

Where do the Cherokee Indians live?

The Cherokees are original residents of the American southeast region, particularly [Georgia](#), [North](#) and [South Carolina](#), [Virginia](#), [Kentucky](#), and [Tennessee](#). Most Cherokees were forced to move to Oklahoma in the 1800's along the Trail of Tears. Descendants of the Cherokee Indians who survived this death march still live in Oklahoma today. Some Cherokees escaped the Trail of Tears by hiding in the Appalachian hills or taking shelter with sympathetic white neighbors. The descendants of these people live scattered throughout the original Cherokee Indian homelands.



How is the Cherokee Indian nation organized?

There are three **federally recognized** Cherokee tribes:

- the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma,
- the United Keetoowah Band in Oklahoma,
- and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina.

Other Cherokee communities in Alabama, Georgia, and other states are considered unofficial by the US government. The Eastern Cherokee people live on a **reservation**. The Oklahoma Cherokee people live on trust land, though many Cherokees call it a reservation anyway. Each Cherokee tribe has its own government, laws, police, and services, just like a small country.

What language do the Cherokees speak?

Most Cherokee people speak English today, but 20,000 people also speak the **Cherokee Indian language**. Cherokee is a complex language with soft sounds. If you'd like to know a few easy [Cherokee words](#):

- "osiyo" (pronounced oh-see-yoh) is a friendly greeting, and
- "wado" (pronounced wah-doh) means 'thank you.'

How do Cherokee Indian children live?

Anejodi, a [stickball](#) game related to the Iroquois game of lacrosse, was a popular sport among Cherokee teenagers and adult men. Like many Native Americans, Cherokee mothers traditionally carried babies in [cradleboards](#) on their backs--a custom which many American parents have [adopted](#) now.



What were men and women's roles in the Cherokee tribe?

Like their distant cousins the [Iroquois](#), the Cherokee Indians had an even division of power between men and women. Cherokee men were in charge of hunting, war, and diplomacy. Cherokee women were in charge of farming, property, and family. Men made political decisions for the tribe, and women made social decisions for the clans. Chiefs were men, and landowners were women. Both genders took part in storytelling, artwork and music, and traditional medicine. Today, Cherokee gender role traditions have changed. Cherokee women can be chiefs also... and Cherokee men are sometimes farmers. However, modern Cherokee people still trace clan relationships through their mothers.