



The United States of America.

Mironenko S.
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The USA.

- The United States of America are situated in the central part of the North American continent. Its western coast is washed by the Pacific Ocean and its eastern coast — by the Atlantic Ocean.
- The total area of the USA is over nine million square kilometers.
- The population of the USA is about 250 million people; most of the population lives in towns and cities.
- The USA is a very large country, so it has several different climatic regions. The coldest regions are in the north and north-east. The south has a subtropical climate.
- The United States is a land of rivers and lakes. The northern state of Minnesota is a land of 10,000 lakes. The longest rivers in the USA are the Mississippi, the Missouri and the Rio Grande. The highest mountains are the Rocky Mountains, the Cordillera and the Sierra Nevada.
- The United States is rich in natural and mineral resources. It produces copper, oil, iron ore and coal. It is a highly-developed industrial and agricultural country.
- There are many big cities in the USA, such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and others. The national capital is Washington, D.C. Its population is about 3.4 million. Washington was built in the late eighteenth century as the centre of government. It was named after George Washington.
- The USA became the world leading country at the beginning of the twentieth century.

A composite image consisting of three vertically stacked panels. The top panel shows a round, analog clock with a white face and black numbers, set against a solid blue background. The middle panel shows a round, analog clock with a yellow face and black numbers, set against a solid red background. The bottom panel shows a closed, thick book with a white cover and pages, set against a solid green background.

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- **The job of the Congress is to make laws. The President can veto a bill. The Congress can pass the law anyway if it gets a two-thirds majority vote. The Congress can also declare war. The House of Representatives can also impeach the President. This means that the House can charge the President with a crime. In this case, the Senate will put the President on trial. The Senate votes to approve the justices that the President appoints to the Supreme Court.**
- **The executive branch of the government puts the country's laws into effect. The President of the United States is a member of the executive branch. The President must be at least 35 years old, and be a natural citizen of the USA. In addition, he must have lived in the US for at least 14 years, and be a civilian. The President is elected every four years and cannot serve more than two terms.**





- **The Vice-President of the USA is president of the Senate. When the President receives a bill from the Congress, he must sign it, and then the bill becomes a law. However, if he disagrees with the law, he can veto it. The President can also ask the Congress to declare war. He also appoints the justices to the Supreme Court. He must do his job according to the Constitution, or he may be impeached.**
- **The judicial branch of the government is the system of courts in the United States. Its job is to enforce laws. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the country. It consists of 9 justices: one Chief Justice and 8 associate justices. The President appoints the justices, but the Senate must approve them. The justices are appointed for life. The Supreme Court makes sure that people obey the laws. The Supreme Court can also decide if a law is constitutional, that is, if it is in agreement with the Constitution. The judicial branch works together with the legislative and executive branches to protect the Constitution and the rights of people.**



The Education System Of The USA.

- **The United States of America has a national Department of Education, but each state is in charge of its own educational system. In addition, individual cities and regions have great control over the schools in that city or region. So, while it is possible to discuss American education in general, the specifics change from place to place in the country. There are three levels of education in the USA: primary, secondary and higher education. At each level there are public and private schools, that is, schools which are provided by the government and schools that are run by individuals, churches or other organizations.**





- In most states, pupils begin primary school, also called "elementary" school, at the age of 6 or 7. Although it is not required, many children attend kindergarten for one year before entering first grade. They attend primary school for 4, 5 or 6 years. The elementary school of America is attended by all children.
- Secondary schools are divided into two types. The first, called middle schools or junior high schools, are attended for 2, 3 or 4 years. The second, called high schools are attended for 3 or 4 years. Each year is called a "grade." Many schools in the USA are organized according to a 5-3-4 pattern, that is, a five-year elementary school programme, a three-year middle-school programme and a four-year high-school programme. Another common pattern is 6-3-3, with 6-2-4 and 4-4-4 patterns also occasionally followed.
- Children from first through twelfth grade are all called students. In fact, anyone studying, from kindergarten through advanced university, is called a student in America. Sometimes schoolchildren are "First-graders", "second-graders" and so on. The last four years of school, they are sometimes known by different names also. Ninth-graders may be called "freshman," tenth-graders "sophomores," eleventh-graders "juniors" and twelfth-graders "seniors." These are the same names used for the four years of college or university.



- **The system of secondary school education in the USA includes different kinds of schools: public and private, large and small, urban and rural, traditional and experimental. In secondary schools, all students study English, mathematics, history and science) Other subjects are selected by the students according to their interests. Other classes may include foreign languages, typing or sewing, art or music, metal or woodworking, agriculture or mechanics. Students study six to ten subjects at a time. Children in the United States are required to attend school either through the end their secondary education or until they are 16 years old or older. If they want to go to college or university, student? must complete secondary school. Students who have completed secondary education are said to have "graduated" and they receive a diploma.**
- **When they have finished their secondary education, students take one of a number of general tests They submit their scores on the test, their grades from school and an application describing them-selves to the universities and colleges where the want to study. The universities and colleges choose the best and most interesting students. Higher education in the USA Is organized differently from in Europe. There are public and private universities and colleges in the USA. Colleges and universities give the same type of education. Universities are generally bigger and are made up of several colleges. They also give graduate degrees, and are often centres for research. Independent colleges are smaller and give students more individual attention.**



- **The first level of higher education in America is the "undergraduate" level, which usually requires four years of study. Students finishing this level receive "bachelor's degrees." People completing the second level of higher education receive "master's degrees." This usually takes between two and four years more. People completing the third level of higher education receive "doctorates." The second and third levels of higher education are called the "graduate" levels.**



American Holidays.

- American holidays are various in character. Some of them are religious and some are connected with American history. American holidays are almost always celebrated by gathering together family and friends. There are often traditional meals. There are ten main holidays in the USA. They are:
- New Year. New Year's Eve is celebrated on December 31. At midnight, bells ring, horns blow and friends exchange hugs and kisses. Everyone stays up late to celebrate the arrival of another year. New Year's Day is traditionally the time to start new programmes and give up bad habits. In big ci-ties it is celebrated with parades, sporting events and fireworks.
- Valentine's Day. On February 14, or St. Val-entine's Day, people in America remind the people who are important to them that they are loved. Hus-bands and wives, parents and children, children and teachers give each other cards and candy that show how they really feel.

Bear Hugs!





- **Easter.** Easter is a religious holiday that comes on a Sunday between March 22 and April 25. Christians believe that Christ rose from the dead on Easter. Other people celebrate Easter as a sign of the coming of spring. Americans paint eggs pretty colours and give them as gifts to children. According to tradition, a rabbit called the "Easter Bunny" brings the eggs and hides them for children to find.
- **Memorial or Decoration Day.** This holiday comes on May 30 and is dedicated to the servicemen who gave their lives in past wars. Schools, clubs and churches decorate cemeteries and hold memorial services. They hang American flags on the main streets of towns.
- **The Fourth of July (Independence Day).** This is the biggest national holiday of the USA. It is celebrated





- as the birthday of the country, because on this day in 1776, the colonies declared their independence from the British Crown and became the United States of America. On Independence Day, Americans march in parades and gather with friends and family. They cook hamburgers and hot dogs over a fire. In the evening, people watch fireworks.
- **Labour Day.** This is the holiday dedicated to the American working class and comes on the first Monday of September. It marks the beginning of autumn and is the last real holiday of summer. Many families take a vacation the week before Labour Day, as it is the end of summer vacation before the beginning of school.
- **Halloween.** October 31 is a day when people, mostly children, dress up in costumes, enjoy parties, and collect candy from their neighbors, saying "Trick or treat." The tradition started because, according to superstition, October 31 is the last day that spirits and devils can roam the earth before "All Hallows Day," a holy day in the church. This means that the day before is "All Hallows Evening," which has been shortened to "Halloween." On this day, many people hollow out a pumpkin, carve a face into it and place a candle inside, making a glowing head called a jack-o-lantern.
- **Veterans' Day.** This comes on November 11 and is usually marked with parades and ceremonies in which people honor those who have served in the country's military.



- **Thanksgiving Day.** This holiday comes on the fourth Thursday in November and is a national holiday too. It is the day for being thankful for what one has and for the harvest. The tradition began when, in the 17th century, the colonists from Plymouth colony in Massachusetts held a big harvest celebration with their Native American friends who had helped them grow food after a terrible harvest the previous year. On Thanksgiving Day, families traditionally eat roast turkey. People travel long distances in order to be with their family on this holiday.
- **Christmas.** Christmas is a religious celebration. It is celebrated on December 25 as the birthday of Christ. It is a family holiday, and every house tries to have a Christmas tree, which is brightly decorated. As a rule, presents for children, relatives and close friends are placed under the tree. There are many traditional songs, sweets and treats associated with Christmas. According to tradition, a mythical grandfatherly old man named "Santa Claus" brings presents to all the children while they are sleeping. He places them in the stockings (socks) that they leave for him to fill.
- **There are many other holidays that almost everyone in the USA celebrates.** Among them are St. Patrick's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and April Fools Day.