



state name

The name "Minnesota" comes from the Dakota phrase Mni Šota Makoce (pronounced: Mni Sho-ta Ma-Ko-chey), meaning "land where the waters reflect the skies."

geography

CAPITAL

St. Paul

SIZE

12th largest state

LAND AREA

79,610 square miles (92%)

WATER AREA

7,329 square miles (8%)

LENGTH

Just over 400 miles

WIDTH

Varies from about 200–350 miles

LOWEST POINT

602 feet at Lake Superior shore

HIGHEST POINT

2,301 feet at Eagle Mountain in Cook County

MEAN ELEVATION

1,200 feet above sea level



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state Bird:
common loon



state flower: pink &
white lady's slipper



state butterfly:
monarch



state gemstone:
lake superior agate



state fish: walleye



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mi EXPLORE
MINNESOTA



the early years

As history is told pre-European contact, the Dakota have occupied the land that is now Minnesota for many generations.

The Dakota occupied lands from what is now northern Canada through a large swath of land to modern-day Louisiana. Bdote (where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet) and Bde Wakan (Spirit Lake, now known as Lake Mille Lacs) are highlighted in Dakota creation stories.

Today, the four Dakota Tribes that share geography with Minnesota reside in the southern third of the state.

Depending on who may be telling the story, the Ojibwe migrated from the eastern United States to the eastern shores of the Mississippi as far back as 900 CE. Other histories say they arrived as late as the 1500's. Jesuit missionaries have documented sightings of the Ojibwe in Canada and in the upper midwest in the early 1600's.

As there were no boundaries designating a specific Tribe's lands pre-contact, the Ojibwe occupied lands across modern-day borders from northern Canada as far south as Kentucky. Tribes crossed each other's lands as a regular occurrence for hunting and foraging.

Today, the Ojibwe Tribes that share geography with Minnesota occupy the northern two-thirds of the state.



learn more about the Dakota people
mnhs.org/fortsnelling/learn/native-americans/dakota-people



learn more about the Ojibwe people
mnhs.org/fortsnelling/learn/native-americans/ojibwe-people

MIGRATION TIMELINE

From the beginning of time the Dakota occupied all of modern-day Minnesota

900 CE-1500's

Ojibwe migration; the Ojibwe begin occupying northeastern Minnesota

Early 1600's

French Jesuit missionary documentation of sightings of Ojibwe in the upper Midwest and around Lake Superior

Mid-1600s

French explorers reach modern-day Duluth

1700s

Fur traders, for French and then British companies, begin harvesting beaver pelts for hat making in Europe

1830s-1850s

First colonial settlers arrive; primarily European Americans from the east coast

1858

Minnesota becomes the 32nd state on May 11

1862

Tensions mount when the U.S. Government was late on making payments to the Dakota for their land. The Dakota experienced widespread hunger. This led to the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, which broke out in southwest Minnesota.

1860s-1900s

Arrivals of large numbers of immigrants, especially Germans and Scandinavians

1900s-TODAY

New Minnesotans arrive from Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, Mexico and other places around the world