

I'm Mr. Beat

And these are the 25 biggest cities in the United States. Behold!

Well, the 25 biggest METROPOLITAN AREAS in the United States. Aw these people think they're cute and have to live in the suburbs.

In this video, I'm going to explain why the 25 biggest cities in the United States exist, and you're just gonna have to sit there and deal with it. Or stand there. Or walk there. Or run there. Or whatever it is you're doing!

One thing to note here before we begin. I've not only lumped in Ventura County with the Los Angeles metro, I've also lumped in the entire Inland Empire with the Los Angeles metro since I don't think most of those two smaller metros would exist WITHOUT L.A.

Sorry Inland Empire. You have a cool name, though.

#25 Portland, Oregon (2.5 million people)

founded in 1845

Portland exists because it was basically at the end of the Oregon Trail. Oh we traveled the Oregon Trail, alright. Asa Lovejoy from Boston and Francis Pettygrove from Portland, Maine both co-founded the town. However, they couldn't agree on what to name it. So they flipped a coin, and Pettygrove won. So it's named after another Portland. That's it. That's why it's called Portland and not Boston. History is weird. Anyway, Portland quickly became a key supply and transit hub in the fertile and mild Willamette Valley. And with all the forests around, Portland quickly became a lumber town. After the railroads came, Portland became a trade and transport hub. By the end of the 1900s, it had developed a reputation as a place that promoted the arts, environmental conservation, smart urban planning, social justice, and just overall really progressive policies and this further fueled growth.

#24 Austin, Texas (2.6 million people)

founded in 1839

Austin exists because it was the site chosen to be the capital of Texas. Named after Stephen Austin, the "Father of Texas," it was a beautiful area with fertile land and the Colorado River to supply fresh water. It was also centrally located, being right in the middle of Texas and away from the Gulf of Mexico so less vulnerable to an attack. The city initially grew due to government jobs and the construction of railroads. The University of Texas being built there also made it become an education hub. By the end of the 1900s, it became known as the live music capital of the world and generally developed a reputation for being a place where a bunch of smart and extremely creative people lived. In recent years, there's been a huge tech boom, especially since the cost of living is much cheaper there than California.

Of all the cities on this list, Austin is currently the fastest-growing metropolitan area in the country.

#23 San Antonio, Texas (2.8 million people)

founded in 1718

Well shoot, San Antonio is just an hour and a half down the road from Austin. Well...unless there's an accident or construction or you just drive really slowly for funsies.

San Antonio exists because the Spanish established it as a mission and fort as they expanded north, hoping to secure their territory against possible French invasions coming from further north. It was a good spot due to fertile land and the San Antonio River to supply fresh water. They named it after Anthony of Padua. 113 years later, Mexico gained independence from Spain and became its own country and San Antonio became the biggest and most important city in what became known as Texas. After Texas became part of the United States, San Antonio became a major trade and military hub. Ranching and the railroad and oil industries helped it grow. In recent years, its military presence and tourism industry has only increased and many cybersecurity and biomedical companies have sprung up there. And since it's cheaper than nearby Austin, it has attracted more out-of-state residents.

#22 St. Louis, Missouri (2.8 million people)

founded in 1764

St. Louis exists because holy crap why not? It had perfect geography!

St. Louis sits right where the Missouri River meets the Mississippi River, and that's a big freaking deal since, before railroads, rivers were the main way to quickly get around the huge continent. And since the two rivers are arguably the two most important rivers on the entire continent, this spot was about as strategically important for defense and trade as a spot can get. In fact, once upon a time, St. Louis seemed destined to become the biggest and most important city in all of the Midwest. Named after King Louis IX (the 9th), French fur traders established St. Louis as a trading post...an outpost for what was then the frontier for European settlers. After changing hands a lot between Spain and France, St. Louis became the administrative capital of all of Louisiana Territory after it became part of the United States. After Lewis and Clark left St. Louis to explore this vast territory, others would follow, and the city became a hub for folks on their way out to the frontier. By the late 1800s, it was a manufacturing and transportation hub. However, in recent years its growth has stagnated.

The St. Louis metro is only 1 of 5 cities on this list that is currently LOSING population.

#21 Baltimore, Maryland (2.9 million people)

founded in 1729

Baltimore exists because of ships and sugar. Named after Cecil Calvert, the 2nd Baron Baltimore who was the first dude to manage Maryland, Baltimore made sense as a good place to form a city since it had a deep natural harbor. It was a perfect port city, an ideal location for shipping everything from tobacco to grain to....you guessed it...sugar. Sooo many ships went

back and forth between Baltimore and the Caribbean thanks to people's love of sugar...oh and rum and tobacco. And with all the ships needed, Baltimore soon enough became a shipbuilding hub. After the railroads came, Baltimore became one of the first places in the country where ships regularly met up with trains. Even today, it remains a trade hub, for real. More than 52 million tons of international cargo went through Baltimore in 2023 alone.

#20 Charlotte, North Carolina (2.9 million people)

founded in 1768

Charlotte exists it was at Tha Crossroads (Bone-Bone-Bone-Bone)

It was basically at the right place at the right time. Named in honor of Queen Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, hence its nickname, "The Queen City," Charlotte began as a small crossroads settlement in the Piedmont region of North Carolina, right at the intersection of two major Native American trading paths. In 1799, the Carolina gold rush, the first gold rush in American history, brought MANY prospectors to Charlotte, which eventually hosted a U.S. Mint to process the gold and helped it become established as a financial center, long before Wall Street was even a thing. Flash forward to the late 1800s, and Charlotte grew as a rail hub getting raw materials to the North from the South. It helped that its location centered between Atlanta and Washington, D.C.

Two cities we'll be talking about later in this video.

Charlotte also grew to become one of the few manufacturing powerhouses in the south, especially for processing cotton. In recent years, the finance, tech, and transportation industries continue to make it one of the fastest growing cities in the country.

But wait just a second there, bucko. Your personal information...stuff like your address, phone number, but even Social Security number... is being sold online without you even knowing about it. That's why I used to get so many robocalls from scammers.

That's, right. Used to! The good news is that you have the right to request data brokers to delete your personal information in order to protect your privacy. The bad news is that it would take you years to do it manually.

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(<https://incogni.com/iammrbeat>) Thanks to Incogni for sponsoring this video. And now, it's time to talk about a magical place called...(really long, painfully awkward pause)

#19 Orlando, Florida (2.9 million people)

founded in 1843

Oh nice. Our first Florida entry. Orlando exists because of oranges. And Mickey Mouse. But it did start out as a military fort. Americans began settling there after the United States Army built Fort Gatlin near present-day Orlando to fight the nearby Seminole nation. No one knows exactly which "Orlando" the town was named after, as it turns out.

By the late 1800s, Orlando began to quickly grow thanks to its citrus industry- the area's mild climate and fertile soil were great for growing oranges and other fruits that you couldn't grow in other parts of the country or the world for that matter. Orlando was where the railroad ended to ship those fruits to the rest of the country. However, after the Great Freeze, a really cold winter that lasted from 1894 to 1895, nearly destroyed the citrus industry, Orlando diversified its economy. Tourism got big there, as did the defense and aerospace industries. And then, a game-changing moment. In 1965, a dude named Walt Disney announced that he had picked Orlando as the location to build his dream theme park, Walt Disney World. In the following years, additional parks like SeaWorld, Universal Studios, and Legoland turned Orlando into the theme park capital of the world. It's currently one of the fastest growing cities in the country.

#18 Denver, Colorado (3.1 million people)

founded in 1858

Denver exists because of "SILVER AND GOLD" and true grit. No, not the book or movies...actual grit. In the late 1850s, tens of thousands of Americans rushed into the Rocky Mountains during the Pike's Peak Gold Rush, and several of them ended up founding Denver, named after the Kansas Territorial Governor James Denver in order to suck up to him. Yeah, at that time Denver was a part of Kansas! Woahness. So it started out as a mining town, but Denver wouldn't be the Denver it is today if not for a small group of GRITTY leaders in the community who were able to first make sure Denver was the capital of Colorado, and second...secure both private and federal funding to build a railroad that connected Denver to the transcontinental railroad up in Wyoming. After that, a nearby silver boom turned Denver into a transportation hub, especially since it was almost halfway between the Mississippi River and the West Coast. In recent years, the aerospace, energy, and telecommunications industries have sparked growth, along with just a bunch of outdoorsy hippie folks moving there due to the giant mountains nearby.

Rocky Mountain High, Colorado

#17 San Diego, California (3.3 million people)

founded in 1769

San Diego exists because of its sweet, sweet harbor and later for its strategic importance. Thousands of years before Europeans arrived, the ~~the~~ lived where San Diego currently sits, so it was a sweet spot naturally with its nearly perfect climate and protected bay. That bay's deep water port later helped San Diego become a key spot for military defense, shipping, and building up a navy. (Anchorman clip) Named after Diego de Alcala, a missionary, San Diego started out as a fort and the first permanent European settlement on the Pacific Coast of the present-day United States. Missionaries soon moved there to try to convert the locals to Roman Catholicism. But that was in the 1700s, and it was a small town for a really long time after that.

San Diego's big turning point was after the United States took over the city and began building up its Navy there in the early 1900s due to its awesome harbor. During World War Two and afterward, the city dramatically grew as a military and defense industry hub. In recent years, it's grown as a slightly cheaper option for people wanting to live in a beautiful city with a nearly perfect climate. Plus, it helps that Tijuana is nearby.

#16 Tampa, Florida (3.4 million people)

founded in 1855

Well hey, Tampa exists for the same reason San Diego exists.

Tampa Bay, baby. Tampa sits on one of the largest natural harbors in the United States, giving it lots of potential for shipping, fishing, and general naval activity. Supposedly named for an indigenous word for lightning in reference to the area's frequent lightning strikes, Tampa began to take shape when the United States Army established a fort nearby again...to fight the nearby Seminole nation. It's almost like they just stole their land. Once the railroad hooked up with it, Tampa dramatically grew by connecting international trade to interstate trade. Believe it or not, Tampa's first wave of growth centered on cigars. In fact, it quickly became the cigar capital of the world. After phosphate, a key ingredient in fertilizers, got discovered nearby, Tampa grew further due to a bunch of folks mining it. In recent years, the tourism, tech, and finance industries have further fueled growth, not to mention the mild winters. A lot of old people here. Retirees have flocked here in recent years.¹

#15 Minneapolis, Minnesota (3.8 million people)

founded in 1856

Minneapolis exists because some people DO go chasing waterfalls. They DON'T stick to the rivers and the lakes that they're used to.

Yep, Minneapolis, named as a combination of a Dakota word for water and Greek word for city (mni+polis), exists because of a waterfall. Saint Anthony Falls, the only natural major waterfall on the entire Mississippi River. In the mid-1800s, Americans realized the falls could power machines and so they built flour and saw mills. There was already a fort nearby, anyway, where

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<https://www.tampabay.com/news/business/tampa-bay-may-be-the-no-1-major-metro-for-seniors-but-lots-of-cities-are/2266356/>

the Mississippi River intersected with the Minnesota River. Also nearby already? The capital of Minnesota, St. Paul. Well, Minneapolis soon enough would overshadow St. Paul as it became the FLOUR capital of the world. It also became a major lumber town, especially after the railroads came to town. In recent years, Minneapolis has continued to grow thanks to thriving healthcare and tech industries.

Talk about MAJOR apolis. amirite

#14 Seattle, Washington (4.1 million people)

founded in 1851

Location, location, location.

Seattle exists because of its prime location for trade, sitting on one of the most naturally advantageous spots on the continent. It's got the deepwater port on Puget Sound, perfect for huge ships, and easy access to forests, rivers, mountains, and the Pacific Ocean. It was almost inevitable that folks would build a city here, man. Named to honor a Duwamish chief who fostered peaceful relations with the settlers, Seattle first quickly grew as a lumber town and trade hub. After the Klondike Gold Rush, many prospectors went through Seattle on their way up to the Yukon. Jump ahead to the 1900s, and Seattle thrived as a shipbuilding center and aerospace hub. In recent years, Seattle has continued to dramatically grow thanks to its tech and coffee. Microsoft, Amazon, and Starbucks all were born here. Not only that, the city still has a reputation for celebrating a vibrant music scene. After all, this is where grunge was born.

#13 Detroit, Michigan (4.4 million people)

founded in 1701

Detroit exists because of its great access to waterways. As I said earlier, rivers used to be highways, the quickest way to get around the continent, and the French established it as a fort and fur trading post because it sat at the narrowest part of THIS river here that connected Lake Erie to Lake St. Clair. The Detroit River, baby. "Déetroit" just means "the strait" in French. The spot was ideal not only for defense and commerce, but for the expansion of the French colonial empire. Yeah but uh...today they generally don't speak French in Detroit. The British took control of the city in 1760 and then the United States took it in 1796. In the 1800s, Detroit became an industrial and transportation hub due to so many raw materials ending up there. It became a gateway to the Great Lakes. And then (honk)....yep, Detroit famously became the birthplace of the modern auto industry. Three of the biggest car companies that ever existed started here: Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler...aka "the Big Three." By 1940, Detroit was the fourth biggest city in the country, but in the later part of the 1900s it began to dramatically shrink due to manufacturing jobs leaving the United States. It's all gravy, though, as Detroit is experiencing a resurgence in recent years due to its lower cost of living and outside the box thinking regarding city management which has attracted a lot of startups.

#12 San Francisco, California (4.6 million people)

founded in 1776

Similar to San Diego, San Francisco exists because of its sweet, sweet harbor and later for its strategic importance. San Francisco has one of the best harbors in the world. It has deep, protected waters...easily defensible, and easy to get to from the interior. The Spanish quickly realized this when they checked out the area in the 1700s. Named after Francis of Assisi, this monk who was a pretty fascinating dude actually, San Francisco also started out as both a military post and mission. But it wasn't until the California gold rush that the city became known as "San Francisco" and dramatically grew thanks to the flood of prospectors coming in. After this, the secret was out that San Francisco had pretty much had perfect weather all year long and was an incredibly beautiful place.

Despite a devastating earthquake destroying 80% of the city in 1906, it was still such a prime spot that folks quickly rebuilt it. Later San Francisco grew as a center for the counterculture of the 1960s and a haven for the LGBTQ+ community. In recent years, the city has become a major financial center and has had thriving healthcare, biotechnology, and tourism industries.

And then, of course Silicon Valley (clip). Well, not the show, but that show was based on the very real region NEAR San Francisco where many of the world's biggest computer-based companies began.

#11 Boston, Massachusetts (5 million people)

founded in 1630

Once again, it's the harbor. And look at all those bays, for crying out loud. Puritans founded Boston to freely practice their religion as they had founded other towns nearby around that time. As was common practice, they named it Boston after Boston, Lincolnshire, a town in England, as a way to preserve a connection to their English roots. But it also was the capital. Boston was mainly established as the capital of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Today, it's STILL the capital, but of course now the capital of the state...hey hey hey...COMMONWEALTH buddy! of Massachusetts.

Boston quickly became a fishing, shipping, and shipbuilding hub. Due to its sweet, sweet harbor, it became the trading center of New England. Boston played a central role in the American Revolution. It's pretty much always been a religious and higher education center. I mean, some of the most prestigious universities in the world are here. In the 1800s, it became an industrial center as factories popped here before most other cities in the world. In recent years, it's continued to grow as an innovation and technology hub- some of the smartest people in the world live here, ok?

#10 Phoenix, Arizona (5.2 million people)

founded in 1881

Yeah...of all the cities on this list, the existence of Phoenix is the most puzzling.

Phoenix exists mostly because of the Hohokam people doing a kick butt job of irrigating the desert. They developed an extensive canal system to turn the desert into fertile farmland, living there for thousands of years. But by the time Europeans got to the area, the Hohokam people were long gone. In the 1860s, Americans saw the old canals and realized the area could support farming again. The name "Phoenix" comes from the fact that it was indeed a city born from the ruins of a former civilization. Believe it or not, Phoenix initially grew after becoming an agricultural hub, growing crops like cotton and alfalfa. By the end of the 1800s, railroads had connected Phoenix to national markets and it had become Arizona's capitol.

However, Phoenix is located in one of the hottest parts of the country, man. While the winters are sunny and beautiful, the summers can be miserable. It wasn't until the invention of air conditioning that Phoenix quickly grew into a major city. Between 1950 and 1960 the city more than tripled in size, its growth helped by the federal government investing a bunch in it and since then its growth has been fueled by the aerospace, insurance, finance, and healthcare industries. In recent years, many retirees have moved here as it's relatively cheap and has nice weather in the winter. And they're still irrigating alright. As long as the water doesn't run out, Phoenix will thrive.

#9 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (6.3 million people)

founded in 1682

Philadelphia exists because of the vision of a dude named William Penn. Sure, it had access to two rivers and a good port, but Penn, who the state of Pennsylvania is named after, made Philly stand out. He established it as a peaceful, tolerant, and just straight up well-organized community that quickly developed a reputation as the best place to live in the American colonies. I mean, the city's name comes from the Greek words for "brother and "love." City of brotherly love. Its wide streets and public squares would influence countless future American cities. By the mid-1700s, it was the biggest city in the country and a center for publishing, science, and politics. This was the birthplace of American democracy, the site of both where the Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution were created. Flash forward to the 1800s, and Philadelphia had become an industrial and trade center.

In recent years, Philadelphia has kept growing by continuing to be welcoming to immigrants and diversifying its economy, but especially excelling in the healthcare and biotech industries.

#8 Atlanta, Georgia (6.4 million people)

founded in 1837

Originally called "Terminus," Atlanta exists because of it being the location of where the Terminator was sent back in time to assassinate a woman named Sarah Connor. (long pause) Just kidding. It was called "Terminus" because that's literally where a rail line ended. Later the

locals named the town “Atlanta” because it sounded cool.² But yeah, Atlanta exists because of the railroads, a planned transportation hub to get cash crops to the rest of the world. During the American Civil War, Atlanta became a key supply hub for the Confederacy, but that also made it a target, and Union forces famously burned most of it down. After the war, though, Atlanta rebounded as a center for commerce and transportation and became the capital of Georgia. In recent decades, Atlanta has also become a logistics hub and now hosts the busiest airport in the world. Overall, its lower cost of living and high-paying jobs in all kinds of fields has continued to fuel its growth.

#7 Washington, D.C. (6.4 million people)

founded in 1791

Oh come on, you know why DC exists. Oh you don't? I'm sorry.

DC exists because the Founding Fathers needed a neutral capital- a city not tied to any single state but in a separate federal district that could operate independently of local politics and influence. Named after George Washington and Christopher Columbus, the U.S. Constitution literally called for Washington, D.C.'s creation. Thanks to the Compromise of 1790, the northern states got their debts forgiven but the southern states got the country's new capital closer to them. So being the nation's capital, DC has grown in size and power as the UNITED STATES has grown in size and power. But it continues to not only be the epicenter of American politics and government. It's also become a hotspot for consulting firms, law firms, nonprofits, international organizations, and of course...our favorite...lobbyists.

#6 Miami, Florida (6.5 million people)

founded in 1896

Miami mostly exists because of THIS woman, Julia Tuttle. I mean, she's literally known as the “Mother of Miami” today. Tuttle lived in the area when hardly anyone else did. You see, the area was seen as undesirable to most folks since it was hot, humid, and...most importantly...swampy. And the mosquitoes. But Tuttle was determined. She begged Henry Flagler to extend his Florida East Coast Railway to her little settlement, telling him it could become an essential spot for trade, agriculture and even tourism. Only after the aforementioned Great Freeze did Flagler agree to do just that. Remember, I was talking about that way back when I was talking about Orlando? Man this video's getting long.

Anyway, it was mainly the tourists who came down initially. Only after the invention of air conditioning did many people consider staying down here permanently. And oh did they stay. Sure enough, Tuttle's prediction came true, Miami not only became a gateway for trade, but a gateway for immigration. Miami, which comes from the indigenous word “Mayaimi,” meaning “big water,” soon developed a reputation as the closest you could get to tropical paradise without leaving the mainland United States. Many immigrants from Caribbean countries have

² <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/woodruff/news/discovering-atlanta-whats-in-a-name>

settled here over the past 75 years, especially Cuban exiles. In recent years, Americans from other states have flocked to live here for the mild winters, beautiful beaches, and low taxes.

#5 Houston, Texas (7.8 million people)

founded in 1836

Like several other cities on this list, Houston exists because of its great access to waterways. Specifically, the Buffalo Bayou watershed which leads to a series of bays and ultimately the Gulf of Mexico. Named after Sam Houston, the hero of the Texas Revolution and first president of the Republic of Texas, Houston even served as the capital of Texas for a couple years. Once the railroads came, Houston mos def became a major shipping center and commercial hub, especially after the completion of the Houston Ship Channel. Today the Port of Houston is one of the world's largest and busiest ports.

After that, the city began to make a BUNCH of money from oil and eventually became an energy hub. And that fueled growth. Get it? aha! And then, NASA came to town. So it was first trade, then oil, then space exploration. In recent years, Houston has become one of the fastest-growing cities in the country due to its mild winters, relatively cheap cost of living and increasingly important healthcare industry.

#4 Dallas, Texas (8.3 million people)

founded in 1841

More than any other reason, Dallas exists because of the railroads. Possibly named after a vice president, George Dallas, Dallas started out as a trading post for farmers as it was near important Native American trails and possible trade routes between the United States and Mexico. However, once MULTIPLE rail lines all converged through the city in the 1870s, it was almost DESTINED to dramatically grow. By that time, nearby Fort Worth was also dramatically growing due its cattle industry. While Dallas and Fort Worth would both steadily grow, Dallas surpassed it as it attracted more manufacturing. By the end of the 1900s, its biggest industries were banking, insurance, and defense. In recent decades, Dallas and its surrounding cities have become a magnet for businesses and job seekers alike mostly due to its high wages, low taxes and relatively lower cost of living.

#3 Chicago, Illinois (9.4 million people)

founded in 1833

Well look at this freaking map. As you recall from earlier in this video, waterways were once highways, and this was the closest the Great Lakes got to the Mississippi River. Chicago exists because it was a prime spot to connect the two, especially after the Illinois and Michigan Canal did just that. But that canal quickly became irrelevant after Chicago became the literal center of the country's railroad network, further fueling its growth as a transportation hub. You wanted to send something somewhere? Odds are, it had to go through Chicago. Oh you wanted to TRAVEL somewhere? Odds are, you be traveling through Chicago, my friend.

After a fire destroyed most of the city and left more than 100,000 of its citizens without a home, Chicago rebuilt itself SMARTER and FASTER. The city became modern. It attracted more immigrants than most other cities after this. During the (sing) Great Migration hundreds of thousands of African Americans from the South ended up here. All these new folks from around the world made Chicago one of the most culturally rich cities in the country. In recent years, its transportation, financial services, publishing, healthcare, and retail industries have continued to keep it growing. Mostly, though, Chicago, which apparently is a Native American word for this plant that used to heavily carpet the area, continues to grow because it continues to reinvent itself.

#2 Los Angeles, California (18.3 million people)

founded in 1781

Well, similar to the fellow California cities on this list, Los Angeles exists because its geography made it inevitable that it would exist. First of all, a perfect climate. Second, access to fresh water via a lovely little river. Not so lovely now. And third, a lot of flat land to build upon. Named to honor the mother of Jesus herself, Mary but then later shortened to the last part of her title, "the angels," Los Angeles started out as a small group of farmers given land by the Spanish Empire. It would remain a small community until the Santa Fe railroad line connected it to Chicago in 1885. After that, the population exploded, going from around 15,000 to 100,000 in less than 15 years.

In the early 1900s, filmmakers began flocking to the Los Angeles area to escape Thomas Edison's monopoly over making movies. Once the filmmakers got to LA, they stayed for the wonderful weather and wide range of geographical locations and architectural styles nearby. But now too many people were coming, so LA stole some water via an aqueduct so cash me outside how ba da? During and after World War Two, growth remained steady thanks to it becoming a military and aerospace hub. Real estate was cheaper here compared to back east and it was simply easier to build. Tourism got huge and the entertainment industry got even bigger.

Mostly though? LA has continued to dramatically grow in recent decades due to it being such a desirable climate. It's beautiful... ya know... despite the traffic, pollution, and wildfires.

The biggest city in the country is one of the OLDEST cities in the country and the oldest on this list...

#1 New York City, New York (19.9 million people)

founded in 1624

New York City exists because it's on a perfectly located island with easy access to multiple waterways and the Atlantic Ocean. It's the only city on this list started by the Dutch. Yep, they called it New Amsterdam named after yep, the original Amsterdam. It was mostly a trading post.

In 1664, though, the English saw how valuable this island was and took it, renaming it New York, after the Duke of York, who later became James II of England. It grew as a shipping, shipbuilding, trade and finance center during colonial times. Immigrants from many different countries made a lot of money here since sooo many goods came through here. It wasn't until after the United States became a country, however, that the construction of the Erie Canal, which connected the Hudson River to the Great Lakes, turned New York City into the biggest port in the country. It was then THE gateway to the interior. After this, NYC became an even bigger magnet for immigrants, making it the most diverse and one of the richest cities in the world. By the 1900s, it had become the finance, media, and cultural hub not just of the country, but of the entire world. Here's where the first skyscrapers popped up. Some of the biggest infrastructure and public spaces innovations first happened here. It heavily invested in mass transit. And there's been no going back ever since. It could really just ride off of the momentum.

So those are the 25 biggest American cities. Uh, yeah, nobody lives in this area here except for a bunch of cows. Here are the 25 biggest American cities from oldest to newest. Dang New York, you're over 400 years old now? Amazing. You smell great, by the way.

What about you? Are you from one of these 25 American cities? What's your favorite American city? Do the thing. Do the right thing even. Thanks for staying curious.