

# Discovery of America - How Christopher Columbus Discovered America?

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One of the most significant dates during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs was 12th October 1492: the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus.



## **When was America discovered by Europeans?**

The first Europeans in America were probably the Vikings who settled on the north-west coast in the AD 1000s. However, more famous is the arrival of the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus in 1492. He was seeking a new route from Europe to Asia when his ships landed on an island in the Caribbean Sea. Columbus believed he was in the East Indies, near Japan or China, and so called the islanders Indians. Christopher Columbus captained the *Santa Maria*, one of three ships in his fleet.

## **Who are the Pilgrim Fathers?**

The Pilgrim Fathers were a group of people from England who sailed to North America in 1620. They were looking for a place to live where they would be free to follow their religion and where they could live by their own laws. Many of the settlers died in the first winter. The following year, survivors celebrated their first harvest, or Thanksgiving, with native people from a local tribe. The Pilgrim Fathers built simple homes of wood, similar to the ones in this modern-day reconstruction.

## **Why was there an American Civil War?**

One of the main reasons for the American Civil War of 1861-65 was slavery. At this time, all people in the northern states were free, but in the south, black people still worked

as slaves. When the south, tried to form a separate nation, the north went to war to keep the USA together. In 1863, the north announced that it would free the slaves when it won the war.

### **Did you know?**

The Statue of Liberty was given to the USA by France on 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration Independence.

### **What is the United States of America?**

The United States of America, or the USA, is made up of 50 states, or regions. The term 'USA' was first used in the Declaration of Independence in 1776, when the American people first declared their freedom from British rule. The Americans went to war with the British and finally won their independence and the right to govern themselves.

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