

A History of the United States at the Olympics

In April 1896, with little notice, a group of United States' athletes set sail for Athens, Greece. They were traveling to compete in the Summer Olympic Games. It was the first international Olympic Games of the modern era. It was also the beginning of the United States' participation in the Olympics.

Fourteen young men from the United States participated in the first modern Olympic Games in 1896. The majority of the athletes were from the East Coast. They came from Princeton University, Harvard University, and the Boston Athletic Association.

The United States Olympic team has grown immensely since its humble beginnings in 1896. The team now surpasses 550 athletes.

The United States hosted its first Summer Olympics in 1904, in St Louis, Missouri. Since then, it has gone on to host seven more Olympics, three summer and four winter. This record of hosting the Olympics is more than any other nation, with France next in line with five games hosted.

The United States is one of three countries that do not pay for their athletes to attend the Olympics. Rather the American Olympic athletes are dependent upon sponsors to earn enough money to cover the cost of participating in the Olympic Games.

1. How many Olympic Games has the United States hosted?
 - ☐ seven
 - ☐ eight
 - ☐ five
 - ☐ four
2. The United States Olympic athletes must
 - ☐ compete with few team members.
 - ☐ earn money to participate from sponsors.
 - ☐ request money from the United States government to cover costs.
 - ☐ request money from the Olympic host country.
3. Where in the country did the first United States Olympic athletes come?
 - ☐ West Coast
 - ☐ South
 - ☐ Great Plains
 - ☐ East Coast



Fun Facts About U.S. Presidents

Here is a collection of fun, fascinating facts about former presidents of the USA.

- Did you know that John F. Kennedy's middle name was Fitzgerald?
- The tallest U.S. president was Abraham Lincoln, who was 6 ft, 4 in tall.
- At only 5 ft, 4 in, James Madison was the shortest U.S. president.
- The second U.S. president, John Adams, and the third president, Thomas Jefferson, both died on the same day!
- There have been eight left-handed presidents.
- For a brief time, President Jefferson kept two bears in a cage on the White House lawn.
- When George Washington's teeth fell out, he had dentures made from animal teeth, screws, and gold wire.
- James Polk banned dancing and card games from the White House.



Quick Questions



1. How many presidents have been left-handed?



2. How might people have reacted to President Jefferson's pets? Why?



3. What were the heights of the tallest and shortest U.S. presidents?

Tallest: _____

Shortest: _____



4. Which word from the text means the same as "didn't allow"?

Lady Liberty



The Statue of Liberty is located on Liberty Island in the New York Harbor. It was given to the people of America as a gift from the people of France. It took over nine years to create and took months to arrive in America because it had to be taken apart, packaged up, and shipped across the sea. The official name of the Statue of Liberty is actually "Liberty Enlightening the World." She stands at over 300 feet high, with just one of her fingers measuring over 8 feet in length! Each day, lots of tourists explore the museum inside the base of the statue before climbing the 354 steep steps to reach the crown and look out over New York.

Quick Questions



1. What is the Statue of Liberty's official name?



2. Which word from the text means the same as "can be found in this place?"



3. Do you think that it is easy to reach the top of the statue? Explain your answer.



4. Find and copy a phrase which tells us that the statue is visited regularly.

Name: _____

Great Seal of the United States

The picture below shows the Great Seal of the United States of America.

It pictures a bald eagle with an olive branch in its right talon and arrows in its left talon. The olive branch is a symbol of peace. It shows that our country always wants to be peaceful. The arrows are a symbol of war. They show that our country is willing to fight to protect our freedom if we need to.

There are 13 leaves on the olive branch and 13 arrows. There are also 13 stars above the eagle and 13 stripes on the crest. The number 13 represents the number of states our country had when it began.

"E pluribus unum" is a Latin phrase. It means "Out of many, one." This phrase shows that many states work together to form one strong country.

