

## Presidents of the United States: A Chronological Reference Guide

### George Washington (1789–1797)

- Born in Pope's Creek, Virginia.
- He and his wife, Martha Washington, had no children together.
- Supported the simple title “Mr. President,” helping establish republican humility over more grandiose titles like “His Excellency” or “His Highness.”
- The only president to be elected unanimously—twice.
- Enjoyed ice cream and spent significantly on it when hosting guests.

### John Adams (1797–1801)

- A leading voice for American independence from Great Britain.
- Served as the first vice president of the United States.
- Died on July 4, 1826—the same day as Thomas Jefferson.
- First president to live in the White House.

### Thomas Jefferson (1801–1809)

- Principal author of the Declaration of Independence.
- His face has appeared on the U.S. nickel since 1938.
- Founded the University of Virginia.
- Sent Lewis and Clark on their famous expedition.

### James Madison (1809–1817)

- Known as the “Father of the Constitution.”
- The shortest president, standing 5 feet 4 inches tall.
- Note: Some sources credit the full shift to his successor, but Madison helped popularize the change.

### James Monroe (1817–1825)

- Namesake of Monrovia, Liberia.
- Issued the Monroe Doctrine in 1823.
- Last president of the Founding Fathers generation.

### John Quincy Adams (1825–1829)

- Son of John Adams.
- Served in Congress after his presidency—one of the few presidents to do so.
- Fought passionately against slavery in his later years.
- First president inaugurated while wearing long pants (trousers) instead of knee breeches.

### Andrew Jackson (1829–1837)

- Survived multiple duels and killed a man in one of them.
- First president targeted in an assassination attempt—both pistols misfired.
- Helped found the modern Democratic Party.

**Martin Van Buren (1837–1841)**

- First president born a U.S. citizen.
- Only president whose first language was Dutch.
- Nicknamed “Old Kinderhook,” which helped popularize the term “OK.”

**William Henry Harrison (1841)**

- Served only 32 days—the shortest presidency in U.S. history.
- Delivered the longest inaugural address in history.

**John Tyler (1841–1845)**

- Expelled from his own political party while in office.
- Had a grandson (Harrison Ruffin Tyler) who lived until 2025, thanks to the family’s pattern of late-in-life fatherhood.

**James K. Polk (1845–1849)**

- Achieved all the major goals he set for his presidency.
- Oversaw the Mexican American War and major territorial expansion.
- First presidential inauguration reported by telegraph.

**Zachary Taylor (1849–1850)**

- National hero of the Mexican American War.
- Never voted in a presidential election before becoming president.

**Millard Fillmore (1850–1853)**

- Installed the first library in the White House.
- Last president from the Whig Party.

**Franklin Pierce (1853–1857)**

- Memorized his entire inaugural address.
- The only president to keep the same cabinet throughout a full term.

**James Buchanan (1857–1861)**

- The only lifelong bachelor president.
- His niece, Harriet Lane, served as First Lady.

**Abraham Lincoln (1861–1865)**

- Led the nation through the Civil War.
- Known for his wrestling skill and later inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.
- First president to be assassinated.
- Assassinated at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. by actor John Wilkes Booth.
- Tallest president at 1.93 m (6' 4")

**Andrew Johnson (1865–1869)**

- First president to be impeached.
- Never attended school and taught himself to read.

**Ulysses S. Grant (1869–1877)**

- Union general who accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender.
- Once arrested for speeding on horseback.

**Rutherford B. Hayes (1877–1881)**

- Oversaw the end of Reconstruction.
- First president to use a telephone in the White House.

**James A. Garfield (1881)**

- Could write Greek with one hand and Latin with the other at the same time.
- Assassinated after only about 200 days in office.

**Chester A. Arthur (1881–1885)**

- Known for his impeccable fashion and large wardrobe.
- Modernized the U.S. Navy.

**Grover Cleveland (1885–1889)**

- The only president to serve two non-consecutive terms.
- Personally, answered the White House telephone.

**Benjamin Harrison (1889–1893)**

- First president to have electricity in the White House.
- Grandson of William Henry Harrison.

**Grover Cleveland (1893–1897)**

- Second-heaviest president after William Howard Taft.
- Secretly underwent cancer surgery on a yacht to avoid public panic.

**William McKinley (1897–1901)**

- Led the nation during the Spanish-American War.
- Assassinated in 1901 during a public appearance in Buffalo, New York.

**Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909)**

- Youngest president to assume office, at age 42.
- Won the Nobel Peace Prize.
- Inspired the creation of the teddy bear.
- Survived an assassination attempt and finished his speech with a bullet lodged in his chest.

**William Howard Taft (1909–1913)**

- The heaviest president, weighing up to 340 pounds.
- Later became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

**Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921)**

- Led the United States through World War I.
- Helped create the League of Nations.

**Warren G. Harding (1921–1923)**

- Died suddenly while traveling.
- His administration later became associated with several scandals.

**Calvin Coolidge (1923–1929)**

- Nicknamed “Silent Cal.”
- Slept up to 11 hours a day, plus naps.

**Herbert Hoover (1929–1933)**

- Engineer and humanitarian before entering politics.
- Spoke Mandarin Chinese with his wife.

**Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933–1945)**

- The only president elected four times.
- Led the United States through the Great Depression and most of World War II.
- Delivered his famous “Fireside Chats.”

**Harry S. Truman (1945–1953)**

- Authorized the atomic bombings of Japan.
- His middle initial, “S,” did not stand for a full name.

**Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953–1961)**

- Served as Supreme Allied Commander during World War II.
- Started the Interstate Highway System.

**John F. Kennedy (1961–1963)**

- Youngest elected president.
- First Catholic president.
- Assassinated in Dallas.

**Lyndon B. Johnson (1963–1969)**

- Sworn in aboard Air Force One.
- Signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Richard Nixon (1969–1974)**

- Opened diplomatic relations with China.
- The only president to resign from office.

**Gerald Ford (1974–1977)**

- The only president never elected as either president or vice president.
- Former college football star.

**Jimmy Carter (1977–1981)**

- Won the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize.
- Lived to age 100, the longest lifespan of any U.S. president.

**Ronald Reagan (1981–1989)**

- Former Hollywood actor.
- Survived an assassination attempt by John Hinckley Jr. in Washington, D.C.

**George H. W. Bush (1989–1993)**

- Youngest Navy pilot during World War II.
- Oversaw the Gulf War.

**Bill Clinton (1993–2001)**

- Played the saxophone on national television.
- Presided over the longest peacetime economic expansion in U.S. history.

**George W. Bush (2001–2009)**

- President during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.
- Owned part of a Major League Baseball team before entering politics.

**Barack Obama (2009–2017)**

- First African American president.
- Won the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize.

**Donald Trump (2017–2021)**

- First president to be impeached twice.
- Hosted The Apprentice before entering politics.

**Joe Biden (2021–2025)**

- Oldest person ever inaugurated as president.
- Served 36 years in the Senate before becoming vice president.

**Donald Trump (2025–present)**

- Returned to office after a non-consecutive term, like Grover Cleveland.
- First president since the 19th century to serve non-consecutive terms.