
Finding The American Dream: How Many Have Taken The Oregon Trail

OREGON TRAIL

The Great Plains The Oregon Trail was an emigrant route in the United States from the Missouri River to the Columbia River country. This was the way to travel back in the 1840s through the 1860s. In 1843 the Great Emigration began and the west would never be the same after the out set of the travelers.

The pioneers traveled by wagon train. They did not, however, follow any single narrow route. In open country the different trains might spread out over a large area, only to meet again for river crossings and mountain passes. In time many different routes also came to be. They originated at various places on the Missouri, but Independence was the main starting point to travel west. Those starting from Independence followed the same route known as the Santa Fe Trail for some 40 miles, then traveled to the Platte and generally followed that river to the North Platte and then the South Platte. Crossing the South Platte, the main trail followed the North Platte to Fort Laramie, then to the present Casper, Wyo. and through the mountains by the South Pass to the Colorado River. The travelers then went to Fort Bridger, from which the Mormon Trail continued to the Great Salt Lake, while the Oregon Trail went northwest across a divide to Fort Hall, on the Snake River. The California Trail branched off to the southwest, but the Oregon Trail continued to Fort Boise. From that point the travelers had to make the hard climb over the Blue Mountains. Once those were crossed, paths diverged somewhat; many went to Fort Walla Walla before proceeding down the south bank of the Columbia River, traversing the Columbia's gorge where it passes through the Cascade Mountains to the Willamette Valley, where the early settlement centered. The end of the trail shifted as settlement spread. The mountain men were chiefly responsible for making the route known, and Thomas Fitzpatrick and James Bridger were known as guides.

The first genuine emigrant train was that led by John Bidwell in 1841, half of them went to California, the rest proceeding from Fort Hall to Oregon. The first train of emigrants to reach Oregon was that led by Elijah White in 1842. Great Emigration occurred in 1843 of more than 900 persons and more than 1,000 head of stock

. By 1845 the emigrants reached a total of more than 3,000. Although it took the average train about six months to travel the 2,000-mile route, the trail was used for many years. Travel gradually declined with the coming of the railroads, and the trail was abandoned in the 1870s.

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)

Many trail sites are now preserved in the Oregon National Historic Society. The Oregon Trail travelers would go down in American history as the Oregon Trail being longest of the great overland routes used in the westward expansion of the United States. It was 2,000 miles (3,200 kilometers if u know what they are) through prairies and deserts and across mountains from Independence, Missouri, to the Pacific Northwest. Even today, people can see the deeply rutted road cut by wagon wheels along sections of the trail.

Travel on the Oregon Trail was a severe test of strength and endurance. The journey in a covered wagon took six months. Settlers often had to cross flooded rivers. Indians attacked the wagon trains, and cholera and other diseases were common. Food, water, and wood were always scarce, and the travelers often encountered contaminated water holes.

Explorers and fur traders first traced the course of the Oregon Trail. In 1805, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark traveled on a western section of the route in the region of the Snake and Columbia rivers. Traders returning from Astoria also used the trail. Benjamin Bonneville is credited with taking the first wagons through South Pass in the 1830's. Nathaniel J. Wyeth also led companies over the trail. John C. Fremont surveyed a portion of the route in 1842 for the United States Army.

Poo yes, the emigrant to the west used buffalo chips as a fuel source. Children would occasionally throw them around in a Frisbee like manner.

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)