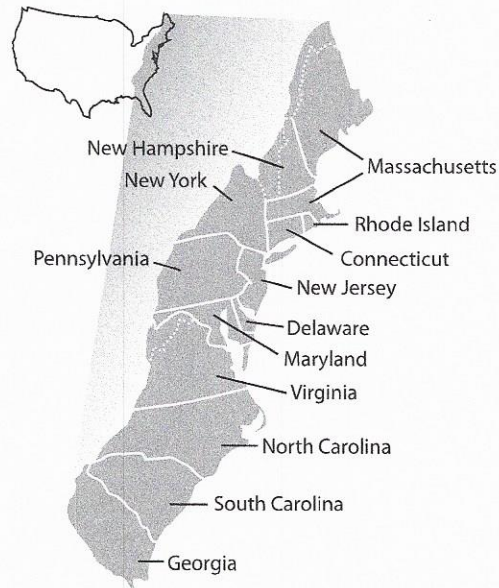


## The American Revolution

- 1 The American Revolution was the war that marked the beginning of the United States. For many decades before the war, this part of North America was ruled by England. Along this Eastern coast, there were thirteen colonies or areas where English settlers lived. Each colony followed the laws made by the English government.
- 2 Many of the people in the colonies were unhappy. Some colonists felt that the English government only wanted money from them. It seemed like the English were forcing the colonists to pay taxes on everything: food, cloth, and tea—everything that they needed. Many colonists also hated paying for the English soldiers who had been sent to protect them from the Native Americans. They thought that they could protect themselves.
- 3 Some colonists hated the idea that a king from across the ocean could be in charge of their lives. They thought that they should have their own government. These people called themselves *Patriots*, and they formed *militias*, small unofficial armies, to protect themselves.
- 4 Some colonists disagreed with the Patriots. They believed that the English government was good, and that the laws and taxes were fair. They believed that the English soldiers provided good protection. These people were loyal to the King and to their English heritage. They came to be called *Loyalists*.
- 5 In 1776, the Patriots declared that they wanted to break away from England and have their own country. They wrote a *Declaration of Independence*. In this paper, they stated



*The thirteen English colonies*

## The American Revolution

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that the colonies would have their own government and would no longer send tax money to England. In response, the British sent their army to fight the colonists. The American Revolution began. (Note: Opinions vary on the start date of the war. Some people consider the battles at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, in April of 1775, as the beginning of the war.)

- 6 On the American side were the Patriots, along with soldiers who came from France and Spain.
- 7 On the English side were the British army, the Loyalists, and many Native Americans. The British also hired some German soldiers to help them. These soldiers were called *Hessians*.
- 8 The fighting was brutal. More than 25,000 people died. At least another 25,000 were wounded. Soldiers burned cities, fields, and villages. No one was safe from their guns.
- 9 The war ended in 1783, when the Patriots won. They signed a treaty with the English king that gave the United States all of the land east of the Mississippi River and south of the Great Lakes (except for Florida, which was part of Spain). This was the beginning of the United States. Everyone who lived in that area was now an “American.”
- 10 Some people were not happy, however. Many Loyalists returned to England or went to Canada so that they could continue being British citizens. Many Native Americans who lived in this area did not recognize the United States as their country, either. They continued to fight for their own independence.



## The Thirteen English Colonies

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