

Fast Facts on Pittsburgh and the Region

▼ **Pittsburgh** was founded in 1758 and incorporated as a city in 1816. Named after the then English Prime Minister **William Pitt**, the 55.5-square-mile city is the seat of government for Allegheny County.

▼ The metropolitan area of Pittsburgh ranks 19th in the country with a population of almost 2.4 million.

▼ One of the world's tallest fountains can be found at **The Point**, where a 150-foot geyser sprays 6,000 gallons a minute. The fountain's 10,000 gallon reservoir is fed by a glacial formation (fourth river) that is underground.

▼ Built in 1758, on the site of the French Ft. Duquesne, Ft. Pitt was the largest and most expensive British fort in the New World. The **Blockhouse at Point State Park** remains today on the site of this strategically placed fort.

▼ When a young 21-year-old **George Washington** first observed the 36-acre Point during a 1753 reconnaissance for the British, he remarked that the land appeared "more than suitable." On the return trip to Virginia, Major Washington and his scout were forced to swim from their raft in the cold waters of the Allegheny River, two miles upstream from The Point.

▼ **Washington's Landing**, an island in the Allegheny River, is so named because this is where George Washington sought refuge during a storm in 1753. Today, the island is home to manufacturing, office buildings, recreation, and residential life.

▼ On July 29, 1786, **John Scull** and **Joseph Hall** published the first newspaper west of the Allegheny Mountains. A four-page weekly, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette was produced on a wooden press, the first ever to make the precarious wagon journey over the mountains from Philadelphia. The paper survived and has grown to be a great newspaper.

▼ The **David L. Lawrence Convention Center** is the first (and largest) certified green convention center in the world. Designed by **Rafael Vinoly**, the new center opened in 2003.

▼ The first aluminum-faced skyscraper was the **Alcoa Building**, erected and opened in downtown Pittsburgh in 1953. It was a 30-story, 410 foot structure with thin stamped aluminum panels forming the exterior walls.

▼ The aluminum pull-tab on drinks that

everyone is familiar with was developed here in 1962 by Alcoa and first used by the **Iron City Brewery**.

▼ For river recreation, there are more than 26,000 pleasure boats registered in Allegheny County... second in the nation only to Dade County, Florida.

▼ Allegheny County has more than 1,700 bridges, with 720 inside the city limits and 15 major bridges crossing waterways in downtown Pittsburgh alone.

▼ Pittsburgh is the second largest inland port in North America. About 54 million tons of textiles, produce, and fossil fuels are shipped through its ports every year.

▼ The first theater in the world devoted to the exhibition of motion pictures was opened in 1905 on Smithfield Street by **Harry Davis** and was called the "Nickelodeon."

▼ In 1913, the first automobile service station opened here in Pittsburgh at Baum Boulevard and St. Clair Street in East Liberty. Built by the **Gulf Refining Company**, it was designed by **J. H. Giesley**.

▼ **WQED** was the first U.S. public television station in America and began here in 1954. It was also the first to telecast classes to elementary schools (1955) and was home to **Mr. Rogers**.

▼ **Pittsburgh International Airport** was ranked several years ago third best in the world and first in the United States by *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine. It received high scores in the categories of food, shops, and amenities.

▼ America's shortest interstate highway is in Pittsburgh. I-579, all 0.5 mile of it, connects the Liberty Bridge and I-376 (via the Boulevard of the Allies) to the Veterans Bridge across the Allegheny River and I-279. This highway also is known as the Crosstown Expressway.

▼ Pittsburgh lost the "h" in its spelling in 1891. Twenty years later, bowing to popular local pressure, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names approved restoration of the "h." On July 19, 1911 Pittsburgh was again Pittsburgh.

▼ Pittsburgh's **KDKA-AM** delivered the nation's first regularly scheduled radio broadcast in 1920, coverage of the Harding-Cox presidential election. Because of their role as radio pioneers, KDKA and Pittsburgh's **KQV-AM** are two of

three radio stations east of the Mississippi River permitted to begin their call letters with “K.” The third is KYW at Philadelphia.

▼ He wrote “My Old Kentucky Home,” but **Stephen Collins Foster** was a Pittsburgh native. The **Stephen C. Foster Memorial** stands at the **University of Pittsburgh**.

▼ Pittsburgh has more cultural institutions per capita than any other city in the U.S.

▼ A brothel once flourished near **The Priory** when that city inn was a home for Benedictine monks in the 1880’s. When the bishop discovered the house of ill repute, he ordered the front curtains closed and relocated the priests to the back room.

▼ The **Wynham Grand Pittsburgh Downtown** claims the world’s largest revolving door.

▼ While the name may be misleading, **The Strip District** is perfectly decent. A bustling marketplace by day, its bars and clubs come alive at night.

▼ A total of 218 covered bridges remain standing throughout Pennsylvania with many in Western Pennsylvania. The common nickname for many of these structures was “the kissin’ bridges.” Wonder why.

▼ **Arnold Palmer**, Latrobe native and patriarch of golf in Western Pennsylvania, won seven professional majors in his career: four Masters, one U.S. Open, and two British Opens. He also won a U.S. Amateur Championship.

▼ The legendary **Oakmont Country Club**, about 10 miles east of downtown Pittsburgh, has played host to 18 major tournaments: the PGA Championship in 1922, 1951, and 1978; the U.S. Open in 1927, 1935, 1953, 1962, 1973, 1983, 1994, and 2007; the U.S. Amateur Championship in 1919, 1925, 1938, 1969, and 2003; and the U.S. Women’s Open in 1992 and 2010.

▼ Here’s another fact that really is par for the course. Pittsburgh has more places to play golf than any city in the nation.

▼ In Pittsburgh, residents and visitors alike are never far from a nice, shady spot. After all, Pittsburgh has more trees than any other city in the country.

▼ The first night game in World Series history took place here at Three Rivers Stadium. Game 4 of the 1971 series was won by Pittsburgh 4-3. The Pirates then went on to

win the series, 4 games to 3. This was one of the last big moments of the beloved **Roberto Clemente**. Fourteen-and-a-half months after the 1971 World Series, The Great Roberto died in a plane crash off the coast of his native Puerto Rico while attempting to take food, clothing, and medical supplies to earthquake victims in Nicaragua.

▼ The Boston Pilgrims defeated the Pittsburgh Pirates five games to three in baseball’s first modern World Series in 1903. Four of the series games were played in Pittsburgh. Playing shortstop for the Pirates was **Honus Wagner**.

▼ The **Pittsburgh Steelers** are the first NFL team to win six Super Bowls, winning their sixth in Super Bowl XLIII in 2009.

▼ During World War II, a player shortage caused the Pittsburgh Steelers to combine with the Philadelphia Eagles in 1943, and the Chicago Cardinals in 1944. The 1943 Steelers were known as the Steagles.

▼ Many local communities have colorful names. For example, you can drive from **Moon** (Township) to (the Borough of) **Mars** in about 40 minutes. And the town of **Apollo** is in nearby **Armstrong County**.

▼ Two of downtown Pittsburgh’s most popular plazas are **Mellon Square** and **Market Square**. Many downtown workers eat lunch in the squares. Market Square also hosts performances, rallies... and countless pigeons.

▼ **Freedom Corner** in the **Hill District**, is so named because many civil rights marches began there. It now serves as the starting point for parades.

▼ Among its many medical firsts, Pittsburgh was the site of the first hospital-based helicopter in the Northeast—**Life Flight**.

▼ The **University of Pittsburgh Medical Center** includes 40 buildings in a “super-block” in Oakland bounded by Fifth Avenue and DeSoto, Terrace, and Darragh streets. It’s one of the world’s most concentrated medical complexes.

▼ The Polio Vaccine was developed by **Dr. Jonas E. Salk**, a 38-year-old University of Pittsburgh researcher and professor. Salk and his staff made this news in 1953.

▼ **Mercy Hospital** was the first hospital west of the Alleghenies.

▼ Pittsburgh radio station **KDKA** was the first radio station in the United States.