

Topic Page: [Des Moines](#)

Definition: **Des Moines** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Capital and largest city of Iowa state, USA, near the confluence of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers. Founded in 1843, it is now an industrial and transport centre for the Corn Belt. Industries: mechanical and aerospace engineering, chemicals. Pop. (2000) 198,682.

Summary Article: **Des Moines**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Capital city of Iowa, on the Des Moines River (a tributary of the Mississippi); seat of Polk County; population (2000 est) 198,700. It is a major road, railway, and air centre for the surrounding Corn Belt region; most of the manufacturing industry is connected with agriculture. Des Moines is the third-largest centre in the world for the insurance industry, after London, England, and Hartford, Connecticut.

History Fort Des Moines was founded in 1843, and the surrounding settlement was incorporated as the city of Des Moines in 1851; it became the state capital in 1857. With the coming of the railways in the 19th century Des Moines developed into an industrial and commercial centre for a wide hinterland. Local coal deposits were excavated here 1910–20. The city suffered extensive damage during floods in 1993.

Educational and cultural institutions Des Moines is the seat of several colleges including Drake University (1881), Grand View College (1896), the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences (1898), and Open Bible College (1930). The Des Moines Art Center was designed by the Finnish-born architect Eliel Saarinen. There is a zoo, botanical gardens, an aquarium, and the state historical centre. There have been three courthouses, built in 1846, 1858, and 1900.

Attractions Des Moines is the location of the annual Iowa State Fair held each August. It attracts about one million visitors per year and was the inspiration for the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, originally a film, *State Fair*. The fair, first held in 1854, is now the largest event in Iowa and one of the largest fairs in the USA. The State Capitol building is in a classical style and is noted for its gold roof. It is one of 123 entries on the national register of historic places; others include a fire station and historic houses and districts.

Origin of the name Des Moines was originally named Fort Raccoon in 1843, but the War Department considered the name in bad taste and replaced it with Fort Des Moines after the name given to the local river by French travellers. Des Moines was probably a corruption of the American Indian name for the river, Moingonia, meaning 'the river of mounds'. The 'Fort' title was dropped after 1857 when Des Moines replaced Iowa City as the state capital.

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Des Moines. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/des_moines



© RM, 2018. All rights reserved.



© RM, 2018. All rights reserved.

APA

Des Moines. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/des_moines

Chicago

"Des Moines." In *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon. Helicon, 2018. https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/des_moines

Harvard

Des Moines. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. [Online]. Abington: Helicon. Available from: https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/des_moines [Accessed 22 September 2019].

MLA

"Des Moines." *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon, 2018. *Credo Reference*, https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/des_moines. Accessed 22 Sep. 2019.