



Native American Tribes: Ute



Ute bride and groom



Ute chief and family, about 1899

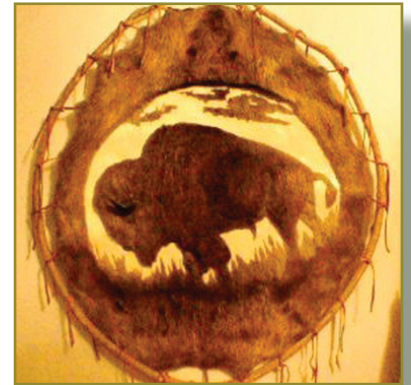
The Ute is a tribe of Native Americans who lived in the western part of the U.S. They originally lived in Utah, Colorado and parts of New Mexico and Wyoming. In the tribal language, Ute means “people of the mountains.” The Utes were organized into several independent groups, called bands. There were at least 17 separate Ute bands.

The Ute got horses from early Spanish explorers in the 1600s. Horses greatly changed the Ute culture. Horses allowed the Ute to travel widely and the tribal economy was based on horse ownership.

The Ute spent many years in a series of wars with neighboring tribes, such as the Apache and Navajo; the Spanish and later with the Americans. In 1864, the U.S. first established a reservation for the tribe in Utah.

The Ute are known as artists. They specialize in complex beadwork, paintings and carvings.

Today there are three Ute reservations in Utah, Colorado and New Mexico. There are about 10,000 members of the Ute tribe. Utah’s name come from the word “Ute.”



Ute painting of a buffalo on hide

Secret Code Word

Use the secret code to find a word about the Ute. Write the letter in the blank that matches the number from the code.

B	E	A	D	W	O	R	K
2	5	1	4	23	15	18	11

Secret code

1 = A	7 = G	13 = M	19 = S	25 = Y
2 = B	8 = H	14 = N	20 = T	26 = Z
3 = C	9 = I	15 = O	21 = U	
4 = D	10 = J	16 = P	22 = V	
5 = E	11 = K	17 = Q	23 = W	
6 = F	12 = L	18 = R	24 = X	

Q&A

Who did the Ute get horses from?

The Spanish

What does the word “Ute” mean in the tribal language?

People of the mountains

Where are the three Ute reservations?

Utah, Colorado and New Mexico

What are the independent groups of Utes called?

bands