



The Mini Page

Betty Debnam, Founding Editor and Editor at Large



© 2013 Universal Uclick

from The Mini Page © 2013 Universal Uclick

America's Highways

On the Road

Americans love to drive. And with more than 4 million miles of public roads — from city streets and county roads to U.S. highways and interstates — there are lots of places to go. The next time you are in a car, take a look around. What kind of road are you on?

Highways are roads built to connect towns and cities across the nation. They allow people and products to travel long distances at high speeds in cars, buses and trucks. If the nation were a human body, its highways would be the blood vessels and arteries.

The Mini Page talked with an official at the Federal Highway Administration to learn more about America's longest, biggest and busiest roads.

Before the highways

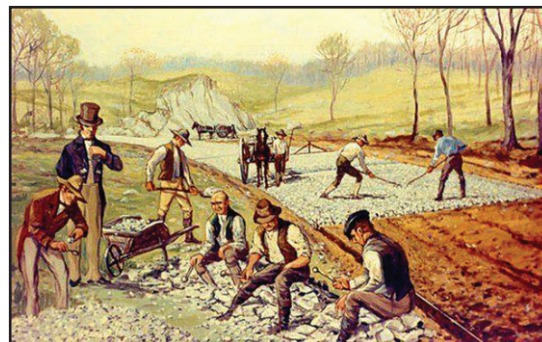
The earliest roads in the United States were more like trails. People rode horses and wagons or just walked to get from one place to another. Almost all roads were unpaved, so if it rained or snowed, these roads became muddy messes.

Some roads were known as **turnpikes**. To travel these routes, you had to pay a fee called a **toll**. By the mid-1800s, trains were the best way to travel long distances.



photo courtesy Missouri Department of Transportation/HNTB Federal Services Corp.

The 3-Trails Crossing Memorial Highway is a multiple-highway interchange in Kansas City, Mo., where three interstates and two federal routes intersect. The area is named for the Oregon, California and Santa Fe pioneer trails that passed nearby in the 1800s, carrying thousands of settlers westward.



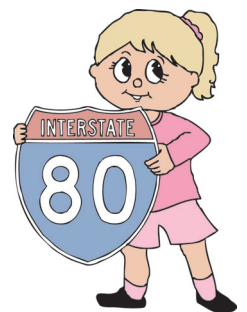
art courtesy Federal Highway Administration

The National Road was America's first "interstate highway," connecting towns in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. President Thomas Jefferson approved its construction in 1806. Thousands of settlers used this semi-paved road to cross the Appalachian Mountains. The road was later extended into Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

Highway Fact-a-roonies

- Number of cars in the U.S. in 1911: 639,000
- Number of cars in 2011: 253,200,000
- Number of licensed drivers in 2011: 211,800,000

• The first highways for cars were called "auto trails." Instead of numbers, they were given names. The Lincoln Highway was the nation's first transcontinental road, from New York City to San Francisco.



Americans on the Move

What's my number?

By the early 1900s, bicycles and automobiles had changed how people traveled. As the U.S. population grew, citizens also needed more food from farms across the country and goods and materials produced in other regions. But most of America's roads were still dirty, dusty and bumpy.

Finally, the federal government and the states decided to work together to create a nationwide highway system. These highways were given numbers:

- Roads that travel **east/west** use **even** numbers.
- Those that run **north/south** use **odd** numbers.

While these new roads helped solve many problems, plans were underway to build something even better.



In which direction do you think this interstate runs?

art courtesy Federal Highway Administration



photo courtesy Federal Highway Administration

Many of the first highways, often known as "routes," passed right through towns and cities. As a result, speed limits varied, and traffic often stopped at busy intersections.

Know your signs

You can usually tell what kind of highway you're on by looking for signs. County roads, state highways, U.S. highways and interstates all use different numbers, shapes and colors of signs to avoid confusing drivers.

In some areas, interstates replaced the existing U.S. routes. Along these stretches you may see signs for both types of highway, though it is actually the same road.

States may use their own shapes and designs for state or county roads.



This is a sign for a county road in New York.

Alaska uses this type of sign, with the Big Dipper, for its state highways.



This type of shield labels a federal, or U.S., highway that is not an interstate.

Ready Resources



The Mini Page provides ideas for websites, books or other resources that will help you learn more about this week's topics.

On the Web:

- fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/brainiacs/index.htm
- nps.gov/fone/historyculture/nationalroad.htm

At the library:

- "Just Fine the Way They Are" by Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge
- "Link Across America: A Story of the Historic Lincoln Highway" by Mary Elizabeth Anderson



Highways

TRY 'N' FIND

Words that remind us of highways are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find: AUTOBAHN, CARS, CITY, CONVOY, COUNTY, EISENHOWER, EVEN, FEDERAL, HIGHWAY, INTERCHANGE, INTERSTATE, MILES, ODD, RAMP, ROUTE, SHIELD, STATE, STOP, TOLL, TRAVEL, TRIP, TURNPIKE.

WHICH INTERSTATE IS CLOSEST TO YOU?



S	E	L	I	M	W	L	E	V	A	R	T	J	B	F
S	R	A	C	I	N	T	E	R	C	H	A	N	G	E
G	S	C	U	R	K	X	U	D	E	S	V	O	Y	D
Y	H	O	E	T	A	T	S	R	E	T	N	I	T	E
T	I	N	Q	V	O	M	L	T	N	O	U	J	I	R
N	E	V	Y	M	E	B	P	L	A	P	T	O	C	A
U	L	O	D	D	M	N	A	V	O	T	I	R	R	L
O	D	Y	A	W	H	G	I	H	L	T	E	K	I	J
C	Z	P	G	R	E	W	O	H	N	E	S	I	E	P

Mini Spy . . .



Mini Spy and her friends are getting ready to take a road trip. See if you can find:

- question mark
- bearded man
- muffin
- number 3
- ladder
- letter E
- ruler
- letter D
- bell
- word MINI
- saw
- kite
- cup
- number 2
- ring
- doughnut
- letter A
- pencil
- number 7



from The Mini Page © 2013 Universal Uclick



Rookie Cookie's Recipe Blackberry Parfait

You'll need:

- 1 (1-ounce) package sugar-free instant vanilla pudding
- 2 cups low-fat milk
- 2 cups blackberries, rinsed and drained
- 3 tablespoons seedless blackberry preserves
- whipped dairy topping



What to do:

1. Make pudding according to package directions; chill for 5 minutes until soft set.
2. Place blackberries and preserves in a small pan; cook on medium heat for 5 minutes to combine preserves and fruit. Let cool.
3. Spoon half of pudding evenly into 4 parfait dishes.
4. Spoon 1/4 cup blackberry sauce on top.
5. Layer with remaining pudding, then with blackberry sauce.
6. Spoon desired amount of whipped topping as final layer.

You will need an adult's help with this recipe.

from The Mini Page © 2013 Universal Uclick

Meet Cole Jensen



photo by Craig Spodin, courtesy Disney XD

Cole Jensen plays Wyatt Bernstein in the Disney Channel series "Crash & Bernstein." He has acted in several TV shows, commercials and a movie. He started taking acting lessons when he was 6 years old and enjoys making people laugh.

Cole grew up in Orange County, Calif. He enjoys hanging out with his friends, biking, basketball, soccer, baseball and playing video games.

He has fun learning new tricks on his yo-yo. He plays the piano and clarinet. He lives with his parents and two sisters. The family has a cat and two guinea pigs.

from The Mini Page © 2013 Universal Uclick



Gus Goodsport's Report

Supersport: Blair Walsh



Height: 5-10

Weight: 192

Birthdate: 1-8-90

Hometown: Boca Raton, Fla.

Blair Walsh spends most of a football game standing on the sideline. But make no mistake, he's one of Minnesota's most valuable Vikings.

As a rookie last season, Walsh was the top placekicker in the NFL. He made all 36 of his extra-point attempts and an amazing 35 of 38 field-goal tries, including one 56-yarder and 10 of 50 yards or more.

That earned Walsh first-team All-NFL honors. Before joining the Vikings, he starred at the University of Georgia, where he set a school and Southeastern Conference scoring record with 412 career points.

Walsh is more than a big foot, however. Along with his brother, he set up a home and hospice care service for youth. He also is a surfer. But he has made his biggest splash as a placekicker.

from The Mini Page © 2013 Universal Uclick



MIGHTY FUNNY'S

Mini Jokes

from The Mini Page © 2013 Universal Uclick

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

Oscar: Did you hear about the owl with laryngitis?

Oliver: He didn't give a hoot!



Obie: What is a smart bird's favorite type of math?

Olive: Owl-gebra!



Owen: What sound do owls and ghosts make when they cry together?

Otto: "Boo-hoooo, boo-hoooo!"

The Interstate Highways

Eisenhower's vision

Dwight D. Eisenhower was America's 34th president from 1953 to 1961. Before that, he served in the U.S. Army for almost 40 years and became a five-star general, the Army's highest rank.



President Dwight D. Eisenhower

photo courtesy White House

In 1919, Eisenhower took part in a military **convoy**, or line, of 72 vehicles and 297 men that traveled 3,250 miles from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco. This trip really highlighted for Eisenhower the poor shape of America's roads. The journey took two months to complete.

Later, Eisenhower commanded the Allies in the defeat of Germany during World War II. There he saw the German **autobahn** (AH-toe-bahn) system. These wide, high-speed highways would become a model for America's greatest roads.

In 1956, President Eisenhower approved the Federal-Aid Highway Act to create the Interstate Highway System.

Look through your newspaper for stories about new highways being built or new technologies that improve travel.

The Mini Page thanks Doug Hecox with the Federal Highway Administration for help with this issue.

What is an interstate?

Interstates are highways with two or more lanes in each direction, with no traffic signals or stop signs. If a vehicle didn't need fuel, it could drive on the interstates forever without having to stop!

Vehicles enter or leave interstates at various points known as **interchange exits**. Most exits have ramps, which allow drivers either to gain speed or slow down. Where two interstates cross each other, drivers can often use an interchange ramp to switch roads without stopping.

Although interstates generally are built and maintained by the states in which they are located, the federal government provides most of the money for their construction and maintenance. These roads must meet certain standards to be considered



photo courtesy Federal Highway Administration

America's newest stretch of interstate opened on Sept. 2, 2013. The new eastern span of California's San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (right) replaced the older bridge (left), which had been damaged in the past by earthquakes.

interstates, and final designs must be approved by the U.S. secretary of transportation. As a result, interstates themselves often appear very similar, though the background scenery may change a lot — from ocean views, forests and cities to prairies, mountains and deserts.

More Highway Fact-a-roonies

- Americans drove 2.95 trillion miles in 2011. That's the same as 402 trips to Pluto and back!

- America's interstates were designed to quickly move military vehicles and soldiers around the country in case of an invasion or an emergency, such as a hurricane.

- Together, America's interstates form the biggest man-made object in the solar system at more than 47,000 miles in length.



- America's longest interstate is Interstate 90, which runs from Boston to Seattle for 3,020 miles.

The nation's longest road is U.S. 20, which stretches 3,365 miles from Boston to Newport, Ore.

- China's expressway system will one day surpass America's interstates, with a planned length of more than 52,000 miles by 2020.

Next week, The Mini Page is all about our congressional leadership.

The Mini Page Staff

Betty Debnam - Founding Editor and Editor at Large Lisa Tarry - Managing Editor Lucy Lien - Associate Editor Wendy Daley - Artist