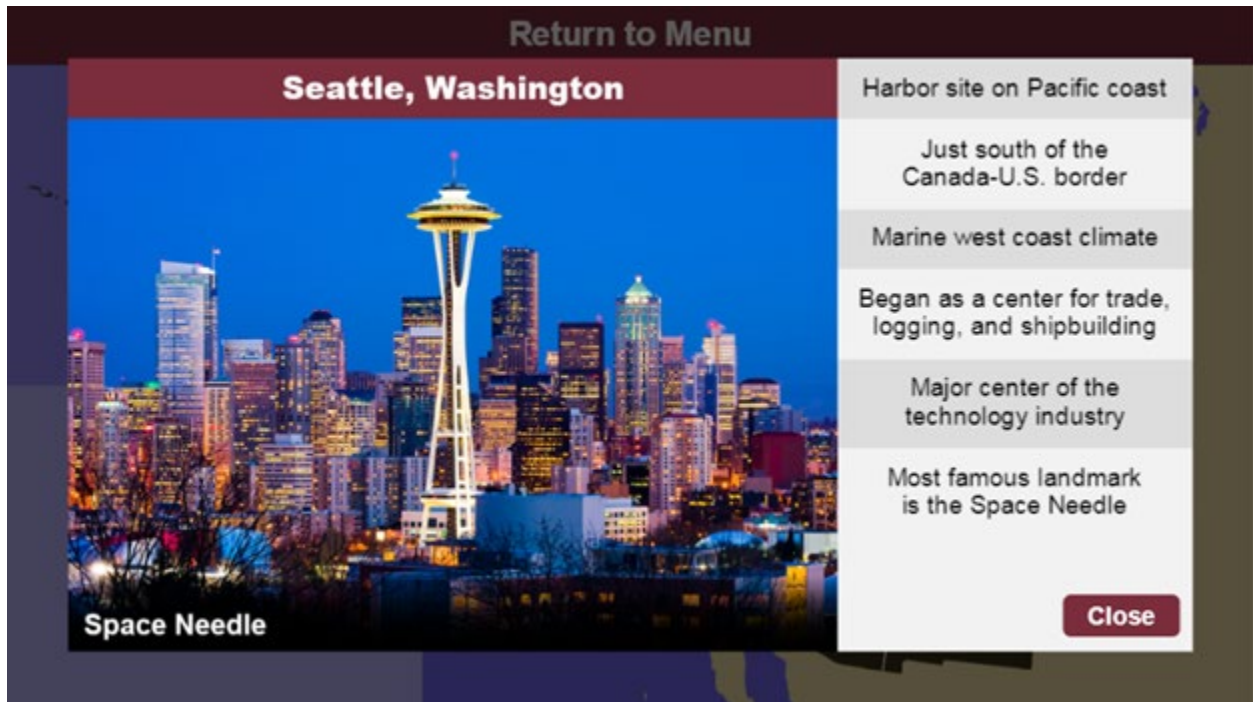
Close

Golden Gate Bridge

San Francisco is located at a harbor site in Northern California, along the Pacific coast. The city was established by Spanish settlers in 1776, and became part of the United States after the Mexican-American War. The population of the city grew immensely during the California Gold Rush in 1849. Now, San Francisco serves multiple functions, as a center for trade, culture, transportation, and tourism. The city's most famous landmark is the Golden Gate Bridge.

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Seattle, Washington



Seattle, Washington is located at a harbor site on the Pacific coast, just south of the Canada-United States border. This area has a marine west coast climate, which produces dense forest vegetation. Because of this, Seattle was originally established as a center for logging, shipbuilding, and trade. Now, Seattle is home to companies like Microsoft and Amazon, which makes the city a major center of the technology industry. The city's most famous landmark is the Space Needle.