

# Roundtrip of the USA!



# Roundtrip of the U.S.A.

## LEVEL

The game is designed for elementary and pre-intermediate level students of English.

It can be played at two different levels: A2 and B1.

The teacher can decide which level best suits the needs of the class.

The playing cards are color-coded by category and star-coded by level: one-star cards for level A2 and two-star cards for level B1.

The teacher can also choose to mix the cards for mixed ability classes.

## OBJECTIVES

The game aims to help students to:

- expand their vocabulary
- review grammar and language structures
- learn something about American culture
- learn something about the geography of the U.S.A.
- learn some riddles in English
- learn some idiomatic expressions

## MATERIALS

- one six-color die and one numbered die
- a playing board with a map of the U.S.A., containing 125 squares (35 photos, 20 instructions)
- 132 playing cards (divided into 6 colored decks each containing 11 one-star and 11 two-star cards)

## PLAYERS

- teams or individual
- a game master (can be the teacher or a student)

## ITINERARY

The playing board represents a map of the U.S.A. with the 48 continental states, plus Alaska and Hawaii.

## GAME SET UP

- Lay out all the game components on a table: playing board, cards, 2 dice.
- Have each team or individual player choose a small object to use as a game token.
- Decide which level of cards you wish to use.
- Shuffle each of the decks of cards and place them face down.

## RULES OF THE GAME

- The youngest player/team leader throws the colored die first and answers a question, read by the game master, in the category corresponding to the color on the side of the die.

Yellow: Riddle

Purple: Idiomatic expression

Blue: Geography

Red: Culture

Orange: Odd One Out

Green: Grammar

- The correct answers are highlighted on the cards to help the game master.
- If a player answers correctly s/he then throws the numbered die and moves along the board.
- Play continues in a clockwise direction.
- If a player answers incorrectly s/he doesn't throw the numbered die and must remain on the square without moving forward.
- If a player's token lands on an instruction square, s/he follows the instructions.
- The winner is the first player/team to reach the end of the itinerary in New York City.

## EXTRA IDEAS

### 1

The teacher asks the students (in groups or individually) to do some research about the various cities on the playing board. They can then exchange information with the rest of the class and/or make a poster. The research could be based on a particular aspect of a city: history, important buildings, festivals or events, famous people, food... etc. Students can be encouraged to carry out research on the Internet, using the suggested websites provided in this guide.

### 2

Students study the playing board carefully, remembering the location of the states and cities. The teacher then hands out blank maps of the U.S.A. on which the students attempt to identify and label each state and locate the main cities. The class corrects the maps together. The teacher can then carry out a simple listening activity by reading aloud a new itinerary which the students mark on their maps. After correcting the maps they can then create their own itineraries in order to make an alternative game.

### 3

The teacher hands out blank copies of the map of the U.S.A. and asks the students to locate the main rivers, lakes, oceans, mountains, and climates, and main cities. They can consult an atlas if necessary. Simple questions can enliven a geography lesson, for example: Which river runs through Boston? What's the weather like in Arizona?

### 4

Based on the information the students have gathered from their Internet search, the teacher invites students to create new sets of questions for each category (geography, culture etc.). These can be used as extra playing cards.

### 5

The teacher hands out the playing cards with idiomatic expressions and asks the students to illustrate the meaning of the expression. This helps the students to understand and remember the expressions in a context. They can also play a mime game; one student mimes an expression and the rest of the class guesses what it is. Points can be awarded for each correctly guessed expression.

### 6

The teacher hands out blank copies of the map of the U.S.A. and asks the students to identify and label each state and general region (e.g. northeast, mid-Atlantic, southwest, etc.), matching it to a typical dish or food. Students can consult the recommended list of websites or others to find information. Examples include: Boston: New England clam chowder; Louisiana: Jambalaya; Alaska: King crab legs; New York: Coney Island hot dog, etc.

## WEBSITES AND INFORMATION

### **Cape Cod and Plymouth Rock (Massachusetts)**

Located on the east coast, near Boston, Cape Cod is a hook-shaped peninsula. The Pilgrims who arrived on the Mayflower first anchored at Provincetown, on the far tip of the Cape, and disembarked on Plymouth Rock, now a historic landmark. The many beaches and connections to other islands nearby make Cape Cod a popular summer destination.

<http://www.capecodchamber.org/>

### **Boston (Massachusetts)**

The city was founded in 1630 and played a key role in the American Revolution. Paul Revere rode from Boston to neighboring towns to warn the citizens of a British attack. The city has a long seafaring tradition because of its vicinity to the ocean, the bay, and the Charles River. Visitors can learn the history of the city by walking the 2.5-mile Freedom Trail. Boston is the state capital and largest city in Massachusetts. The first public school was founded in Boston and many prestigious universities are located in the city and surrounding area.

[www.bostonusa.com/](http://www.bostonusa.com/)

### **Buffalo and Niagara Falls (NY)**

The city is located on Lake Erie, at the head of the Niagara River which flows north over Niagara Falls and into Lake Ontario. There are many Native American stories that tell of the origin of the Horseshoe Falls. The meaning of the word 'niagara' is "thundering waters". This series of impressive falls can be seen and enjoyed from both the U.S. side and the Canadian side as they are on the border between the two nations.

[http://www.niagarafallslive.com/Facts\\_about\\_Niagara\\_Falls.htm](http://www.niagarafallslive.com/Facts_about_Niagara_Falls.htm)

### **Detroit (Michigan)**

Detroit has been nicknamed 'Motor City' because of the auto industry. The Detroit Institute of Arts houses the famous Diego Rivera murals that depict factory workers on assembly lines. Detroit is also the birthplace of Motown Records.

[www.americaslibrary.gov/es/mi/es\\_mi\\_detroit\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/es/mi/es_mi_detroit_1.html)

### **Indianapolis (Indiana)**

It is the capital of the state of Indiana and is home to the largest single-day sporting event in the world: the Indianapolis 500 for car-racing fans. The city also hosts the largest half-marathon race in the U.S. Other attractions include the Children's Museum, the Canal Walk, the Catacombs tour, and the State Fair.

<https://www.visitindy.com/>

**St. Louis (Missouri)**

Built along the Mississippi River, the city's number one attraction and iconic landmark is Gateway Arch. This 630-foot structure was built in the 1960s to honor the explorers Lewis and Clark and America's westward expansion in the 19th century. The city's origins are Native American (Osage and Illiniwek) and French.

<http://explorestlouis.com/visit-explore/discover/25-things-to-do-in-st-louis/>

**Chicago (Illinois)**

Located right on Lake Michigan and called the 'Windy City', Chicago is one of the largest cities in the U.S. It is famous for its incredible architecture and skyline skyscrapers such as the John Hancock Center, the Willis Tower, and neo-Gothic Tribune Tower. The city has many attractions from museums to dining and shopping, including The Bean, a must-see for visitors to the waterfront area.

<https://chicago.com>

**Minneapolis/St. Paul (Minnesota)**

Minneapolis and St. Paul, commonly called the 'Twin Cities', form a large metropolitan area built around the Mississippi, Minnesota, and St. Croix Rivers. Attractions include the Stone Arch Bridge and the Walker Sculpture Garden where visitors can admire the Spoonbridge and Cherry, a monumental fountain-sculpture.

<http://www.visit-twincities.com/>

**Mount Rushmore (South Dakota)**

Mount Rushmore is a mountain located in the Black Hills National Forest. On one side, carved into the mountain face is a gigantic sculpture of the faces of four U.S. Presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt. The site is called the Shrine of Democracy.

<http://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/mount-rushmore>

**Yellowstone National Park (Idaho, Montana, Wyoming)**

A huge national park and one of America's favorites, Yellowstone extends over part of three states. Millions of visitors come each year to enjoy nature's many animal species as well as canyons, rivers, forests, hot springs and ... one of the main attractions, the impressive Old Faithful geyser, a natural wonder.

[www.nps.gov/yell/](http://www.nps.gov/yell/) <<http://www.nps.gov/yell/>

**Seattle (Washington)**

Seattle, also called the 'Emerald City', is known for timber, airplanes, and software. Its most famous symbol, the Space Needle, was built for the 1964 World's Fair. Today it represents the city's focus on high technology: Seattle is home to Amazon.com and Microsoft.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Seattle>

### **Juneau (Alaska)**

The capital of the state of Alaska, Juneau is a fairly small city with a rich history going back before the 1898 Alaska gold rush. Located on an island, Juneau is unique among state capitals because it is accessible only by boat or plane - no roads lead to it. Local natural attractions include the Mendenhall Glacier and the Tracy Arm Fjord.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Juneau>

### **Portland (Oregon)**

Also called the 'City of Roses' because of the annual Rose Festival held there, Portland is on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. The city is known for its liberal political values, clean environment and land use; it is famous for its parks, bridges, bicycle and skateboard paths and it has lively art, theater, and music scenes.

[http://wikitravel.org/en/Portland\\_\(Oregon\)](http://wikitravel.org/en/Portland_(Oregon))

### **San Francisco (California)**

Originally founded by Spanish colonists in 1776, San Francisco grew into a large city thanks to the Gold Rush of 1849. Home to the iconic Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco is also quite close to Silicon Valley, one of the biggest high tech areas in the world.

[http://wikitravel.org/en/San\\_Francisco](http://wikitravel.org/en/San_Francisco)

### **Sequoia National Park (California)**

California is the home of coastal redwoods (the tallest trees in the world sometimes reaching over 300 feet high) and sequoias (the largest and oldest trees in the world sometimes reaching 56 feet in diameter and over 3,500 years old).

<http://www.visitsequoia.com/redwoods-and-sequoias.aspx>

### **Las Vegas (Nevada)**

Built in the Mojave Desert, the city calls itself 'The Entertainment Capital of the World', and is known for gambling, conventions, and nightlife. The heart of the town is The Strip, four miles long, where the hotels, casinos, and luxury resorts are extremely elaborate renditions of famous places in the world.

[http://wikitravel.org/en/Las\\_Vegas](http://wikitravel.org/en/Las_Vegas)

### **Grand Canyon (Arizona)**

The Grand Canyon is among the deepest, longest and widest land formations on Earth. Impressively carved by the Colorado River, in places, the canyon is over one mile deep and shows billions of years of history in the rock formations. The Puebloan Native Americans were the first to inhabit the area, followed by other cultures until the arrival of Europeans. Nearby is another natural wonder, Death Valley - the lowest, driest, and hottest place in the United States, but one of the most beautiful.

[www.nps.gov/grca/](http://www.nps.gov/grca/)

[www.nps.gov/deva/](http://www.nps.gov/deva/)

**Los Angeles (California)**

Originally named 'Ciudad de Los Angeles' or 'City of Angels', L.A. was founded by the Spanish. Today it is a global city that is one of the five largest in the world. It includes Hollywood and is a key location for entertainment, producing more television shows, video games, and recorded music than any other place on earth. Top attractions include the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Universal Studios, Disneyland, the Getty Center, and Griffith Observatory.

[http://wikitravel.org/en/Los\\_Angeles](http://wikitravel.org/en/Los_Angeles)

**Honolulu (Hawaii)**

Located in the island of Oahu, this city is the capital of the state of Hawaii, which is the most remote (furthest from any continent) group of islands in the world. The tropical climate, beautiful nature, and world-famous beaches with gold, red, black, and green sand make this a paradise location. Honolulu is home to iconic Waikiki Beach and the Pearl Harbor memorials.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Honolulu>

**San Diego (California)**

The second largest city in California, San Diego is known for its mild sunny climate, beautiful beaches, large harbor, and long association with the US Navy. A major attraction is Balboa Park and the world-famous San Diego Zoo. Coronado is voted the best beach and the downtown is lively and vibrant, especially the historic Gaslamp Quarter. The city is very close to the Mexican border and the city of Tijuana.

[www.sandiego.org/](http://www.sandiego.org/)

**Sedona (Arizona)**

Sedona is a desert town, surrounded by red rock formations called 'buttes', steep canyons, and pine forests. Visitors are attracted by the beautiful scenery and the energy of this place that was once considered sacred by Native Americans.

<http://visitsedona.com/>

**Salt Lake City (Utah)**

This city was founded in 1848 by Brigham Young and his followers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (a.k.a. 'Mormons'). Mormons are known for their tradition of sending Mormon missionaries throughout the world and for their famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir, made up of 360 men and women and most often accompanied by one of the largest and most elaborate organs in the world. Ronald Reagan called it 'America's Choir'.

[wikitravel.org/en/Salt\\_Lake\\_City](http://wikitravel.org/en/Salt_Lake_City)

### **Santa Fe (New Mexico)**

The city of Santa Fe (which means 'holy faith' in Spanish) was the capital of the northern Mexican territories, but became part of the United States in 1848. Today it is the capital of the state of New Mexico and is known as a center for artists. Visitors are attracted to Carlsbad Caverns, the second largest series of caves in the United States; at sunset every day, tourists can enjoy the spectacle of millions of bats exiting the caves to feed during the night hours.

[wikitravel.org/en/Santa\\_Fe\\_\(New\\_Mexico\)](http://wikitravel.org/en/Santa_Fe_(New_Mexico))

<http://carlsbadnewmexico.com/>

### **San Antonio (Texas)**

San Antonio boasts a rich colonial heritage. Along the San Antonio River, visitors enjoy the eateries and shops that line the River Walk, a landmark promenade. The city is specially known for The Alamo, an 18th-century Spanish mission that stands as a memorial to the battle for Texan independence from Mexico in 1836. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

<http://visitsanantonio.com/>

### **Houston (Texas)**

Houston, the largest city in the state of Texas, is the capital of the American petroleum industry; in 1982 it became the headquarters for the U.S. space program's Mission Control Center, the monitoring center for all NASA manned space flights. The Space Center is the top tourist attraction.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Houston>

<http://spacecenter.org/attractions/>

### **New Orleans (Louisiana)**

This city near the mouth of the Mississippi River has heavy Spanish, French, African, and American influences, forming a unique cultural mix. This is reflected in the spicy cuisine, lively and varied music, and festive spirit. An especially popular time to visit is during carnival time, or Mardi Gras. This city was the center of the 2005 Hurricane Katrina, one of the worst natural disasters in US history.

[http://wikitravel.org/en/New\\_Orleans](http://wikitravel.org/en/New_Orleans)

### **Memphis (Tennessee)**

Memphis, located on the Mississippi River, is the largest city in Tennessee. It is the home of many major American music styles and artists: soul, blues, gospel, rock and roll, and country. Big name artists include Aretha Franklin, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, and the 'King of Rock and Roll', Elvis Presley. His home, Graceland, is a popular tourist attraction.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Memphis>

### **Nashville (Tennessee)**

Nicknamed 'Music City' Nashville is known as the 'home of country music' and a center of the music industry. It is home to the Country Music Hall of Fame and each year the CMA Music Festival is held here.

[www.visitmusiccity.com/](http://www.visitmusiccity.com/)

### **Miami (Florida)**

America's gateway to Latin America, Miami is the largest city in Florida, and a major American hub of finance, commerce, and culture. Nicknamed 'America's Cleanest City' and 'Cruise Capital of the World', Miami is the second largest US city with a Spanish-speaking majority. Popular neighborhoods to visit are Little Havana and Little Haiti.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Miami>

### **Orlando (Florida)**

Orlando is known as the 'Theme Park Capital of the US' because there are more than a dozen in the area. The most well-known and well-loved parks are Walt Disney World, which is made up of four parks including Magic Kingdom, Epcot and two water parks, and Universal Studios. Because of this tourist industry, Orlando has more hotel rooms than any other city in the US.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Orlando>

### **Charleston (South Carolina)**

Once a bustling colonial seaport, Charleston is rich in maritime history. The island citadel, Fort Sumter, is the site of the start of the Civil War (1861-65) because its cannons fired the opening bombardments. This war was fought for the survival of the Union on one side and independence for the Confederacy on the other. The city has been called a "veritable living museum."

<http://www.charlestoncvb.com/>

### **Kitty Hawk (North Carolina)**

Kitty Hawk is known as the site of the first powered heavier-than-air flight. In 1903 the Wright Brothers chose the site because its frequent winds and soft sands were suitable for their glider experiments.

<http://www.kitty-hawk.com/history.html>

### **Washington, DC**

Named after George Washington, the city was founded in 1791 and became the capital of the U.S.A.. Washington is not in any of the 50 states but is in a separate "District of Columbia". Located on the Potomac River, the city is bordered by the states of Maryland and Virginia. It is the seat of national government, with the centers of all three branches located here: The White House, the Capitol, and the Supreme Court.

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/usa/washington-dc>

### **Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)**

Known as the 'City of Brotherly Love', Philadelphia is one of the oldest and most historically influential cities in the U.S.A.. This is the city where the Declaration of Independence was written, leading to the creation of the U.S.A. as a separate country. Philadelphia is home to the Liberty Bell, a symbol of freedom. It was rung for the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence.

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Philadelphia>

<http://www.ushistory.org/libertybell/>

### **New York City (NY)**

Often called "The Big Apple", with a population of 8.5 million people (and 23 million in the larger metropolitan area), this is the largest city in the U.S.A.. It is the home of the United Nations and a center of commerce, art, fashion, and finance. It is the most linguistically diverse city in the world with over 800 languages spoken. The major attractions include The Statue of Liberty, Times Square, the Empire State Building, Central Park, Broadway, and Greenwich Village.

<http://www.history.com/topics/new-york-city>

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