

Summary: Tennessee's Land

Three Grand Divisions

Tennessee is divided into three major regions: East Tennessee, Middle Tennessee, and West Tennessee. People call these regions the three grand divisions of Tennessee.

East Tennessee has three landform regions. One of the regions includes The Unaka Mountains and the Great Smoky Mountains. The Great Smoky Mountain National Park is found here. More people visit this park than any other national park. Another region in East Tennessee is the Valley and Ridge. It has many deep valleys between wooded ridges. The cities of Knoxville and Chattanooga are located along the Tennessee River in this region. The Cumberland Plateau is the third land region of East Tennessee. This region has some sharp valleys and deep ridges. Farming and coal-mining are important industries in this region.

Middle Tennessee

Middle Tennessee includes the Highland Rim and Nashville Basin land regions. Since Highland Rim has many ridges, valleys, sinkholes, and underground caves, the land is not good for farming. The Nashville Basin has good soil for growing crops, such as corn, soybeans, and cotton. Many businesses and factories are located in the Nashville Basin region. Nashville is in the northern part of this region. State government is located there.

West Tennessee

West Tennessee includes the Gulf Coastal Plain and the Mississippi Flood Plain. The Gulf Coastal Plain has some of Tennessee's best farmland. In this land region, farmers grow soybeans, cotton, corn, and hay. Memphis, the biggest city in Tennessee, is located in this region.

The thin strip of land along the Mississippi River is the Mississippi Flood Plain. It is a region that regularly floods when the river overflows. This land region has rich soil that is good for growing soybeans.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

plateau *noun*, a high, steep-sided area rising above the surrounding land

rim *noun*, the outer edge of something

flood plain *noun*, an area near a river that regularly floods when the river overflows



After You Read

REVIEW What are Tennessee's three major regions? Highlight the names of the grand divisions of Tennessee.

REVIEW What are the two landform regions of Middle Tennessee? Draw a box around the sentence that names the land regions of Middle Tennessee.

REVIEW What do farmers grow in West Tennessee? What crops do farmers grow in the Gulf Coastal Plain? What do farmers grow in the Mississippi Flood Plain? Circle the words that tell the answers.