

# Burgers and the USA



For many people around the world a burger is more than just food – it is a symbol of the USA and its way of life. How did it all start?

## White Castle

White Castle started in 1921 and was the first restaurant company that sold burgers. In these restaurants, the most important thing was to prepare the food quickly and easily. The cook did not have to be an expert. It was also the first company to use cardboard boxes and cups.



Teenagers at a Baltimore drive-in, 1960

## The drive-in

In the 1940s, the car was becoming more and more important to Americans. In new drive-in restaurants, people stayed in their cars and waiters brought the food out to them. These drive-in restaurants became very popular with American teenagers.

## The burger bar

In 1940 two brothers, Richard and Maurice McDonald opened a drive-in burger bar in California. Eight years later they made some changes to the McDonalds restaurant. People had to collect their own food. The food arrived quickly and the prices were cheap.



Arkansas, USA

Are there fast food restaurants where you live? What food do they sell?

## Fast food today

Today McDonalds is the top fast food company in the USA. White Castle is still quite popular, but is not as big as many other fast food companies. And, of course, burgers are not the only kind of fast food that people can buy. Americans spend over \$110 billion on fast food every year.

## Around the world

Today there are American fast food restaurants in over 100 different countries. McDonalds has over 31,000 restaurants and more than 1.5 million workers around the world.



Near Shanghai, China

What do these words mean?  
You can use a dictionary.

symbol company cardboard