

The Fur Trade & Early Canada — Knowledge Organiser

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Key facts

- From the 1600s, the fur trade was the most important business in early Canada.
- Beaver fur was especially valuable for making hats in Europe.
- Indigenous peoples were essential partners, trading furs and sharing survival knowledge.
- The Hudson's Bay Company, founded in 1670, became one of the largest fur-trading companies.

Key vocabulary

- Fur trade — the buying and selling of animal furs.
- Voyageur — a French-Canadian canoe traveller who carried furs and goods.
- Trading post — a place where furs and goods were exchanged.
- Pelt — an animal's fur and skin.

Why it mattered

The fur trade drove explorers deep into the land, built early towns and routes, and brought French, British and Indigenous peoples together in trade. In many ways, it shaped the country Canada became — including the Métis people, who emerged from these connections.