

Virginia's Major Industries and Products

1. Virginia has a strong economy with many kinds of industries and products. Top products and industries for Virginia include architectural and engineering services, banking and lending, computer programming or systems design, food products and shipbuilding.
2. The service industry is important to Virginia's economy. Virginians earn income through jobs in private health care, computer programming or systems design, and engineering, government services, including operation of public schools, hospitals and military bases. Tourism is also an important industry, especially in the Coastal Plain. Every year, thousands of tourists visit Virginia beaches, theme parks and historical sites.
3. Manufacturing, which is the making of goods on a large scale, using machinery, is also a top industry. Top manufactured products in Virginia include ships, tobacco products, beverages, chemical goods, motor vehicle parts and trucks.
4. Fertile soil and a favorable climate make agriculture an important industry in Virginia, especially in the Piedmont, Blue Ridge Mountains and the Valley and Ridge. Chickens, cows, milk, turkeys and hogs are Virginia's leading livestock products. Soybeans, corn, tobacco, tomatoes, apples, and peanuts are among Virginia's leading cash crops today. Tobacco, once the basis of Virginia's economy, has been replaced by livestock and livestock products as the state's most valuable source of agricultural income.
5. Access to deep water ports in the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean make shipbuilding, fishing, crabbing and oyster harvesting possible in the Coastal Plain region.
6. Historically, the success of the coal fields in the Appalachian Plateau was due to the growth of railroads that transport coal to piers in the Tidewater for shipment to other parts of the United States and around the world. Today, coal is less important to Virginia's economy as businesses and individuals shift to other sources of energy.
7. Virginia's transportation system, which includes highways, railroads, air transportation, and shipping, moves raw materials to factories and finished products to markets. Virginia exports agricultural and manufactured products, including tobacco, poultry, coal, and large ships. Export means to send products to another country for sale. Virginia plays an important role in the global economy.