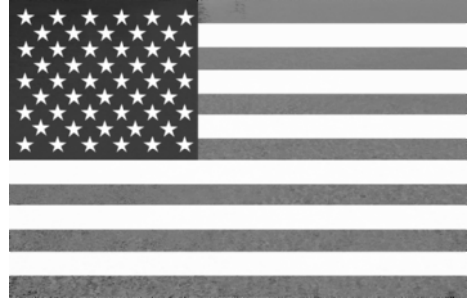




Close your eyes and **picture** the 4th of July in a town in America: Friends and family are partying in the **backyard**. Hamburgers and hot dogs are **sizzling** on the **barbecue**. A large **bowl** of **homemade** potato salad is on the picnic table next to glass **jugs** of lemonade and iced tea. Freshly baked apple **pie** and ice-cream are waiting in the



kitchen for desserts. The backyard is decorated with colorful balloons, and the fireworks are ready for when it gets dark. This is how many Americans **celebrate** their most important holiday – **Independence Day**.

In cities, people stand at the side of the street to watch the 4th of July parade, with its decorative **floats**, **marching bands** and **baton twirlers**. People **cheer** the parade, kids eat **cotton candy**, everyone **waves** flags, and lots of people even paint their faces red, white and blue – the colors of the national flag, the *Stars and Stripes*.

With its **rows** of white stars on a blue background, and red and white stripes, it's easy to see where the flag's name *Stars and Stripes* comes from. The fifty stars represent the fifty U.S. states, and the thirteen stripes represent the thirteen colonies which **fought** against the British in 1775 to become independent. On Independence Day, July 4, 1776, The United States of America was born.

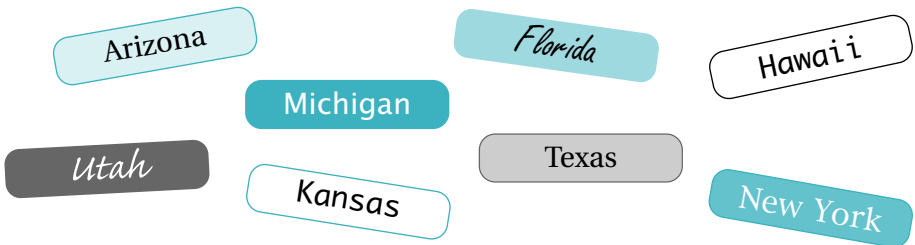
to picture *hier*: sich vorstellen • **backyard** Hinterhof • **to sizzle** brutzeln • **barbecue** Grillparty • **bowl** Schale • **homemade** hausgemacht • **jug** Krug • **pie** Kuchen, Pastete • **to celebrate** feiern • **independence** Unabhängigkeit • **float** *hier*: Festzugswagen • **marching band** Marschkapelle • **baton** Tambourstock • **to twirl** (herum)wirbeln • **to cheer** bejubeln • **cotton candy** Zuckerwatte • **to wave** winken • **stripe** Streifen • **row** Reihe • **to fight** (**fought**, **fought**) kämpfen

But where did the flag's design **actually** come from? The first *Stars and Stripes* was introduced on June 14, 1777 and, some years later, this flag was the inspiration for America's national **anthem**, the *Star-Spangled Banner*. The United States of America **grew** quickly, and as it got larger, it kept needing more stars to represent the new states, and for that reason, the flag has been changed twenty-six times. The latest – 27th – version of the flag was introduced on July 4, 1960 when the 50th state, Hawaii, entered the Union. It's this version you can see today – not only on public holidays but **flying** in people's front gardens or from **flagpoles** at schools and public buildings, on car **bumper stickers**, on **badges**, on clothes, at military **funerals**, at political meetings ... at any time and in any place where it is important to show: we are Americans. ♦

NB: colorful (AmE), colourful (BrE), favorite (AmE), favourite (BrE)

State names

Each American state has one or more **nicknames** that can be found on car **license plates** e.g. *Georgia – The Peach State*.



actually eigentlich • **anthem** Hymne • **to grow (grew, grown)** wachsen • **to fly (flew, flown)** hier: flattern, wehen • **flagpole** Fahnenmast • **bumper sticker** Aufkleber für die Stoßstange • **badge** Abzeichen • **funeral** Beerdigung • **nickname** Spitzname • **license plate** Nummernschild

Write the name of each state in the appropriate gap.

- 1 is known as *the Empire State* because George Washington called it “the seat of the Empire”.
- 2 is called *the Aloha State*. “Aloha” is a Polynesian **greeting** that means hello and goodbye, and is often heard on the island.
- 3 is known as *the Sunshine State*. This sunny, southern state is famous for its oranges, and is a **favorite** holiday destination.
- 4 gets its name *the Lone Star State* from the **5-pointed** star symbol on its state flag. The star is also worn by sheriffs in old Western movies.
- 5 is known as *the Great Lake State* because its name is the same as one of the Great Lakes.
- 6 is called *the Grand Canyon State* for its popular natural tourist attraction.
- 7 is known as *the Wheat State*. Endless **wheat** fields cover much of this prairie state, and **supply** Americans with bread’s most important **ingredient**.
- 8 gets its name *the Mormon State* from the Mormons – a religious group who **settled** near Salt Lake City.

empire Reich • **greeting** Gruß • **favorite** bevorzugt, beliebt • **5-pointed** fünfzackig • **wheat** Weizen • **to supply** liefern • **ingredient** Zutat • **to settle** sich ansiedeln