



Utah

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- constituent state of the United States of America. Mountains, high plateaus, and deserts form most of its landscape. The capital, Salt Lake City, is located in the north-central region of the state. The state lies in the heart of the West and is bounded by Idaho to the north, Wyoming to the northeast, Colorado to the east, Arizona to the south, and Nevada to the west. At Four Corners, in the southeast, Utah meets Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona at right angles, the only such meeting of states in the country. Utah became the 45th member of the union on January 4, 1896.

- Utah represents a unique episode in the settlement of the United States, a story of a religious group that trekked across three-fourths of the continent in search of a “promised land” where they could be free from persecution. Salt Lake City is the world headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as the Mormon church, and the spiritual home of adherents throughout the world. With Mormons making up nearly seven-tenths of the state’s population, the beliefs and traditions of the Mormon church continue to exert profound influences on many facets of the state’s life and institutions.

Mormon church



- Before the arrival of the first Mormon pioneers, Utah was inhabited by several Native American tribes, including the Ute, for whom the state is named. From the beginning of Mormon settlement in 1847, the pioneers set about wresting a green land from the deserts, gradually supplementing their crops with the products of industry and the earth. The economy of present-day Utah is based on manufacturing, tourism, and services, in addition to agriculture and mining. Area 84,898 square miles (219,884 square km). Population (2010) 2,763,885; (2019 est.) 3,205,958.

Relief

- The Colorado Plateau comprises slightly more than half of Utah. Relatively high in elevation, this region is cut by brilliantly coloured canyons.



- The western third of the state is part of the Great Basin of the Basin and Range Province, a broad, flat, desertlike area with occasional mountain peaks. The Great Salt Lake lies in the northeastern part of the region. To the southwest of the lake is the Great Salt Lake Desert, covering some 4,000 square miles (10,500 square km), which include the Bonneville Salt Flats, the site of many automobile and motorcycle land-speed trials.
- The Middle Rockies in the northeast comprise the Uinta Mountains, one of the few mountain ranges in the United States running in an east-west direction, and the Wasatch Range. Along the latter runs a series of valleys and plateaus known as the Wasatch Front. The Wasatch Range exhibits many glacially formed features such as cirques and moraines. Canyons have been formed by various streams.

- Elevations range from 13,528 feet (4,123 metres) at Kings Peak in the Uintas to about 2,350 feet (715 metres) in the southwestern corner of the state. The Oquirrh and Deep Creek ranges of the Great Basin are important for their deposits of copper, gold, lead, and zinc.



Drainage

- Utah contributes to three major drainage areas—the Colorado and Columbia rivers and the Great Basin. The Colorado and its tributary, the Green, drain eastern Utah. The Colorado River Storage Project includes several dams and many lakes in that area. Rivers in the central and western parts of the state include the Bear, Weber, Provo, Jordan, and Sevier, all of which flow into the Great Basin. The Raft River and Goose Creek, in the northwestern corner of the state, feed into the Snake River, part of the Columbia River drainage. All of the river systems are important for their irrigation and power potential.



- Irrigation was among the first Mormon pioneer efforts in 1847, and since then irrigation and water conservation have become increasingly important. The irrigation complex in Utah comprises a number of dams, reservoirs, canals and ditches, pipelines, and flowing wells, exclusive of the large Glen Canyon and Flaming Gorge dams. State boards and departments regulate water use, while the division of health maintains water-quality standards under the Water Pollution Control Act of 1953.
- During the Pleistocene Epoch (about 2,600,000 to 11,700 years ago), the region's huge Lake Bonneville covered an area as large as Lake Michigan. The Great Salt Lake, saline Sevier Lake, and freshwater Utah Lake are the major remnants of Lake Bonneville

Soils

- The desert soil that covers most of the state lacks many organic materials but contains lime. Lack of adequate drainage in the Great Basin has damaged surrounding soils with saline materials and alkali salts. The richest soils are in the centre of the state, from the Idaho border almost to Arizona, where most farming is done. Mountain soils provide a habitat for conifers and other trees.

