




# Transatlantic Trade

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1607-1754



# Mercantilism

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- Throughout both the 17th and 18th centuries, the British controlled colonial trade through the Navigation Acts.
- Navigation Acts (1660): These laws restricted colonial trade, so that all of the raw materials coming from the thirteen colonies and other overseas possessions went only to ports in the British Empire.
- Mercantilism: A policy which utilized raw materials from colonies to enrich the ruling country.
- Triangular Trade: A ship with rum from an American port would sail to West Africa, exchange their goods for slaves and drop them off in the Caribbean. In the Caribbean, the same ship would then carry molasses back to the American port (to distill more rum).

# Trade Goods

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Agriculture– the vast majority of the colonists were small farmers.

The following goods were invaluable for trade from the following colonial regions:

Chesapeake- tobacco and small farm products

The Middle Colonies- wheat, flour, dairy products, beef, fruits and vegetables, furs and iron-making

New England- fishing, whaling, shipbuilding, furniture, lumbering and furs

Lower South- rice, indigo, furs and naval stores

West Africa- Slaves

The Caribbean Islands- Molasses and Slaves

England- Manufactured Goods

# The Impact of Transatlantic Trade- Part I of II

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- Molasses Act (1733)- represents an attempt by the British government to regulate colonial trade and to keep the colonists from trading with other European powers (it was an extension of the Navigation Acts)
- The American colonists enjoyed a higher standard of living than their British counterparts. Smuggling became more rampant as the colonists were searching for more markets to trade their goods for better profits.
- Over time, the colonists became increasingly frustrated with the British policy of mercantilism as colonial populations expanded, more colonists became wealthier and a reliance upon British manufactured goods increased.

# The Impact of Transatlantic Trade- Part II of II

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- While colonial ports in Philadelphia, Boston, New York and Charleston were busy centers of commerce, the colonists were hampered by poor roads and depended upon both port cities and navigable rivers for trade. Taverns arose in cities– becoming places for learning the news, swapping stories and exchanging ideas. By 1750, a postal system had emerged and early roads began linking the colonists together.
- The Anglican Church (or Church of England) remained important in the Southern Colonies, while the Congregational Church (Puritan-based) remained important in New England.
- In general, in the American people could feel free to worship, or not worship, as they pleased.