

NEW ENGLAND

Colonies - Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island

Climate/Geography - Colonists in the New England colonies endured bitterly cold winters and mild summers. Land was flat close to the coastline but became hilly and mountainous farther inland. Soil was generally rocky, making farming difficult. Cold winters reduced the spread of disease.

Religion - The New England colonies were dominated by the Puritans, reformers seeking to "purify" Christianity, who came over from England to practice religion without persecution. Puritans followed strict rules and were intolerant of other religions, eventually absorbing the separatist Pilgrims in Massachusetts by 1629. Life in New England was dominated by church, and there were severe consequences for those who failed to attend, or, those who spoke out against the Puritan ways. Singing and celebrating holidays were among things prohibited in Puritan New England.

Economy - New England's economy was largely dependent on the ocean. Fishing (especially codfish) was most important to the New England economy, though whaling, trapping, shipbuilding, and logging were important also. Eventually, many New England shippers grew wealthy buying slaves from West Africa in return for rum, and selling the slaves to the West Indies in return for molasses. This process was called the "triangular trade."

MIDDLE

Colonies - New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware

Climate/Geography - The Middle colonies spanned the Mid-Atlantic region of America and were temperate in climate with warm summers and cold winters. Geography ranged from coastal plains along the coastline, piedmont (rolling hills) in the middle, and mountains farther inland. This area had good coastal harbors for shipping. Climate and land were ideal for agriculture. These colonies were known as the "breadbasket" because of the large amounts of barley, wheat, oats, and rye that were grown here.

Religion - Religion in the Middle Colonies was varied as no single religion seemed to dominate the entire region. Religious tolerance attracted immigrants from a wide-range of foreign countries who practiced many different religions. Quakers, Catholics, Jews, Lutherans and Presbyterians were among those religious groups that had significant numbers in the middle colonies.

Economy - The Middle Colonies enjoyed a successful and diverse economy. Largely agricultural, farms in this region grew numerous kinds of crops, most notably grains and oats. Logging, shipbuilding, textiles production, and papermaking were also important in the Middle Colonies. Big cities such as Philadelphia and New York were major shipping hubs, and craftsmen such as blacksmiths, silversmiths, cobblers, wheelwrights, wigmakers, milliners, and others contributed to the economies of such cities.

SOUTHERN

Colonies - Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia

Climate/Geography - The Southern Colonies enjoyed warm climate with hot summers and mild winters. Geography ranged from coastal plains in the east to piedmont farther inland. The westernmost regions were mountainous. The soil was perfect for farming and the growing season was longer than in any other region. Hot summers, however, propagated diseases such as malaria and yellow fever.

Religion - Most people in the Southern Colonies were Anglican (Baptist or Presbyterian), though most of the original settlers from the Maryland colony were Catholic, as Lord Baltimore founded it as a refuge for English Catholics. Religion did not have the same impact on communities as in the New England colonies or the Mid-Atlantic colonies because people lived on plantations that were often distant and spread out from one another.

Economy - The Southern economy was almost entirely based on farming. Rice, indigo, tobacco, sugarcane, and cotton were cash crops. Crops were grown on large plantations where slaves and indentured servants worked the land. In fact, Charleston, South Carolina became one of the centers of the American slave trade in the 1700's.

	COLONY	FOUNDED	LEADER	FIRST SETTLEMENT
New England Colonies	Massachusetts			
	Plymouth	1620	William Bradford	Plymouth
	Mass. Bay	1630	John Winthrop	Boston
	New Hampshire	1623	John Wheelwright	Exeter
	Connecticut	1636	Thomas Hooker	Hartford
	Rhode Island	1636	Roger Williams	Providence
Middle Colonies	Delaware	1638	Peter Minuit	Wilmington
	New York	1664	Peter Minuit	New York
	New Jersey	1664	Lord Berkeley Sir Carteret	East Jersey–Carteret West Jersey–Salem
	Pennsylvania	1681	William Penn	Philadelphia
Southern Colonies	Virginia	1607	John Smith	Jamestown
	Maryland	1632	George Calvert	St. Mary's
	North Carolina	1663	Group of eight proprietors	Albemarle County
	South Carolina	1663	Group of eight proprietors	Charles Town (later Charleston)
	Georgia	1732	James Oglethorpe	Savannah