

South Carolina Facts

- Settled:** First European settlers were the Spanish in 1566 on what is now Parris Island, the Marine Corps training facility near Beaufort. The first permanent European settlement was in 1670 by the English at what is now Charleston. The two Carolinas became separate royal colonies in 1729.
- State History:** One of the 13 original colonies, South Carolina became the eighth state to ratify the Constitution in 1788, the first to secede from the union in December 1860 and the site of the first shots fired in the Civil War, at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor in April 1861.
- Capital:** Columbia. One of the nation's first planned communities, Columbia was established in 1786 as a centrally located state capital. Much of the city was destroyed in a spectacular fire after the undefended city surrendered to Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman and his troops on Feb. 17, 1865, the same day Confederate troops evacuated Charleston in the final weeks of the war.
- Physical Features:** South Carolina has a diverse geography. The Savannah River and its large reservoirs form the western border with Georgia. The northwest corner of the state includes the Blue Ridge Mountains and a dramatic escarpment. Then the piedmont gives way to the sand hills of the Midlands and then the coastal plains, marshland, sea islands, beaches and approximately 200 miles of Atlantic Ocean coastline. Approximately 830 square miles of the state is covered with water, including one of the largest inland impoundments in the South, 110,000-acre Lake Marion, one of the two Santee Cooper lakes. (Moultrie is the other.)
- Climate:** South Carolina generally has warm summers and mild winters. Snow falls occasionally in the upper piedmont and mountain areas, rarely elsewhere. Rainfall varies across the state with the highest annual totals typically occurring in the northwest corner and the least in the central part of the state. The heaviest rains tend to occur in tropical systems, which can come off the Atlantic Coast or off the Gulf of Mexico through Georgia.
- Motto:** Dum Spiro Spero (“While I Breathe I Hope”)
- State Flower:** Yellow jessamine
- State Bird:** Carolina wren

State Tree:	(sabal or cabbage) palmetto
State Songs:	“Carolina” and “South Carolina on my Mind”
State Dance:	The Shag

Here are some more “fast facts” about South Carolina.

- Borders – Atlantic Ocean, Georgia, North Carolina
- Time zone – Eastern
 - Total area – 31,189 square miles (41st largest state)
 - Greatest distances:
 - North to south – 218 miles
 - East to west – 275 miles
- Geographic center – Richland County (13 miles southeast of Columbia) The site of what is now Columbia was chosen to be the state capital because of its central location in the state, and when Columbia was laid out in 1786 it was one of the nation’s first such planned cities.
- Largest county – Horry (1,134 square miles), home to Myrtle Beach
- Smallest county – McCormick (360 square miles), on the Savannah River
- Highest point – Sassafras Mountain (3,560 feet), Blue Ridge Mountains
- Highest waterfall – Raven Cliff Falls (420 feet), also in the Blue Ridge
- Largest lake – Lake Marion (110,000 acres, or about 172 square miles), one of the two Santee Cooper lakes
- Longest river – Savannah River (238 miles that forms state’s western border)
- Miles of coastal shoreline – 2,876 – 11th longest in nation
- Miles of oceanfront beaches – 182

Population, Demographics

- Estimated population – 4,012,012 ((2000 U.S. Census, 26th largest state)
- Largest cities – Columbia; 117, 357; Charleston 101,024; North Charleston, 81,577; Rock Hill, 56,144; Greenville, 55,926. (2000 U.S. Census)
- Largest counties: Greenville, 379,616; Richland (Columbia) 320,677; Charleston, 309,969; Spartanburg, 253,791; Lexington, 216,014. (2000 U.S. Census)
- Percent urban – 54.6
- Percent rural – 45.4
- Percent white – 69.0
- Percent black – 29.9
- Percent Hispanic – 1.3
- Median age – 32
- Percent under 18 – 26.4

- Percent 18-64 – 62.2
- Percent 65 and older – 11.4

Biggest industry: Tourism, generating nearly \$15 billion a year in economic impact and representing about 189,000 jobs, more than 10 percent of the state’s total employment.

Biggest farm product: Chicken broilers. South Carolina also produces more peaches than Georgia.

State parks: The S.C. State Park Service operates 46 state parks. Seventeen were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression. One of the newer parks (1970) is Charles Towne Landing, the site of the first permanent English settlement in the Carolinas. (1670)

Some movies filmed here: “Forrest Gump”, “The Big Chill” and “The Prince of Tides” in the Lowcountry; “The Patriot” in the Upstate; “Sleeping with the Enemy” in Abbeville; “The Program” at Williams-Brice Stadium in Columbia.

Some entertainers from South Carolina: Leeza Gibbons, Andie McDowell, James Brown, Hootie & the Blowfish, Vanna White, Dizzy Gillespie, Eartha Kitt.

Some famous authors and artists: Jasper Johns, Jonathan Green, Pat Conroy, James Dickey, Mary Boykin Chestnut.

Some famous athletes: Joe Frazier, boxing; Alex English, basketball; Jay Haas, golf; Larry Doby; baseball; Althea Gibson, tennis; Xavier McDaniel, basketball; George Rogers, football; Harry Carson, football; Jim Rice, baseball.

Major colleges and universities: Clemson University, University of South Carolina, Furman University, Winthrop University, College of Charleston, The Citadel.

Statesmen, politicians, military men: Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, James Byrnes, Bernard Baruch, William Westmoreland, Ernest Hollings, Strom Thurmond, Jesse Jackson.

African-American astronauts: Ron McNair (died in the Challenger explosion), Charles Bolden (now a top Marines commander.)

Finally, a few firsts, mosts and largests:

- First public library, golf course, museum, Reform synagogue, Southern Baptist church, theater built specifically for dramatic presentations, (and only) commercial tea farm and oldest formal gardens in the country ... all in and around Charleston.
- The first state to secede from the Union was South Carolina in December 1860 and the first shots of the Civil War were fired soon after, in April 1861, at Fort Sumter in the Charleston Harbor.
- Most battles and skirmishes fought during the Revolutionary War, more than 240.
- First colony in the New World to plant rice and indigo for sale.
- Largest U.S. Army basic training facility is Fort Jackson in Columbia. Parris Island near Beaufort is home to the largest U.S. Marines training base on the East Coast.
- First inland striped bass fishery was in the Santee Cooper lakes.
- South Carolina traditionally has the longest deer hunting season in the country.

- The largest remaining virgin stand of bald cypress and tupelo trees in the world are located in the Francis Biedler Forest near Charleston.
- Congaree National Park near Columbia is the largest expanse of old-growth bottomland forest in the country.
- Most golf holes per capita in the United States. South Carolina has more than 370 courses, which generate more than \$2.2 billion in economic impact a year.