



北京市高等教育精品教材立项项目

总主编 史宝辉



大学英语立体化网络化系列教材·拓展课程教材

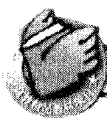
英语国家概况

(纸质版+电子教程+习题集)

訾 纓 ◎主编



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS



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英语国家概况

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前言

《英语国家概况》是大学英语提高阶段的公共选修课教材。本书采用电子教程光盘与纸质版教材相结合的编写模式,配套使用。

一、整体框架

1. 电子教程光盘

电子教程光盘供拓展学习使用。光盘与纸质版教材基本框架结构相同,但内容更加丰富,为课堂教学内容的拓展与延伸,包含大量精美插图和音、视频教学资料;涵盖六大部分内容,第一至第五部分为美国、加拿大、英国和爱尔兰、澳大利亚和新西兰以及新加坡、南非和印度等九国的国家概况,分为十八单元进行介绍;第六部分为课程习题集和答案。具体框架如下:

- 1) 美国部分 (第1—4章 共4章)
- 2) 加拿大部分 (第5—8章 共4章)
- 3) 英国/爱尔兰部分 (第9—13章 共5章)
- 4) 澳大利亚/新西兰部分 (第14—17章 共4章)
- 5) 其他英语国家部分(新加坡,南非,印度)(第18章,共1章)
- 6) 课程习题集与答案

2. 纸质版教材

纸质版教材供课堂教学使用。全书内容分为15章进行讲授,推荐学时为30—40学时;内容包括美国、加拿大、英国、爱尔兰、澳大利亚和新西兰等六个国家的概况,任课教师可根据教学要求和学生情况对上述国家进行选择教学。

二、主要内容

每一国家的概况介绍编写体例基本相同,均涵盖以下四方面的内容:

1. 国家综述(General Survey)

包括国名、国土面积、人口、官方语言、国旗、国歌、国徽、国花、宗教和货币等。

2. 地理与历史(Geography and History)

包括地理特点、气候、山脉河流、区划、主要地区、城市简介;历史进程及重要历史事件介绍。

3. 政治与经济(Political System and National Economy)

政治概况包括政府、政体、政党、宪法、国王、国家元首和政府首脑介绍;经济概况包括工业、农业、旅游业、商业、金融业等情况的介绍。

4. 社会与文化(Culture and Society)

包括文化群体、价值观、中小学教育和高等教育、文学艺术、体育运动、社会习俗、衣食住行、重要节日和主要宗教的介绍。

三、教程特色

1. 本教程编写形式新颖。目前国内英语国家概况教材大多为纸质版教材,供大学英语使用的此类教材尚未见电子教程出版。本教程突破了传统模式,采用纸质教材与电子教程光盘相结合的编写模式,集知识性和趣味性于一体,在实现公共选修课教材立体化、网络化方面进行了有益的尝试,对激发学生学习兴趣、提高选修课大班教学效果具有良好的促进作用。

2. 本教程图文并茂,采用了插图式的讲授方法。在讲授过程中,充分利用电子教程的资源优势,根据所授内容插入相应人物、景物、事件等的图片、录像片断、演说录音、歌曲等等,使课程内容生动、直观,符合当代大学生的认知心理。电子教程丰富的图、文与音、视频教学资源可满足大学英语基础与提高阶段对文化背景知识的要求。

3. 本教程使用便捷。电子教程光盘字号大小,版式设计均已按照上课需要进行设定,教师上课时可直接使用,不必自行调试,省时省力。学生课下可结合课堂教学内容,利用拓展内容进行复习,深化所学知识,完成所学章节的练习内容,并根据电子教程上所提供过的听力原文和答案进行自检。

四、习题形式

本教程附有配套习题集,含各类练习题七百余道。每节后附练习题 10 题 (Section Exercises),习题形式包括正误判断、多项选择和连线等客观题型;每章后附综合练习题 15-20 题 (Chapter Exercises),主要形式为填空、短语解释和简答等主观题型。练习题部分的设计可为学生通过四、六级考试和研究生英语入学考试提供帮助。

五、读者对象

本教程读者群宽泛,适用范围广阔。既可用于课堂教学,亦可用于学生课外拓展学习,同时它还是教师备课的优质资源库。

教程难度对应《大学英语教学要求》所规定的较高要求。对于英语专业本科生及研究生,教师可通过拓展内容提高教学难度。

六、编写队伍

本教程主要编写人员均有国外留学、访学经历,主讲过英美概况、美国历史、西方文化等本科和研究生课程,教学经验丰富,所编教材针对性、实用性强。

由于编写这样一部教材是一个新的尝试,时间紧、任务重,缺点错误在所难免,欢迎广大教师、学生 and 使用者提出宝贵意见,以便我们及时做出修改。

编者

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Understanding the United States

A General Survey of the US



Map of the United States

Covering the central part of North America, the United States is a vast country to explore. It is a federal republic consisting of 50 states with dazzling (耀眼的) landscape and variable geography, also an exciting mixture of cultural diversity and diplomatic controversy.

Country Name

The conventional official name is the United States of America, shortened as the United States, US, or USA. On July 4, 1776, *The Declaration of Independence* announced that the thirteen North American colonies would be the United States of America, free and independent of Great Britain. It has a nickname, "Uncle Sam." The image came from a meat provider named Samuel Wilson during the war of 1812. The American Congress officially recognized Uncle Sam as a national symbol in 1961.

Capital

Washington D. C. is the capital and political center of the United States. There are a number of important institutions in this city, such as the White House (residence of the President) and

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the Capitol Hill (home to the American Congress).

Language

English is the official language of the United States, also called American English in contrast with British English. According to the 2000 census (人口普查), English is spoken by 82.1% of its population, Spanish 10.7%, other Indo-European 3.8%, Asian and Pacific island 2.7%, and other 0.7%.

Note: Hawaiian is an official language in the state of Hawaii.

Religion

Most Americans are Christians, among them 52% are protestant and 24% Roman Catholic. For other religions, Mormon 2%, Jewish 1%, Muslim 1%, other 10%, and none 10%, according to a 2002 investigation.

Currency

The official currency of the United States is the United States dollar (USD \$). In 1792 the newly independent United States chose the Spanish dollar, subdivided into 100 cents, as the unit of American currency in preference to the British pound. Now the US dollar is one of the most circulated currencies of the world.

National Flag

On June 14, 1777, at Philadelphia, the Marine Committee of the Second Continental Congress offered the resolution which resulted in the adoption of the Flag of the United States.

The flag of the US goes by many names: Stars and Stripes, Old Glory, Star-Spangled (星光灿烂的) Banner, or the Red, White, and Blue. It has 13 stripes—7 red stripes and 6 white stripes. A blue square in the upper corner contains 50 white stars. The stripes represent the 13 original American colonies. The 50 stars stand for the 50 US states. According to the Department of State, red stands for hardiness and courage, white is the symbol of purity and innocence, and blue is the color of vigilance, perseverance and justice.

The National Anthem

The “Star-Spangled Banner” is the national anthem of the United States. It was composed by Francis Scott Key in 1814. The United States Congress made the “Star-Spangled Banner” the national anthem of the United States in 1931.

The National Flower

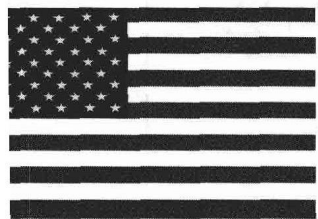
Rose is the national flower of the United States. President Reagan signed Proclamation in 1986 that rose is named as the National Floral Emblem of the United States of America. The American people hold rose dear as the symbol of life, love and devotion, of beauty and eternity.

The National Bird

The bald eagle was chosen in 1782 as the emblem (象征) of the US because of its long life, great strength and majestic looks, and also because it was then believed to exist only on the continent of North America.

The Great Seal (国玺)

The Seal of the United States depicts a bald eagle with a shield of 13 alternating red and white stripes representing the 13 original States on its breast. Across the top of the shield is a blue field that unites all the stripes into one. The blue chief represents the United States Congress. In his talons (爪) the eagle grasps an olive



branch representing peace, and 13 arrows representing war. Above the eagle are thirteen stars inside a circular design, representing a "New Constellation." In his beak the eagle grasps a flowing ribbon bearing the first MOTTO of the United States: E Pluribus Unum. These Latin words are translated as "Out of many, One."

Population

The United States is home to about 301 million people. That makes it the world's third most populated country, after China and India, and the most populous of today's developed countries. It has also one of the highest population growth rates of the industrialized nations: about one percent annually. This adds some 2.5 million people every year. Most Americans are descended from immigrants. Immigration now contributes roughly a third of the annual U.S. population increase.



A Collection of Fast Facts of the United States

Official name	the United States of America
Capital	Washington, D.C.
Population	301,621,157 people
Rank among countries in population	3rd
Major cities	New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia
Total area	9,372,615 km ²
Rank in area worldwide	4th
Highest point	Mt. McKinley, 6,194 meters
Lowest point	Death Valley, 6 meters
Currency	United States dollar
Principal language	English
Major religion	Christianity
Literacy rate	97%
Largest state	Alaska, 1,720,000 km ²
Smallest state	Rhode Island, 4,000 km ²
Most populous state	California, 35,900,900 people
Least populous state	Wyoming, 507,000 people
Independence Day	July 4th

Chapter 1 Geography

I Geographical Features

The United States is located in the central part of North America, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean in the east and the North Pacific Ocean in the west. With a total area of 9,372,615 square kilometers, the United States ranks the fourth largest country in area in the world, after Russia, Canada and China.

As far as geographical features are concerned, the country can be separated into three major divisions: the highlands in the east, the mountains in the west, and a vast plain region in between. In order to explain more clearly, we can begin by dividing the continent of North America into 7 regions. These regions are large areas where the landforms (地貌) or kinds of lands are similar. The 7 regions are:

- the Atlantic and Gulf coastal plain
- the Appalachian Mountains
- the Central Lowlands and the Great Plains
- the Rocky Mountains
- the Great Basin (山间高原盆地)
- the Pacific Coastal Ranges and Lowlands
- the Canadian Shield (also called the Laurentian Shield, 加拿大地盾, 劳伦地盾)

The Coastal Plain

Along the east coast of North America is a narrow plain. This plain begins far up the coast and becomes wider as you travel south. The coastal plain extends all along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States. The coastal plain is low and flat. In some places, there are large areas where the land is covered with shallow water. These areas are called swamps or wet lands. The swamps are thick with plants, and there are many wild animals.

The Appalachian Mountains

In the west of the coastal plain are the Appalachian Mountains. The Appalachians are a chain of thickly wooded mountains that stretch from Maine all the way to Georgia and Alabama. The topography (地形学) of these mountains is different, and not many of them are nearly as tall as west-coast ranges. Much cultivation and urbanization has occurred in the Appalachians, but there are still many remote areas. The Appalachian Mountains are different from other ranges because most of their trees are deciduous (每年落叶的).

The Appalachians are old mountains. This means that they were formed millions of years ago. Since then, they have been worn down by the wind and the weather. Today, most of these mountains have rounded tops. The highest peak of the Appalachians is only a little over 2,000 meters. The valleys between them do not have steep sides. In parts of the Appalachians, the land is not good for farming. People have farmed thin strips of land in the valleys where it is flat. But farmers here barely grow enough for themselves to eat. Much coal is found in these mountains.

The Great Plains

In the west of the Appalachians, the land drops to the mighty Mississippi River. Still west is a vast open area called the Great Plains. The Great Plains is the broad expanse of prairie which lies east of the Rocky Mountains in the United States of America and Canada. As one of the largest areas of flatland in the world, it stretches from northern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, covering the US states of New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota and North Dakota, the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Much of Minnesota and Iowa and much of the Canadian province of Manitoba also lie in the Great Plains. It is usually divided by Missouri River into two regions: the Central Lowland in the east, and Great Plains in the west.

● *The Central Lowland*

The plains east of the Missouri River are called the Central Lowlands. It stretches from the five Great Lakes to central Texas. Here is some of the most fertile land in the world. On these plains, the farmers grow corn, soybeans, and wheat. The Central Lowlands are also rich in oil and natural gas. Many of the large cities in the US are located in the Central Lowlands.

● *The Great Plains*

To the west of the Missouri River is the Great Plains. Most of the area is treeless grassland. Wheat and corn fields cover much of the plains. Great herds of cattle and sheep feed on its grasses. Places such as South Dakota's Ordway Prairie Preserve ensure that some of the natural prairie land survives.

Rocky Mountains

West of the Great Plains are the Rocky Mountains, spanning the country from Alaska to Mexico. High with rugged peaks and steep valleys, the Rocky Mountains rise over 4,260 meters above sea levels and form the continental divide of the United States. On one side of this great divide, all rivers flow west to the Pacific Ocean. On the other side, the rivers flow east. Rocky Mountains are younger than the Appalachians. Some of the people living in the Rocky Mountains earn their living by mining and logging. Rocky Mountains also attract visitors who come for sports and vacations. The Breathtaking sunsets, glaciated valleys (冰川谷), pristine (原始的) forests, and snow-crested peaks—this is nature of drama.

Plateaus and the Great Basin

West of the Rockies are the two great plateaus: the Columbia Plateau in the north and the Colorado Plateau in the south, with the Great Basin in between. The Columbia Plateau is largely underlain by ancient lava (熔岩) flows, while Colorado Plateau includes spectacular canyons, high plateaus, and mountains.

A number of ancient salty lakes are found in the basin, including the famous Great Salt Lake of Utah. The rivers here do not flow toward the sea and most of them are shallow and salty. Many flow into the Great Salt Lake. This land receives little rainfall. Much of it is desert. Death Valley is on the western edge of this region. This valley, 200 kilometers long and 86 kilometers below the sea level, is the lowest point and hottest place in the US. There are few big cities in this part. The land near the Rocky Mountains is good for grazing cattle.

The Pacific Coastal Ranges

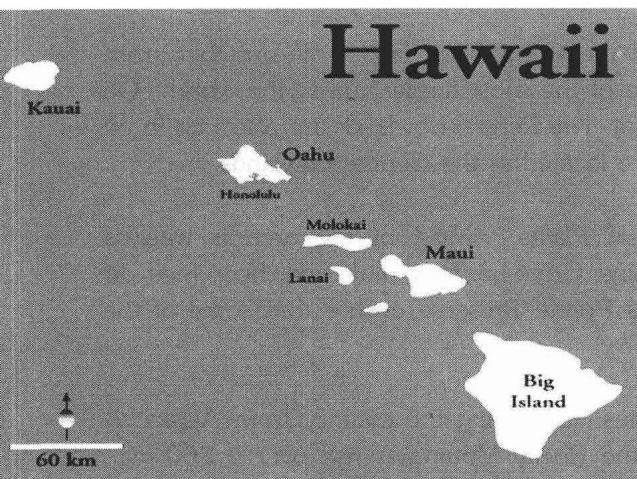
Farther west, along the coast, stands another great system of mountains, the Pacific Coastal ranges including the Sierra Nevada (内华达山脉) and Cascade ranges (喀斯喀特山脉). It is truly a unique landscape consisting of various physiographic regions. With dynamic landforms such as California's white sand beaches in the south and the rugged and rocky coasts of Washington in the north, the Pacific Coast is very different from other coastal regions in the US. Another unique feature running along the Pacific Ocean is the Coast Ranges, which have peak elevations

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of about 1,200 meters in the state of Oregon.

The Canadian Shield

The last main region of North America is called the Canadian Shield, also known as the Laurentian Plateau (or Laurentian Highlands), which covers an area of 4,790,000 km² and has the shape of a giant shield. It stands mainly in Canada, extending from Newfoundland in the east, to the Beaufort Sea in the northwest, and south through Wisconsin and Minnesota in the US. This is a large area of rocky hills covered with forests. It forms the central land mass of North America. Few people live in the northern region. But the land is rich in minerals such as nickel, copper, and silver. There are many streams and lakes in the Canadian Shield. These waters attract many Canadians and Americans from farther south for vacations.



Alaska and Hawaii

Alaska lies in the northwestern corner of North America, still mostly a rugged wilderness. Alaska covers 656,425 square miles, making it the largest of the 50 states and more than twice the size of Texas, the second largest state. Juneau (朱诺) is the capital of Alaska. Most of Alaska is surrounded by water. To the north is the Arctic Ocean; to the south is the Gulf of Alaska and Pacific Ocean; to the west is the Bering Sea. Alaska's land borders Canada to the east and south. The geography can be categorized into four main areas including two mountain ranges, a central plateau, and the Arctic slope or coastal plain. It also

includes the fertile farmland known as the Matanuska (马塔努斯卡河) Valley. Alaska contains 375 million acres of land and thousands of lakes. Permafrost (永久冻结带) is a major factor in the geography of Alaska. It covers most of the northern part of the State. Discontinuous or isolated patches also exist over the central portions in an overall area covering nearly a third of the State. The highest point in Alaska is Mt. McKinley at 20,320 feet above sea level (麦金利山). In fact, Mt. McKinley is the highest point in North America. Yukon River (3,185 km long, of which 1,149 km lie in Canada) is the longest river in Alaska and the fifth-longest river in North America.

About 3,680 kilometers across the Pacific Ocean is Hawaii, a long chain of tropical islands including 8 main islands and over a hundred atolls (环状珊瑚岛) and islets. The Hawaiian Islands were formed by volcanoes that pushed up from the seafloor millions of years ago. Hawaii is the largest of the habitable Hawaiian islands and covers 4,038 square miles. This island was formed by five volcanoes, two of which are still active and erupt intermittently (间歇地). Waikiki Beach (威基基海滩), located in Honolulu (火奴鲁鲁, 即“檀香山”, 美国夏威夷州首府和最大的城市), is one of Hawaii's most popular attractions. Millions of tourists visit Hawaii to bask in the sun on its beautiful beaches.

II Major Rivers, Lakes and Mountains

Rivers

● Mississippi River

The Mississippi River, lying between the Appalachian Mountains and the Rocky Moun-

tain, is the most important river in the United States and one of the great continental rivers in the world. It flows 3,770 kilometers from its source in northwestern Minnesota to its mouth in the Gulf of Mexico.

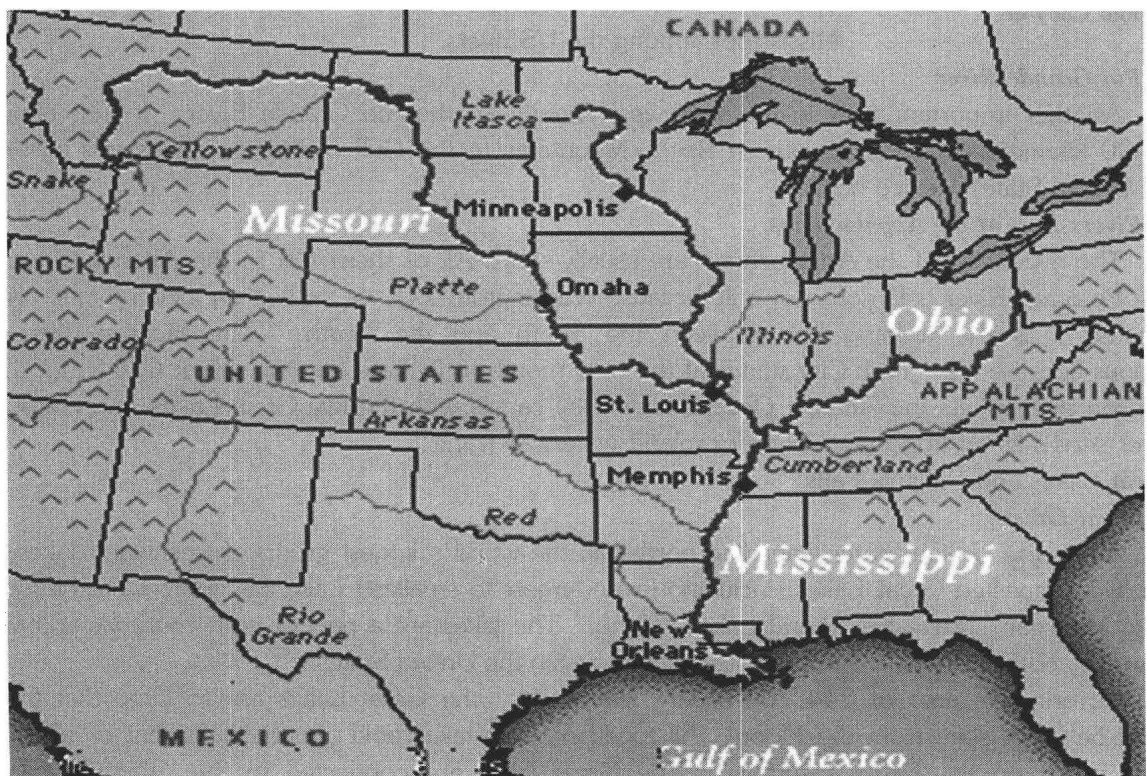
The Mississippi is the largest river in North America. This means that it carries a greater volume of water than any other North American river. But the Mississippi is not the longest river. That honor goes to the Missouri. The Missouri is 320 kilometers longer. But if Mississippi is measured from the source of its chief headstream (the main branch), the Missouri River, it is over 6,000 kilometers with more than 40 tributaries. The two major tributaries are the Missouri River and Ohio River. The Illinois and Arkansas are other major rivers that flow into the Mississippi. Along the way, the Mississippi borders ten states. It is known as the Father of Waters.

● *Missouri River*

The Missouri River is the longest river system in the United States. It flows about 4,090 kilometers from southwest Montana among the Rocky Mountains to just north of St. Louis, Missouri, where it joins the Mississippi River. The river is nicknamed "The Big Muddy" as it has a great deal of mud in it. On its way to the Mississippi, the Missouri forms part of the border of seven states. The three largest cities along the Missouri are Omaha in Nebraska, and Kansas City and St. Louis in Missouri.

● *Ohio River*

Another main tributary of the Mississippi is Ohio River (1,500 kilometers), which rises from the rainy east at Pittsburgh, Penn. and joins the Mississippi at Cairo, Illinois. It served as the gateway to the West at the beginning of the 1800s for the early settlers moving west from the Appalachians. By the 1820s, steamboats had arrived on the Ohio River. Steamboats moved a lot faster than flatboats. Traffic on the Ohio rapidly increased as steamboats carried goods and people up and down the river. Three cities became important centers of trade because of



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their locations on the busy waterway: Pittsburgh, Cincinnati (in Ohio), and Louisville (in Kentucky). Traffic on the river lessened in the late 1800s after the railroads were built.

By the mid-1900s, the Ohio River had become severely polluted. Sewage and industrial wastes had been dumped in it for many years. No one wanted to swim in the river. Cleanup efforts have helped make the river a place where people can once again enjoy fishing, swimming, and boating.

● *St. Lawrence River*

Another important river is the St. Lawrence, which forms part of the boundary between Canada and the United States. The St. Lawrence River is the chief outlet of the Great Lakes, flowing northeast from Lake Ontario to the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the North Atlantic Ocean, a distance of 1,300 km. It serves as a major water route to the interior of the United States and Canada, linking the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean.

● *Colorado River and Columbia River*

On the Pacific side there are two great rivers: the Colorado River and the Columbia River. The Colorado River begins in the Rocky Mountains. It flows southwest for some 2,300 kilometers and empties into the Gulf of California. For 342 of these kilometers the Colorado flows through the magnificent Grand Canyon in Arizona, which is one of the most beautiful places in the United States. The Colorado drains an enormous area. All the farms and cities of the southwestern corner of the country depend on its water. Many Dams have been built in the Colorado River system. Hoover Dam, built in 1936 by the federal government, is the largest of the dams located on the Colorado River.

The Columbia River rises in western Canada and continues in the US for about 1,900 kilometers. It flows into the Pacific Ocean. The volume of the Columbia's flow is second only to that of the Mississippi among the US rivers.



the Grand Canyon

● *Rio Grande River*

Another important river in the southwest America is the Rio Grande River. It runs about 3,000 kilometers from the southern Rocky Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico and forms part of the United States-Mexico border.

● *Rivers East of the Appalachians*

The rivers east of the Appalachians are usually short. All of them run to the Atlantic Ocean. The Potomac River is famous not only because Washington D.C. is located on its bank but also because it is the dividing line between the South and the North. The Hudson River is famous because New York City stands at the river mouth. It is there (at New York City) that the Hudson river meets the Atlantic Ocean. Linked by canals with the five Great Lakes, the Hudson River serves as an important route for inland waterway traffic.

Great Lakes and Niagara Falls

● *Great Lakes*

Along the United States-Canadian border lie the world's largest group of freshwater lakes—the five connected Great Lakes, including (from largest to smallest) Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario. The lakes are a part of both countries and are shared by both. Only Lake Michigan lies entirely within the United States.

Covering an area of 244,100 square kilometers, the Great Lakes are so large that they could be easily seen from the Moon! All together, the lakes hold about 20 percent of all the fresh water on the Earth's surface. The Great lakes are connected to the Atlantic Ocean

by the St. Lawrence River. Four of North America's largest cities are located on the edge of the Great Lakes. They are Chicago, Detroit, Toronto (Canada), and Cleveland. These lakes are joined together by canals and linked to the Mississippi and its tributaries. They are the economic lifeline of the Midwest.

● *Niagara Falls* (尼亚加拉瀑布)

Niagara Falls is the most spectacular falls in the United States because of its great beauty and immense size. It is part of the Niagara River, which connects Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. East of the river is the United States. West of the river is Canada. About halfway between the two lakes, a sharp drop in the river makes Niagara Falls.

Niagara Falls consists of two giant waterfalls and one smaller one. One big waterfall, called American Falls, is on the US side of the river. The waterfall is 328 meters wide and 55 meters high. The biggest of the two giant waterfalls is in Canada and is known as the Canadian Falls, also called the Horseshoe Falls because of its horseshoe shape. The curved edge of the Canadian Falls measures 670 meters wide and the water drops 57 meters. The Canadian Falls carries nine times more water than the American Falls! A great tourist attraction, Niagara Falls makes an enormous, ground-shaking roar and a huge cloud of water mist. Rainbows shine through the mist. At night, the falls are lit with colored lights, creating a brilliant display!



● *Great Salt Lake*

In northwest Utah lies the Great Salt Lake. Its maximum depth is 8 meters. As a terminal lake, the Great Salt Lake is several times more saline than seawater, making it easy to float in. It contains about 4.4 billion tons of minerals. About three fourths of this total is common table salt. Surrounded by stretches of sand, salt land and marsh, the lake remains isolated, though in recent years it has become important as a source of minerals, as a beach and water-sports attraction, and as a wildlife preserve. Near Great Salt Lake lies the capital and largest city of Utah—Salt Lake City. The marshlands on the lake's eastern and northern shores are the habitat for millions of migratory shorebirds and waterfowl.

Mountains

Beside the Appalachian Mountains and the Rocky Mountains, there are still a few more worth mentioning in this part. Mount McKinley in Alaska is the tallest mountain in the United States. It rises 6,194 meters above sea level. In the Sierra Nevada of eastern California, Mount Whitney, at 4,418 meters, is the highest peak in the United States outside of Alaska. The Sawatch Mountains form part of the Continental Divide, which runs through western Colorado. The divide, the main watershed boundary of the North American continent, weaves (迂回通过) through the continent along the tops of the Rocky Mountains. It marks the point at which all rivers to the east flow toward the Atlantic Ocean and all rivers to the west flow toward the Pacific Ocean. The Cascade Range is a major mountain range extending from northern California through Oregon and Washington into British Columbia, Canada.

III Natural Resources and Climate

Natural Resources

● Minerals and Metals

The United States is a land rich in natural resources. Many minerals are found in North America. Iron, nickel(镍), copper, gold, and many other metals are found in the North of the Great Lakes. Coal is found in eastern United States. Oil is found near the Gulf of Mexico. More metals—including lead, zinc(锌), and silver—are found in the western mountains. The US ranks first in the world in coal and natural gas deposits, and ranks second in the oil deposits.

● Forests

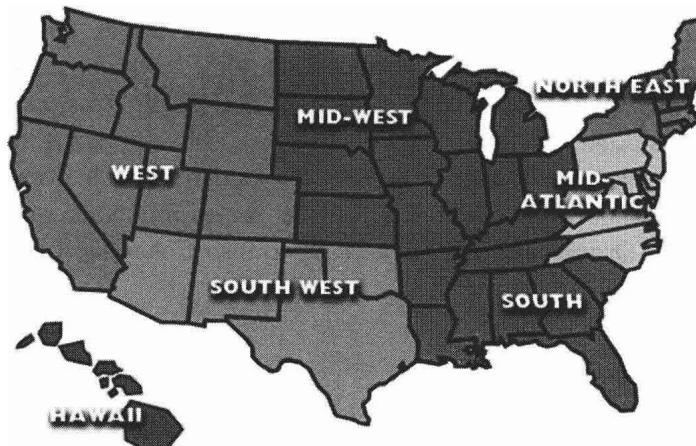
Before European settlement, forests covered nearly one billion acres of what is now the United States. Since the mid-1600's, about 300 million acres of forest have been cleared, primarily for agriculture during the 19th century. Today about one-third of the nation is forested. Total forest area has been relatively stable for the last 100 years (currently about 747 million acres). Forests are chiefly found in the eastern and western highlands of the country. Along the Pacific coast there are more thick forests. The heavy rainfall there helps the trees to grow very large. This is the home of giant trees like the redwoods of California. Redwood trees often grow to be 61—91 meters tall. But in the Southwest, there are deserts where only small shrubs and cacti can grow.

Climate

Climates throughout the United States are as varied as its geographical features. It is mostly temperate, but tropical in Hawaii and Florida, arctic in Alaska, semiarid(半干旱的) in the great plains west of the Mississippi River, and arid in the Great Basin of the southwest. Most of the nation experiences all four seasons, with cold and snow winters and warm summers. The southwest and southeast experience fewer variations in climate and rarely receive snow in the winter.

The United States are exposed to various natural hazards: tsunamis(海啸), volcanoes, and earthquake activity around Pacific Basin; hurricanes along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts; tornadoes(龙卷风) in the Midwest and southeast; mud slides in California; forest fires in the west; flooding; permafrost in northern Alaska.

IV State Regions



Map of State Regions

According to their climate, geography, traditions, and history, the 50 states of the United States are divided into six regions as shown in the following table.

New England	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
Middle Atlantic	Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
South	Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
Midwest	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin
Southwest	Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas
West	Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

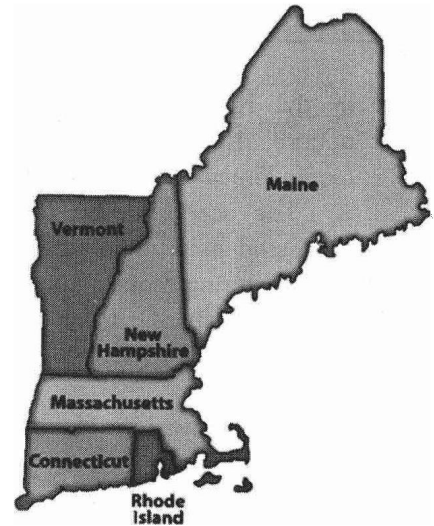
New England

New England is the smallest of all six regions. Yet it played a dominant role in American development. From the 17th century until well into the 19th, New England was the country's cultural and economic center.

The earliest European settlers of New England were English. They found it difficult to farm the land in large lots, as was common in the South. By 1750, many settlers had turned to other pursuits. The mainstays(支柱) of the region became shipbuilding, fishing, and trade.

New Englanders gained a reputation for hard work, shrewdness, thrift, and ingenuity. These traits came in handy as the Industrial Revolution reached America in the first half of the 19th century and new factories sprang up in this region. Boston had become the financial heart of the nation.

New England also supported a vibrant (充满活力的) cultural life. Education is the region's strongest legacies. There are such top-ranking universities and colleges as Harvard, Yale, Brown, Dartmouth, Smith, Wellesley, Mt. Holyoke, Williams, Amherst, and Wesleyan, unequaled by any other region. In the 20th century, most of New England's traditional industries have relocated (重新部署) to states or foreign countries where goods can be made more cheaply. The gap has been partly filled by the microelectronics and computer industry.

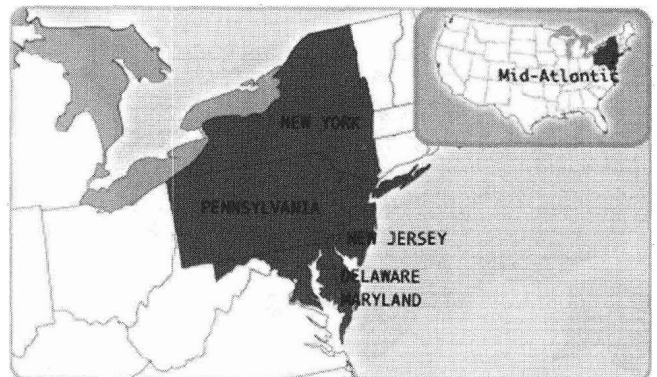


Map of New England

The Middle Atlantic States

If New England provided the brains and dollars for 19th century American expansion, the Middle Atlantic States provided the muscle. The region's largest states, New York and Pennsylvania, became centers of heavy industry (iron, glass, and steel).

The Middle Atlantic region was settled by a wider range of people than New England. Early settlers were mostly farmers and traders, and the region served as a bridge between North and South. Philadelphia was home to the Continental Congress that organized the American Revolution and the birthplace of the



Map of the Middle Region Atlantick Region