

Key Dates of United States History

The Colonies

- 1607- England colonists found the Jamestown colony
- 1620- The Pilgrims sign the mayflower Compact.
- 1630- Puritans found the Massachusetts Bay colony
- 1770- The Boston Massacre takes place
- 1773- Parliament passes the Tea Act which allows the East India Company to sell tea cheaply in the colonies. Patriots stage the Boston Tea party in December.
- 1774- Parliament passes the Intolerable Acts, which restrict colonial powers
- 1775- On April 19 the Revolutionary War begins with the fighting at Lexington and Concord
- 1776- On July 4 the 13 colonies issue the declaration of Independence and break away from Great Britain.
- 1781- In October the British surrender to George Washington at Yorktown securing the victory in the Revolutionary War.
- 1781- The Articles of Confederation are ratified by the 13 colonies
- 1787- The Constitution is signed on September 17
- 1791- The Bill of Rights is ratified by the states in December
- 1789- George Washington is elected president on April 6
- 1796- Washington publishes his Farewell Address and John Adams is elected president

The Expanding Nation

- 1803- The Senate approves the Louisiana Purchase
- 1804- Lewis and Clark explore the Purchase
- 1812- Congress declares war on Great Britain
- 1838- The Trail of Tears begins, as U.S. troops remove the Cherokee from Georgia
- 1837- Horace Mann becomes the first secretary of education in Mass.
- 1848- The first meeting for women's rights is held in New York
- 1848- Gold is discovered in California
- 1855- Boston lets African American children attend school

A Divided Nation

- 1852- Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes Uncle Tom's Cabin
- 1856- John Brown and his followers kill five pro-slavery settlers in the Pottawatomie Massacre
- 1860- Lincoln is elected president
- 1861- Confederate guns open fire on Fort Sumter in South Carolina on April 12
- 1863- The Emancipation Proclamation goes into effect on January 1
- 1863- On November 19 President Lincoln delivers the Gettysburg Address
- 1865- General Lee surrenders to General Grant at Appomattox Courthouse on April 9
- 1868- President Johnson is impeached
- 1875- Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1875
- 1876- Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone
- 1879- Edison invents the light bulb

World War I

- 1917- The U.S. Congress declares war on Germany on April 6
- 1918- President Wilson announces the 14 points to negotiate peace after WWI
- 1919- The Treaty of Versailles, the peace treaty, resolves WWI
- 1927- Charles Lindbergh finishes the first solo transatlantic flight
- 1929- The stock market crashes on October 29, leading to the Great Depression
- 1933- FDR passes his New Deal thus creating many jobs

Major Wars

1941- On December 7, Japanese planes bomb Pearl Harbor. Congress declares war the next day

1944- On June 6th, Allied troops storm German defenses on the beaches of Normandy, France

1945- A U.S. warplane drops an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6. On August 9, a second atomic bomb is dropped on Nagasaki, Japan

1947- President Truman announces the Truman Doctrine

1949- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is created

1950- The Korean War begins

1953- The Korean War ends

A Time of Change

1954- The Supreme Court declares segregation illegal in its Brown vs. Board of Education ruling.

1959-Alaska and Hawaii become the 49th and 50th states.

1962-President Kennedy demands that the Soviets remove missiles from Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis.

1963-President Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas, and Vice-president Johnson becomes the president.

1965-Martin Luther King is assassinated.

1969-U.S. astronauts walk on the moon in July.

1961-President Kennedy sends members of the Special Forces and more U.S. military advisors to Vietnam.

1979-The Paris Peace Accords are signed ending the Vietnam War.

1991-The Persian Gulf War begins.

1995-The Dayton peace accords are signed, bringing the end to the Bosnian War.

2001-On September 11th terrorists attack the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.