



comparative: the size of South America (or slightly larger than Brazil); slightly larger than China; about two and a half times the size of Western Europe

Land boundaries: *total*: 12,034 km  
*border countries*: Canada 8,893 km (including 2,477 km with Alaska), Mexico 3,141 km  
*note*: US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba is leased by the US and is part of Cuba; the base boundary is 29 km

Coastline: 19,924 km

Maritime claims *territorial sea*: 12 NM  
 - as described in *contiguous zone*: 24 NM  
 UNCLOS 1982 *exclusive economic zone*: 200 NM  
 (see Notes and *continental shelf*: not specified  
 Definitions):

Climate: mostly temperate, but tropical in Hawaii and Florida, arctic in Alaska, semiarid in the great plains west of the Mississippi River, and arid in the Great Basin of the southwest; low winter temperatures in the northwest are ameliorated occasionally in January and February by warm chinook winds from the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains

Terrain: vast central plain, mountains in west, hills and low mountains in east; rugged mountains and broad river valleys in Alaska; rugged, volcanic topography in Hawaii

Elevation *lowest point*: Death Valley -86 m  
 extremes: *highest point*: Mount McKinley 6,194 m

Natural resources: coal, copper, lead, molybdenum, phosphates, uranium, bauxite, gold, iron, mercury, nickel, potash, silver, tungsten, zinc, petroleum, natural gas, timber

Land use: *arable land*: 19.3%  
*other*: 80.5% (1998 est.)  
*permanent crops*: 0.2%

Irrigated land: 214,000 sq km (1998 est.)

Natural hazards: tsunamis, volcanoes, and earthquake activity around Pacific Basin; hurricanes along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts; tornadoes in the midwest and southeast; mud slides in California; forest fires in the west; flooding; permafrost in northern Alaska, a major impediment to development

Environment - current issues: air pollution resulting in acid rain in both the US and Canada; the US is the largest single emitter of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels; water pollution from runoff of pesticides and fertilizers; limited natural fresh water resources in much of the western part of the country require careful management; desertification

Environment - international agreements: *party to*: Air Pollution, Air Pollution-Nitrogen Oxides, Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic-Marine Living Resources, Antarctic Seals, Antarctic Treaty, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Marine Dumping, Marine Life

Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling  
*signed, but not ratified:* Air Pollution-Persistent Organic Pollutants, Air Pollution-Volatile Organic Compounds, Biodiversity, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Hazardous Wastes

Geography - world's third-largest country by size (after Russia and Canada) and by note: population (after China and India); Mt. McKinley is highest point in North America and Death Valley the lowest point on the continent

**People****United States**

Population: 293,027,571 (July 2004 est.)

Age structure: *0-14 years:* 20.8% (male 31,122,974; female 29,713,748)  
*15-64 years:* 66.9% (male 97,756,380; female 98,183,309)  
*65 years and over:* 12.4% (male 15,078,204; female 21,172,956) (2004 est.)

Median age: *total:* 36 years  
*male:* 34.7 years  
*female:* 37.4 years (2004 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.92% (2004 est.)

Birth rate: 14.13 births/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Death rate: 8.34 deaths/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Net migration rate: 3.41 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Sex ratio: *at birth:* 1.05 male(s)/female  
*under 15 years:* 1.05 male(s)/female  
*15-64 years:* 1 male(s)/female  
*65 years and over:* 0.71 male(s)/female  
*total population:* 0.97 male(s)/female (2004 est.)

Infant mortality rate: *total:* 6.63 deaths/1,000 live births  
*female:* 5.91 deaths/1,000 live births (2004 est.)  
*male:* 7.31 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth: *total population:* 77.43 years  
*male:* 74.63 years  
*female:* 80.36 years (2004 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.07 children born/woman (2004 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate: 0.6% (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living: 900,000 (2001 est.)

with HIV/AIDS:

HIV/AIDS - 15,000 (2001 est.)  
deaths:

Nationality: *noun*: American(s)  
*adjective*: American

Ethnic groups: white 77.1%, black 12.9%, Asian 4.2%, Amerindian and Alaska native 1.5%, native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander 0.3%, other 4% (2000)  
*note*: a separate listing for Hispanic is not included because the US Census Bureau considers Hispanic to mean a person of Latin American descent (including persons of Cuban, Mexican, or Puerto Rican origin) living in the US who may be of any race or ethnic group (white, black, Asian, etc.)

Religions: Protestant 56%, Roman Catholic 28%, Jewish 2%, other 4%, none 10% (1989)

Languages: English, Spanish (spoken by a sizable minority)

Literacy: *definition*: age 15 and over can read and write  
*total population*: 97%  
*male*: 97%  
*female*: 97% (1979 est.)

## Government      United States

Country name: *conventional long form*: United States of America  
*conventional short form*: United States  
*abbreviation*: US or USA

Government type: Constitution-based federal republic; strong democratic tradition

Capital: Washington, DC

Administrative divisions: 50 states and 1 district\*; Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia\*, 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

Dependent areas: American Samoa, Baker Island, Guam, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Islands, Navassa Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palmyra Atoll, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Wake Island  
*note*: from 18 July 1947 until 1 October 1994, the US administered the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. It entered into a political relationship with all four political units: the Northern Mariana Islands is a commonwealth in political union with the US (effective 3 November 1986); Palau concluded a Compact of Free Association with the US (effective 1 October 1994); the

Federated States of Micronesia signed a Compact of Free Association with the US (effective 3 November 1986); the Republic of the Marshall Islands signed a Compact of Free Association with the US (effective 21 October 1986)

- Independence: 4 July 1776 (from Great Britain)
- National holiday: Independence Day, 4 July (1776)
- Constitution: 17 September 1787, effective 4 March 1789
- Legal system: based on English common law; judicial review of legislative acts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations
- Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal
- Executive branch: *chief of state*: President George W. BUSH (since 20 January 2001); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government  
*head of government*: President George W. BUSH (since 20 January 2001) ; note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government  
*cabinet*: Cabinet appointed by the president with Senate approval  
*elections*: president and vice president elected on the same ticket by a college of representatives who are elected directly from each state; president and vice president serve four-year terms; election last held 7 November 2000 (next to be held 2 November 2004).  
*election results*: George W. BUSH elected president; percent of popular vote - George W. BUSH (Republican Party) 48%, Albert A. GORE, Jr. (Democratic Party) 48%, Ralph NADER (Green Party) 3%, other 1%
- Legislative branch: bicameral Congress consists of the Senate (100 seats, one-third are renewed every two years; two members are elected from each state by popular vote to serve six-year terms) and the House of Representatives (435 seats; members are directly elected by popular vote to serve two-year terms)  
*election results*: Senate - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - Republican Party 51, Democratic Party 48, independent 1; House of Representatives - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - Republican Party 226, Democratic Party 204, independent 1, undecided 4  
*elections*: Senate - last held 5 November 2002 (next to be held 2 November 2004); House of Representatives - last held 5 November 2002 (next to be held 2 November 2004)
- Judicial branch: Supreme Court (its nine justices are appointed for life on condition of good behavior by the president with confirmation by the Senate); United States Courts of Appeal; United States District Courts; State and County Courts
- Political parties and leaders: Democratic Party [Terence McAULIFFE]; Green Party [leader NA]; Libertarian Party [Steve DASBACH]; Republican Party [Governor Marc RACICOT]
- International organization participation: AfDB, ANZUS, APEC, ARF, AsDB, ASEAN (dialogue partner), Australia Group, BIS, CE (observer), CERN (observer), CP, EAPC, EBRD, FAO, G-5, G-7, G-8, G-10, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCT (signatory), ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IEA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO, ITU, MICAH, NAM (guest), NATO, NEA, NSG,

OAS, OECD, OPCW, OSCE, Paris Club, PCA, UN, UN Security Council, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNITAR, UNMEE, UNMIK, UNMIL, UNMOVIC, UNOMIG, UNRWA, UNTSO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTrO, ZC

Flag description: 13 equal horizontal stripes of red (top and bottom) alternating with white; there is a blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side corner bearing 50 small, white, five-pointed stars arranged in nine offset horizontal rows of six stars (top and bottom) alternating with rows of five stars; the 50 stars represent the 50 states, the 13 stripes represent the 13 original colonies; known as Old Glory; the design and colors have been the basis for a number of other flags, including Chile, Liberia, Malaysia, and Puerto Rico

## Economy

### United States

Economy - overview: The US has the largest and most technologically powerful economy in the world, with a per capita GDP of \$37,800. In this market-oriented economy, private individuals and business firms make most of the decisions, and the federal and state governments buy needed goods and services predominantly in the private marketplace. US business firms enjoy considerably greater flexibility than their counterparts in Western Europe and Japan in decisions to expand capital plant, to lay off surplus workers, and to develop new products. At the same time, they face higher barriers to entry in their rivals' home markets than the barriers to entry of foreign firms in US markets. US firms are at or near the forefront in technological advances, especially in computers and in medical, aerospace, and military equipment; their advantage has narrowed since the end of World War II. The onrush of technology largely explains the gradual development of a "two-tier labor market" in which those at the bottom lack the education and the professional/technical skills of those at the top and, more and more, fail to get comparable pay raises, health insurance coverage, and other benefits. Since 1975, practically all the gains in household income have gone to the top 20% of households. The years 1994-2000 witnessed solid increases in real output, low inflation rates, and a drop in unemployment to below 5%. The year 2001 saw the end of boom psychology and performance, with output increasing only 0.3% and unemployment and business failures rising substantially. The response to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 showed the remarkable resilience of the economy. Moderate recovery took place in 2002 with the GDP growth rate rising to 2.4%. A major short-term problem in first half 2002 was a sharp decline in the stock market, fueled in part by the exposure of dubious accounting practices in some major corporations. The war in March/April 2003 between a US-led coalition and Iraq shifted resources to the military. In 2003, growth in output and productivity and the recovery of the stock market to above 10,000 for the Dow Jones Industrial Average were promising signs. Unemployment stayed at the 6% level, however, and began to decline only at the end of the year. Long-term problems include inadequate investment in economic infrastructure, rapidly rising medical and pension costs of an aging population, sizable trade and budget deficits, and stagnation of family income in the lower economic groups.

---

GDP:	purchasing power parity - \$10.98 trillion (2003 est.)
GDP - real growth rate:	3.1% (2003 est.)
GDP - per capita:	purchasing power parity - \$37,800 (2003 est.)
GDP - composition by sector:	<i>agriculture</i> : 2% <i>industry</i> : 18% <i>services</i> : 80% (2002 est.)
Population below poverty line:	12% (2003 est.)
Household income or consumption by percentage share:	<i>lowest 10%</i> : 1.8% <i>highest 10%</i> : 30.5% (1997)
Distribution of family income - Gini index:	40.8 (1997)
Inflation rate (consumer prices):	2.1% (2003)
Labor force:	141.8 million (includes unemployed) (2003)
Labor force - by occupation:	managerial, professional, and technical 31%, sales and office 28.9%, services 13.6%, manufacturing, extraction, transportation, and crafts 24.1%, farming, forestry, and fishing 2.4% <i>note</i> : figures exclude the unemployed (2001)
Unemployment rate:	6.2% (2003)
Budget:	<i>revenues</i> : \$1.946 trillion <i>expenditures</i> : \$2.052 trillion, including capital expenditures of NA (2002 est.)
Industries:	leading industrial power in the world, highly diversified and technologically advanced; petroleum, steel, motor vehicles, aerospace, telecommunications, chemicals, electronics, food processing, consumer goods, lumber, mining
Industrial production growth rate:	-1% (2003 est.)
Electricity - production:	3.719 trillion kWh (2001)
Electricity - production by source:	<i>fossil fuel</i> : 71.4% <i>hydro</i> : 5.6% <i>other</i> : 2.3% (2001) <i>nuclear</i> : 20.7%

---

---

Electricity - consumption:	3.602 trillion kWh (2001)
Electricity - exports:	18.17 billion kWh (2001)
Electricity - imports:	38.48 billion kWh (2001)
Oil - production:	8.054 million bbl/day (2001 est.)
Oil - consumption:	19.65 million bbl/day (2001 est.)
Oil - exports:	NA
Oil - imports:	NA
Oil - proved reserves:	22.45 billion bbl (1 January 2002)
Natural gas - production:	548.1 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - consumption:	640.9 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - exports:	11.16 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - imports:	114.1 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - proved reserves:	5.195 trillion cu m (1 January 2002)
Agriculture - products:	wheat, corn, other grains, fruits, vegetables, cotton; beef, pork, poultry, dairy products; forest products; fish
Exports:	\$714.5 billion f.o.b. (2003 est.)
Exports - commodities:	capital goods, automobiles, industrial supplies and raw materials, consumer goods, agricultural products
Exports - partners:	Canada 23.2%, Mexico 14.1%, Japan 7.4%, UK 4.8% (2002)
Imports:	\$1.26 trillion f.o.b. (2003 est.)
Imports - commodities:	crude oil and refined petroleum products, machinery, automobiles, consumer goods, industrial raw materials, food and beverages
Imports - partners:	Canada 17.8%, Mexico 11.3%, China 11.1%, Japan 10.4%, Germany 5.3% (2002)
Debt - external:	\$1.4 trillion (2001 est.)
Economic aid - ODA:	\$6.9 billion (1997)

---



donor:

Currency: US dollar (USD)

Currency code: USD

Exchange rates: British pounds per US dollar - 0.6139 (2003), 0.6661 (2002), 0.6944 (2001), 0.6596 (2000), 0.6180 (1999), Canadian dollars per US dollar - 1.4045 (2003), 1.5693 (2002), 1.5488 (2001), 1.4851 (2000), 1.4857 (1999), Japanese yen per US dollar - 116.08 (2003), 125.39 (2002), 121.53 (2001), 107.77 (2000), 113.91 (1999), euros per US dollar - 0.8866 (2003), 1.0626 (2002), 1.1175 (2001), 1.08540 (2000), 0.93863 (1999)

Fiscal year: 1 October - 30 September

## Communications United States

Telephones - 186,232,300 (2002)  
main lines in use:

Telephones - 140,766,800 (2002)  
mobile cellular:

Telephone system: *general assessment:* a large, technologically advanced, multipurpose communications system

*domestic:* a large system of fiber-optic cable, microwave radio relay, coaxial cable, and domestic satellites carries every form of telephone traffic; a rapidly growing cellular system carries mobile telephone traffic throughout the country

*international:* country code - 1; 24 ocean cable systems in use; satellite earth stations - 61 Intelsat (45 Atlantic Ocean and 16 Pacific Ocean), 5 Intersputnik (Atlantic Ocean region), and 4 Inmarsat (Pacific and Atlantic Ocean regions) (2000)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 4,762, FM 5,542, shortwave 18 (1998)

Radios: 575 million (1997)

Television broadcast stations: more than 1,500 (including nearly 1,000 stations affiliated with the five major networks - NBC, ABC, CBS, FOX, and PBS; in addition, there are about 9,000 cable TV systems) (1997)

Televisions: 219 million (1997)

Internet country code: .us

Internet hosts: 115,311,958 (2002)

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 7,000 (2002 est.)

Internet users: 159 million (2002)

---



---

**Transportation United States**

- Railways: *total*: 194,731 km mainline routes  
*standard gauge*: 194,731 km 1.435-m gauge  
*note*: represents the aggregate length of roadway of all line-haul railroads including an estimate for class II and III railroads; excludes 135,185 km of yard tracks, sidings, and parallel lines (2000)
- Highways: *total*: 6,406,296 km  
*paved*: 4,148,395 km (including 74,898 km of expressways)  
*unpaved*: 2,257,902 km (2002)
- Waterways: 41,009 km  
*note*: navigable inland channels, exclusive of the Great Lakes
- Pipelines: petroleum products 244,620 km; natural gas 548,665 km (2003)
- Ports and harbors: Anchorage, Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Chicago, Duluth, Hampton Roads, Honolulu, Houston, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Port Canaveral, Portland (Oregon), Prudhoe Bay, San Francisco, Savannah, Seattle, Tampa, Toledo
- Merchant marine: *total*: 466 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 12,436,658 GRT/14,630,116 DWT  
*by type*: barge carrier 8, bulk 69, cargo 75, chemical tanker 12, combination bulk 2, combination ore/oil 1, container 100, multi-functional large load carrier 3, passenger 12, passenger/cargo 2, petroleum tanker 81, refrigerated cargo 3, roll on/roll off 83, short-sea/passenger 3, vehicle carrier 12  
*foreign-owned*: Australia 2, Canada 7, Denmark 17, Malaysia 1, Netherlands 1, Norway 6, Singapore 3, United Kingdom 5  
*registered in other countries*: 670 (2003 est.)
- Airports: 14,807 (2003 est.)
- Airports - with paved runways: *total*: 5,128  
*over 3,047 m*: 188  
*2,438 to 3,047 m*: 221  
*914 to 1,523 m*: 2,383  
*under 914 m*: 961 (2003 est.)  
*1,524 to 2,437 m*: 1,375
- Airports - with unpaved runways: *total*: 9,679  
*under 914 m*: 7,796 (2003 est.)  
*over 3,047 m*: 1  
*2,438 to 3,047 m*: 7  
*914 to 1,523 m*: 1,714  
*1,524 to 2,437 m*: 161
- Heliports: 155 (2003 est.)

---



---

**Military United States**

- Military branches: Army, Navy and Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard (Coast Guard administered in peacetime by the Department of Homeland Security, but in

wartime reports to the Department of the Navy)

Military manpower -  
military age: 18 years of age (2004 est.)

Military manpower -  
availability: *males age 15-49: 73,597,731* (2004 est.)

Military manpower - fit  
for military  
service: NA (2004 est.)

Military manpower -  
reaching military  
age annually: *males: 2,124,164* (2004 est.)

Military expenditures -  
dollar figure: \$399 billion (2001)

Military expenditures -  
percent of GDP: 3.9% (2001)

## Transnational Issues

### United States

Disputes - international: Prolonged drought, population growth, and outmoded practices and infrastructure in the border region has strained water-sharing arrangements with Mexico; undocumented nationals from Mexico and Central America continue to enter the United States illegally; 1990 Maritime Boundary Agreement in the Bering Sea still awaits Russian Duma ratification; managed maritime boundary disputes with Canada at Dixon Entrance, Beaufort Sea, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and around the disputed Machias Seal Island and North Rock; The Bahamas have not been able to agree on a maritime boundary; US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay is leased from Cuba and only mutual agreement or US abandonment of the area can terminate the lease; Haiti claims US-administered Navassa Island; US has made no territorial claim in Antarctica (but has reserved the right to do so) and does not recognize the claims of any other state; Marshall Islands claims Wake Island

Illicit drugs: consumer of cocaine shipped from Colombia through Mexico and the Caribbean; consumer of heroin, marijuana, and increasingly methamphetamine from Mexico; consumer of high-quality Southeast Asian heroin; illicit producer of cannabis, marijuana, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and methamphetamine; money-laundering center