

# About.com Geography

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## How did Pakistan get its name?

The name of the country Pakistan<sup>1</sup> has a fascinating history - it is essentially an acronym.

Prior to 1947, the country now known as Pakistan was a British colony. In 1947 the United Kingdom granted independence to the region under a new name, Pakistan. The name had been developed by a group of students at Cambridge University who issued a pamphlet in 1933 called *Now or Never*. They came up with the term "Pakistan" as "composed of letters taken from the names of our homelands: that is, Punjab, Afghania [North-West Frontier Province], Kashmir, Iran, Sindh, Tukharistan, Afghanistan, and Balochistan. It means the land of the Paks, the spiritually pure and clean."

Although the suffix "stan" means country in Hindi and Persian, the students were able to fit the names of homelands to create an appropriate country name.

## How Did Pakistan Get Its Name and and What Does the Name Pakistan Mean In Urdu and Persian?

Pakistan is a relatively new country, and many believe it got its name in an unusual way.

Its letters come from the first letters of the country's homelands: Punjab, Afghania, Kashmir, Iran, Sindh, Tukharistan, Afghanistan, and Balochistan (not for its first letter but for the last).

The countries of East and West Pakistan were carved out of India in 1947 to settle religious differences between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority.

East and West Pakistan became the homeland for Muslim Indians.

Several years later, East Pakistan declared its independence and became the nation of Bangladesh. West Pakistan then became known simply as Pakistan.

The suffix "-stan" at the end of several Asian country names means "nation" or "land."

The name Pakistan (the letters) comes from:

P- Punjab

A- Afghani aka North West Frontier Province which in the present day is known as Khyber Pakhtun Khwa

K- Kashmir

I- it's simply there to make the names pronunciation easy

S- Sindh

TAN- the last 3 letters of Balochistan.