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# Jamestown Settlement

## Escort Notes

**IT STARTED AT JAMESTOWN.** In 1607, a band of 104 men and boys dropped anchor and began to build a settlement. They were on a mission sponsored by the Virginia Company of London to earn a profit from the riches of the New World.

Today at Jamestown Settlement, near the original site of America's first permanent English colony, your groups will explore life in 17th-century Virginia. A visit starts with the historical docudrama *Jamestown: The Beginning*. Indoor gallery exhibits examine Jamestown's origins in England, the world of the Powhatans of coastal Virginia, the cultural background of Africans in 17th-century Virginia and the first century of the Virginia colony, when Jamestown served as its capital.

Outdoors are life-size re-creations of a Powhatan Indian village, the fort built by the Jamestown colonists and the three ships that brought them from England. In each of the three areas, historical interpreters dressed in authentically styled period clothing demonstrate what it may have been like to live in the early 17th century. A riverfront discovery area focuses on the vital role of the James River and other waterways in Powhatan Indian, European and African commerce, travel and subsistence.

Throughout the outdoor areas, costumed historical interpreters are guides to the past, helping your group experience history—from twisting native grasses into rope in the Indian village, to trying on armor in James Fort, to using 17th-century navigational instruments on board the ships.



Climb aboard re-creations of the three ships – *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed* and *Discovery* – that brought colonists from England.

## A Jamestown Chronology

**1607** - On May 13, nearly five months after departing from England, leaders of an expedition of 104 colonists selected a site on the James River for a settlement. The group was sponsored by the Virginia Company of London, whose investors hoped to make a profit from the resources of the New World. The group named their settlement for King James I.

**1608** - Captain Christopher Newport, commander of the 1607 Jamestown expedition, returned to Virginia in January with settlers and goods. It was the first of a series of regular arrivals in the colony. John Smith was elected president of the governing council in the fall. Smith returned to England the next fall (1609) to recover from a gunpowder wound and never returned to Virginia.

**1611** - Elizabeth City and Henrico were established, marking the beginning of expansion beyond Jamestown.

**1613** - The first sample of dried tobacco cultivated by John Rolfe was shipped to England about this time. Tobacco was the "golden weed" that ensured the economic survival of the colony. Pocahontas was kidnapped by the English.

**1614** - Pocahontas married John Rolfe after being baptized in the Anglican Church. She died in England three years later (1617).

**1619** - The first representative legislative assembly in British America met at Jamestown on July 30. The first documented people of African origin in Virginia arrived aboard an English privateersailing under Dutch colors.

**1620** - The Plymouth colony was established in Massachusetts.

**1624** - King James revoked the charter of the Virginia Company, and Virginia became a royal colony.

**1699** - The capital of Virginia moved from Jamestown to Williamsburg.



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