
FACTPACK

Facts About the Commonwealth of Virginia



Compiled by:

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Virginia Legislative Office

Produced by:

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FACTS ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Nickname

The Old Dominion

Founded

May 13, 1607, at Jamestown; first permanent English settlement in North America

Date Joined the Union

June 25, 1788 (10th state to ratify the Constitution)

Capitals

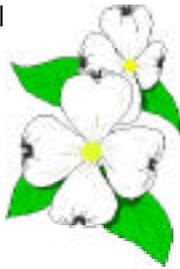
Richmond (since 1780); Williamsburg (1699-1780); Jamestown (1607-1699)

Population

6,618,000 (1995 estimate)

Area

40,815 square mil



Dogwood

OFFICIAL STATE EMBLEMS

Beverage Milk

Bird Cardinal

Boat Chesapeake Bay Deadrise

Dog Foxhound

Fish Brook Trout

Flag The flag of Virginia contains the state seal in a field of blue. It was first used in the 1830s, but not officially adopted until 1930.

Floral Emblem Dogwood

Folk Dance Square Dancing

Insect Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly

Seal The great seal of Virginia is circular in shape. In the center is a figure of Virtus, the goddess of virtue, dressed as a warrior. She holds a spear in her right hand, with its point held downward touching the earth. In her left hand is a sheathed sword pointing upward. Her left foot rests on the chest of the figure of tyranny, who is lying on the ground. Above the figure is the word "Virginia," and under the figures is the state motto "Sic Semper Tyrannis" or "Thus Always to Tyrants." The seal, designed by George Wythe, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was first adopted in 1776 and modified.



Shell Oyster

Surrounding States and Bodies of Water

District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, Atlantic Ocean, Chesapeake Bay

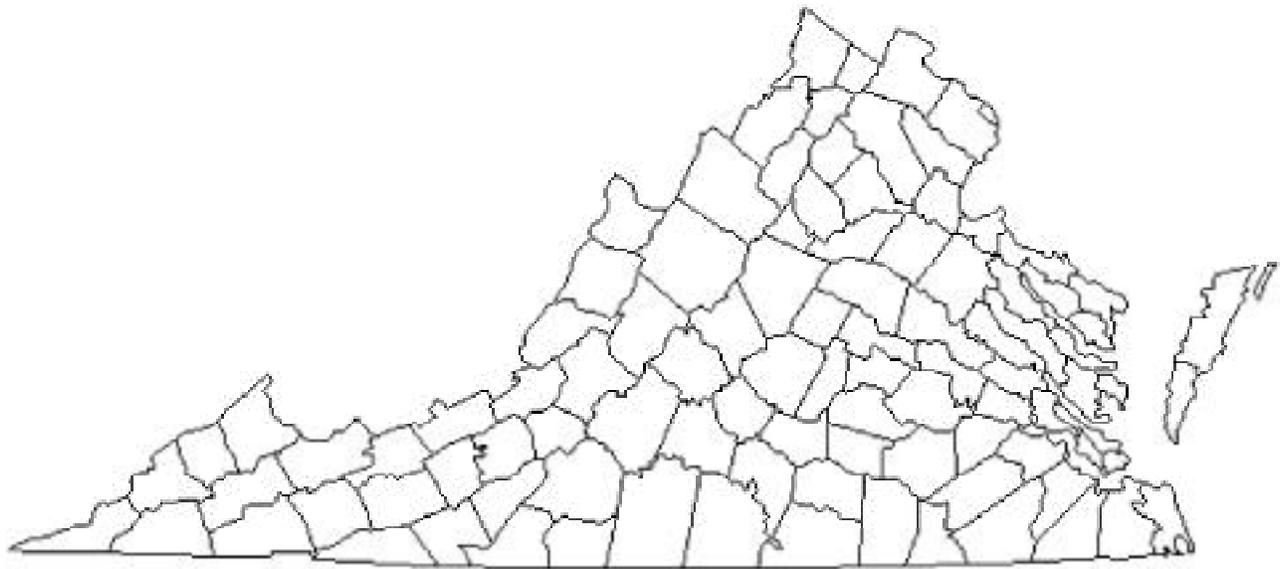
Major Industries

Trade, Manufacturing, Tourism, Agriculture, Government (including U.S. military installations)

GEOGRAPHY

Major Rivers

Appomattox, Clinch, Dan, Elizabeth, Holston, James, New, North Anna, Nottoway, Potomac, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Shenandoah, South Anna, York



HISTORY

Other Major Bodies of Water Lake Anna, Back Bay, Buggs Island Lake, Chesapeake Bay, Claytor Lake, Great Dismal Swamp, Smith Mountain Lake, South Holston Lake

Major Mountain Ranges
Allegheny, Appalachian, Blue Ridge, Shenandoah

Counties 95

Independent Cities 40

Incorporated Towns 192

Populations of Virginia Metropolitan Statistical Areas (1995 Estimates)

Bristol (Virginia portion)	90,300
Norfolk/Virginia Beach/Newport News	1,504,300
Charlottesville	143,800
Richmond	929,500
Danville	109,400
Roanoke	231,100
Lynchburg	203,800
Northern Virginia	1,928,200

What is the Commonwealth of Virginia?

You will often hear our state called the Commonwealth of Virginia. This does not mean that Virginia has a different form of government than any other state. "Commonwealth" is defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary as a political unit or government (1) "founded on law and united by compact or tacit agreement of the people for the common good," or (2) "one in which supreme authority is vested in the people." Using these definitions, it could be said that each of the 50 states, as well as our national government, is a commonwealth. Besides Virginia, three other states—Kentucky, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania—use the term commonwealth as part of their official names.

The first use of commonwealth in Virginia was early in our history. One reason given by Governor Sir George Yeardley for authorizing the first General Assembly meeting at Jamestown in 1619 was "for the better establishing of a commonwealth here."

From 1649 to 1660, England and Virginia did not have a king. Instead the Puritans ruled under a Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. They called their government the Commonwealth of England. This commonwealth ended when King Charles II reclaimed the throne in 1660.

In colonial times, Virginia was officially known as the Colony and Dominion of Virginia. When we broke our ties with the British Crown during the Revolution, the old name was no longer suitable. The delegates to the convention in Williamsburg, when the first Constitution of Virginia was adopted on June 29, 1776, used commonwealth as the name for their new form of government. It is very likely that they had in mind the Puritans' rebellion against the Crown in England over 100 years earlier.

Pennsylvania and Massachusetts also chose to be called commonwealths after independence from Great Britain. The other ten former colonies took the name "state," the term used in the Declaration of Independence.

Kentucky was once part of Virginia. When Kentuckians joined the Union as the 15th state in 1792, they kept the name commonwealth.

There are several other uses of the word "Commonwealth" in the world today:

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is not a state, but a territory. In this case, commonwealth refers to the free association with the United States chosen by the Puerto Rican people.

The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of Great Britain and about 50 countries that once were part of the British Empire. Some of these nations, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Bahamas, Jamaica, and other Caribbean islands, still recognize the British monarch as their official head of state.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia and other former Soviet republics formed the Commonwealth of Independent States, a loose alliance set up to handle certain matters of mutual interest among these newly independent countries.

FAMOUS VIRGINIANS



Political, Military and Social Leaders

Presidents of the United States born in Virginia

George Washington	(1st, 1789-1797)
Thomas Jefferson	(3rd, 1801-1809)
James Madison	(4th, 1809-1817)
James Monroe	(5th, 1817-1825)
William Henry Harrison	(9th, 1841)
John Tyler	(10th, 1841-1845)
Zachary Taylor	(12th, 1849-1850)
Woodrow Wilson	(28th, 1913-1921)

Colonial and Revolutionary Leaders (1607-1789)

- Nathaniel Bacon - led "Bacon's Rebellion" against British authority in 1676
- George Rogers Clark - Revolutionary soldier; captured Northwest Territories from British
- Patrick Henry - orator; patriot leader; famous for "liberty or death" speech
- Henry "Lighthorse Harry" Lee - Revolutionary War hero; father of Robert E. Lee
- Richard Henry Lee - presented the proposal for independence to Continental Congress in 1776
- George Mason - author of Virginia Declaration of Rights
- Daniel Morgan - Revolutionary soldier; leader of "Morgan's Rifles"
- Pocahontas - daughter of Indian chief Powhatan; married John Rolfe
- Peyton Randolph - president of First Continental Congress
- John Smith - leader of first settlement at Jamestown
- George Wythe - first professor of law in an American college, the College of William and Mary

Early America (1789-1860)

- Stephen F. Austin - leader of Texas independence from Mexico movement

James Barbour - secretary of war (1825-1828)
Philip P. Barbour - speaker of the house (1821-1823); supreme court justice (1836-1841)
Henry Clay - famous orator and statesman; moved to Kentucky after youth in Virginia
Peter V. Daniel - supreme court justice (1841-1860)
John B. Floyd - secretary of war (1857-1861)
Thomas W. Gilmer - secretary of the Navy (1844)
Sam Houston - governor of Tennessee (1827-1829); 1st president of Republic of Texas (1836-1838)
Charles Lee - attorney general (1795-1801)
John Marshall - chief justice of supreme court (1805-1835)
John Y. Mason - secretary of the Navy (1844-1849); Attorney General (1845-1846)
Edmund Randolph - 1st attorney general of the United States (1789-1794); secretary of state (1794-1795)
John Randolph - congressman; political writer
Winfield Scott - general; hero of Mexican-American War
Alexander H. H. Stuart - secretary of the interior (1850-1853)
Abel P. Upshur - secretary of the Navy (1841-1843)
William Wirt - attorney general (1817-1829)

War Between the States (1861-1865)

Jubal Early - Confederate general
A. P. Hill - Confederate general
Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson - Confederate general
Joseph E. Johnston - Confederate general; 1st commander of Confederate Army
Fitzhugh Lee - Confederate general; governor of Virginia; commanded United States forces in Cuba during Spanish-American War (1898)
Robert E. Lee - commanding general, Confederate Army
John Singleton Mosby - "The Gray Ghost;" Confederate calvary commander
George Pickett - Confederate general; led fateful charge at Battle of Gettysburg
J. E. B. Stuart - Confederate calvary general
George Thomas - Union general

20th Century

William Doak - secretary of labor (1930-1933)
Henry H. Fowler - secretary of the treasury (1965-1968)
Carter Glass - secretary of the treasury (1918-1920)
John A. Knebel - secretary of agriculture (1976-1977)
Nancy Langhorne, Lady Astor - first woman member of British Parliament
John O. Marsh Jr. - secretary of the army (1980-1989)
Lewis F. Powell Jr. - supreme court justice (1972-1990)
James R. Schlesinger - secretary of defense (1973-1975); secretary of energy (1977-1979)
E. R. Stettinius Jr. - secretary of state (1944-1945)
Claude A. Swanson - secretary of the Navy (1933-1940)
Maggie L. Walker - first woman bank president in America; advocate of black women's rights
John W. Warner - secretary of the Navy (1972-1974); U. S. Senator (1979-)

Educators, Inventors, Scientists, Explorers

Richard E. Byrd - aviator; explorer of North and South Poles
William Clark - explored Louisiana Purchase for President Thomas Jefferson
Meriwether Lewis - explored Louisiana Purchase for President Thomas Jefferson
Matthew Fontaine Maury - mapped ocean currents; "Pathfinder of the Seas"
Cyrus H. McCormick - inventor of the grain reaper
Dr. Ephraim McDowell - "father of abdominal surgery"
William McGuffey - educator; author of "McGuffey Readers"
Walter Reed - Army doctor; discovered cause of yellow fever
John Rolfe - introduced tobacco to America in 1612
Edmund Ruffin - founded public education system in Virginia
James Rumsey - pioneer of steamboat development
Alexander Spotswood - royal governor; led early expeditions into western Virginia
Booker T. Washington - educator; founder of Tuskegee Institute

Writers, Journalists, Artists

Russell Baker - political columnist; Pulitzer Prize winner (1979, 1983)
Robert Beverly - colonial historian
William Cabell Bruce - historian; Pulitzer Prize winner (1918)
William Byrd II - chronicler of early colonial life
James Branch Cabell - fiction writer in 1900s
Willa Cather - novelist; early 1900s; Pulitzer Prize winner (1923)
John Esten Cooke - popular novelist of early 1800s
Virginius Dabney - historian; newspaper editor; Pulitzer Prize winner (1948)
Rita Dove - U.S. Poet Laureat and Pulitzer Prize winner
John A. Elder - painter of many famous Civil War scenes
Sir Moses Ezekiel - sculptor; famous for Civil War subjects; knighted by the emperor of Germany and king of Italy
Douglas Southall Freeman - historian; newspaper editor; one the America's greatest biographers; Pulitzer Prize winner (1935, 1958)
Ellen Glasgow - fiction writer in early 1900s; Pulitzer Prize winner (1942)
Earl Hamner Jr. - novelist; creator of "The Waltons"
James J. Kilpatrick - political columnist
Dumas Malone - historian; famous for works on Thomas Jefferson; Pulitzer Prize winner (1975)
David J. Mays - historian; Pulitzer Prize winner (1953)
Charles McDowell - newspaper columnist
Geri Melchers - painter, sculptor
Thomas Nelson Page - fiction writer of the 1800s
Edgar Allen Poe - famous writer of novels, poetry, short stories
Tom Robbins - novelist
Ann Spencer - African-American poet
William Stith - colonial historian
William Styron - novelist; Pulitzer Prize winner (1968)
Peter Taylor - Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction - "Summons to Memphis" (1987)
Edward V. Valentine - sculptor; famous for statues honoring prominent Virginians
Tom Wolfe - novelist - "Bonfire of the Vanities"; non-fiction - "The Right Stuff "

E. A. Poe



Entertainment (Music, Movies, Television)

Pearl Bailey - singer
Kylene Barker - 1979 Miss America
Warren Beatty - movie actor and director; Academy Award winner as director of "Reds"
Maybelle Carter - country singer
June Carter Cash - country singer; married to Johnny Cash
Spencer Christian - TV weatherman, ABC's "Good Morning America"
Roy Clark - country singer; star of "Hee Haw"
Patsy Cline - country singer
Katherine Couric - "Today Show" host
Joseph Cotton - movie actor
Ella Fitzgerald - singer
Steven Furst - movie and TV actor; "Animal House, "St. Elsewhere"
Bruce Hornsby - singer
David Huddleston - actor/movie producer; "Rio Lobo," "Blazing Saddle"
Shirley MacLaine - stage and screen actress; Academy Award winner for "Terms of Endearment"
Aimee Mann - rock singer
Frank McCarthy - movie director
Tommy Newsom - musician
Juice Newton - country/pop singer
Wayne Newton - singer/Las Vegas entertainer
MacKenzie Phillips - TV actress; "One Day at a Time"
Robert Porterfield - founder of the Barter Theatre in Abingdon, the State Theater of Virginia
Tim Reid - TV actor; "WKRP in Cincinnati, "Simon & Simon"
Judge Reinhold - actor; "Beverly Hills Cop"
Bill "Bojangles" Robinson - dancer; stage and screen actor in early 1900s
George C. Scott - movie actor; Academy Award winner for "Patton"
Randolph Scott - movie actor
Willard Scott - TV weatherman; NBC's "Today Show"
Kate Smith - singer
The Statler Brothers - country-western singing group
Blair Underwood - actor; "LA Law"

Athletes

Arthur Ashe (tennis) - former #1 ranked player;
Wimbledon winner

Al Bumbry (baseball) - American League Rookie of
the Year (1973)

Gary Clark (football) - Washington Redskins

Dell Curry (basketball) - Utah Jazz

Bob Dandridge (basketball) - Washington Bullets

Bill Dudley (football) - member, pro football Hall of
Fame

Ken Easley (football) - Seattle Seahawks

Johnny Grubb (baseball) - Detroit Tigers

Randy Hundley (baseball) - Chicago Cubs

Todd Hundley (baseball) - New York Mets, son of
Randy (above)

Willie Lanier (football) - member, pro football Hall
of Fame

Moses Malone (basketball) - Washington Bullets

Clarence "Ace" Parker (baseball, football) - played
both sports professionally in 1937 and 1938 for
the Philadelphia Athletics and Brooklyn Dodgers

Mary Meagher Plant - 2 time Olympic gold medalist
in swimming

Ralph Sampson (basketball)

Larry Sheets (baseball) - Baltimore Orioles

Bruce Smith (football) - Buffalo Bills

Sam Snead (golf) - 3 Masters titles; 3 PGA titles;
1 British Open title

Curtis Strange (golf) - U.S. Open champion (1988,
1989); winner 1985 Canadian Open

Fran Tarkenton (football) - member, pro football
Hall of Fame

Lawrence Taylor (football) - New York Giants

Bobby Watkins (golf) - a leading money winner on
the PGA tour

Lanny Watkins (golf) - PGA title (1977)

Pernell Whitaker - boxer



HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW IN VIRGINIA

The following steps depict the normal procedures where a non-controversial bill becomes a law. Bills may originate in either house of the General Assembly. By custom, the general appropriation bill is introduced in the House.

1. A delegate (as requested by constituents) prepares to introduce legislation permitting the governing bodies of localities to prohibit the sale and use of certain fireworks.
2. The delegate then explains exactly the proposal he has in mind to a staff attorney in the Division of Legislative Services. The staff attorney checks existing law and the constitutionality of the proposed legislation.
3. A bill is then drafted by the Division of Legislative Services.
4. Copies of the bill are made and delivered to the delegate.
5. The delegate signs his name on the bill, and introduces it by laying the original and a duplicate copy on the desk of the Clerk of the House of Delegates.
6. The bill is ordered printed and referred to the Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns.
7. The members of the Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns - in public session - familiarize themselves with the bill and decide to approve it without amendments.
8. The Committee then reports the bill favorably to the House.
9. First reading: the bill title is printed on the calendar or is read by the Clerk, and the bill advances to second reading.

10. Second reading: The next day the bill title appears on the printed calendar on second reading. Bills are considered in the order in which they appear on the calendar. The Clerk reads the title of the bill a second time.

11. A bill on second reading is amendable. The bill is explained by its patron who answers any questions that may be asked. By voice vote the house votes to advance the bill to third reading.

12. A bill that has passed second reading with or without amendments is "engrossed." Any amendments are inserted in the proper place, and the bill is then in the final form for passage.

13. The next day, the engrossed bill title appears on the House calendar on Third Reading. The bill is read by title a third time by the Clerk of the House of Delegates. By recorded roll call vote the bill is passed by the House of Delegates.

14. Communication: When passed, the bill is sent to the Senate either by the Clerk in a communication or by a member in person, informing the Senate that the bill has passed the House and requesting the concurrence of the Senate.

15. In the Senate: The bill goes through substantially the same procedure as it did in the House. The bill is read by title a first time, referred to a standing committee, considered and reported by the committee, read a second time and a third time before passage by a constitutional majority.

16. After the bill has been passed by both houses of the General Assembly ...

17. It is printed as an enrolled bill, examined, and signed by the presiding officer of each house.

18. Then the bill is sent to the Governor for his approval.

19. The bill is then sent to the Clerk of the House (The Keeper of the Rolls of the State) to file for convenient reference.

20. Bills enacted at a regular session (or the reconvened session which follows) are effective the 1st day of July following adjournment of the regular session, unless another date is specified. Bills enacted at a special session (or the reconvened session which follows) are effective the 1st day of the 4th month following the adjournment of the special session, unless another date is specified. The General Appropriation Act is usually effective July 1st, and Emergency Acts become effective when signed by the Governor.

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