



## MISSISSIPPI FACTS AND FIGURES

Mississippi is full of beauty, history, and tradition, letting visitors relive the grandeur of the Old South. It also boasts of a highway more than 8,000 years old – the Natchez Trace Parkway. Mississippi’s long literary tradition begins in the town of Oxford which was home to writer William Faulkner and suspense novelist John Grisham. Award-winning authors Richard Wright and Eudora Welty also used their home state of Mississippi as the basis for their work, and playwright Tennessee Williams and puppet master Jim Henson honed their creativity in the state.

## ORIGIN OF NAME

The state of Mississippi was named after the river that flows along its western boundary, coming from several different Indian words that translate (depending upon the tribe) as “Ancient Father of Waters,” “Beyond Age,” “Great River,” or “Chief River.” The most common translation is “Father of Waters.”

## HISTORY

Originally inhabited by Indians from several tribal nations (including Choctaw Mississippi was not colonized until 1699 when Pierre Le Moyne Sieur d’Iberville landed in what is now Ocean Springs on the Gulf Coast. Claimed by the French, then the Spanish and English, Mississippi was eventually bought by the United States, becoming its 20th state in 1817. By the 1830s, cotton was king, and the state was on its way to becoming one of the nation’s wealthiest. On January 9, 1861, Mississippi seceded from the Union and, with the outbreak of the Civil War, battles were waged in every corner of the state. Re-admitted to the Union in 1870, the state began to rebuild. Long recognized as an agricultural state, today’s Mississippi is also the largest manufacturer of upholstered furniture, supplies 75% of the U.S. supply of pond-raised catfish, and is home to NASA’s John C. Stennis Space Center, where all engines for the space shuttle are tested. Mississippi is home to the nation’s largest Army Corps of Engineers Waterway Experiment Station, and the Grand Gulf Nuclear Power Station. The state is recognized internationally for its outstanding contributions in the medical research areas of hypertension and organ transplant.

## HOW TO GET THERE

There are no non-stop international flights into Mississippi. The closest international airport is at Memphis, Tennessee. Domestic airports include: Jackson, Meridian and Gulfport/Biloxi.

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## DISTANCES AND TIMES

- Mississippi is in the country's Central Time Zone
- The South observes Daylight Savings Time from late April through October
- Greyhound and Trailways bus lines and AMTRAK rail lines offer stops throughout Mississippi
- Jackson is:
  - 399 miles (646 kilometers and 7 hours by car) from Atlanta, Georgia
  - 245 miles (397 kilometers and 4 hours by car) from Birmingham, Alabama
  - 180 miles (292 kilometers and 3 hours by car) from New Orleans, Louisiana
  - 212 miles (343 kilometers and 3 1/2 hours by car) from Memphis, Tennessee
  - 185 miles (300 kilometers and 3 hours by car) from Mobile, Alabama

For additional travel information, call 1-866-SEE MISS (733-6477) or 601-359-3297.  
Internet site: [www.VisitMississippi.org](http://www.VisitMississippi.org)

## MOTTO

Virtute et Armis (by valor and arms)

## POPULATION

2.57 million

## CAPITAL

Jackson

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## MAJOR CITIES POPULATION

Metro Jackson 425,000  
Gulfport 64,829  
Biloxi 53,403  
Hattiesburg 47,803  
Southaven 45,395  
Greenville 42,933  
Meridian 40,835  
Tupelo 35,194  
Vicksburg 27,056  
Pascagoula 27,026  
Columbus 22,724

## SQUARE MILEAGE

47,233 (including 420 miles of inland water surface)

## HIGHEST ELEVATION

806 ft. (Mt. Woodall at Iuka, MS)

## MILES OF COASTLINE

359 (including 62 miles of beaches)

## STATE SYMBOLS

Bird	Mockingbird
Fish	Largemouth Bass
Flower	Magnolia
Song	“Go Mississippi”
Tree	Magnolia

## WEATHER

Mississippi’s moderate climate encourages outdoor activities year round. The state experiences four distinct seasons, but temperatures are mild all year. Year round averages around 65 degrees.

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## TRANSPORTATION

Mississippi cities are serviced by either a major or a commuter airline. Most towns are linked by bus. Amtrak Train Network serves several cities and towns.

Major interstates include I-20 (east/west), I-55 (north/south), I-59 (southwest/northwest), and I-10 (along the Gulf Coast).

Primary highways include US 45, US 49, US 61, US 78, US 80, US 82, US 90, and US 98.

The Natchez Trace Parkway is a historical national highway that runs from Nashville, Tennessee, through northwest Alabama, into Mississippi to Natchez. This scenic route allows no commercial vehicles, has no billboards, and maintains a speed limit of 50 mph. Running parallel to the Mississippi River is Highway 61, known as the 'Blues Highway' because of its location through the Mississippi Delta where blues music was born.

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## MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

Agricultural and Forestry Museum (Jackson)  
Antebellum Homes/Structures  
Beaches  
Casinos  
Delta Blues Museum (Clarksdale)  
Golf  
B.B. King Museum & Delta Interpretive Center (Indianola)  
Elvis Presley's Birthplace (Tupelo)  
George Ohr Museum (Biloxi)  
Great River Road (Highway 61)  
Gulf Islands National Seashore  
Historic Bed and Breakfast Inns  
Infinity Science Center at NASA Stennis Space Center (2011)  
Jackson Zoological Park  
John C. Stennis Space Center  
Mississippi Children's Museum (late 2010) (Jackson)  
Mississippi Craft Center (Ridgeland)  
Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame (Jackson)  
Natchez Pilgrimage  
Natchez Trace Parkway  
National Forests  
National Parks  
Old Capitol Museum  
Resorts and hotels along the Mississippi Gulf Coast  
Rowan Oak, home of William Faulkner (Oxford)  
Russell C. Davis Planetarium (Jackson)  
23 State Parks  
Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway  
Tunica RiverPark on the Mississippi River (Tunica)  
Vicksburg National Military Park and U.S.S. Cairo Museum  
Vicksburg Pilgrimage  
Viking Cooking School (Greenwood and Ridgeland)  
Walter Anderson Museum (Biloxi)

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## MAJOR EVENTS

Blessing of the Fleet  
Civil War Re-enactments  
Christmas Events  
Craft Shows  
Crawfish Festivals  
Delta Blues Festival  
Dixie National Livestock Show, Rodeo and Western Festival  
Faulkner Literary Conference  
Fishing Tournaments  
Hot Air Balloon Races  
International Ballet Competition  
Jimmie Rodgers Festival  
Mardi Gras  
Mississippi State Fair  
Music Festivals  
Seafood Festivals  
Spring/Fall Pilgrimage-Tours of Antebellum and Victorian Homes and Gardens  
State Games  
World Catfish Festival  
World-Class Golf Tournaments

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Baseball  
Bird watching  
Bicycling  
Boating  
Hunting  
Fishing  
Football  
Hiking  
Equestrian activities  
Swimming  
RVing  
Camping  
Golf - PGA TOUR Viking Classic; PGA CHAMPIONS TOUR Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic  
Tennis  
Water Skiing  
Canoeing  
Kayaking  
Sailing  
Shooting Sports  
Rock climbing

## FAMOUS MISSISSIPPIANS

### SOCIAL REFORMERS

Medgar Evers	Civil Rights
Charles Evers	Civil Rights
Ida B. Wells	Civil Rights

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## SPORTS PERSONALITIES

Red Barber	Sportscaster
Cool Papa Bell	Baseball
Dizzy Dean	Baseball
Jeff Brantley	Baseball
“Boo” Ferris	Baseball
Archie Moore	Boxing
Bailey Howell	Basketball
Brett Favre	Football
Jake Gibbs	Football
Charlie Connerly	Football
Archie Manning	Football
Deuce McAllister	Football
Walter Payton	Football
Jerry Rice	Football
Steve McNair	Football
Lake Speed	NASCAR
Ralph Boston	Track

## ENTERTAINERS

Dana Andrews	Actor
Jerry Clower	Comedian
Morgan Freeman	Actor
Jim Henson	Muppets® Creator
James Earl Jones	Actor
Dianne Ladd	Actor
Gerald McRaney	Actor
Eric Roberts	Actor
Ray Walston	Actor
Sela Ward	Actor
Cynthia Geary	Actor
Mary Ann Mobley	Actor
Oprah Winfrey	Talk show host
Bob Pittman	Founder of MTV

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## MUSICIANS AND SINGERS

Steve Azar  
Moe Bandy  
Lance Bass  
Jimmy Buffett  
Bo Diddley  
Pete Fountain  
Mickey Gilley  
W.C. Handy  
Faith Hill  
Guy Hovis  
Robert Johnson  
B.B. King  
Dorothy Moore  
Brandy Norwood  
Elvis Presley  
Leontyne Price  
Charley Pride  
LeAnn Rimes  
Jimmie Rodgers  
Britney Spears  
Marty Stuart  
3 Doors Down  
Ike Turner  
Conway Twitty  
Muddy Waters  
Cassandra Wilson  
Howlin' Wolf  
Tammy Wynette

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# MISSISSIPPI



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## THE ARTS

Margaret W. Alexander	Writer
Walter Anderson	Artist
John Butler	Choreographer
Hodding Carter, III	Journalist
Ellen Douglas	Writer
William Faulkner	Novelist
Shelby Foote	Novelist/Historian
Ellen Gilchrist	Novelist
John Grisham	Novelist
Beth Henley	Playwright
Willie Morris	Journalist/Novelist
Walker Percy	Novelist
William Raspberry	Columnist
James Street	Novelist
Eudora Welty	Novelist
Tennessee Williams	Playwright
Richard Wright	Novelist/Poet
Zig Ziglar	Speaker

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