



Utah

State History

~ In a Nutshell ~

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Utahs State History In a Nutshell
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What is the "In a Nutshell" series?

This is a series of concise, easy to understand information on many popular topics. You will find that many of products in this series can also be found as part of larger publications and/or curriculum on the publisher's website. At the end of each book, you will find a list of questions that may be used to help you review the material.

Utah State History Lapbook Journal Study Guide



The Great Seal of Utah

The state of Utah covers 85,000 square miles, and is home to some of the most spectacular and unique natural formations in the country. Some of these unique sites have been designated national parks -- Among them are Zion National Park with its natural monuments, the towers and spires of Bryce Canyon, and the spectacular red rock of the Canyon Lands. Natural bridges, gorgeous canyons, and mysterious moonscapes are all part of Utah's landscape.

Utah is not only known for “the greatest snow on earth” but is a popular destination for hiking, biking, and camping.

The Navajo Indians were referred to by the Apache as "Yuttahih" meaning "one that is higher up." Europeans thought the word referred to Indians living higher in the mountains than the Navajo - the territory became known as the land of the Utes, and eventually Utah.

People who live in Utah or who come from Utah are called Utahns.



Map of Utah – Capital, Major Cities, Lakes and Rivers

STATEHOOD

On January 4, 1896, Utah became the 45th state to be admitted into the Union.

STATE CONSTITUTION

Utah still operates under its first constitution adopted in 1895.

The Utah Constitution is the governing document of the state of Utah. It was drafted in 1895 and ratified by the state's voters on November 5, 1895 by a popular vote of 31,305 to 7,607. The proclamation of the President of the United States announcing the result of the election and admitting Utah to the Union as a state was issued January 4, 1896. Utah's Constitution has been amended many times since its inception.

PREAMBLE: *Grateful to Almighty God for life and liberty, we, the people of Utah, in order to secure and perpetuate the principles of free government, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION.*

STATE GOVERNMENT

As in the case of the federal government, Utah's state government is organized into three branches - legislative, executive, and judicial with each branch having specific functions and responsibilities as outlined under the Utah Constitution.

Executive Branch: The chief executive officers, all elected for four-year terms, include the governor, lieutenant governor (who also serves as secretary of state), attorney general, treasurer, and auditor. The governor must be at least 30 years old, a qualified voter, and must have been a state resident and citizen for at least five years. The governor and lieutenant governor are jointly elected and limited to serving three consecutive terms.

Utah's Legislative Branch, the Utah State Legislature is composed of two bodies like the United States Congress, the House of Representatives and the Senate. The legislature, as established in the constitution of 1896, consists of a 29-member senate and a 75-seat house of representatives; senators serve for four years, representatives for two. There are no term limits for either chamber. Each body elects its own leadership and is responsible for determining its own rules of procedures. Annual sessions begin in January and are limited to 45 calendar days. Legislators must be at least 25 years old, US citizens, state residents for at least three years, district residents for at least six months, and qualified voters in their districts.

The Legislature convenes at the Utah State Capitol in Salt Lake City on the fourth Monday of January for an annual 45 day session. A bill passed by the legislature becomes law if signed by the governor, if left unsigned by the governor for 10 days while the legislature is in session (20 if it has adjourned), or if passed over the governor's veto by two-thirds of the members of each house.

Amending the constitution requires a two-thirds vote of the legislature and ratification by majority vote at the next general election. The Utah Constitutional Revision Commission has

been a permanent commission since 1977, recommending and drafting proposed constitutional changes. Voters must be US citizens, at least 18 years old, and have been residents of the state 30 days prior to Election Day. Restrictions apply to those convicted of certain crimes and to those judged by the court as mentally incompetent to vote.

The Judicial Branch, the Utah State Court System, is comprised of two appellate courts – the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals; trial courts including the District, Juvenile, and Justice courts; and two administrative bodies – the Judicial Council and the Administrative Office of the Court. District, Juvenile and Justice Courts are located in each of the state's eight judicial districts. (Supreme Court justices serve 10 year renewable terms. The Court of Appeals judges serve 6 year renewable terms.)

The Utah Judicial Council is the policy-making body for the judiciary branch. It has the constitutional authority to adopt uniform rules for the administration of all the courts in the state. The Council also sets standards for judicial performance, court facilities, support services, and judicial and non-judicial staff levels.

The Judicial Council consists of fourteen members. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court chairs the Council. The other members include: a Supreme Court Justice; a judge of the Court of Appeals; five District Court judges; two Juvenile Court judges; three Justice Court judges; a state bar representative; and the State Court Administrator, who serves as secretariat to the Council.

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

The legislative branch of the United States government makes laws for our nation and raises and distributes money to run the United States government. The most evident part of the legislative branch is the United States Congress. Congress is divided into two parts, called houses. The two parts are the Senate and the House of Representatives. Congress is referred to as a bicameral body because it is made up of two houses. The Latin roots of the word bicameral, "bi" and "cameral," mean two chambers or rooms.

Members of the Senate are called Senators and members of the House of Representatives are called Representatives. Senators and representatives serving in these two bodies are sometimes referred to as congressmen, or women, and sometimes as legislators because their business is to legislate or make laws. The role of the legislative branch is defined in the United States Constitution.

Each state elects people to represent them in the United States Congress in Washington, DC. The citizens of each state elect two senators to represent them in the Senate. They also elect representatives to represent them in the House of Representatives. The number of representatives each state sends to the House of Representatives is not a specific number like the Senate, but is based on the population of the state. The people, that are elected to represent the state's citizens in the United States Congress, are referred to as the Congressional Delegation.

There are 100 senators in the U.S. Senate. Each is elected to a term, in the Senate, of six years. There are 435 representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives. Each is elected to a term, in the "House," of two years.

The citizens of Utah elect two people, like every other state, to represent them in the Senate and three people, based on Utah's current population in the most recent federal census, to represent them in the House of Representatives.

STATE SEAL

At the center of the Great Seal of the state of Utah is a shield with a beehive, the word "Industry", and the date 1847.

Even prior to Utah gaining statehood in 1896, the image of the beehive and the term "Industry" were unofficial symbols of the region.

The 1847 provisional state of Deseret, which was to become Utah, adopted the beehive as its official emblem, and the symbol carried through as Utah became a part of the Union.

The qualities of the beehive (industry, perseverance, thrift, stability, and self-reliance) were all virtues respected by the region's settlers. On both sides of the seal are American flags, atop the shield is an American eagle, and under it "1847". The circumference of the seal contains the words "The Great Seal of the State of Utah", and the date of statehood, "1896".



STATE CAPITAL (Salt Lake City)



Utah's Capitol building, located on a hill overlooking downtown Salt Lake City, is an elegant architectural masterpiece.

The building is set on over 40 acres, with beautifully maintained and sculpted lawns, trees, flowerbeds, and shrubs. From the south steps, Kiwanzar trees can be viewed circling the drive. From the front steps you see a spectacular view of the Wasatch and Oquirrh Mountains, and Salt Lake City below.

The gardens feature plants native to Utah.

Visitors are welcome to walk through and enjoy a peaceful moment. A Vietnam Memorial is found on the west grounds, commemorating the 388 Utah natives who died in the war. To the east, a monument stands in honor of the Mormon Battalion - a group of 500 Mormons who pledged allegiance to their country by marching from Iowa to San Diego to fight in the 1846 Mexican conflict.

Wherever you roam on the Capitol grounds, you're sure to be reminded of those who have come before, and of the future yet to come. The building was constructed between 1912 and 1916, using granite from nearby Little Cottonwood Canyon. The dome is covered with Utah copper. There are 52 Corinthian columns. Throughout the grounds, on the building itself, and within the interior are countless beehive representations. The beehive is Utah's state symbol, representing the values of industry and cooperation.

Seed money for the construction of the Capitol came in 1911 when the state collected almost \$800,000 in inheritance tax from the estate of railroad magnate E.H. Harriman. The state bonded for another \$2 million and legislators chose Richard Kletting's Renaissance Revival plan for a 404-foot long, 240-foot wide and 286-foot tall statehouse.

Inside, the Capitol is divided into two wings, each lined by marble Ionic columns weighing 25,000 pounds, with the Supreme Court on the east end and the House of Representatives on the west. In the center is the 165-foot tall rotunda. The ceiling of the rotunda is beautifully painted with clouds and seagulls, paying tribute to the state bird. Twelve paintings lining the rotunda were a WPA project and painted elsewhere then attached to the walls. The paintings depict scenes from the early history of the state and its settling. Statues in the rotunda include likenesses of Brigham Young and Philo T. Farnsworth (inventor of television).

Other rooms of note include the State Reception Room, better known as the Gold Room, which is used for important state functions and is adorned with French, Scottish, Russian and English period pieces. The Governor's Office is on the west end of the second floor directly below the House. The first floor houses a gift shop and exhibits about features unique to Utah, including ancient Lake Bonneville, National Parks, the Utah mountains, and matters of historical significance.

Today's Capitol is actually Utah's second. The first Capitol Building was in a small town called Fillmore, built there by federal decree, but only one wing of that building was finished before Salt Lake City was made the territorial capitol in 1855. Between then and January 4, 1896, when Utah became a state, the Legislature met at different locations around the city.

STATE MOTTO

"Industry" officially became the State Motto on March 4, 1959.

Industry is associated with the symbol of the beehive. The early pioneers had few material resources at their disposal and therefore had to rely on their own "industry" to survive. The word "industry" appears on both the State Seal and the State Flag.

STATE FLAG

Utah's state flag displays the state seal design against a field of blue. The beehive on the shield is a symbol of hard work and industry (the state motto is "INDUSTRY," and Utah's nickname is *The Beehive State*). The date 1847 is the year the Mormons came to Utah. 1896 is the year Utah became the 45th state. This flag was adopted by the legislature in 1913.



Recent Correction to Utah State Flag:

In 2011, during the 59th state legislative session, a Concurrent Resolution (HCR002) was adopted requiring flag makers to fix a mistake found on all current Utah state flags. The mistake originated in 1922 when a flag maker misplaced the year 1847, by stitching it just above the year 1896, instead of in its correct position on the shield. The flag was to also return to the original 1913 color scheme, which had a white background for the flag's shield instead of blue. The resolution also allowed for continued use of any old-design flags still in use but called for only the new/old design to be sold from that point forward.

Later in 2011, House Bill #490 passed the legislature, making March 9 an annual Utah State Flag day.

STATE NICKNAMES

The Beehive State

Most of the nicknames associated with Utah are related to the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, or Mormons, that first settled in the territory. The word "Deseret" is defined in *The Book of Mormon* as a honeybee. Early Mormon settlers have been described as having carried "swarms of bees" with them. This nickname commemorates the industry of the people of Utah. The beehive was adopted, in 1847, as an official emblem and represents the qualities of industry, perseverance, thrift, stability, and self-reliance, all virtues respected by the region's settlers. The beehive is the centerpiece of the Utah State Flag and the Utah State Seal.

The Deseret State

When the Mormons first came to the territory, they named the area The State of Deseret, a reference to the honeybee in *The Book of Mormon*. This name was the official name of the colony from 1849 to 1850. The nickname, "The Deseret State," is in reference to Utah's original name.

The Mormon State

Utah is sometimes called "The Mormon State," after the first settlers in the territory; members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Land of the Saints

This term is another reference to the early settlers and their influence in the state.

Land of the Mormons

This term is another reference to the early settlers and their influence in the state.

The Salt Lake State

This is the only non-Mormon nickname of the group and, of course, refers to The Great Salt Lake.

STATE BIRD

The California Gull (*Larus californicus*) was adopted as the official state bird of Utah on February 14, 1955.

The sea gull, even without official status, was long considered the state bird of Utah due to its storied role as a protector of crops. It gained this reputation during the summer of 1848 when swarms of crickets attacked pioneer food supplies. It was reported that flocks of the birds arrived, settled in the "...half-ruined fields" and "gorged themselves" on the attacking crickets. It's often stated that the sea gull was made the state bird in return for saving the settler's lives.



It was a long way from 1848 but, over 100 years later, a bill was introduced in the Utah House of Representatives by Richard C. Howe promoting the California gull as the official state bird. The bill was approved by the Utah Legislature and Governor J. Bracken Lee signed the legislation adopting the sea gull as the official state bird on February 14, 1955.

The statute does not identify a particular species, but official Utah websites consistently and emphatically identify the state bird as a California gull (*Larus californicus*), even remarking that the statute itself only identifies the state bird as a generic "sea gull."

Note: The state bird is the California Gull, however Utah Code generically lists it as the sea gull. ("Pioneer: Utah's Online Library")

Shearer, in his 2002 edition of *State Names, Seals, Flags, and Symbols*, displays a similar inconsistency by referring to the state bird as a "sea gull" and citing it as *Larus californicus*.

Shankle, though about 20 years ahead of the official act, is consistent. In his 1934 book, he refers to the "unofficial at the time" state bird as *Larus californicus*, the California gull.

Below, you will find 15 general questions to help review what you have learned. Use the following page(s) for documenting your answers. Older students may choose to write a State Report as well.

Review Questions:

1. List the states and/or bodies of water that border this state.
2. What was the date of statehood?
3. What is the state capital?
4. What is the state motto?
5. Name at least one state nickname.
6. Describe the state flag.
7. What is the state bird?
8. What is the state flower?
9. List at least 5 other state symbols.
10. Describe this state's government.
11. Name the major imports and exports for this state.
12. Describe the weather and climate in this state.
13. List at least 5 famous people from this state.
14. Describe at least 5 significant events in this state's history.
15. What other interesting information have you learned about this state?

Answers to Review Questions:

