

Wyoming

By Tom Kirvan

A STATE MARKED BY WILD BEAUTY AND WESTERN SPIRIT

Wyoming, known as the “Equality State,” is a land of dramatic landscapes, rich history, and iconic Western culture. With its vast open spaces, rugged mountain ranges, and world-famous national parks, Wyoming offers a true escape into the heart of the American West.

Wyoming is the least populated state in the United States, with a population of approximately 580,000 residents. Despite its small population, Wyoming ranks as the 10th largest state by area. This sparse population density allows for breathtaking, uninterrupted landscapes, where nature dominates the horizon, untarnished by civilization.

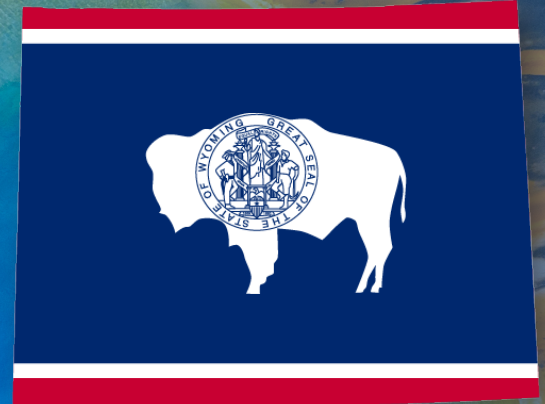
The state is divided into two main geographic regions: the Rocky Mountains in the west and the High Plains in the east. The western region is characterized by towering peaks, deep valleys, and pristine alpine lakes, while the eastern plains are home to rolling hills and wide-open grasslands. The Continental Divide runs through Wyoming, and the state’s diverse geography includes geysers, hot springs, forests, and deserts.

Wyoming’s history is deeply intertwined with the expansion of the American frontier. Indigenous peoples, including the Arapaho, Shoshone, and Cheyenne, originally inhabited the region. European exploration began in the early 19th century with fur trappers and traders.

In 1868, the Wyoming Territory was established, and in 1890, Wyoming became the 44th state. Wyoming earned its nickname, the “Equality State,” because it was the first U.S. state to grant women the right to vote, a landmark decision in 1869. The state also played a pivotal role in the westward migration, with key trails like the Oregon Trail and the Pony Express crossing its lands.

Wyoming’s economy is driven primarily by energy, tourism, and agriculture. The state boasts an abundance of natural resources, including coal, oil, natural gas, and uranium. Mining and energy extraction remain key industries, contributing significantly to state revenue.

Tourism is another vital economic driver, with visitors drawn to Wyoming’s natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities. Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks attract millions annually. Agriculture, particularly cattle ranching and sheep herding, remains a cultural and economic cornerstone, reflecting Wyoming’s deep-rooted Western heritage.



Fast Facts

Capital: Cheyenne

Population: 580,000

Highest Point: Gannett Peak (13,810 feet)

Trivia: One of three states that are rectangular

Primerus Member: Gary L. Shockey, PC

Gary L. Shockey, PC, a personal injury law firm based in Casper.

Wyoming

Cheyenne, the state capital, is located in southeastern Wyoming. With a population of around 65,000, Cheyenne is also the most populous city in the state. Known for its historic architecture and cowboy culture, Cheyenne hosts the world-famous Cheyenne Frontier Days, a weeklong rodeo and festival celebrating Wyoming's Western roots.

Top 5 Must-See Tourist Destinations

- **Yellowstone National Park:** America's first national park and widely considered the first national park in the world, Yellowstone is Wyoming's crown jewel. Known for its geothermal features, including the iconic Old Faithful geyser and colorful Grand Prismatic Spring, the park is also home to abundant wildlife such as bison, elk, and grizzly bears. Visitors can explore scenic drives, hiking trails, waterfalls, and the breathtaking Yellowstone Lake.
- **Grand Teton National Park:** Located south of Yellowstone, Grand Teton National Park is famous for its jagged mountain peaks, clear alpine lakes, and diverse wildlife. The Teton Range provides a stunning backdrop for outdoor activities such as hiking, climbing, boating, and wildlife photography. The park also includes the charming area of Jackson Hole, known for its Western flair and vibrant arts scene.
- **Devils Tower National Monument:** Rising dramatically from the plains of northeastern Wyoming, Devils Tower is a striking geological formation and sacred site for Native American tribes. The monument is popular among rock climbers and hikers, with trails offering panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. The site gained pop culture fame through its appearance in the film "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."
- **Hot Springs State Park:** Located in Thermopolis, Hot Springs State Park features mineral hot springs with therapeutic properties. Visitors can soak in the free public bathhouse, walk along the scenic trails, or view the resident bison herd. The park also offers picnic areas and suspension footbridges that provide picturesque views of the Bighorn River.

• **Buffalo Bill Center of the West:** Situated in Cody, this comprehensive museum complex offers insight into the history, art, and culture of the American West. Named after the legendary showman Buffalo Bill Cody, the center includes five museums covering topics such as Western art, Plains Indian cultures, natural history, and firearms. The nearby Cody Nite Rodeo adds to the authentic Western experience.