

The Southwest



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**Shown on the cover is the Grand Canyon
in Arizona.**

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From Cowboys to Astronauts

The Southwest United States holds allure for many people. Much of the Southwest remains untouched. Monument Valley in Arizona has been featured in many movies because of its beauty and pristine nature. It is famous for its tall, red **buttes**. They have been the hideout of many Old West movie outlaws and the range for movie cowboys. No doubt, films have helped create a myth around the Southwest. But the Southwest is much more than what is shown on the screen.

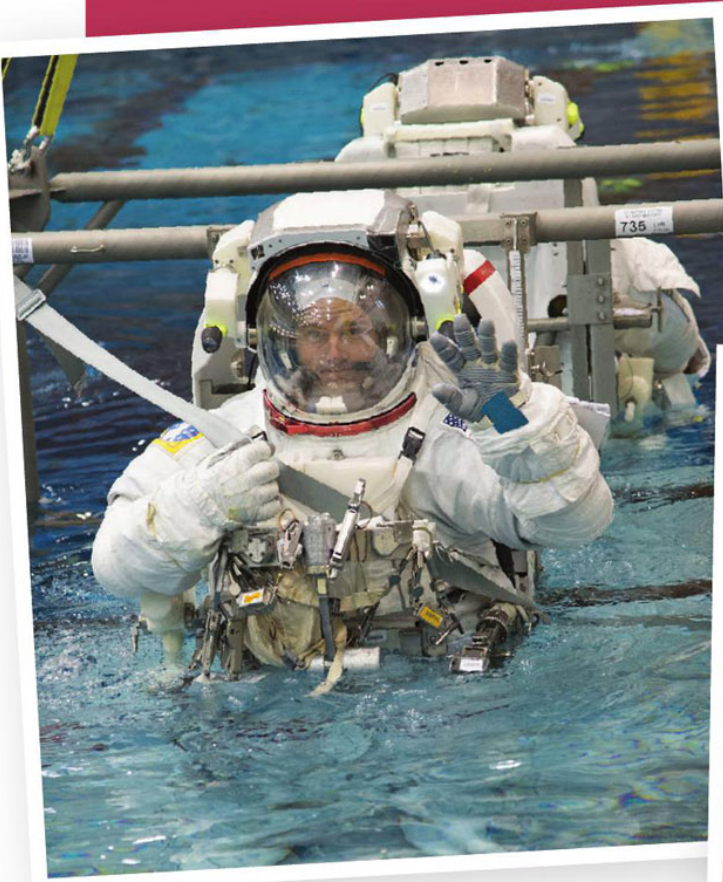
The Southwest includes Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma. These states were some of the last admitted into the United States. Today, much of the land of the Southwest belongs to American Indian tribes. Many people work hard to maintain the rich history and cultures of the native peoples.



Hunts Mesa in Monument Valley, Arizona

The Future Is in Space

The Southwest is also the home of **Spaceport America**. This company is located in New Mexico. It is the world's first spaceport designed for commercial use. It has already launched more than 300 rockets! One day, anyone might be able to fly into outer space from New Mexico.



spacewalk training at the Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory

Astronaut Ellen Ochoa prepares for training at the Johnson Space Center.



The Southwest also looks toward the future. It is home to the Johnson Space Center. The center is located in Houston, Texas. It is where **NASA** astronauts train to fly into outer space. It has been the **mission control** for NASA space flights since the 1960s.

The story of the American Southwest is old. People first arrived in the area thousands of years ago. Its long story is one of loss, change, and hope for the future.

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