

Geography

Denver sits where the Great Plains meet the Rocky Mountains. It is known as the “Mile-High City.” If you stand on the 18th step of the state capitol building, you'll be exactly 5,280 feet, or one mile, above sea level. By the way, the dome of the capitol building is covered with real Colorado gold.



Ways to Have Fun

Denver offers lots of opportunities to have fun. The city has more than 250 parks with trails for cycling, running, and walking. Denver even has a park where a herd of bison lives.

Denver is the center of professional sports in the Rocky Mountain region. The city's major league teams include the Denver Broncos (football), the Colorado Rockies (baseball), the Denver Nuggets (basketball), and the Colorado Avalanche (ice hockey). Every January, Denver hosts a national cattle show and rodeo.



Geography



Salt Lake City is in the north-central part of Utah. It is located in a high valley between the Wasatch Mountains and the Great Salt Lake Desert.

The climate in Salt Lake City is dry. The city has warm summers and some snow in the winter.

Ways to Have Fun

The Wasatch Mountains tower over Salt Lake City. They are a wonderful place for hiking and skiing. Because of this, Salt Lake City was chosen as the site of the 2002 Winter Olympics. The city also has many parks.

Salt Lake City has one major league sports team, the Utah Jazz (basketball).



Geography

Boise is located on the Boise River in southwestern Idaho. It is near the Salmon River Mountains. Boise has a dry, sunny climate, with some snow in the winter.



Ways to Have Fun

Many people in Boise enjoy the outdoors. There are lots of paths for walking, bicycling, skating, and jogging. In a set of parks called the Greenbelt, people picnic, play sports, watch birds, and listen to concerts. Places for skiing and whitewater rafting are within an easy drive of the city. Sports fans in Boise can root for the city's minor league baseball and ice hockey teams.



Geography

Seattle is in the northwestern corner of the United States, about 100 miles south of the border with Canada. The city lies next to a large bay of the Pacific Ocean. Mountains surround it.

Seattle has a mild, rainy climate. The city is often cloudy or foggy.

Ways to Have Fun

Seattle has more than 5,000 acres of public land. People enjoy miles of trails on which they can cycle, skate, jog, and walk. The nearby mountains offer excellent skiing, climbing, and hiking. Mount Rainier is a favorite hiking destination. And the area's many lakes make boating and fishing popular pastimes.



Seattle has three major league sports teams. They are the Mariners (baseball), the Seahawks (football), and the Sounders (soccer).



Geography

Portland sits on the banks of the Willamette River, in northwestern Oregon. The city lies in a fertile valley between the Coast and Cascade mountain ranges. Portland has a mild climate, with heavy rains in the late fall and winter.

Ways to Have Fun

Portland has many parks and open spaces. Forest Park covers nearly 5,000 acres. It is one of the largest natural areas inside a U.S. city. Mount Hood, located less than 50 miles away from Portland, is a great place for skiing and other winter sports. Portland has one major league sports team, the Portland Trail Blazers (basketball).





Geography

San Jose lies near the southern tip of San Francisco Bay. The city has a mild to warm climate.

Ways to Have Fun

San Jose has about 75 parks and playgrounds. The largest park is Alum Rock Park. It has miles of trails for hiking and horseback riding. Fans of thrill rides can go to amusement parks in nearby Santa Clara and Santa Cruz.

San Jose has two major league sports teams, the Sharks (ice hockey) and the Earthquakes (soccer).

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Geography



Las Vegas is near the southern tip of Nevada. It sits in a desert valley surrounded by mountains.

Las Vegas has a dry climate. Winters are warm, and summers are hot.



Ways to Have Fun

Las Vegas is famous for its shows. Many popular singers, dancers, and comics perform there. Championship boxing matches are often held in the city. People in Las Vegas also enjoy outdoor activities. They can hike and camp. They can fish and boat on nearby lakes. And the Grand Canyon is only a five-hour drive from the city.