

United States History – Skeleton Outline

- 1663 Conclusion of the Seven Years War between France and Britain, transferring French Canada and the Ohio Valley to the British Crown.
- 1665 Britain passes the Stamp Act, to raise taxes in the colonies for the defence of the new territories. Thirteen British colonies along the Atlantic seacoast are united in opposition to paying the tax.
- 1770 Boston Tea Party. Britain closes the port of Boston and sends four regiments to maintain order.
- 1776 Declaration of Independence. Thirteen colonies unite in armed struggle for independence. George Washington appointed army commander.
- 1781 British army surrounded at Yorktown and forced to surrender. Congress finally agrees to Articles of Confederation.
- 1783 The Peace of Paris concludes American War of Independence. Many loyalists come to Canada.
- 1787 Congress adopts a new Constitution to replace the Articles of Confederation, and appoints George Washington as the first President. Slaves are counted as three fifths of a person and enjoy no rights of citizenship.
- 1803 The Louisiana Purchase. The United States more than doubles its territory.
- 1812 United States declares war on Britain and attempts to invade Canada.
- 1820 Missouri Compromise agrees the terms under which western territories can join the Union as Free or Slave States.
- 1823 President James Monroe proclaims the Monroe Doctrine, stating that future colonisation in the Americas would not be accepted by the United States.
- 1846 United States declares war on Mexico, and, in 1848, acquires California, Arizona, Nevada and Utah.
- 1849 California Gold Rush.
- 1850 Fugitive Slave Act means no escaped slave is safe to build a new life in the North.
- 1854 Republican Party founded by anti-slavery northerners. Kansas-Nebraska Act allows incoming settlers to decide whether to permit slavery.
- 1857 Supreme Court announces, in the Dred Scott decision, that negroes could not be regarded as citizens of the United States, and did not have the right to sue in their courts.
- 1860 Abraham Lincoln elected first Republican president of the U. S. Starting with South Carolina, eleven states eventually secede to form the Confederate States of America
- 1861 American Civil War begins
- 1863 President Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation, giving freedom to slaves in states in rebellion to the United States.
- 1865 Civil War ends with the defeat of the Confederacy. President Lincoln is assassinated. Reconstruction begins.
- 1869 Transcontinental railway link completed.

- 1876 Custer's Last Stand. Rutherford Hayes elected president after agreeing to withdraw federal troops from the South. The end of Reconstruction.
- 1880 Rise of big monopolies and combines, controlled by "Robber Barons", such as John D. Rockefeller, (Oil); Cornelius Vanderbilt, (Shipping and Railways); Andrew Carnegie, (Steel); J. P. Morgan, (Banking).
- 1898 Spanish American War starts after USS Maine explodes in Havana harbour. Spain is defeated, and the United States occupies Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, emerging as an imperial power.
- 1901 Theodore Roosevelt becomes president after assassination of President William A. McKinley. Remembered for founding the first national parks, starting the Panama Canal, "Trust Busting" and the "Big Stick Policy".
- 1912 Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, becomes the first southern President since before the Civil War.
- 1917 America finally enters the Great War against Germany.
- 1918 The Great War ends in an Armistice. President Wilson embarks for Europe determined to use all his influence to launch a League of Nations.
- 1919 Prohibition becomes the law after the Eighteenth Amendment is ratified. President Wilson suffers a stroke. The League of Nations is rejected by the U. S. Congress. A time of racial and civil violence and unrest.
- 1920s Roaring Twenties. A general increase in partying, flouting the law, gangsterism, and business and Stock Market speculation.
- 1929 Wall Street Crash. The beginning of the Great Depression.
- 1932 Franklin Delano Roosevelt elected President, promising a New Deal and an end to Prohibition. Initiates a policy of massive government intervention to build public works and relieve unemployment.
- 1939 World War II breaks out in Europe.
- 1940 Franklin Roosevelt re-elected for unprecedented third term.
- 1941 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. Germany declares war on the United States. America becomes the "Arsenal of Democracy".
- 1944 Roosevelt wins unprecedented fourth term, with Harry Truman as Vice President.
- 1945 United Nations is born. Germany is defeated. Roosevelt dies and Harry Truman becomes President. Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders.
- 1947 Marshall Plan announced to rebuild the war-devastated countries of Europe.
- 1948 Berlin Airlift marks the start of the Cold War.
- 1950 North Korea invades South Korea. United States leads United Nations allies in military intervention to drive the communist forces back.
- 1953 Rising fear and hysteria over Communist infiltration into American life culminates in the McCarthy Hearings, resulting in a number of people losing their jobs for supposed leftist leanings.
- 1954 Brown vs Board of Education. Supreme Court rules that school segregation by race is unconstitutional.

- 1960 John F. Kennedy elected President. Retiring President Eisenhower warns Americans to beware of "the military industrial complex".
- 1963 President John Kennedy assassinated. Lyndon Johnson becomes president, and signs Civil Rights Bill the following year following filibuster of 57 days.
- 1965 President Johnson escalates troop levels in Vietnam War.
- 1968 Civil rights leader Martin Luther King assassinated. Wide spread rioting. Robert Kennedy launches presidential campaign and is assassinated. Richard Nixon elected President. Accelerated takeover of southern electoral seats by Republican Party.
- 1972 Nixon re-elected President shortly after the Watergate burglary attempt is discovered at Democratic National Headquarters.
- 1974 Nixon resigns after threatened impeachment over his role in Watergate and the cover up.
- 1975 Saigon falls to North Vietnamese and Vietcong.

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