UTAH

THE BEEHIVE STATE *Became a state January 4, 1896 (45th)*

Utah is a land of red rock arches, snowy peaks and a lake saltier than the sea. Its pioneers picked the busy honeybee as their symbol, and the name stuck.



Why the Beehive State?

Brigham Young led Mormon pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847. They called their new home Deseret, a word from the Book of Mormon said to mean honeybee. Bees are known for staying busy. A beehive still sits on the state flag, and the state motto is one word, Industry, which means hard work.



The Last Spike Was Gold

On May 10, 1869, two railroads met at Promontory Summit. One had been built east from California and the other west from Nebraska. Leland Stanford gently tapped a spike made of gold. Then he swung hard at the last iron spike and hit the wooden tie instead. A telegraph operator tapped out one word anyway, “Done.” Rails now crossed the West.



Leftovers of a Giant Lake

Long ago, a lake nearly as big as Lake Michigan covered this part of the West. The Great Salt Lake is what remains of it. Rivers carry minerals into the lake, but no river flows out. Water leaves only by drying up into the air, and the salt stays behind. People float in it more easily than in other water.



The Forest That Is One Tree

In Fishlake National Forest stands a grove of about 47,000 quaking aspens. They look like separate trees, but every trunk grows from one shared set of roots. That makes the whole grove a single living thing. It covers 106 acres and weighs more than 6,000 tons. Its name is Pando, which is Latin for “I spread.”



A Dinosaur Mystery

Scientists have dug more than 12,000 fossil bones out of one quarry near the town of Cleveland. The bones come from at least 74 animals. The odd part is who they were. More than three of every four bones came from meat eaters such as Allosaurus. No one has proved why so many hunters ended up in one spot.



The Gulls and the Crickets

The story goes that in 1848, swarms of hungry insects called Mormon crickets marched into the pioneers’ fields. Then flocks of gulls flew in and gobbled them up. Historians say frost and dry weather hurt the crops too. Still, the gull is the state bird, and a monument on Temple Square honors it.

BY THE NUMBERS

Population	About 3.5 million (30th most)
Size	About 84,900 square miles (13th largest)
Highest point	Kings Peak, 13,528 feet
Counties	29
Neighbors	Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada

DID YOU KNOW?

- Drivers have chased speed records on the Bonneville Salt Flats since 1914. A rocket car went faster than 620 miles an hour there in 1970.
- Utah is named for the Ute people. The name is often said to mean people of the mountains.
- The Bingham Canyon Mine is about three quarters of a mile deep and two and a half miles wide.
- Newspaper Rock has more than 650 carvings. Its Navajo name means rock that tells a story.

FIND IT ON THE MAP

1. Which city is the capital?
2. Which city is closest to Delicate Arch?
3. Which flower’s bulbs saved pioneers from hunger?

Answers: 1. Salt Lake City 2. Moab 3. Sego Lily