

# FLORIDA (FL)

## Sunshine State



### Fast Facts

**State Capital:** Tallahassee  
**Population:** 15,982,378 (Census 2000)  
**Land Area:** 53,927 square miles  
**Year Admitted to the Union:** 1845



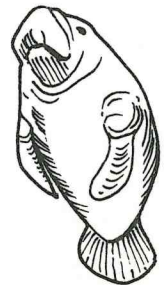
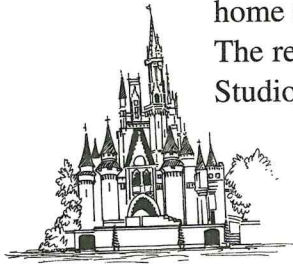
State Flag

The Sunshine State's warm climate beckons many vacationers each year, even though it is regularly hit by some of the country's most ferocious storms—hurricanes. Lightning also strikes Florida more times than any other state.

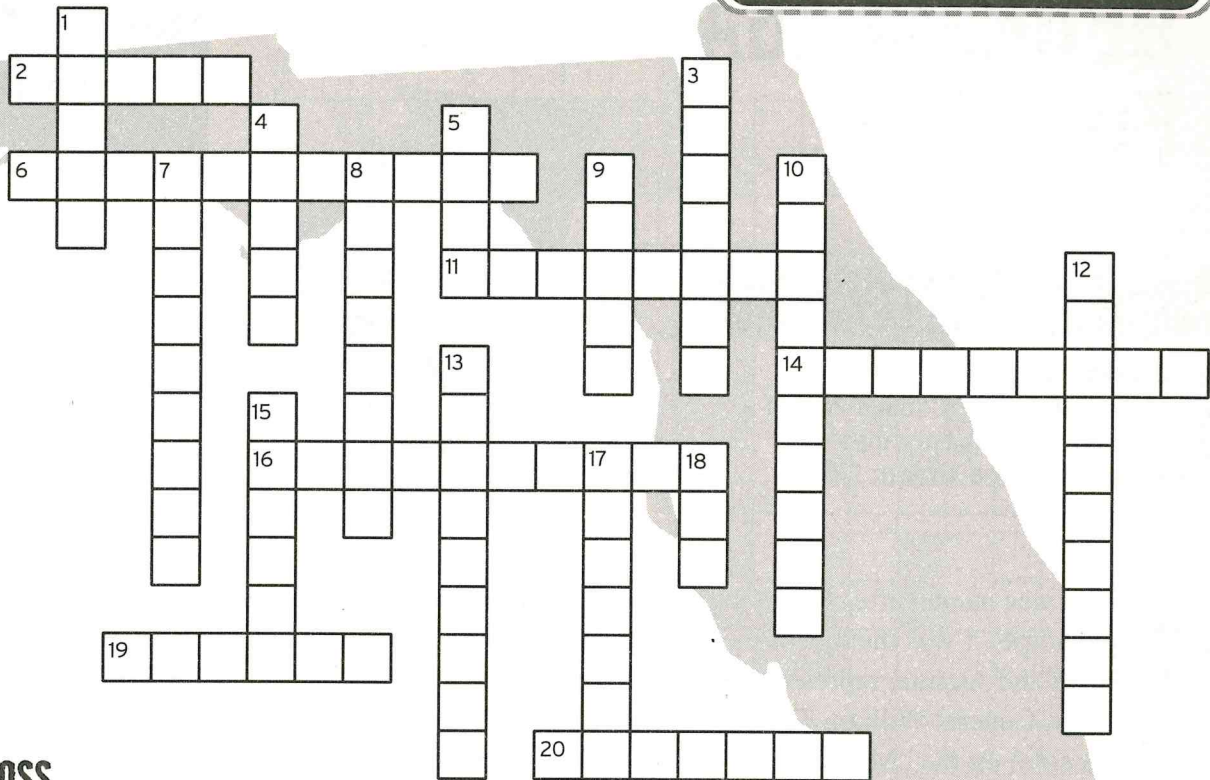
Despite this, tourism remains Florida's biggest industry. Lake Buena Vista in Orlando is home to the world's number-one vacation destination, Walt Disney World. The resort boasts four theme parks: Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney-MGM Studios, and Animal Kingdom. Also nearby are Universal Studios and Sea World. East of Orlando lies Cape Canaveral and Kennedy Space Center, where NASA shuttle flights are launched, and a museum exhibits the history of space flight. For more earthbound history, St. Augustine, the oldest city in the United States founded in 1565, features beautiful churches and ancient buildings that reflect its Spanish heritage.

Other popular tourist attractions include Florida's beaches and resorts. Daytona Beach hosts the Daytona 500 car races, which used to take place on the beach's unusually hard sand. Now they are run at the Daytona International Speedway. Farther south, Fort Lauderdale, the "Venice of the United States," has 165 miles of waterways to explore. At the end of the Atlantic coastline is Miami, a city that resonates with Cuban culture. Miami is gateway to the Florida Keys, home to impressive coral reefs and stunning sunsets.

Florida's Gulf Coast has its own attractions. Tampa Bay is home to Busch Gardens, a large theme park that features an expansive animal safari. Two national refuges, Cedar Key and Lower Suwannee, offer a view of vibrant Gulf wildlife. The Everglades National Park features a 40-mile slow-moving river that was named "The Sea of Grass" by Native Americans. Alligators, crocodiles, and poisonous snakes, as well as endangered manatees and Florida panthers make their home here. Just north is Lake Okeechobee, the largest lake in Florida. There's no shortage of places to visit and things to do in the Sunshine State.



## Florida Crossword Puzzle



### ACROSS

2. \_\_\_\_ Gardens is located in Tampa.
6. The capital of Florida is \_\_\_\_.
11. Florida is the \_\_\_\_ State.
14. The Kennedy Space Center is in Cape \_\_\_\_.
16. The \_\_\_\_ is home to alligators, crocodiles, and other swamp creatures.
19. The Kennedy Space Center has a \_\_\_\_ devoted to space flight.
20. The panther and \_\_\_\_ are endangered animals in the Everglades.
7. Florida has more \_\_\_\_ strikes than any other state.
8. Lower \_\_\_\_ is one of the national wildlife refuges in Florida.
9. Walt Disney World is in Lake Buena \_\_\_\_.
10. Lake \_\_\_\_ is the largest lake in Florida.
12. \_\_\_\_ are major storms that occasionally hit Florida.

### DOWN

1. \_\_\_\_ culture can be found in Miami.
3. \_\_\_\_ is Florida's biggest industry.
4. There are four \_\_\_\_ parks at Florida's Walt Disney World.
5. If you like beautiful sunsets, visit the Florida \_\_\_\_.
13. St. \_\_\_\_ is the oldest city in the United States.
15. Because of its inland waterways, Ft. Lauderdale is called the \_\_\_\_ of the United States.
17. \_\_\_\_ has hard beaches that cars used to race on.
18. The Everglades is also called the "\_\_\_\_ of Grass."