

# Welcome To Minnesota

I live in Minnesota. It is a Midwestern State. Minnesota is famous for lakes, being so far north, being cold, gophers, hockey, iron, and wolves! It is the 12<sup>th</sup> largest state, making it near the top of the list, and is the 21<sup>st</sup> most populous, making it just above average in that category. You might know some of the major cities, like Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester, Duluth, and Minnetonka. The state capital is St. Paul. Now that you know some of the basic facts about Minnesota, let me tell you a little more about my state.

Minnesota is known as The Land of 10,000 Lakes. Minnesota means 'clear water' in the Dakota Indian tribe's language. This seems a fitting name for a place with so many lakes and rivers, doesn't it? There are actually nearly 12,000 lakes in Minnesota, but who's counting. And those rivers, try about 6,000 of them flowing for nearly 70,000 miles! Minnesota also marks the headwaters of the Mississippi River, which is America's largest river. It all starts in Minnesota! Don't forget that it has some shoreline on Lake Superior, one of the 5 Great Lakes.



Minnesota is also the northernmost state in America, except for Alaska. It borders Canada, and has the only piece of the Lower 48 States that goes above the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel, which is the line that marks the border between Canada and America. It is a pretty big state filled with a lot of wildlife, like gophers, elk, deer, moose, wolves, and bear. There are also a lot of game birds, like turkeys, grouse, and pheasants.

Minnesota has a bit of a reputation for being a bit nice, country, and old-fashioned. There are several TV shows and movies about Minnesotan culture. Still, there is plenty of industry around, especially mining and lumber. There is a surprising amount of agriculture going on, too. Minnesota has a lot of farm-raised turkeys, sweet corn, green peas, sugar beets, corn, and soybeans. There are also plenty of sports to watch. The Minnesota Twins baseball team, the Minnesota Vikings football team, the Minnesota Wild hockey team, and the Minnesota Timberwolves basketball teams are all very recognizable. There are plenty of outdoor sports like fishing, hunting, boating, and hiking to participate in, as well as winter team sports of curling, hockey, broomball, and skating!

Now that you know a little more about Minnesota, are you thinking about visiting? There are so many fun things to see and do in the winter (and other seasons, too). Hope to see you soon!

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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What is Minnesota's nickname?
  - A. The Frozen State
  - B. The Wolf State
  - C. The Land of 10,000 Lakes
  - D. The Nice State
2. True or False: Minnesota is below average in size for an American state.
  - A. True
  - B. False
3. Which of these is Minnesota NOT famous for?
  - A. wolves
  - B. being so far north
  - C. mild winters
  - D. lakes
4. Which of these agricultural products is NOT a big business in Minnesota?
  - A. pineapples
  - B. green peas
  - C. sugar beets
  - D. soybeans
5. SHORT ANSWER: Would you like to visit Minnesota? Why or Why Not?

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