

The Presidents of the United States of America

Introduction

The United States has been led by a succession of Presidents since the office was first established in 1789. Each president has shaped the nation's history through leadership in times of war, peace, prosperity, and crisis. Below is a chronological overview of every U.S. president, their years in office, political party, and notable contributions.

List of U.S. Presidents

18th Century Presidents

George Washington (1789–1797) – No formal party; Commander of the Continental Army; set precedents for the presidency.

John Adams (1797–1801) – Federalist; first president to live in the White House.

19th Century Presidents

Thomas Jefferson (1801–1809) – Democratic-Republican; Louisiana Purchase, Lewis and Clark Expedition.

James Madison (1809–1817) – Democratic-Republican; War of 1812.

James Monroe (1817–1825) – Democratic-Republican; Monroe Doctrine.

John Quincy Adams (1825–1829) – Democratic-Republican; son of John Adams.

Andrew Jackson (1829–1837) – Democrat; expanded presidential power, Trail of Tears.

Martin Van Buren (1837–1841) – Democrat; Panic of 1837 economic crisis.

William Henry Harrison (1841) – Whig; shortest presidency (died after 31 days).

John Tyler (1841–1845) – Whig; annexation of Texas.

James K. Polk (1845–1849) – Democrat; Mexican-American War, expanded U.S. territory.

Zachary Taylor (1849–1850) – Whig; died in office.

Millard Fillmore (1850–1853) – Whig; signed Compromise of 1850.

Franklin Pierce (1853–1857) – Democrat; Kansas-Nebraska Act.

James Buchanan (1857–1861) – Democrat; failed to prevent secession.

Abraham Lincoln (1861–1865) – Republican; led during Civil War, Emancipation Proclamation, assassinated 1865.

Andrew Johnson (1865–1869) – Democrat/National Union; first president impeached.

Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877) - Republican; Civil War general, Reconstruction.

Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-1881) - Republican; ended Reconstruction.

James A. Garfield (1881) - Republican; assassinated after 6 months.

Chester A. Arthur (1881-1885) - Republican; civil service reform.

Grover Cleveland (1885-1889) - Democrat; only president to serve non-consecutive terms.

Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893) - Republican; grandson of William Henry Harrison.

Grover Cleveland (1893-1897) - Democrat; returns for second (non-consecutive) term.

William McKinley (1897-1901) - Republican; Spanish-American War; assassinated 1901.

20th Century Presidents

Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) - Republican; Progressive Era reforms, Panama Canal.

William Howard Taft (1909-1913) - Republican; later Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921) – Democrat; WWI leadership, League of Nations.

Warren G. Harding (1921–1923) – Republican; scandals (Teapot Dome).

Calvin Coolidge (1923–1929) – Republican; pro-business, “Silent Cal.”

Herbert Hoover (1929–1933) – Republican; Great Depression began.

Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933–1945) – Democrat; New Deal, WWII; only president elected 4 times.

Harry S. Truman (1945–1953) – Democrat; ended WWII with atomic bombs; Marshall Plan.

Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953–1961) – Republican; WWII general, Interstate Highway System.

John F. Kennedy (1961–1963) – Democrat; Cuban Missile Crisis; assassinated 1963.

Lyndon B. Johnson (1963–1969) – Democrat; Civil Rights Act, Vietnam War escalation.

Richard Nixon (1969–1974) – Republican; opened relations with China; resigned after Watergate.

Gerald Ford (1974–1977) – Republican; only president never elected VP or President.

Jimmy Carter (1977–1981) – Democrat; Camp David Accords, later humanitarian work.

Ronald Reagan (1981–1989) – Republican; conservative revolution, ended Cold War era.

George H. W. Bush (1989–1993) – Republican; Gulf War, Berlin Wall fell.

Bill Clinton (1993–2001) – Democrat; economic boom, impeachment trial.

George W. Bush (2001–2009) – Republican; 9/11 attacks, War on Terror.

Barack Obama (2009–2017) – Democrat; first African-American president; Affordable Care Act.

21st Century Presidents

Donald Trump (2017–2021) – Republican; impeached twice; “America First” policies.

Joe Biden (2021–present) – Democrat; COVID-19 recovery efforts, infrastructure law, ongoing challenges.

Conclusion

From George Washington to Joe Biden, each U.S. president has left a distinct legacy—whether through guiding the nation in war, promoting prosperity, or navigating crises. Collectively, they reflect the evolving story of America.