



PIONEER TREK

In 1847 Illinois, the 19th-century Latter-day Saint journey began. Traveling through Iowa, then Nebraska and eventually toward the Rocky Mountains lead the LDS Pioneers to a place of refuge. This was marked as one of the most significant episodes in the history of the United States' great western migration. Under Brigham Young's direction, an estimated 70,000 Latter-day Saints made the difficult journey to Utah from 1847 until the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869.

1. April 16, 1847 was the start of the Latter-day Saint trek into unknown territory, with them not knowing when their journey will end.
2. The Mormon trail is 1,032 miles long starting in Iowa and heading through Nebraska, Wyoming, and finally ending in Utah. The journey took around 100 days, yet today we can travel that distance in 2 hours by plane.
3. Pioneer companies communicated with those following by writing on posts and placing them prominently in the trail. Other methods included placing letters in improvised boxes or writing on sun-bleached buffalo skulls.
4. The most common boy and girl pioneer name was John and Mary.
5. After traveling about 100 days, the Saints reached the Salt Lake Valley on July 21, 1847 and continued to arrive until the 24th.
6. The pioneers would measure the miles of their journey by tying a rag to a wagon wheel and assigning somebody to count the revolutions. But on April 19, 1847, William Clayton suggested a form of an odometer that the Saints would use for the duration of their travels.
7. Unlike the thousands of pioneers streaming west to California and Oregon looking for a better life, the Mormon pioneers migrated involuntary — the result of expulsion from Illinois and Missouri by hostile neighbors.
8. One family, or five individuals, were assigned to a handcart. A cart hauled no more than 200 lbs — about 17 pounds of baggage per person.
9. During the summer months, thousands of Latter-day Saint youth and adults come to these places to remember the trek of the handcart pioneers and to hear stories of the other pioneer companies that traveled through the area.
10. To cut down on expensive wagons and oxen, President Young decided to begin using handcarts for two reasons: First, they were light enough to help speed up the journey and second, the Latter-day Saints who remained in Europe were mostly poor.
11. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints operates three historic sites in central Wyoming. Today these sites honor the pioneers for their sacrifice, faith, and determination to gather to Zion, and they also honor the rescuers for their heroic charity.
12. Leaders of the parties would blow bugle throughout the day to help keep the pioneers on a tight schedule. One at 5 a.m., and each man was expected to rise, pray, get his team up, eat breakfast and be ready to start by 7 a.m. Another was blown at 8:30 p.m., and fires were extinguished at 9 p.m.
13. A monument dedicated to the rescuers that carried the men, women, and children across the bitterly cold Sweetwater River on November 4, 1856.