

# First Nations of Canada

**First Nations** are the people of native tribes who lived in [Canada](#) before [Europeans](#) came there. Many Canadians also use "First Nations" to mean people with natives in their family trees. Many say it because these nations were here long before Canada, and to make it clearer that the First Nations have many [cultures](#), and that some of the cultures are very different from others. Some consider it a respect to those who first cultivated certain patches of land. Other words that have been used for First Nations people, tribes, and cultures have been "indigenous", "aboriginal", "Indian", "Native Indian", "Amerind," or "native." Now many people say "Indian" only about people from [India](#).

## Early First Nations: The Six Main Geographical Groups

<b>Woodland First Nations</b>	who lived in dense boreal forest in the eastern part of the country
<b>Iroquoian First Nations</b>	who inhabited the southernmost area, a fertile land suitable for planting corn, beans and squash
<b>Plains First Nations</b>	who lived on the grasslands of the Prairies
<b>Plateau First Nations</b>	whose geography ranged from semi-desert conditions in the south to high mountains and dense forest in the north
<b>Pacific Coast First Nations</b>	who had access to abundant salmon and shellfish and the gigantic red cedar for building large houses
<b>First Nations of the Mackenzie and Yukon River Basins</b>	whose harsh environment consisted of dark forests, barren lands and the swampy terrain known as muskeg

## History of First Nations: – Newcomer Relations

10,000BC	<a href="#">Indigenous peoples</a> occupied North America for thousands of years before European explorers first arrived on the eastern shores of the continent.
11th Century	Norse explorers and settlers, moving ever-westward from Scandinavia to Iceland and Greenland, and eventually to the island of Newfoundland. There they founded North America's first European colony at L'Anse aux Meadows.
1500s	Europeans returned to the eastern shores of North America to establish settlements.
1600s	The British had established several colonies and begun settlement on a large scale.
	Soon after founding these colonies, the two powers (Britain and France) cemented alliances with First Nations to support their commercial interests, which included the fur trade.
16th & 17th Century	The fur trade was so profitable and important that the various European and First Nations interests often clashed violently throughout the 16th and 17th centuries.
Mid-1600s	Competition between groups such as the Haudenosaunee and the Huron resulted in all-out warfare. In the mid-1600s, the Huron were driven from their traditional territories around Georgian Bay.

## History of First Nations:

### – Military Alliances and Conflict

1701	France and 40 First Nations signed a treaty in Montreal known as the Great Peace. Through the agreement, the various First Nations in the Great Lakes basin promised to stop violent attacks and to share the lands, as "a dish with two spoons."
Seven Years' War of 1756–1763	Power struggles, particularly between the British and the French, transformed their respective commercial partnerships with First Nations into vital military alliances that brought much needed support to both camps.
1755	Desperate for military assistance ahead of what would turn out to be the final French–British conflict in North America, British administrators created the Indian Department in 1755 to coordinate alliances with the powerful Haudenosaunee.
1760	The fall of Montreal—the last French stronghold on the St. Lawrence—put an end to French colonial efforts in what would become Canada. The Aboriginal allies of New France called upon the British to recognize their neutrality in the Seven Years War and concluded the Treaty of Swegatchie and the Murray Treaty.
1763	The Treaty of Paris in 1763 ended more than 150 years of European competition and conflict. Through this agreement, France ceded its colonial territories in what is now Canada, including Acadia, New France and the Interior lands of the Great Lakes and the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Britain was now the primary European power throughout much of North America, controlling all of the valuable commercial fur trade.

## History of First Nations:

### – From Allies to Wards

Late 18th Century	The relationship between First Nations and the British Crown was still very much based on commercial and military interests. The Indian Department had one primary goal for the British administration throughout the Great Lakes basin—to maintain the peace between the small number of British soldiers and traders stationed at far-flung trading posts and the far more numerous and well-armed First Nations.
1783	The outbreak of the American War of Independence and Britain's subsequent recognition of the United States of America in 1783 had a dramatic impact on the relationship between the British Crown and its First Nations allies. The loss of the American colonies brought some 30,000 United Empire Loyalist refugees to the remaining British colonies in North America.
1812	During the War of 1812, First Nations fought alongside the British and Canadian colonists against the American invasion of what is now southern Ontario.
1830s	with more and more lands surrendered for settlement, only pockets of First Nations lands remained in Upper Canada. For the most part, the land surrender treaties did not create sizeable reserves for the First Nations signatories. First Nations thus increasingly lost access to hunting grounds and became a dispossessed people on their former lands.
1836	A treaty concluded in 1836 by the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head, established Manitoulin Island in Georgian Bay as a reserve for the dispossessed First Nations population.

## NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY TIME LINE

- 15,000–7000 B.C. Paleo-Indian era
- 100 B.C. First mound cultures begin
- 1100 A.D. Cliff cities built in Southwest by Ancestral Puebloans

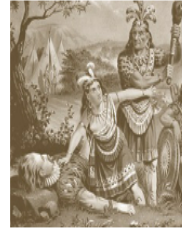


- 1142 Iroquois Confederacy constitution written
- 1607 Chief Powhatan captures Captain John Smith
- 1621 The Pilgrims at Plymouth and the Wampanoag sign a peace treaty



- 1626 Peter Minuit buys Manhattan Island from the Leni Lenape
- 1636 The Pequot War occurs
- 1675–76 King Philip's War
- 1711–1715 Tuscarora Indian War
- 1763 Chief Pontiac leads the Ottawa in battle against the British
- 1787 First federal treaty is made with the Delaware Nation
- 1803 The Louisiana Purchase adds to the United States' territory
- 1804–06 Lewis and Clark chart the western territory with the help of Sacagawea,

- 1808–12 Tecumseh and his brother, Tenskwatawa, found Prophetstown as
- 1815 The Seminole Wars begin
- 1821 The federal government begins moving Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw west of the Mississippi River



- 1828 Sequoyah and Elias Boudinot begin publishing the *Cherokee Phoenix*
- 1830 Indian Removal Act is passed
- 1834 Congress creates Indian Territory
- 1835–42 Second Seminole War



- 1838 Cherokee are forcibly removed to Indian Territory
- 1849 The Bureau of Indian Affairs transfers from the War Department to the Department of the Interior
- 1860–64 The Navajo War breaks out in New Mexico Territory
- 1864 Sand Creek Massacre
- 1876 Lakota defeat George Armstrong Custer in the Battle of the Little Bighorn
- 1877 Nez Percé leader Chief Joseph surrenders
- 1879 Carlisle Indian boarding school is established
- 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre
- 1886 Geronimo surrenders



- 1887 The Dawes Act passes
- 1889 Wovoka leads to the beginning of the Ghost Dance religion



- 1924 Native Americans granted citizenship and voting rights
- 1934 Indian Reorganization Act is passed
- 1944 The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is formed
- 1968 Indian Civil Rights Act passes; American Indian Movement (AIM) is created
- 1969–71 Occupation of Alcatraz Island
- 1973 Occupation at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation
- 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act and American Indian Religious Freedom Act pass
- 1988 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act allows tribes to conduct gaming
- 1990 Native American Languages Act and Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act are passed by Congress
- 1996 President Clinton authorizes November as National American Indian Month
- 2001 John Herrington becomes the first Native American in space

