

Colorado's History



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Colorado Long Ago

Colorado has been a state for a long time. But it has a history far older than its statehood.

To explore the history of Colorado, we need to look back in time thousands of years. Back before anyone in U.S. history can remember. Back before people wrote down what they did for future people to read.

In this time long ago, the towering mountains we now know as the Rockies were strung across the land. Wide plains spread out east of the mountains. The Grand Mesa stretched its wide, flat top into the western clouds. But no buildings sprouted from the landscape. No highways crossed the plains. And the night sky, free from city lights, was lit with more stars than the eye could see.



Grand Mesa

Grand Mesa is the largest mesa, or flat-topped mountain, in the world. Volcanoes formed it 10 million years ago. Over time, **erosion** has molded it to what we see today.

Pueblo Peoples

The first humans came to the area we know as Colorado about 14,000 years ago. They were **nomads**, following **game** for food. As time went on and they learned new skills, they started to put down roots. The people learned to grow plants for food. They hunted small, local game. They also became experts at making baskets, weaving, and pottery. Using **adobe**, wood, and stone, they built dwellings that would last. In fact, some of those dwellings still exist!



Much of the land was **arid** even then, so storing water was key. They learned to build reservoirs and dams, much as people do now. By doing this, water was there when they needed it. They lived like this for a very long time. Today, we know them as the Pueblo peoples.

Cliff Palace

This city built of stone was made by the Pueblo peoples long ago. Today, it is a part of Mesa Verde National Park.

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