



Maine Essentials

Origin of the Name: Attributed to Sir Ferdinando Gorges, it is possible Maine was named for a small village on the coast of England once named Maine, or Gorges' family lived near a village called Broadmayne, sometimes called Maine, Meine, or Parva Maen (Little Maine). In 2001, Maine established Franco-American Day, which said the state was named after the Old French province of Maienne, meaning "river of the middle." A prevailing theory, however, is nautical in origin. The "main" or "main land" distinguishes the bulk of the state from its numerous islands.

License Plate: Maine issued registration plates for cars in 1905. The first and only plate slogan, "Vacationland," appeared on the plate in 1936. A chickadee perched on a pine branch has illustrated the general issue plate since July 1, 1999. Prior to that date, a red lobster adorned the plate. There are also 22 specialty plates available to the general public for a fee to support various causes that range from the lobster industry to breast cancer research.

Motto: *Dirigo* ("I Lead")

Coat of Arms: A new but identical seal was ordered in 1880 after a Fusionist Secretary of State destroyed the original following an election loss. The Coat of Arms contains the original seal, designed in 1820, and is still in use today. It pictures “on dexter side, an Husbandman, resting on a scythe; on sinister side, a Seaman,” a moose-deer, a mast-pine tree (a tall, straight pine good for making ships’ masts), and in the foreground land and sea, the name of the state and the whole surrounded by a crest topped by the North Star. Oddly, there are no official colors for the seal or the Coat of Arms.

State Flag: Adopted in 1909, the flag has no official colors, but it is generally represented as a blue field with the Coat of Arms showing a green pine tree, green grass and a brown moose. Some examples, however, show purple trees behind the pine tree, or even yellow, pink, or red. The original Maine flag, in use from 1901 to 1909, was a simple pine tree with the North Star above.

Statehood: Maine became the 23rd state on March 15, 1820.

State Nickname: Pine Tree State

Tourism Slogan: Maine, The Way Life Should Be

State Tartan: The oldest state tartan in the US, designed in 1964 by Nova Scotian Sol Gillis, it has four colors: azure blue for the sky, royal blue for the waters, dark green for the forests, and a thin red line for the “bloodline” of Maine people.

Did you know . . .

that in 2003 Maine was the first state in the nation to give portable, wireless personal computers to all seventh- and eighth-grade students and their teachers?

State Capital: Augusta

Largest City: Portland

Time Zone: Eastern Standard Time (or Eastern Daylight Time)

Civic Holidays: Maine celebrates all federal holidays and the April holiday it uniquely shares with Massachusetts, Patriot Day, which recognizes the battles of Lexington and Concord which launched the American Revolution. Federal holidays are New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Location: In the northeastern corner of the United States, bordering the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the state of New Hampshire to the southwest, the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick to the northeast and Quebec to the northwest. Maine is the northernmost portion of New England and the easternmost state in the US.

Area Code: 207

System of Measurement: The United States Customary System (aka English, Imperial or standard units)

Voting Age: 18

Drinking Age: 21

Did you know. . .

that Maine is the only state in the continental US to be bordered by only one other state?

TAKE 5 CHRIS FAHY'S FIVE FAVORITE NONFICTION BOOKS ABOUT MAINE

Christopher Fahy is a novelist and poet who has written about Maine for nearly 40 years. He has written a dozen novels, some in the horror and suspense genres, but nearly all of them set in Maine. He is a regular book reviewer for *Downeast Magazine*, and won the Maine Arts Commission literary prize for a book of short stories set in Maine. He is a writing instructor and helps to organize the annual poetry festival at the University of Maine in Augusta, for which he was given a special award by the university. He also worked for more than 20 years part-time as a counselor to the blind and visually impaired.

1. ***The Coast of Maine* by Louise Dickinson Rich:** A concise discussion of the geography, history, and development of the Maine coast, including islands, told in a brisk and breezy style. Includes some photographs, a number of entertaining stories (many of which are probably true), and a long list of things to see and do in various towns. Rich became famous for *We Took to the Woods*, her account of going back to the land long before it was fashionable. The woods she took to were also in Maine, and this is a book you should read if you want an in-depth description of one particular area of the state.

2. ***Northern Farm* by Henry Beston:** Beston describes a year in the life of his inland farm in the late 1940s; he delves into the history of his land, the changes of the seasons, his relationships with his neighbors, and patterns of work. His many astute observations of nature are told in a clear yet poetical prose. Each chapter contains a diary entry describing the events that are happening at the time he is writing. This provides a down to earth counterpoint to his philosophical and speculative notations.

3. ***Summer Island* by Eliot Porter:** Photographer Porter spent every summer since childhood on Great Spruce Head Island in Penobscot Bay. He captures the beauty of this and other islands in superb photographs, many in color, pairs them with quotes from poets and naturalists, and tells about his island's past and his discoveries while growing up there. Porter's eye is exquisite. Anyone who studies his photographs will make discoveries of their own, and anyone who carefully reads the text will have a better idea of what to look for while exploring Maine's woods and beaches.

4. ***Night Train at Wiscasset Station* by Lew Dietz and Kosti Ruohomaa:** In the 1940s and 50s, Ruohomaa took hundreds of photos of Maine people and places, many of which appeared in *Life* magazine. The best of these are included in this volume, which documents a way of life that was starting to disappear. Dietz provides essays on Maine's landscape, weather, and ways.

5. ***Focused on the Coast* by Neal Parent:** Excellent contemporary photos of, among other subjects, fishermen at sea, crisp shadows on snow, sailboats, waterfowl, and fog-shrouded harbors. Parent captures the rhythm and feel of what he photographs—an abandoned farm, a rocky shore during a storm—and puts the viewer right there. His gallery is located in downtown Belfast and every visitor to that city should be sure to stop by.

You Know You're From

- You can see Canada from your house.
- You call four inches of snow "a dusting."
- Your snow blower gets stuck on the roof.
- Your central heating system is fueled by large logs.
- More than half the meat in your freezer is moose.
- You call the area around your back door "the dooryard."
- You use "wicked" as a multipurpose part of speech.
- Your dog eats better than you do, and more often.
- You know a lobster pot is a trap, not a kettle.
- Your basement is called "downcellah."
- You buy your shrimp, berries, and Christmas wreaths from pickup trucks on the side of the road in season.
- You don't use your car's turn signal because everyone knows where you're going.
- You eat supper at night and dinner at noon.
- You know how to pronounce Calais, Damariscotta, Wytopitlock, and Saco.
- You eat ice cream with flavors like "Moose Tracks" and "Maine Black Bear."
- You know that "stove up" has nothing to do with cooking.
- Dressing up means wearing a tie with your flannel shirt.
- You've had a vacation from school just to help the family pick potatoes.
- The hardware store is busier on any Saturday than the toy stores are at Christmas.
- You leave your car running while you run into a store.
- Driving is better in the winter because the potholes get filled with snow.
- Your idea of a traffic jam is ten cars waiting to pass a tractor on the highway.
- You've had arguments over the comparative qualities of fried dough.
- You know the "Counties of our State" song.
- You can name all the seasons: Tourist, Foliage, Snowmobile, and Mud. (Or Winter and August.)
- "Vacation" means going to Bangor for the weekend.
- Your summer home is a "camp" less than half an hour from your house.
- You measure the distance between places in hours, not miles.

Maine When . . .

- You've made meals out of a Jordan's red-dyed hot dog, a bag of Humpty Dumpty potato chips, and a can of Moxie soda.
- The local paper covers national and international headlines on one page but requires six pages for local sports.
- You often switch from "heat" to "A/C" in your car on the same day.
- You never say what you "paid" for an item but how much you "gave" for it.
- You know Bob Marley is a comedian, not a singer.
- You know 24/7 refers only to the hours at L.L. Bean.
- You go to the dump and bring back more than you took.
- You've watched *Murder She Wrote* and snickered at the stupid fake accents and the west coast boats shown in the intro.
- You brake for fiddleheads.
- You know how to find the rope swing at the quarry swimming hole.
- Your "luxury vehicle" is a 12-year-old pickup.
- The bumper jack in your pickup will lift a house.
- You've gone to a Grange bean supper.
- You design your kids' Halloween costumes to fit over a snowsuit.
- You have more miles on your snow blower than on your car.
- You install security lights on your house and garage and leave both unlocked.
- It takes you three hours to go to the store for one item even when you're in a rush because you have to stop and talk to everyone.
- You carry jumper cables in your car and your girlfriend knows how to use them.
- Your aunt, grandmother, cousins, second cousins, fifth uncle, etc., all live within ten miles of you.
- You know that the Maine Turnpike is for the tourists; real Mainers take the back roads.
- You wouldn't eat Manhattan clam chowder or beans in tomato sauce if you were starving!
- You use a down comforter in the summer.
- There's a vegetable stand within 10 minutes of your house.
- You garden with a full head net during black-fly season.
- Even your school cafeteria made good chowder.

Population: Maine has 16 counties, 22 cities and 424 towns with a total population of 1,317,207, a 1.5 percent increase since 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, the population increased by 3.8 percent. Projections say Maine residents will reach 1.4 million by 2025.

Population Density: Maine's land area covers 2,000 square miles with the average number of persons per mile estimated at 42.7.

TAKE **5** **BRET GILLIAM'S TOP FIVE** REASONS HE MOVED TO MAINE FROM THE CARIBBEAN

Bret Gilliam moved to Maine following 25 years in the Virgin Islands and the surrounding Caribbean. He is a widely published author, photographer and filmmaker who also specializes in legal consulting for diving and marine litigation.

1. You can actually go outside without melting from heat stroke from June to September.
2. None of those damned palm trees ever changed colors in the fall.
3. Weather: Snow is the epitome of peaceful tranquility, hurricanes blow you away. . . literally.
4. Drivers know which side of the road to drive on (most of the time).
5. Crime in Maine means someone's shed got robbed of a snow blower; in the Caribbean crime involves machetes, handguns, and voodoo.

How Maine Compares: Maine is the least densely populated of all the New England states. Vermont is ranked 30th in the US at 67.2 people per square mile, followed by New Hampshire in 20th place with 146.7. Connecticut is ranked fourth in the US with 722.9, while Massachusetts is third, with 822.7. Tiny Rhode Island beats its neighbors, second in population density in the US, at 1,012.3. The US average is 86.2. The District of Columbia (Washington, the nation’s capital), while technically not a state, is first in density, with 9,581.3 people per square mile.

More Trees than People: Maine ranks 39th in size, but 40th in population in the US. More than half of Maine’s population lives on only one-seventh of the land, within 25 miles of the sea. Nearly half the state is uninhabited. Ninety percent of the state is covered in trees. It’s the most heavily forested of the states.

POPULATION BREAKDOWN

	Total	% of State Population
Male	641,623	48.8 percent
Female	673,157	51.2 percent

- Persons under 5 years old: 5.4 percent
- Persons under 18 years old: 21.3 percent
- Persons over 18 years old: 78.5 percent
- Persons 65 and older: 14.7 percent
- Median age: 41.1 years
- US average: 36.4 years

Did you know. . .

that the Maine County Song is sung to the tune of “Yankee Doodle Dandy” in all Maine elementary schools as a way to teach students the names of Maine’s 16 counties?

They said it

*"Did you ever see a place that looked like it was built to enjoy?
Well this whole state of Maine looks that way."*

– Will Rogers, American humorist

RURAL VS URBAN

Rural: 548,506

Urban: 768,701

HOME AND FAMILY

- Average household size: 2.35, compared to 2.60 in the US
- Average family size: 2.84, compared to 3.19 in the US

POPULATION AND SIZE OF COUNTIES

County	Size	Population
Androscoggin	459 square miles	103,793
Aroostook	6,453 square miles	73,938
Cumberland	853 square miles	265,612
Franklin	1,789 square miles	29,467
Hancock	1,522 square miles	51,791
Kennebec	879 square miles	117,114
Knox	374 square miles	36,618
Lincoln	457 square miles	33,616
Oxford	2,023 square miles	54,755
Penobscot	3,258 square miles	144,919
Piscataquis	3,770 square miles	17,235
Sagadahoc	250 square miles	35,214
Somerset	3,633 square miles	50,888
Waldo	724 square miles	36,280
Washington	2,528 square miles	33,941
York	989 square miles	186,742

Source: Government of Maine.

Hard Shell

It is hard to imagine today, but what every Maine school child comes to learn is that not all that long ago lobster was considered a “poor man’s food.” When coastal school children brought lobster sandwiches to school every day, it was proof positive of their dire economic straits. And what children didn’t bring to school, enterprising Maine fishermen simply ploughed back into the ground to use as fertilizer for their gardens.

All that has changed now, of course. The mighty lobster has ascended to the realm of luxury food. It now cavorts with caviar and foie de gras at the finest restaurants in Manhattan and Europe. Even among Mainers today, a lobster feed has taken on ritualistic rigor. Arguments ensue over proper cooking methods.

Part of the mythology of the lobster has been transferred to the fishermen who harvest them. There are currently 6,312 commercial lobster fishermen in the state of Maine and they, along with the people they employ, are often the backbone of coastal communities. For visitors and locals alike there is something primal and satisfying to see the lobster boats in pretty fishing villages and to eat a Maine lobster within view of its origins. The humble lobster has indeed become a tourist draw in its own right.

Lobster has not so quietly become the most visible and valuable seafood product in the state and is worth more than \$250 million each year. Although fishermen have mostly switched from wooden to wire traps, harvesting methods have largely remained unchanged for 200 plus years. For Mainers and visitors, lobsters and lobster fishermen are one of very few unchanged links to the past, and therefore not only occupies a place in the palate of the nation, but also in the mind and heart.

POPULATIONS OF MAINE'S LARGEST CITIES

Portland's city population is 64,249, but the greater metropolitan area population is measured at 230,000, nearly one-quarter of Maine's population. Lewiston's population is 35,690 and is the second largest city in Maine on its own, but the population is nearly always linked with neighboring Auburn. The area is usually referred to as Lewiston-

TAKE **5** BILLY COOK'S FIVE WAYS TO HELP YOU SURVIVE A VISIT TO MAINE

A native of midcoast Maine, and a Harvard graduate, Cook has written about Maine and elsewhere for more than 40 years. His family traces its roots back to the very earliest European communities along the Maine and Canadian coast. His recent short story, "A Good Connection" is included in the anthology *Sunday Miscellany*.

1. **Don't fake a Maine accent.** The entire cast of *Murder She Wrote* failed miserably, and most of us would have loved the chance to throttle any of them. Fair warning.
2. **Leave your city driving habits at home.** When you're down there, you might need heavy foot, but we're just not used to having people whip out in front of us. We're also used to a bit more space around us, and tend to brake really hard very suddenly when you ride on our bumpers.
3. **If you come in June, bring bug repellent.** If you come in July or August, bring your own parking space.
4. **Don't ask us, "What do you DO all winter?"** Mostly we just sit and twiddle our thumbs waiting for you to come back and entertain us.
5. **We're called "Mainers" from early to mid-summer, and after you've all been here a couple months we become "Maineacs."** Don't take it personal.

They said it

“Nature was here something savage and awful, though beautiful. I looked with awe at the ground I trod on, to see what the Powers had made there, the form and fashion and material of their work. This was that Earth of which we have heard, made out of Chaos and Old Night.”

– Henry David Thoreau, in the essay “Ktaadn” (modern spelling: Katahdin) *The Maine Woods*, 1864

Auburn, or colloquially as L.A. The combined population is 106,815. Auburn alone has a population of 23,602, ranking it fifth among Maine cities.

- Bangor: 31,473
- South Portland: 23,742
- Biddeford: 22,072
- Augusta: 18,626
- Saco: 18,230
- Westbrook: 16,108
- Waterville: 15,621

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

	Maine	US
Caucasian	95.5 percent	74.1 percent
African American	1.1 percent	12.4 percent
Hispanic or Latino	1.1 percent	14.7 percent
American Indian	0.5 percent	0.8 percent
Asian	0.9 percent	4.3 percent
Foreign-born	2.9 percent	11.1 percent

Source: US Census Data.

ANCESTRY

The top 10 countries identified as the country of origin of the families, or ancestry, of Maine residents who don't identify their families simply as being from America. Note that there are two kinds of French. If these were not separated, French would be the biggest nationality.

	Number	Percent
English	274,423	21.5
French (except Basque)	181,663	14.2
Irish	192,901	15.1
French Canadian	110,344	8.7
German	85,553	6.7
Scottish	61,226	4.8
Scotch-Irish	33,575	2.6
Polish	24,982	2.0
Swedish	21,342	1.7
Dutch	13,267	1.0

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Most Mainers identify as Christian (82 percent), and most of those as various kinds of Protestants (56 percent). But as for identification with individual churches, of the Christians, the largest number is Catholic.

Baptist: 16 percent

Methodist: 9 percent

Pentecostal: 6 percent

Church of Christ: 3 percent

Lutheran: 3 percent

Other Protestant or general Protestant: 18 percent

Roman Catholic: 25 percent

Other Christian: 1 percent

Other Religions: 1 percent

Non-Religious: 17 percent

They said it

*"To hell with all my worries
They are negligible at best.
I leave for Maine tomorrow
Where my soul can take a rest."*

– Anonymous, from the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad's
tourist magazine *In The Maine Woods*, published in 1934

MATCHED

Marriage rate in Maine: 7.5 per 1,000

Marriage rate in the US: 7.3 per 1,000

DETACHED

Divorce rate in Maine: 4.3 per 1,000

Divorce rate in the US: 3.6 per 1,000

HATCHED (2008)

Births in Maine: 14,200

Births in the US: 4,278,899

DISPATCHED (2008)

Deaths in Maine: 12,443

Deaths in the US: 2,397,615

Source: US Bureau of Census.

MULTILINGUAL

The percentage of Maine residents who speak a language other than English at home is 7.6, compared to a national figure of 19.5. In Maine, the primary language spoken besides English is French, at an average of 5.28 percent, while in Louisiana, the average is 4.6 percent. More people in Maine speak French at home than any other state.

They said it

“Maine possesses a globally known ‘brand’ built on images of livable communities, stunning scenery, and great recreational opportunities. This brand has increased in economic value as the search for quality places grows in importance. Maine is surprisingly well-positioned for the future.”

– Brookings Institute

GETTIN' OLD

Maine's median age of 41.1 years is the highest in the nation, according to US Census Bureau statistics, compared to a US median of 36.4 years. Maine has about 160,000 residents in the 25-34-year-old range, but by 2030, population projections indicate that this group—the bulk of the labor force—will be 25,000 fewer. Now there are four working-age residents for each person over 65, but by 2010, experts predict there will be only two, meaning a greater future need for medical and other services for the elderly supported by a smaller work force.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

High school graduates or higher total 88.8 percent of Maine's population, compared to a national average of 84 percent. However, residents with a bachelor's degree or higher, at 25.9 percent, fall a little behind the US figure of 27 percent.

SCHOOL DAYS

Maine's public elementary, middle, and high schools are funded by a combination of local property taxes and state and federal taxes. Many are regionalized into consolidated districts, so many students are bused to school in nearby towns. Maine also has a magnet public boarding school: The Maine School of Science and Math (grades 10-12) in Limestone, Aroostook County, with 105 students.

POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Maine has 45 colleges and universities. Students can earn an associate degree at 22 of the schools, a bachelor's at 19, and a graduate degree at 10. Maine hosts 19 private colleges and universities, 10 public colleges and universities, eight community colleges, specialty schools such as a criminal justice academy, boatbuilding schools, Maine Maritime Academy, a law school, the environmentally-focused College of the Atlantic, Portland School of Art, Bangor Theological Seminary, and three world-renowned private liberal arts colleges: Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Bates College in Lewiston, and Colby College in Waterville.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

The University of Maine System has seven campuses of which Orono is the “flagship” campus. The system also includes seven community colleges and nine off-campus satellite centers throughout the state.

Total enrollment for 2008-2009 was 23,688, down 3 percent from the previous year. Its non-resident enrollment of 4,299 students was the second highest in UMS history, and included students from 48 states and 60 countries. In the Distance Education area, online web-based courses are up 19 percent. Law school enrollment increased by 5.9 percent.

Tuition for a full-time undergraduate ranges from \$5,700 for an in-state student at one of the smaller campuses to \$7,170 at the Orono campus. Out-of-state students can expect to pay from \$14,310 to \$20,580. A regional program offers a special tuition break for students from other New England states, ranging from \$8,550 to \$10,770.

Did you know. . .

that the first chartered city in the US was in Maine? The coastal community of York was chartered in 1641.

UMAINE TOTAL ENROLLMENTS

University of Maine (main campus, Orono): 11,818

University of Maine at Augusta: 5,617

University of Maine at Farmington: 2,265

University of Maine at Fort Kent: 1,343

University of Maine at Machias: 1,259

University of Maine at Presque Isle: 1,652

University of Southern Maine: 10,820 (Maine Law School: 254)

SPORTS

Mainers particularly love high school and college basketball and the Black Bears, UMaine Orono's hockey team. The state's small population may account for the fact that semipro teams sometimes don't stick around long. The state currently has three. Earlier, Bangor lost its Can-Am League Lumberjacks minor league baseball team. However, Maine anticipates a semipro basketball team affiliated with the Boston Celtics to move to Portland in 2010.

The Portland Pirates are the American Hockey League affiliate of the Anaheim Ducks of California. They came along in 1993, soon after another team, the Maine Mariners, folded. Team colors are red, black, silver, and white. The logo sports a cartoon pirate with a hockey stick.

The Portland Sea Dogs are the American League minor league

Did you know . . .

that Maine is the most sparsely populated state east of the Mississippi River?

Did you know . . .

that if the 45th degree line of latitude that separates Vermont from Quebec were continued eastward, nearly two-thirds of Maine would lie north of the line?

affiliate team for the Boston Red Sox. The 2009 season marked the team's 16th season in Portland. They made four straight playoff appearances between 2005 and 2008.

The minor league MAINEiacs hockey team arrived in Lewiston in 2003, where they play in the Androscoggin Bank Colisee for the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League - the only US-based QMJHL team. The team started in Canada and played from several towns under different names. In 2007, the MAINEiacs won the 2007 President's Cup.

Weblinks

Maine Historical Society

<http://www.mainehistory.org/>

Find out more about Maine's history through this website; lots of reading on the MHS Museum, the Longfellow House, and the MHS Library.

Maine State Government, facts and history

http://www.maine.gov/portal/facts_history/

Facts, archives, personal accounts of the 'good old days,' genealogy resources, maps, statistics, and more.

Did you know. . .

that Maine had the highest net gain of any state in New England of people over the age of 65 moving to the state to retire?

Did you know. . .

that 16 percent of Maine residences are owned by out-of-state residents or by Maine residents for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use?