

## The 13 American Colonies

There are 50 states in the United States of America. If you look at the American flag, you'll see 50 stars, one for each state. But many years ago, there were only 13 stars. These stars represented the original American colonies: New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Back in the 1600s, English settlers came to America seeking independence from British rulers. They founded Virginia, the first American colony in 1607. Settlers from many different nations, such as Sweden and France, continued to form colonies for many years. The 13th colony Georgia was founded in 1732. American colonies were divided into three regions: the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies, and the Southern Colonies. Each region had a different way of life. The New England Colonies were good for fishing and fur trading, but there was very little farm land. The Middle Colonies were better for growing crops and raising farm animals. People in the Southern Colonies made money from cash crops, such as rice and cotton. Cash crops were grown for the purpose of selling. After the Revolutionary War, Colonies started to become states. This would give them independence from Great Britain to start a new government.