

Notes: The Thirteen English Colonies

A brief look at eight (8) important colonies in Colonial America (including Plymouth, MA).

New England Colonies

Plymouth (Massachusetts [MA])

- ☆ Founded in 1620 by Pilgrims (English Separatists) seeking religious freedom.
- ☆ Led by William Bradford.
- ☆ Notable: Mayflower Compact—agreement to make and abide by laws for the good of the colony—was an important step in self-government and governing through elected representatives.
- ☆ Also, Plymouth was **NOT** the official colony of Massachusetts—the Pilgrims originally planned to settle in Virginia but were blown off-course by an Atlantic storm.

Massachusetts (MA) (Massachusetts Bay)

- ☆ Founded in 1630 by Puritans (English Protestants) seeking religious freedom.
- ☆ Led by John Winthrop. Massachusetts Bay is the OFFICIAL colony of Massachusetts.
- ☆ Notable: Set up an assembly of representatives called the General Court.

Connecticut (CT)

- ☆ Founded in 1636 by Thomas Hooker for religious and political freedom.
- ☆ Hooker was a Puritan minister from Massachusetts Bay Colony who believed the governor in MA Bay had too much power, and he set up CT with strict limits on government.
- ☆ Notable: A plan of government called the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut—gave a vote to all men who owned property, not just church members, and limited power of governor—expanded the idea of representative government.

Rhode Island (RI)

- ☆ Founded in 1636 by Roger Williams for religious and political freedom.
 - ☆ Williams was a young Puritan minister from Salem, MA, who challenged the church's political power and believed the church should be separate from state.
 - ☆ Notable: Williams promoted religious tolerance, allowing all faiths (Protestant, Jews, and Catholics) to practice freely.
 - ☆ Also, Anne Hutchinson became an important symbol in struggle for religious freedom.
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Middle Colonies

New York (NY)

- ☆ Founded in 1664 by the Duke of York for trading and religious freedom.
 - ☆ Notable: Originally founded as New Netherland by the Dutch. Peter Stuyvesant, the governor of New Netherland, surrendered the colony to King Charles II after English warships entered the harbor of New Amsterdam (New York City).
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Pennsylvania (PA)

- ☆ Founded in 1682 by William Penn (a Quaker and friend of King Charles II) for religious and political freedom.
 - ☆ Notable: Quakers were persecuted in England for their “radical” beliefs—all people were equal in God’s sight, allowed women to preach in public, opposed all war and refused to serve in the army, and for fair treatment of Native Americans.
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Southern Colonies

Virginia (VA) (Jamestown)

- ☆ Founded in 1607 by members of the Virginia Company seeking economic opportunity.
 - ☆ Led by John Smith.
 - ☆ Colonists at first sought gold and later became successful by planting tobacco.
 - ☆ Notable: Virginia House of Burgesses established in 1619 as the first representative government in the colonies.
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Maryland (MD)

- ☆ Founded in 1634 by Lord Baltimore for religious freedom—a colony where Catholics could practice their religion freely.
 - ☆ Notable: Act of Toleration passed in 1649 gave the right to worship freely to all Christians (Catholics and Protestants). However, this did not include Jews and Muslims.
 - ☆ Also: The colony was named in honor of the wife of King Charles I—*Henrietta Maria*.
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Georgia (GA)

- ☆ Founded in 1732 by James Oglethorpe as a home for English debtors (people who owed money they could not pay back).
 - ☆ Notable: At first, GA grew slowly as farms were limited in size (<500 acres) and slavery was forbidden. Later, Oglethorpe changed the rules to allow large plantations and slave labor, and the colony grew more quickly.
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