From the foundation of the colonies beginning with the founding of Jamestown until the beginning of the Revolutionary War, different regions of the eastern coast had different characteristics. Once established, the thirteen British colonies could be divided into three geographic areas: New England, Middle, and Southern. Each of these had specific economic, social, and political developments that were unique to the regions.

* **New England**

**Colonies:** [New Hampshire](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/hampshirecolony.htm), [Massachusetts](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/masscolony.htm), [Rhode Island](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/rhodecolony.htm), and [Connecticut](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/connectcolony.htm). These were known for being rich in forests and fur trapping. Harbors were located throughout the region. The area was not known for good farmland. Therefore, the farms were small, mainly to provide food for individual families. New England flourished instead with fishing, shipbuilding, lumbering, and fur trading along with trading goods with Europe. The famous Triangle Trade occurred in the New England colonies where slaves were sold in the West Indies for molasses. This was sent to New England to make Rum which was then sent to Africa to trade for slaves.

In New England, small towns were the centers of local government. In 1643, Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven formed the New England Confederation to provide defense against Indians, Dutch, and the French. This was the first attempt to form a union between colonies.

A group of Massasoit Indians organized themselves under King Philip to fight the colonists. King Philip’s War lasted from 1675-78. The Indians were finally defeated at a great loss.

* **Middle Colonies**

**Colonies:** [New York](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/newyorkcolony.htm), [New Jersey](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/jerseycolony.htm), [Pennsylvania](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/penncolony.htm), and [Delaware](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/delawarecolony.htm). This area was excellent for farming and included natural harbors. Farmers grew grain and raised livestock. The Middle Colonies also practiced trade like New England, but typically they were trading raw materials for manufactured items.

One important event that happened in the Middle Colonies during the colonial period was the Zenger Trial in 1735. John Peter Zenger was arrested for writing against the royal governor of New York. Zenger was defended by Andrew Hamilton and found not guilty helping to establish the idea of freedom of the press.

* **Southern Colonies**

**Colonies:** [Maryland](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/marylandcolony.htm), [Virginia](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/virginiacolony.htm), [North Carolina](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/ncarolinacolony.htm), [South Carolina](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/scarolinacolony.htm), and [Georgia](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/georgiacolony.htm). Southern colonies grew their own food along with growing three major cash crops: tobacco, rice, and indigo. These were grown on plantations typically worked by slaves and indentured servants. The main commerce of the South was with England. Plantations kept people widely separate which prevented the growth of many towns.

An important event that occurred in the Southern Colonies was Bacon's Rebellion. Nathaniel Bacon led a group of Virginia colonists against Indians who were attacking frontier farms. The royal governor, Sir William Berkeley, had not moved against the Indians. Bacon was labeled a traitor by the governor and ordered arrested. Bacon attacked Jamestown and seized the government. He then became ill and died. Berkeley returned, hanged many of the rebels, and was eventually removed from office by King Charles.

Virginia

Jamestown was the first English settlement in America (1607). It had a hard time at first and didn’t flourish until the colonists received their own land and the tobacco industry began flourishing, the settlement took root. People continued to arrive and new settlements arose. In 1624, Virginia was made a royal colony.

[**Massachusetts**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/masscolony.htm)

Pilgrims wishing to flee persecution and find religious freedom traveled to America and formed the Plymouth Colony in 1620. Before landing, they established their own government, the basis of which was the Mayflower Compact. In 1628, Puritans formed the Massachusetts Bay Company and many Puritans continued to settle in the area around Boston. In 1691, Plymouth joined with the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

[**Connecticut**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/connectcolony.htm)

A group of individuals led by Thomas Hooker left the Massachusetts Bay Colony due to dissatisfaction with harsh rules and settled in the Connecticut River Valley. In 1639, three settlements joined to form a unified government creating a document called the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, the first written constitution in America. King Charles II officially united Connecticut as a single colony in 1662.

[**Rhode Island**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/rhodecolony.htm)

Roger Williams argued for freedom of religion and separation of church and state. He was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony and founded Providence. Anne Hutchinson was also banished from Massachusetts and she settled Portsmouth. Two additional settlements formed in the area and all four received a charter from England creating their own government eventually called Rhode Island.

[**New Hampshire**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/hampshirecolony.htm)

In 1622, John Mason and Sir Ferdinando Gorges received land in northern New England. Mason eventually formed New Hampshire and Gorges land led to Maine. Massachusetts controlled both until New Hampshire was given a royal charter in 1679 and Maine was made its own state in 1820.

[**Maryland**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/marylandcolony.htm)

Lord Baltimore received land from King Charles I to create a haven for Catholics. His son, the second [Lord Baltimore](http://americanhistory.about.com/od/biographiesaf/p/biobaltimore.htm), personally owned all the land and could use or sell it as he wished. In 1649, the Toleration Act was passed allowing all Christians to worship as they pleased.

[**North Carolina**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/ncarolinacolony.htm) **and** [**South Carolina**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/scarolinacolony.htm)

Eight men received charters in 1663 from King Charles II to settle south of Virginia. The area was called Carolina. The main port was Charles Town (Charleston). In 1729, North and South Carolina became separate royal colonies.

[**New York**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/newyorkcolony.htm)

The Dutch owned a colony called New Netherland. In 1664, Charles II granted New Netherland to his brother James, Duke of York. He just had to take it from the Dutch. He arrived with a fleet. The Dutch surrendered without a fight.

[**New Jersey**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/jerseycolony.htm)

The Duke of York granted some land to Sir George Carteret and Lord John Berkeley who named their colony New Jersey. They provided liberal grants of land and freedom of religion. The two parts of the colony were not united into a royal colony until 1702.

[**Pennsylvania**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/penncolony.htm)

The Quakers were persecuted by the English and wished to have a colony in America. [William Penn](http://americanhistory.about.com/od/biographiesmr/p/biopenn.htm) received a grant which the King called Pennsylvania. Penn wished to begin a “holy experiment.” The first settlement was Philadelphia. This colony quickly became one of the largest in the New World.

[**Delaware**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/delawarecolony.htm)

When the Duke of York got New Netherland, he also received New Sweden which had been founded by [Peter Minuit](http://americanhistory.about.com/od/biographiesmr/p/biominuit.htm). He renamed this area Delaware. This area became part of Pennsylvania until 1703 when it created its own legislature.

[**Georgia**](http://americanhistory.about.com/cs/colonialamerica/p/georgiacolony.htm)

James Oglethorpe received a charter to create a colony between South Carolina and Florida. He founded Savannah in 1733. Georgia became a royal colony in 1752.

1754 marked a changed era in America with the beginning of the French and Indian War. From this period on, the colonists became more discontent with British rule as new acts and sanctions were created. The increasing tension between Britain and the colonies would lead to the Revolutionary War.

**Step 1: Complete the chart**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **COLONY** | **WHEN SETTLED** | **LEADER** | **GOAL** | **RESULTS** |
| **Georgia** |  |  |  |  |
| **Rhode Island** |  |  |  |  |
| **Virginia** |  |  |  |  |
| **New Hampshire** |  |  |  |  |
| **Pennsylvania** |  |  |  |  |
| **New York** |  |  |  |  |
| **Massachusetts** |  |  |  |  |
| **New Jersey** |  |  |  |  |
| **Connecticut** |  |  |  |  |
| **North Carolina** |  |  |  |  |
| **South Carolina** |  |  |  |  |
| **Maryland** |  |  |  |  |
| **Delaware** |  |  |  |  |

**Step 2: Create a time line, putting the colonies in chronological order.**