



The Presidency

A look at the men, the power,
the highest office in the land

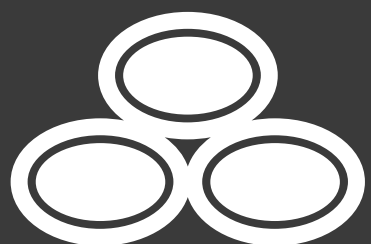


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The Presidency

JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Chief executive of the federal government, responsible for ensuring that the laws passed by Congress are executed and enforced as written. Able to sign and veto legislation.
- Commander in chief of the armed forces, with the authority to send troops into combat and sole responsibility for deciding whether to use nuclear weapons.
- May grant pardons for crimes other than impeachment.
- May make treaties, but only if two-thirds of the Senate agrees to the terms of those treaties.
- Can nominate ambassadors, Supreme

Court justices and other officers (most commonly Cabinet secretaries and federal judges). Senate has final approval on any nominations.

- Directs foreign and domestic policy.
- Must address Congress from time to time on the state of the union.

REQUIREMENTS

- Must be at least 35 years old.
- Must be a U.S. citizen.
- Must have lived in the United States for at least 14 years.

REPORTS TO

- The American people

SALARY

- \$400,000

OTHER

- Full-time; lodging and workspace provided in Washington, D.C.
- Company motorcade and air fleet
- Pension in retirement, plus a payroll for office staff, Secret Service protection for life and free postage for life
- Next opening: Nov. 3, 2020, for a four-year term

Sources: Scholastic.com, AmericanThinker.com, Chron.com, U.S. Constitution



1 GEORGE WASHINGTON

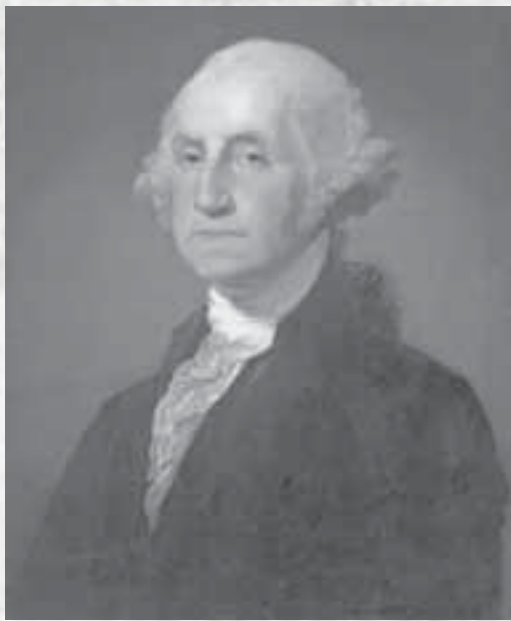
1st president (1789-1797)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- George Washington grew up in Virginia, raised mostly by his mother and his older half-brother, Lawrence, after his father died when he was 11 years old.
- Washington's early military experiences were not successful, but helped him prepare for his leadership during the American Revolution. He took over command of his half-brother's local militia after Lawrence passed away when Washington was in his early 20s, and suffered defeats in the early stages of the French and Indian War. Washington had two horses shot out from under him in a battle at Fort Duquesne, and colonists hailed him as a hero for his actions in the battle. He was then, at the age of 22, given command of all of Virginia's forces.
- Washington left the military, was married, and served in the Virginia legislature as he worked at Mount Vernon.
- In 1774 he was one of Virginia's delegates to the First Continental Congress, and the following year, at the Second Continental Congress, he was unanimously selected to lead the Continental Army.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- After the Revolution, Washington left the public eye, but he was everyone's choice to lead the new government as president following the Constitutional Convention.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"It is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness."
– from his farewell address in 1796

- Washington selected the location of the nation's capital, which would later be named after him.

- He did not necessarily want to serve more than his four-year term, but realizing he had a lot more work to do he agreed to run for re-election, where he was again a unanimous choice. He stepped down after that, establishing a two-term tradition that would last for more than a century.

- Washington's every move helped define the new office of the presidency, which he was aware of and felt strongly should not closely resemble the monarchy the country broke away from.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

- During Washington's presidency governmental departments were created that would form the president's Cabinet, and Washington signed into law the act establishing the Supreme Court, as well as the first 10 amendments to the Constitution: the Bill of Rights.
- Washington established a position of neutrality for the United States in regard to foreign affairs. He resisted getting involved in the French Revolution despite France's willingness to help the American cause just a decade before.
- In addition to setting policies and overcoming challenges domestically and internationally, the new government disagreed over financial policies and how to pay debts.





The Presidency

JOHN ADAMS

2nd president (1797-1801)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- John Adams grew up in Massachusetts, attending Harvard College before launching a successful career as a lawyer. He was well-respected in Boston and chosen to defend the British soldiers charged in the 1770 Boston Massacre. He argued for them in a tense political climate, and they were not sent to jail.

- Adams was a prolific writer, often crafting essays supporting the cause of rebels against England.

- Adams was a member of the Massachusetts delegation to both the First and Second Continental Congresses. He later spent time in Europe enlisting the help of the French during the American Revolution and then to help negotiate the treaty that ended the war.

- He served as the first United States minister to England before coming back to America to serve as the country's first vice president.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Because of how much time he spent overseas Adams was uniquely qualified as president to handle foreign affairs. He felt he could handle foreign matters while Congress dealt with domestic policy.

- In 1800 John and Abigail Adams moved into the

still-unfinished Executive Mansion (later to be called the White House), where every president since has lived.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- Adams became president at a time France, in the midst of its Revolution, saw a treaty between the United States and England as a threat. Adams attempted to send representatives to France, but they were not received at first by the prime minister, and then would only be received if the United States paid a bribe. This became known as the XYZ Affair, and it upset many in America.

- Many of Adams's policies were a reaction to the problems in France: The Navy Department was created, and Adams worked with Congress to build up the Army and the Navy. Taxes were increased to help pay for these measures. In response to a distrust of the French, the controversial Alien and Sedition Acts were passed in 1798, which allowed for the detention of enemy aliens without a trial, the lengthening of the naturalization period before someone could become an American citizen, and the punishment of speech against the government.

France and America were involved in conflicts at sea until Adams finally was able to send representatives to negotiate peace with France before he left office.

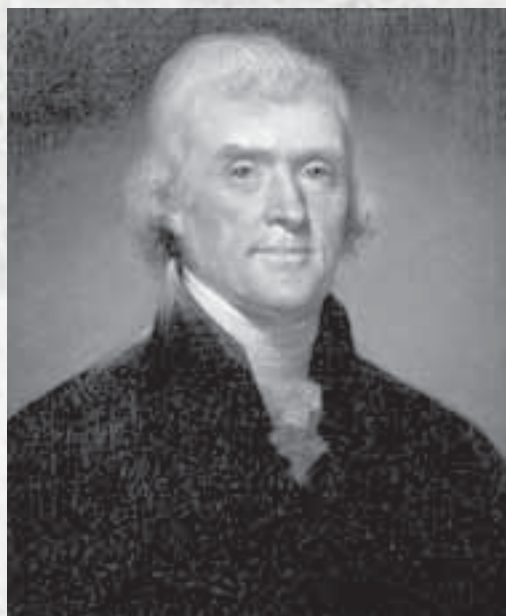
NOTABLE QUOTE

"Because power corrupts, society's demand for moral authority and character increase as the importance of the position increases."



THOMAS JEFFERSON

3rd president (1801-1809)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Thomas Jefferson had a privileged upbringing in Virginia, which allowed him to receive an excellent education, culminating with his pursuit of law after attending the College of William and Mary.

- Jefferson became a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, where he became a more vocal opponent of British rule over the American colonies.

- During the Second Continental Congress in 1776 Jefferson was selected, due to his strong writing skills, to draft the Declaration of Independence.

- During the American Revolution, Jefferson served as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and then a short stint as Virginia's governor.

- Jefferson spent four years as America's minister to France after the war, and during this time he kept in contact with the framers of the Constitution in the United States, emphasizing the need for a bill of rights that would protect citizens' basic rights.

- When George Washington became president, he named Jefferson as his secretary of state, and after finishing second in the presidential election of 1796 Jefferson served as vice president to John Adams.

- Jefferson's opposition to many of Adams' policies helped him win the presidential election of 1800.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Jefferson did not believe in a strong central government, yet when called to make decisions as president that didn't necessarily align with that belief (the Louisiana Purchase, for example), he used the full force of the office.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- The Louisiana Purchase began with the intention to buy the strategic port of New Orleans from the French, but France was desperate for money and sold most of the land between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains to the United States for \$15 million.

The purchase doubled the nation's size, and Jefferson sent a mission led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the land.

- After England and France went to war in 1803, England began seizing U.S. ships. This escalated to the point where England fired on an American ship, killing three, and

in response Jefferson stopped trading with all of Europe and would not allow British ships into U.S. ports. Eventually the U.S. reopened trade with all countries except for England and France, and this was one of the events that led to the War of 1812.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"I believe (America's government is) ... the strongest government on earth. I believe it is the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern." – from his first inaugural address, March 4, 1801





The Presidency

JAMES MADISON

4th president (1809-1817)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- James Madison was born in Virginia and grew up with a love for reading and learning. He studied at the College of New Jersey (which later became Princeton University), and afterward began studying law but didn't love it. He never became a full-fledged lawyer; instead, at age 24 when fighting began in the American Revolution, he took up the cause for American independence from Great Britain.

- Madison started out serving on the Committee of Safety in Virginia, then became a delegate to the Virginia Convention where he first worked with Thomas Jefferson. He was a member of the Virginia Council of State before becoming a member of the Continental Congress. At 29 years old Madison was the youngest member of the congress, and became a respected contributor.

- Madison was part of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, and his work laying out much of what became the U.S. Constitution in the Virginia Plan led to Madison being called the "Father of the Constitution." Along with Alexander Hamilton, Madison published essays — which came to be known as the Federalist Papers — that laid out the meaning of the new laws of the land.

- His work continued as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he pushed through the Bill of Rights, and he

served as Thomas Jefferson's secretary of state before winning the presidency himself in 1808.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Madison was probably more accomplished before he became president than during his time in office, but one of the effects he had on the office was through his marriage to Dolley Payne Todd. Dolley Madison served as an occasional hostess at the White House during Jefferson's presidency, when her husband was secretary of state, and was thus a popular figure in Washington when James became president. Dolley was much more interested in public life than the two previous first ladies had been, and set a tone for the role that others since have followed.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Madison inherited Jefferson's policy of not trading with France and England while they were at war, and when England insisted that they would continue to seize American ships, the United States Congress voted to declare war on Britain in April 1812.

- The War of 1812 dominated Madison's presidency. His opponents called it "Mister Madison's War," and others referred to it as the Second War For Independence. During the war the British took control of the Northwest Territory and invaded Washington, D.C., burning the White House, but they couldn't advance past Baltimore and Fort McHenry.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."



JAMES MONROE

5th president (1817-1825)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- James Monroe was born in Virginia in 1758 and grew up with the colonies on their way to war with Great Britain.

- Monroe attended the College of William and Mary but by the end of 1776 he joined the Continental Army. He suffered an almost-fatal wound to his shoulder in the Battle of Trenton and though he stopped fighting after that, he remained a part of the military until the end of the war.

- Thomas Jefferson became a mentor for Monroe as he studied law after the war, and Monroe was elected to the Virginia Assembly in 1782. He served on the Council of State, was elected to the Continental Congress and served in the United States Senate.

- Aside from a short stint as governor of Virginia, a lot of Monroe's political activity under the government set up by the Constitution was done overseas. He was appointed to be the U.S. minister to France by George Washington, then when Jefferson was president Monroe was sent to France to help negotiate the Louisiana Purchase. He was also a U.S. minister to Britain and did work in Spain.

- Monroe was secretary of state for James Madison and served some of the time as secretary of war during the War of 1812, and his

leadership in these positions set him up to be elected president in 1816.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Called "The Era of Good Feelings," Monroe's presidency featured two historic policies that helped shape America's future — the Monroe Doctrine and the Missouri Compromise — and the Cabinet he assembled is viewed as one of the strongest in American history.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- The United States acquired Florida during Monroe's presidency, and with new states being added to the union Congress reached the Missouri Compromise, which drew a dividing line at 36 degrees, 30 minutes latitude — western territories added as states north of that line would be admitted as free states and south would be added as slave states.

- In 1823 President Monroe issued what came to be known as the Monroe Doctrine. It stated that the United

States would not accept European interference in the western hemisphere, essentially saying the U.S. would protect Latin America. Monroe's was the first such policy statement about the area by the United States.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"The best form of government is that which is most likely to prevent the greatest sum of evil."





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JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

6th president (1825-1829)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- John Quincy Adams grew up just outside of Boston, Massachusetts, and as he grew followed the political career of his father, John Adams, very closely. The American Revolution, which began not far from where he lived, also had an impact on his young life.

- During his teenage years Adams accompanied his father overseas and spent considerable time in a number of European cities, including Paris and Amsterdam. He studied at Harvard College for two years when he returned to the United States.

- After practicing law for a time, Adams was sent back to Europe by President Washington to serve as minister to the Netherlands. He also served as U.S. minister to Prussia before returning to America and serving as a Massachusetts state senator and then a United States senator.

- After James Madison became president John Quincy Adams again went overseas, first as the U.S. minister to Russia, and then to Belgium as part of the delegation negotiating the peace treaty to end the War of 1812.

- Perhaps Adams' greatest political accomplishments came when he was secretary of state under President Monroe. Among other successes, he helped form the Monroe Doctrine and set



NOTABLE QUOTE

“From the experience of the past we derive instructive lessons for the future.”
– from his inaugural address March 4, 1825

many of the current borders of the United States.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Adams won a very close and what some considered controversial election for president in 1824, and when he took office believed in a strong federal government — in particular, the role of the president to help improve societal conditions. Some believed this was too bold of a position for a president who had barely won the office.

- After his presidency, Adams served nine terms in the United States House of Representatives, where he often spoke out against slavery.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- During his time in office, President Adams managed to improve parts of the country he felt needed work, such as harbors, roads and canals. The United States opened up com-

mercial trade treaties with a number of foreign countries, and settled issues with Great Britain left over from the War of 1812.

- The ill will from the 1824 election followed Adams throughout his presidency, as Andrew Jackson almost immediately started campaigning for the 1828 election, resulting in a landslide victory and only one term in office for Adams.



ANDREW JACKSON

7th president (1829-1837)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Andrew Jackson was born in the Carolina Territory in 1767, and said he considered himself a native of South Carolina. By age 15 Jackson had fought in the American Revolution and left the war as an orphan, having lost most of his relatives in the fighting in some way.

- Jackson studied law and opened a practice in Nashville, Tennessee. Before his career in the military he was a delegate to the Tennessee constitutional convention, the first congressman from the state, a U.S. senator, and then a judge on Tennessee's superior court.

- Jackson became major general in command of the Tennessee militia, where he fought many battles against Native Americans and acquired millions of acres of land for the U.S., and became a hero for his work during the War of 1812 defending New Orleans.

- Jackson's final act in the military came when he led an invasion of Florida, leading to the United States acquiring the territory from Spain. Jackson became governor of the territory in 1821.

- Largely on the strength of his military reputation, “Old Hickory” — so named because of his



NOTABLE QUOTE

“As long as our Government is administered for the good of the people and is regulated by their will; as long as it secures to us the rights of person and property, liberty of conscience and of the press, it will be worth defending.”
– from his first inaugural address March 4, 1829

toughness — was elected president of the United States in 1828.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Jackson's ardent followers, pitted against those who strongly opposed him, created the Democratic Party and in turn, the Whig Party. Though parties would change throughout the years, Jackson is credited with inspiring the modern two-party system.

- Jackson vetoed 12 bills while in office, more than every president who came before him combined.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Jackson's presidency might be best known for the Indian Removal Act, in which Jackson sided with the states when it came to deciding who owned the land occupied by different Native American tribes. When told to relocate, some tribes did so willingly and some resisted.

- Jackson's disapproval of the Second Bank of the United States came to a head when he vetoed the bill renewing the bank's charter. He also moved to remove the government's deposits from the bank and put them in state-chartered banks.





The Presidency

MARTIN VAN BUREN

8th president (1837-1841)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Martin Van Buren was born to Dutch parents in a town near Albany, New York, in 1782. He was the first president to never spend a day under British rule.
- Van Buren's father owned a tavern and inn where government workers traveling to and from Albany stayed, so as a boy Martin was exposed to politicians like Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr.
- Van Buren grew up to practice law and became involved in New York politics as a Democratic-Republican, the party led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. This shaped the view of limited government he would carry through his life.
- Van Buren was elected to the New York State Senate, spent time as the state's attorney general and moved to Washington after winning a United States Senate seat. As a senator he opposed President John Quincy Adams' policies and helped Andrew Jackson win the 1828 election.
- Van Buren was elected governor of New York but left that position quickly when Jackson named him secretary of state, and by the time Jackson was up for re-election in 1832 he picked Van Buren as his vice

presidential candidate. Van Buren's promise to continue Jackson's policies helped him win the presidency in 1836.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Van Buren helped shape the Democratic Party during his time as vice president and, like his predecessor, the Whig Party, which was created to take power back from the Democrats.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Almost immediately after taking office Van Buren faced his first crisis: the Panic of 1837. The financial crisis was the worst America had faced in its short history, and the country would not recover until the early 1840s.
- Van Buren continued the policy established under Jackson to move all Native Americans west of the Mississippi, and in addition to the Native Americans who died during the forced movement, thousands more died in violence that resulted from resistance to the move.
- Van Buren's opponents capitalized on his shortcomings in office and defeated him when he was up for re-election in 1840.

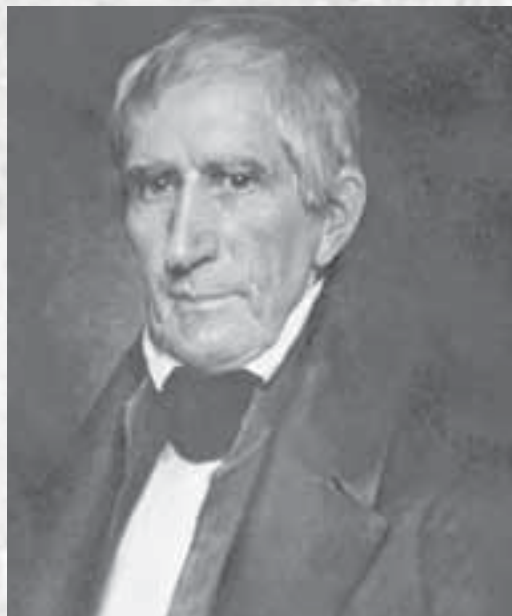
NOTABLE QUOTE

"In receiving from the people the sacred trust twice confided to my illustrious predecessor (President Jackson), and which he has discharged so faithfully and so well, I know that I can not expect to perform the arduous task with equal ability and success. But ... I may hope that somewhat of the same cheering approbation will be found to attend upon my path."
—from his inauguration March 4, 1837



WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON

9th president (1841)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Born in 1773, William Harrison grew up as the youngest of seven children during the Revolutionary War.
- Harrison's family was part of Virginia's elite, friendly with George Washington. Benjamin Harrison, William's father, served three terms as Virginia's governor and signed the Declaration of Independence.
- William Harrison knew by age 18 that he wanted to pursue a military career, and quickly rose through the ranks serving in the Northwest Territory. When, under President John Adams, the territory was split into the Ohio and Indiana Territories, Harrison was named governor of the Indiana Territory.
- As governor Harrison negotiated unfair land deals with Native Americans, leading to the Battle of Tippecanoe. Harrison's success there resulted in his commanding a force during the War of 1812, after which he resigned from the Army.
- Harrison had a varied political career after that, serving in the House of Representatives, the Ohio State Senate and, eventually, the United States Senate. He was also named an ambassador to Colombia under John Quincy Adams.
- After losing in the 1836 presidential election, Harrison was

a candidate again in 1840. His military career was highlighted in the campaign, and "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," referring to Harrison and his running mate, John Tyler, was the first presidential campaign slogan.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Harrison didn't have a chance to define the office, dying just 32 days into his presidency. His two-hour-long inaugural address gave some hints as to how he would have served: He promised a limited presidential role, not interfering with what Congress decided. He said a president should not use a veto unless he believed a law Congress passed was unconstitutional. Harrison was a slaveowner who believed the states had the right to decide slavery issues for themselves. In his address he also promised he would not serve a second term as president.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Harrison gave his inaugural address wearing no coat or hat on a cold, snowy day. When he attended inaugural receptions in his wet clothing, he developed pneumonia. He died one month after his inauguration, resulting in the shortest presidential term.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"The attempt of those of one state to control the domestic institutions of another can only result in feelings of distrust and jealousy, the certain harbingers of disunion, violence, and civil war, and the ultimate destruction of our free institutions."





The Presidency

JOHN TYLER

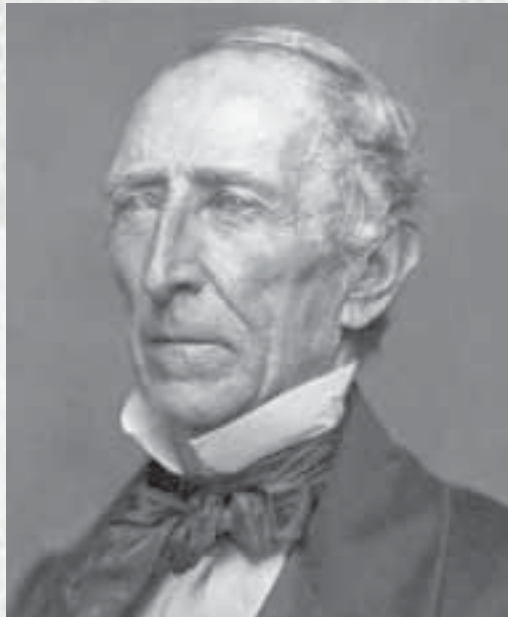
10th president (1841-1845)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Like his predecessor, John Tyler was born in Virginia and was the son of a man who would serve as Virginia's governor.
- Tyler became a prominent lawyer and began his political career in the Virginia House of Delegates. He served in the War of 1812, and afterward began his career in Washington as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.
- After leaving Congress because of disagreements with certain policies — especially surrounding slavery, an issue he did not think the government should become involved in — Tyler returned as a U.S. Senator.
- Tyler's position on slavery made him popular in the South, and as a result he was chosen to be half of the "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too!" ticket for the presidency in the 1840 election.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Simply by taking the oath of office — Tyler became the first vice president to succeed to the presidency after the death of a president.
- The Constitution was not exactly clear on a succession process. Tyler asserted immediately that he had the full powers of the office, setting a precedent that has been followed for the century-and-a-half-plus since.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"If the tide of defamation and abuse shall turn, and my administration come to be praised, future Vice-Presidents who may succeed to the Presidency may feel some slight encouragement to pursue an independent course."

- Tyler was also, at age 51, the youngest man to that point to hold the office of president.
- Another first for Tyler was that after his wife died in 1842, Tyler remarried two years later, becoming the first president to marry while in office.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Tyler kept in place President Harrison's entire cabinet, which included many men who believed they should have become president instead of Tyler. After he twice vetoed a bill looking to bring back the Bank of the United States, his entire cabinet (besides the secretary of state) resigned in protest.
- Tyler established a relationship with China that resulted in similar trading rights with the country that the British had.
- Just before Tyler left office two notable events occurred: He passed an annexation bill for Texas, which had declared its independence from Mexico, through Congress. Three days before leaving office Tyler signed the Texas statehood bill into law. Sealing the rocky relationship Tyler had with Congress throughout his presidency, on his last day in office Congress overrode a Tyler veto of a bill that would fund small ships for the government. That was the first time Congress had overridden a presidential veto in the country's history.



JAMES KNOX POLK

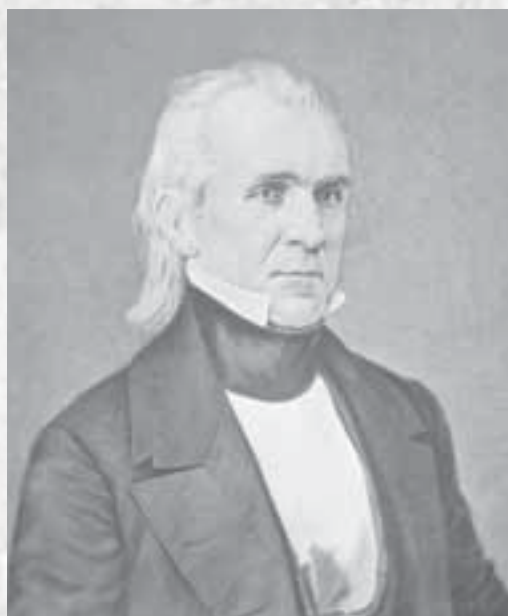
11th president (1845-1849)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- James Knox Polk was born in North Carolina and at age 10 moved with his family to Tennessee. The journey to the frontier was hard for him, and he suffered from illness for most of his youth.
- Polk graduated from the University of North Carolina and went on to study law, then entered politics by winning a seat in the Tennessee House of Representatives. He would then serve in the United States House of Representatives, where he went on to be elected speaker of the house.
- Polk left Washington to become governor of Tennessee. He lost two subsequent elections for governor before winning the presidency in 1844.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Running for president with his supporters coining the campaign slogan "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!," Polk made clear the westward expansion of the United States was a priority. "Fifty-Four Forty" referred to the disputed land between the lines of latitude of 42 degrees south and 54 degrees, 40 minutes north that both Great Britain and the United States claimed. Polk was committed to expanding the United States from coast to coast during his time in office.
- In order to manage all of the land acquired during his presidency,



NOTABLE QUOTE

"No president who performs his duties faithfully and conscientiously can have any leisure."

Polk established the Department of the Interior.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- President Polk secured the Oregon Territory, though instead of 54 degrees, 40 minutes agreed to the boundary being the 49th parallel. This gave the United States what would become Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and control of the Columbia River.
- The Mexican-American War, sometimes called "Mister Polk's War," broke out in 1846, and when the treaty to end the war was signed in 1848 the United States had negotiated the acquisition of Mexican territory that would become Arizona, California, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado, and the boundary of Texas was set at the Rio Grande.
- With all of the new territory came questions about whether new states should be admitted as slave states or free states. None of this was decided during Polk's presidency, but it laid the groundwork for the Civil War that was fast approaching.
- Polk held true to his promise to serve just a single term, and after cutting short a tour of the Southern states after his time in office due to illness, Polk died. His death three months after leaving office was the quickest of any president.





The Presidency

ZACHARY TAYLOR

12th president (1849-1850)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Zachary Taylor was born in Virginia but grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, which in the late 1700s was a frontier outpost. He aspired to a career in the military.

- Taylor began his military career in 1808 at Fort Pickering, in what is now Memphis, and moved between different forts over the years.

- He was nicknamed “Old Rough and Ready” by the men he led because he was willing to endure the hardships of fighting with them. He spent much of his time – and became well-known for – fighting Native Americans throughout the Southern and Midwestern parts of the present-day United States.

- Taylor became most famous for his victories in the Mexican-American War, and he was held in the same high esteem as American generals before him such as George Washington and Andrew Jackson.

- It was this popularity that helped launch him to the presidency in 1848.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Taylor let Congress handle most domestic matters,

believing the role of the president was to veto any laws he deemed unconstitutional.

- He did not believe slavery should be allowed to expand westward as the United States did, and had he lived, based on his strong nationalist views and desire to avoid a situation involving secession, many speculate how history would have unfolded differently.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- When Taylor took office there were 30 states, evenly split between slave and free. He wanted the new territories applying for statehood to decide for themselves whether to be free or slave states, anticipating they would decide to be free, which upset Southern states.

- In his short time in office he also kept an eye on issues that he had fought over during his time in the military: border disputes in Texas and Native American disputes in the

southern part of the country.

- Taylor died July 9, 1850, after just 16 months in office, from a severe stomach ailment that most historians believe to have been cholera.

NOTABLE QUOTE

“I have no private purpose to accomplish, no party objectives to build up, no enemies to punish – nothing to serve but my country.”



MILLARD FILLMORE

13th president (1850-1853)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Millard Fillmore was born in upstate New York, and his family struggled to make ends meet. After a failed apprenticeship with a clothmaker, Fillmore worked to put himself through school, studied law and became a lawyer.

- Fillmore entered the political world by serving as a New York state lawmaker, then won election to the United States House of Representatives.

- Fillmore was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee in his final term as a Congressman, then lost an election for governor of New York after leaving the House. He was elected a few years later as New York’s comptroller. This win put him in position to be named Zachary Taylor’s running mate in 1848. Taylor won the election, but Fillmore did not play a major role in any decision-making in the White House.

- When Taylor died suddenly in 1850, Fillmore became president of the United States.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Fillmore didn’t believe in slavery on principle, but he

believed that in order for the country to resolve its disputes on the issue, compromise was necessary.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- The Compromise of 1850 was passed early in Fillmore’s time as president. It settled some of the slavery issues of the day but for each compromise that made one part of the country happy, someone else was left upset.

- Fillmore, to please Southerners threatening to secede, strongly enforced the Fugitive Slave Law, which stated that runaway slaves needed to be returned to their owners. This, in turn, upset abolitionists.

- Commodore Matthew Perry made his trade mission to Japan during Fillmore’s presidency. While the mission was not completed until after Fillmore left office, it resulted in Japan opening up for trade with the rest of the world.

- Fillmore was not very popular by the end of his time in office. He had little interest in running again, nor did the American people want him to.

NOTABLE QUOTE

“God knows that I detest slavery, but it is an existing evil, for which we are not responsible, and we must endure it, till we can get rid of it without destroying the last hope of free government in the world.”





The Presidency

14 FRANKLIN PIERCE

14th president (1853-1857)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Franklin Pierce grew up in New Hampshire, where his father was a veteran of the Revolutionary War and governor.
- Pierce attended Bowdoin College in Maine at the same time as Nathaniel Hawthorne.
- Pierce served in the House of Representatives and the Senate before serving in the Mexican-American War. After the war he became a well-known lawyer in New Hampshire.
- Pierce was always very outgoing, and after becoming a politician he struggled with drinking. For a time after he was married he gave up alcohol, but turned to it again after tragedies in his life.
- The Pierces had three children; two died in early childhood and the third was killed in a train accident shortly before Pierce's inauguration.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Pierce was elected to the presidency in part because of his anonymity. The country — as well as his political party — were divided, and Pierce became a candidate most could agree on.
- Pierce was a pro-slavery Northerner, opposed to the abolitionist movement, and this shaped the decisions he made as president.
- Pierce's original appeal as a candidate faded quickly with some



NOTABLE QUOTE

"You have summoned me in my weakness; you must sustain me by your strength." – from his inaugural address March 4, 1853, two months after the death of his 12-year-old son

of his Cabinet appointments, including Jefferson Davis as secretary of war.

SUCCESSIONS AND FAILURES

- While in office Pierce signed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which was not just the most notable legislation of his presidency, but one of the most notable in American history. The act repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which banned slavery north of the 36 degrees, 30 minutes latitude line. Since the Kansas-Nebraska Act allowed for popular sovereignty to decide the issue of slavery in the territory, both sides of the issue moved into the area, leading to violence and the nickname "Bleeding Kansas." Intended to help settle the debate over slavery, the act accelerated tensions between the North and South.
- Pierce sent Sen. James Gadsden to negotiate with Mexico what came to be known as the Gadsden Purchase. The United States paid Mexico \$15 million for land that is now the southern part of New Mexico and Arizona, settling border disputes left over from the Mexican-American War. The Gadsden Purchase set the final boundaries of the

continental United States.

- Though Pierce wanted a second term, he was not nominated by his party. He was a very unpopular former president until his death in 1869.



15 JAMES BUCHANAN

15th president (1857-1861)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- James Buchanan grew up in Pennsylvania, the second of 11 children. His father came to America from Ireland and became a successful merchant. James grew up to become a successful lawyer.
- Buchanan served in the War of 1812, where his regiment did not see any action. He then served in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, the United States House of Representatives, as an envoy to Russia and in the United States Senate. Buchanan became one of the most powerful senators in Congress before James Polk named him secretary of state. Buchanan also served as an ambassador to England before he won the presidency.
- Buchanan was the only bachelor president in American history. An early love of his, Ann Coleman, broke up with him amid rumors he was seeing someone else, and she died shortly thereafter. Buchanan was shaken by the experience and vowed that he would never marry.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Buchanan believed slavery was an issue for individual states to decide. Though he was a Northerner, this made him popular in the South.
- Many Americans hoped Buchanan would be able to steer the country away from civil war over slavery. He, of course, could not.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"I had hoped for the nomination in 1844, again in 1848, and even in 1852, but now I would hesitate to take it. Before many years the abolitionists will bring war upon this land. It may come during the next presidential term."
- Buchanan, shortly before his campaign for the presidency in 1856

- In December 1860, after Abraham Lincoln had been elected president but Buchanan was still in office, South Carolina and six other states seceded. Buchanan chose not to act in fear of provoking the South, but his inaction allowed the Confederate government to start up.

SUCCESSIONS AND FAILURES

- Buchanan's presidency was defined by the slavery issue that was dividing the country: Two days after Buchanan's inauguration the Supreme Court issued the Dred Scott decision, stating that slaves were property and had no rights. Buchanan urged Congress to accept Kansas as a slave state, but they reached a compromise that would allow Kansas to hold an election, where it was decided Kansas would be admitted as a free state. During Buchanan's presidency John Brown, an abolitionist who killed pro-slavery settlers in Kansas and went on the run, was captured and hanged. This was another in a long line of conflicts between North and South that brought the country closer to civil war.
- Though Buchanan had experience with foreign policy and an interest in expanding American influence over Central America, the issues on the domestic front prevented him from getting much traction in foreign affairs.





The Presidency

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

16th president (1861-1865)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky, but his family moved to Indiana and then Illinois before he was an adult.
- Lincoln's first job was working on a ferryboat, and he also worked in a general store, where he got to know many of the people in his town.
- Lincoln joined the military for a few months to fight Native Americans in the Black Hawk War, and afterward he studied law.
- He became an Illinois state legislator for four terms, then won a seat in the United States House of Representatives. In 1849 Lincoln returned to Illinois, where his law career took off, but he kept an eye on political opportunities.
- In 1858 Lincoln ran for a U.S. Senate seat against Stephen Douglas. Although Lincoln lost the election the two engaged in a series of debates that gained them national renown. The debates were mostly centered around the issue of slavery and Lincoln's view that America could not continue to be split on the issue, that it needed to be completely slave or completely free, and his opinion that the words "all men are created equal" meant it should be free.
- Lincoln did not serve in another political office before



NOTABLE QUOTE

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."
– from his second inaugural address, March 4, 1865

- Lincoln won re-election in 1864, but a month after his inauguration he was assassinated.

winning the presidential election in 1860, but he continued to campaign for many Republicans, maintaining connections and keeping a high profile for himself.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- President Lincoln's role in preserving the Union as well as in delivering the Emancipation Proclamation cemented his place in American history as one of the greatest presidents. He also, even when it appeared that he might not win, never considered not having a presidential election in 1864, which was the first time a democratic nation held a national election during a time of war.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- A month after Lincoln took office, fighting broke out between the North and the South. The Civil War was the defining event of his presidency, lasting four-and-a-half years.
- Halfway through the war Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that as of Jan. 1, 1863, all slaves in rebellious states would be freed. In this way the Civil War became not just a fight to preserve the Union but also a fight for freedom.



ANDREW JOHNSON

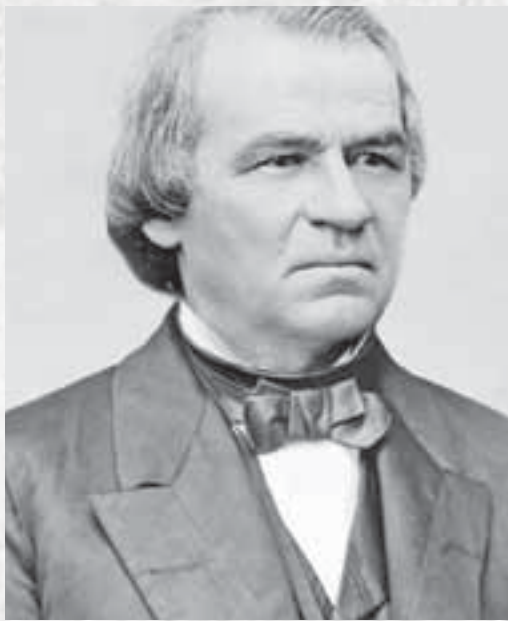
17th president (1865-1869)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Andrew Johnson was born and grew up in North Carolina without formal schooling. When he was 17 he moved to Tennessee where he set up a tailor shop, which is what he apprenticed as years earlier, and married Eliza McCordle, who taught him to read and write.
- After serving as a town alderman and a mayor, Johnson won seats in the state legislature and state Senate, then served in the United States House of Representatives and became governor of Tennessee.
- Johnson returned to Washington as a United States senator opposed to secession. When Tennessee broke from the Union, Johnson was the only Southern senator to not resign his seat. He aligned with Abraham Lincoln, which led to his selection as Lincoln's vice presidential candidate for his second term in office.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Johnson's clashes with Congress led to him being the first president to be impeached – brought to trial before the Senate. The Senate fell one vote short of the two-thirds majority needed to convict Johnson.
- The impeachment process, and the lack of a conviction, set a precedent that Congress should not be able to remove a president from office simply because they disagreed.
- It also led to a shift in the balance of government, with



NOTABLE QUOTE

"I feel incompetent to perform duties ... which have been so unexpectedly thrown upon me."

Johnson's presidency, his secretary of state, William Seward, did negotiate the sale of the land that would become Alaska to the United States.

- Johnson served a short time as U.S. senator from Tennessee after his presidency, dying shortly after taking office in 1875.

Congress maintaining more power than the president, a shift that lasted until the 1900s.

- Although President Johnson was not removed from office, the damage was done. He had no chance at being re-elected after his impeachment.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- With President Lincoln's assassination coming so soon after the end of the Civil War, the task of Reconstruction fell to President Johnson. He implemented his interpretation of President Lincoln's vision. The first step was having the defeated states draft new constitutions outlawing slavery and renouncing secession under provisional governors he appointed. The states would not be allowed representation in Congress until they did this.
- President Johnson did not approve laws granting civil rights to African-Americans, leading Congress to approve the 14th Amendment, which defined citizenship and authorized the federal government to defend citizens' rights.
- Although domestic issues dominated



The Presidency

18 ULYSSES S. GRANT

18th president (1869-1877)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Ulysses Grant grew up in Ohio, unremarkable in his studies and most skills other than riding and taking care of horses.
- He studied at the United States Military Academy at West Point and upon graduation was assigned to a post near St. Louis, Missouri. With this group he would fight in the Mexican-American War, and after that war he would get married and be stationed in Detroit, New York, the Oregon Territory and California.
- Grant left the Army in 1854 and struggled to make a living. When the Civil War broke out, he took over a group of volunteers and steadily made his way up through the ranks until he was named commander of all Union forces.
- Grant was a war hero after the Civil War, and in 1866 he was named general of the armies, only the second man to achieve the rank. (George Washington was the first.) His status as a hero positioned him to be a presidential candidate, especially when he differed from President Johnson's

views.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- President Grant was loyal to those who had worked with him in the past. This led to some appointments in his administration of people who were corrupt. Though Grant was never directly implicated, his time in office was plagued by scandal.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- From the moment he took office President Grant worked to protect the rights of black citizens, pushing for the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, which gave citizens the right to vote no matter their race. He signed the Amendment into law in 1870.
- Grant had to deal with an economic downturn after the Civil War, including the Panic of 1873, which led to a depression. He believed in a conservative fiscal approach.
- Grant worked to improve treatment of Native Americans but was never able to install changes that lasted beyond his time in office.

NOTABLE QUOTE

“The greatest good to the greatest number is the object to be attained ... This requires security of person, property, and free religious and political opinion in every part of our common country, without regard to local prejudice. All laws to secure these ends will receive my best efforts for their enforcement.”
– from his first inaugural address March 4, 1869



19 RUTHERFORD B. HAYES

19th president (1877-1881)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Rutherford Hayes was born in Ohio and spent nearly his whole life in the state, attending Kenyon College, working as a lawyer in Fremont and Cincinnati, fighting for Ohio's 23rd Volunteer Infantry, serving as representative and governor for the state, and retiring to Fremont after his presidency.
- His election to president was controversial. As states reported their returns, it became likely that Samuel Tilden, the Democratic nominee, would win the election. But three states were close, and if Hayes won all of them he would have one more electoral vote than Tilden. After a massive investigation and, eventually, a Republican-heavy "Electoral Commission," Hayes was declared the winner despite losing the final popular count by 250,000 votes.
- Democrats attempted to prevent Hayes' win through a filibuster but after a series of meetings with Republicans, ended the delay tactic. No evidence remains to verify what was discussed in these meetings, but historians have speculated that Republicans convinced Democrats to stop the filibuster in exchange for troops to cease propping up the final Reconstruction governments in South Carolina and Louisiana.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Hayes did not oversee any major national or international conflicts, or implement any long-term American policies. But he remained scandal-free and represented the nation as an upright statesman.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- Although Hayes is often most remembered for his decision on Reconstruction, he proved a great administrator. He ushered the United States currency back to full conversion with gold reserves. He implemented reforms in civil service to ensure that government officials received their positions on merit rather than through patronage. Hayes also weeded corruption out of Congress after scandal within President Grant's administration.
- During the Great Railroad Strike in 1877, he ordered troops to troubled areas in order to protect life and property, but the troops were nonetheless used to break the strike. This set a precedent for years of the federal government coming to the aid of state governments and corporations against worker movements.
- He supported a policy of education for Native Americans, resulting in a movement to acculturate tribes to white-American standards. This was seen as a progressive move at the time.

– Kristina Smith, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center





The Presidency

JAMES GARFIELD

20th president (1881)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- James Garfield grew up on a farm in Ohio. His father died when James was a baby and he helped his mother farm before embarking on a variety of careers: He spent a short time as a teen working on canal boats between Cleveland and Pittsburgh, but became sick after falling overboard a number of times. He worked as a carpenter, teacher and janitor while going through school, then after graduating college taught courses at one of the schools he attended. He would serve as president of that school for a short time, then, after studying law independently, passed the bar exam.
- Garfield was an abolitionist and entered the political world as an Ohio state legislator before fighting in the Civil War and being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.
- He spent eight terms in the House, gaining valuable financial experience serving on a number of important committees.
- Garfield won a tight election in 1880, by about 7,000 votes.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Garfield brought his financial expertise to his plans for the presidency: Before his assassination he was able to recall government bonds that were refinanced and save millions of dollars in the country's budget.
- Although he was not a big supporter of President Lincoln, Garfield recognized his importance to the country's history and named Lincoln's son Robert as his secretary of war.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- Garfield's short time in office didn't allow him to accomplish much other than the appointing of Cabinet and other government positions. Some of these appointments led to disagreements which, when Garfield stuck to his picks, established him as the leader of his political party.
- Garfield was shot and killed by Charles Guiteau four months into his presidency, at Washington's Baltimore and Potomac train station. Guiteau, known as emotionally disturbed, killed Garfield because he wasn't given a position in the government. Garfield was shot July 2, 1881, and died Sept. 19 from blood poisoning and complications.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"The finances of the government shall suffer no detriment which it may be possible for my administration to prevent." – from his inaugural address March 4, 1881



CHESTER A. ARTHUR

21st president (1881-1885)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Chester Arthur was born and raised in Vermont and New York, and attended Union College in Schenectady, New York.
- Arthur aspired to a life of luxury in Manhattan, and after passing his bar exam he worked for a prestigious law firm in New York City. He became widely known for his work on a couple of cases involving the rights of black people, including one that involved traveling to Albany to argue in front of the New York Supreme Court.
- He gained administrative experience through his service in the Civil War, and after the war he worked for the New York City Tax Commission and then as the Collector of the Port of New York.
- Arthur was named the vice presidential candidate to James Garfield and actively campaigned during the election of 1880, traveling throughout the Midwest to garner support.
- Arthur and Garfield differed on issues once Garfield won the election, and by the time Garfield was assassinated, the two men were not getting along.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Arthur was a man of expensive tastes. During his

presidency he hired Louis Comfort Tiffany, New York City's most fashionable designer, to renovate the White House to make it look fancier and more appropriately reflect how he thought the president's mansion should look.

- Arthur was also president for the dedication of the Washington Monument in February 1885, shortly before he left office.
- Arthur's wife, Ellen, died before he became president, so he spent his days in office as a widower.
- He was also diagnosed with a deadly kidney disease in 1882, a condition he kept secret and worked through the entire time he was president. Arthur died at age 57 on Nov. 18, 1886.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- When Arthur became president after Garfield's assassination, he did so amid low expectations from those in government, but left office widely respected.
- Arthur worked to limit corruption in government appointments, signing a Civil Service Act that banned salary kickbacks and allowed new employees to advance only by merit.
- Arthur's presidency is credited with moving toward a more modern Navy, commissioning ships made of steel as well as establishing the Naval War College in Rhode Island and creating the Office of Naval Intelligence.





The Presidency

GROVER CLEVELAND

22nd and 24th president (1885-1889, 1893-1897)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Grover Cleveland was born in New Jersey and grew up in central New York. He never attended college, but he studied law and became a lawyer in New York City.
- Cleveland paid a substitute in order to avoid serving in the Civil War, and spent the war years as assistant district attorney for Erie County. After the war, Cleveland was elected sheriff of Erie County, then mayor of Buffalo.
- He was a hard worker and impressed many with his work as mayor, leading to his election as governor of New York. This position led to his being nationally recognized, and he was elected president of the United States in 1884.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Cleveland is the only president to serve two non-consecutive terms in office.
- He used the full power of the presidency to his advantage. He vetoed more bills in just his first term in office than all previous presidents had combined.



NOTABLE QUOTE

“A government for the people must depend for its success on the intelligence, the morality, the justice, and the interest of the people themselves.”

SUCCESSIONS AND FAILURES

- Cleveland believed the government should not interfere in social problems. He did not support racially integrated schools and refused to see African-Americans as equal to white people, he took no stand on women’s suffrage, and he believed Native Americans should be assimilated into American culture and give up their traditional ways.
- During his two terms in office Cleveland negotiated disputes in Samoa, Hawaii and Venezuela. In regards to Venezuela, Cleveland threatened to go to war with England over the presence of British warships in the area before peaceful negotiations happened. This was significant because of Cleveland’s enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine.
- Cleveland’s second term began with a severe depression and high unemployment. Cleveland replenished the country’s gold reserves with the help of investment banker J.P. Morgan, but because banks profited from the deal, public opinion turned against him, and he was an unpopular president by the time his second term came to an end.



BENJAMIN HARRISON

23rd president (1889-1893)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Benjamin Harrison was born and raised in Ohio. He was the great-grandson of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the grandson of William Henry Harrison, the ninth president of the United States.
- Harrison attended college in Ohio and studied law there before moving to Indiana to practice the profession. That’s where he also entered politics, serving as Indianapolis city attorney and holding various roles in the Republican party before serving in the military during the Civil War.
- After the war Harrison gained a more national political reputation for work he did supporting candidates like Rutherford B. Hayes and James Garfield. Hayes appointed Harrison to the Mississippi River Commission.
- Harrison was a United States Senator from Indiana before deciding to run for president.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- The McKinley Tariff of 1890 (named for the future president, who was a congressman from Ohio at the time) was supported by President Harrison. The bill



NOTABLE QUOTE

“No other people have a government more worthy of their respect and love or a land so magnificent in extent, so pleasant to look upon, and so full of generous suggestion to enterprise and labor.”

gave the president tremendous authority over foreign trade, and helped set a tone in foreign dealings that other presidents would follow in the 20th century.

- Harrison’s support of the McKinley Tariff as well as the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890, passed in part to help gather support for the tariff, are believed to have contributed to the economic downturn of 1893, the greatest depression in American history to that point.

SUCCESSIONS AND FAILURES

- The Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 was supported by the Harrison administration. This was the first federal law to regulate giant corporations, which were beginning to monopolize the economy.
- He authorized America’s first forest reserve in Yellowstone, Wyoming, with the Land Revision Act of 1891.
- President Harrison continued the work started by President Arthur in expanding the Navy. While he was president the Navy grew to seven armored ships.
- Harrison lost the 1892 presidential election to the same man he defeated in the 1888 election, Grover Cleveland.





The Presidency

WILLIAM MCKINLEY

25th president (1897-1901)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- William McKinley was born in Ohio and was teaching in a country school when the Civil War broke out. Enlisting as a private in the Union Army, he was mustered out at the end of the war as a brevet major of volunteers. Afterward, he studied law and opened an office in Canton, Ohio.
- At 34, McKinley won a seat in Congress. He was appointed to the Ways and Means Committee. During his 14 years in the House, he became the leading Republican tariff expert, giving his name to the measure enacted in 1890.
- The next year he was elected governor of Ohio, serving two terms.
- At the 1896 Republican Convention, in time of depression, wealthy Cleveland businessman Marcus Alonzo Hanna ensured the nomination of his friend McKinley as “the advance agent of prosperity.” He won by the largest majority of popular votes since 1872.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- President McKinley’s many difficult foreign policy decisions, especially his policy toward China and his handling of the

Boxer Rebellion, coupled with his decision to go to war with Spain over Cuban independence, helped the United States literally enter the 20th century as a force to be reckoned with on the world stage.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

- When McKinley became president, the depression of 1893 had almost run its course. He called Congress into special session to enact the highest tariff in history, the Dingley Act, on foreign goods to protect U.S. businesses and industries.
- In the 100-day Spanish-American War, the United States destroyed the Spanish fleet outside Santiago harbor in Cuba, seized Manila in the Philippines and occupied Puerto Rico. The U.S. eventually annexed the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico.
- McKinley’s second term, which had begun auspiciously, came to a tragic end in September 1901 at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition when a deranged anarchist shot him twice. He died eight days later.

— White House Historical Association via the William McKinley Presidential Library & Museum

NOTABLE QUOTE

“War should never be entered upon until every agency of peace has failed.” – from his first inaugural address March 4, 1897



THEODORE ROOSEVELT

26th president (1901-1909)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Theodore Roosevelt overcame a childhood marked with sickness. Growing up in New York City he suffered from asthma, and as a teenager worked extra hard to improve his health. He did this through gymnastics and weightlifting, and as a result became a lifelong advocate of the importance of exercise.
- In 1884 Roosevelt’s mother and wife died on the same day. He moved to the Western frontier for about two years to overcome his grief. He spent his days hunting, riding and acting as a frontier sheriff. As president he was an advocate of conservation, believing in the power of woodlands and mountain ranges as places of refuge, and identifying the character of the nation with America’s wilderness regions.
- After stints as assistant secretary of the Navy, leader of the Rough Riders Regiment during the Spanish-American War, and governor of New York, Roosevelt served as vice president under William McKinley.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Roosevelt became president after McKinley was assassinated in 1901, making him, at 42, the youngest person to hold the office.

- Roosevelt is considered the first modern president because he significantly expanded the influence and power of the office.
- He believed the government had the right to regulate big business in order to protect the interests of the people.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

- Roosevelt used his presidential authority in many ways while in office: He issued executive orders to create national forests, and he stepped in to settle a coal strike in Pennsylvania, leading to the term “Square Deal,” which became the term to describe his domestic policy.
- He also used the media as a “bully pulpit” to influence the American people.
- Roosevelt became the first president to leave the country during his term in office when he visited Panama

in 1906 to see the construction of the Panama Canal. Though the canal wasn’t finished until 1914, the negotiations for its placement and construction happened during Roosevelt’s presidency.

- Roosevelt issued the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, which says the United States would police the Western Hemisphere, and he built the Navy into one of the largest in the world.

NOTABLE QUOTE

On foreign policy: “Speak softly and carry a big stick.”





The Presidency

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

27th president (1909-1913)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- William Taft grew up in Ohio, attended Yale University and went to law school at the University of Cincinnati.

- Taft worked his way through the court system first as a lawyer and then as a judge. He served on the Cincinnati Superior Court before being named U.S. solicitor general in Washington, D.C. Taft was appointed to the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and was a law professor and dean at the University of Cincinnati Law School.

- Taft aspired to serve on the United States Supreme Court, but his wife hoped he would become president. This helped him decide to branch out and accept President McKinley's request that he go to the Philippine Islands, which had become a U.S. protectorate, and set up a government. After he did that (turning down two opportunities to be a Supreme Court justice in the meantime), Taft returned to the United States and served as President Roosevelt's secretary of war.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Taft was elected president on the strength of his predecessor's endorsement and promise to continue the policies of President



NOTABLE QUOTE

"Presidents come and go, but the Supreme Court goes on forever."

University Law School until 1921. That year President Harding appointed him chief justice of the United States Supreme Court, where he served until 1930 as the only president to also become chief justice.

Roosevelt. When he did not, the friends became rivals, and Theodore Roosevelt ran for president again against him after Taft's first term in office. Neither won, as Woodrow Wilson became the next president.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- President Taft entered office fully intent on continuing President Roosevelt's policies. He continued to prosecute trusts, most famously the Standard Oil Company and American Tobacco Company.

- Taft oversaw passage of the 16th and 17th amendments to the Constitution, which allowed for the implementation of an income tax and the direct election of senators, respectively.

- Taft broke from Roosevelt's ideology when he signed a tariff reduction bill that Roosevelt and his supporters didn't think was low enough, and he dismissed the chief for-ester of the U.S., which caused turmoil in the Republican Party.

- After leaving office Taft taught at Yale



WOODROW WILSON

28th president (1913-1921)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Woodrow Wilson was born in Virginia, and before he was 20 years old his family would move to Augusta, Georgia; Columbia, South Carolina; and Wilmington, North Carolina.

- Wilson studied at Davidson College in North Carolina and at the College of New Jersey, which later became Princeton University. He practiced law in Atlanta for a short time before pursuing a Ph.D. in history and political science.

- Wilson taught at Bryn Mawr College, Wesleyan University and Princeton, and published a number of books before becoming president of Princeton University in 1902.

- The work he did at Princeton and afterward as governor of New Jersey gained him the national profile he needed to win the presidential election in 1912.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Shortly after taking office, President Wilson explained his vision of his role as president to a joint session of Congress, becoming the first president to address Congress personally since John Adams.

- Many historians think of Wilson as the man who set the example for the modern activist president, moving the president from someone who worked on an equal or lesser level with Congress to the dominant branch of government.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"These ... are the things we shall stand for, whether in war or in peace: ... that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed and that no other powers should be supported by the common thought, purpose or power of the family of nations." – from his second inaugural address March 5, 1917

- The 19th Amendment was passed during Wilson's time in office, granting women the right to vote.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- Among the economic policies of the Wilson administration was the Federal Reserve Act of 1913, which established the Federal Reserve Board and empowered it with the ability to adjust the interest rate, a system still in place today.

- World War I broke out early in Wilson's first term, and for the first three years of the war Wilson believed America's best approach was to follow its tradition of neutrality. But when German submarines attacked boats that resulted in the deaths of American citizens, the United States was forced to enter the war.

- After the war President Wilson outlined his vision for the future in his "Fourteen Points" speech to Congress. Among his ideas was a league of nations in which he believed the United States would play a leading role. In the end the League of Nations was created, and for political reasons the United States voted to not be a part of it.

- Wilson suffered a stroke late in his presidency that left him half-paralyzed and secluded in his last year in office. He did much of his business through his wife Edith.





The Presidency

WARREN HARDING

29th president (1921-1923)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Warren Harding grew up in Ohio and held a number of jobs before entering politics. He was a teacher, then involved in law, insurance and journalism as publisher of a local newspaper.
- Harding had good relationships with most politicians because he avoided being very critical in the newspaper, and he was elected to the Ohio state Senate.
- He returned in and out of his newspaper career until he was elected to the United States Senate in 1914. As a U.S. senator, Harding was absent for more sessions than he attended.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Harding considered the presidency as something of a ceremonial position rather than one where he should make a big impact.
- His administration was filled with corruption, and though he himself had progressive views on race and civil rights, the shortcomings of his administration caused him to be widely regarded as the worst president in American

history.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- Some members of President Harding's administration were accomplished and quite good at what they did. But many others were later charged with defrauding the government, and some of them went to jail. The most notable scheme to rock the administration was the Teapot Dome Scandal, where Harding's secretary of the interior, Albert Fall, accepted bribes from private oil companies in exchange for allowing them access to oil reserves in Wyoming and California.
- During Harding's presidency the United States worked with England and Japan to control naval buildups, and the country began investing in energy resources in the Middle East.
- Dogged by the scandals impacting his presidency, in 1923 President Harding set up a tour of the Western states and Alaska to meet people and explain his policies. Harding became sick with what was believed to be food poisoning, and had a heart attack and died in his sleep Aug. 2, 1923.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"I have no trouble with my enemies. I can take care of my enemies in a fight. But my friends ... they're the ones who keep me walking the floor at nights!"



CALVIN COOLIDGE

30th president (1923-1929)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Calvin Coolidge was born in Vermont and attended Amherst College in Massachusetts. After graduating, Coolidge stayed in Massachusetts to study law, then opened up a practice in Northampton, Massachusetts, where he also began his political career.
- Coolidge started as a member of the local Republican Club, then advanced to City Council; was a city solicitor, county clerk and chairman of the local Republican Party organization; served on the state legislature; then was elected mayor of Northampton, state senator, lieutenant governor, then governor of Massachusetts.
- Coolidge was selected to be Warren Harding's running mate, and served as vice president for two years before Harding died suddenly. Coolidge learned the news while vacationing in Vermont. Coolidge's father John, a justice of the peace, administered the oath of office for his son in the middle of the night.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Theodore Roosevelt was the only other vice president to finish another president's term, then run for and win an election himself. But Coolidge repeated the feat in the 1924 presidential election after finishing Harding's first term, unscathed by the scandals that constantly impacted his

predecessor.

- Coolidge was known as "Silent Cal" for the fact that he didn't enjoy making small talk at social gatherings, but in fact he addressed the nation by radio at least once a month, held many press conferences and was an oft-phographed president.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- President Coolidge wanted to maintain the economic success the country was experiencing during his time in office. His administration cut taxes and took credit for the prosperity of the time, but these policies contributed to the Great Depression on the horizon.
- During Coolidge's presidency the Federal Radio Commission was created (later to be known as the Federal Communications Commission), which put the growing radio industry under federal regulations.
- Latin American countries met during Coolidge's presidency to address the issue of American intervention in the area — the U.S. had troops in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti and was active in Cuba and Mexico. President Coolidge traveled to the meeting to discuss matters with the other countries, which led to better relationships down the road.
- Coolidge chose not to run for another term, leaving the presidency viewed favorably by many Americans.





The Presidency

HERBERT HOOVER

31st president (1929-1933)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Herbert Clark Hoover was born in 1874 in West Branch, Iowa. He became an orphan at age 9.

- In 1891, Stanford University opened its doors and Hoover was part of the founding class. He graduated in 1895 with a degree in geology and had met his future wife, Lou Henry.

- Unable to find employment, Hoover took a job in a California mine pushing ore carts. Eventually he landed as a typist with Louis Janin, a mining consultant in San Francisco. Janin quickly promoted him and recommended him to the Bewick Moreing Company to manage their gold mines in Western Australia. Although only 23, Hoover was given the job.

- By age 40, Hoover had traveled around the world five times and became a self-made millionaire with interests on six of the seven continents.

- At the onset of World War I, Hoover and his family were living in London.

He and Lou assisted an estimated 120,000 stranded Americans with aid and travel back to the states. He then set up the Commission for Relief in Belgium to feed more than 7 million non-combatants in German-occupied Belgium and Northern France.

- When the U.S. entered the war in 1917, Hoover was asked by President Wilson to head the Food Administration. Hoover persuaded Americans to voluntarily reduce their consumption of meat, wheat and sugar to assist in feeding soldiers and civilians abroad.

- As head of the American Relief Administration after the war,



NOTABLE QUOTE

“Being a politician is a poor profession. Being a public servant is a noble one.”

Hoover provided food and medical assistance to millions in Europe.

- President Harding appointed Hoover as secretary of commerce, a post he continued to serve under President Coolidge.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Known for his meticulous planning, energy and vision, Hoover set an ambitious presidential agenda to provide improved and efficient government services to the American people.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- A global Great Depression in fall 1929 consumed most of Hoover's attention. While unable to overcome the economic crisis, Hoover did initiate economic policies such as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation that laid the foundation for later recovery.

- His presidency also had some important successes that are usually overshadowed by the Depression.

Hoover used the power of the federal government to put gangster Al Capone in jail. A major naval disarmament conference was concluded among the great naval powers. Numerous public works programs such as the Bay Bridge in San Francisco, the U.S. Supreme Court Building and Hoover Dam were begun during his presidency. Hoover also set aside more than 2.2 million acres of forest and park lands.

— Thomas F. Schwartz, Ph.D., director of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

32nd president (1933-1945)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born and raised in a privileged family in Hyde Park, New York. He was tutored at home until age 14, and after attending a private school for his high school years, graduated from Harvard College.

- Franklin admired his distant cousin Theodore Roosevelt, who was president during the years Franklin was at Harvard, and this was one of the things that spurred him to enter politics. He began as a New York state senator, and after supporting Woodrow Wilson's presidential campaign, FDR was named assistant secretary of the Navy. He served in that capacity during World War I and unsuccessfully ran for office as a U.S. senator and vice presidential candidate before taking a job at a financial firm.

- While he was working in the financial firm FDR contracted polio, leaving him partially paralyzed and in a state where he was unable to recover full use of his legs. He spent most of the rest of his life in a wheelchair.

- FDR became governor of New York just before the stock market crash in 1929. He was re-elected in 1930 with the Great Depression underway, and his leadership in New York during that difficult time was part of the reason he was elected president of the United States in 1932.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Roosevelt's unprecedented four presidential election wins speak to



NOTABLE QUOTE

“Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

— from his first inaugural address

his popularity and success in the office. But it also led to the passage of the 22nd amendment in 1951, which limited a president to two terms in office as people realized the potential downside to having a president serve more than eight years.

- FDR communicated with the country through “fireside chats,” speaking often to the American populace over the radio.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- President Roosevelt promised a “New Deal” to help lead America out of the Great Depression. This included, among other aspects, stabilizing the banking system and creating jobs. His administration created the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Civil Works Administration, which provided jobs building bridges, roads and airports, cleaning beaches and planting trees. The Tennessee Valley Authority created jobs that helped bring electricity and roads to parts of the country that didn't have them. While many of the moves the administration made had impacts on the economy – some positive, some negative – none brought an end to the Great Depression without the help of World War II.

- Roosevelt was president when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, leaving the U.S. no choice but to join the international conflict. Roosevelt made the decision to enter the war, but he would not live to see it come to an end.

- Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage in April 1945, shortly after beginning his fourth term in office.





The Presidency

HARRY S. TRUMAN

33rd president (1945-1953)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Harry Truman was born in 1884 in Missouri. After graduating high school he worked as a timekeeper for a railroad construction contractor, then as a clerk in two Kansas City banks before returning home to help his father run the family farm for more than 10 years.
- When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Truman helped organize the 2nd Regiment of Missouri Field Artillery of the Missouri National Guard, which was quickly called into federal service in France. Truman was promoted to captain and given command of the regiment's Battery D.
- Truman joined the reserves after the war, rising to the rank of colonel.
- From 1919 to 1922 he ran a men's clothing store in Kansas City with a friend. The store failed in the post-war recession. Truman narrowly avoided bankruptcy.
- Truman was elected in 1922 to be one of three judges of the Jackson County Court.
- In 1934, Truman was elected to the United States Senate. He had significant roles in the passage of the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 and the Transportation Act of 1940. After being re-elected in 1940, Truman gained national prominence as chairman of the Senate Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, which came to be called the Truman Committee.
- In July 1944, Truman was nominated to run for vice president with Franklin Roosevelt. On Jan. 20, 1945, he took the vice-presidential oath, and after Roosevelt's unexpected death only 82 days later, he was sworn in as president.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Truman later called his first year as president a "year of decisions." He oversaw during his first two months in office the ending of the war in



NOTABLE QUOTE

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

- Europe. He approved the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945. This first year of Truman's presidency also saw the founding of the United Nations and the development of an increasingly strained and confrontational relationship with the Soviet Union.
- Central to almost everything Truman undertook in his foreign policy was the desire to prevent the expansion of the influence of the Soviet Union. The Truman Doctrine was an enunciation of American willingness to provide military aid to countries resisting communist insurgencies; the Marshall Plan sought to revive the economies of the nations of Europe in the hope that communism would not thrive in the midst of prosperity; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization built a military barrier confronting the Soviet-dominated part of Europe.
- The one time during his presidency when a communist nation invaded a non-communist one — when North Korea invaded South Korea in June 1950 — Truman responded by waging undeclared war.
- Truman was successful in achieving a healthy peacetime economy, but only a few of his social program proposals became law.
- He issued executive orders desegregating the armed forces and forbidding racial discrimination in federal employment. He also established a Committee on Civil Rights and encouraged the Justice Department to argue before the Supreme Court on behalf of plaintiffs fighting against segregation.

— Harry S. Truman Library & Museum



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

34th president (1953-1961)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Dwight Eisenhower was born in Texas and raised in Kansas. He attended the United States Military Academy at West Point.
- After Pearl Harbor, Gen. George C. Marshall called Eisenhower to Washington for a war plans assignment. He commanded the Allied Forces landing in North Africa in November 1942; on D-Day, 1944, he was supreme commander of the troops invading France.
- After the war, he became president of Columbia University, then took leave to assume supreme command over the new NATO forces being assembled in 1951.
- Republican emissaries to his headquarters near Paris persuaded him to run for president in 1952. "I Like Ike" was an irresistible slogan; Eisenhower won a sweeping victory.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Eisenhower worked incessantly during his two terms to ease the tensions of the Cold War.
- In domestic policy the president pursued a middle course, continuing most of the New Deal and Fair Deal programs, emphasizing a balanced budget.



NOTABLE QUOTE

On desegregation: "There must be no second-class citizens in this country."

- program — the loan of American uranium to "have-not" nations for peaceful purposes.

— White House Historical Association via WhiteHouse.gov





The Presidency

JOHN F. KENNEDY

35th president (1961-1963)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- John F. Kennedy grew up in a wealthy family in Massachusetts. He battled various illnesses in his youth, some of which continued to bother him into adulthood, but after graduating from Harvard University he was well enough to join the U.S. Navy in World War II. He was awarded the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Medal for Valor and a Purple Heart for his actions in the war.
- Kennedy served in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate before running for president in 1960 at age 43.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Some of Kennedy's biggest impacts on the office of the presidency came during his campaign: He worked to reassure voters that his religion — Roman Catholic — wouldn't influence his work as president, and he spoke about the topic often. Kennedy and Richard Nixon participated in four debates that were broadcast live on national television. This became common practice in elections that followed, but was the first time television was used extensively. It worked to Kennedy's advantage: Listeners to the first debate on radio thought Nixon had won, but the way the two candidates appeared on television left viewers more impressed by Kennedy.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Kennedy's domestic agenda was dominated by civil rights



NOTABLE QUOTE

“Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.”
— from his inaugural address, Jan. 20, 1961

a big supporter of the space program and laid the groundwork for the moon landing that took place in 1969. He increased the United States' presence in Vietnam.

- Kennedy was shot and killed Nov. 22, 1963, as his motorcade drove through Dallas, Texas.

issues. He wanted to wait until his second term to send a civil rights bill to Congress, but a series of events forced him to do that shortly before his death. While Kennedy was in office, he ordered federal marshals to accompany James Meredith, a black man who was trying to enroll at the traditionally white University of Mississippi, to the campus in 1962, and a violent riot broke out. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led the March on Washington in 1963 that featured his “I Have A Dream” speech. Four children were killed in a racially motivated church bombing in 1963 in Birmingham, Alabama.

- The Bay of Pigs Invasion was a failed attempt to overthrow Communist Cuban leader Fidel Castro. It took place just two months into Kennedy's presidency, and the next year Cuba figured prominently again when the Soviet Union brought missiles and troops to the island, targeting the United States. Kennedy's administration reached a deal with the Soviet Union before the end of 1962.

- Kennedy's two years in office were marked by unfinished business: He created the Peace Corps. He was



LYNDON JOHNSON

36th president (1963-1969)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Lyndon Johnson grew up in Texas and studied to become a teacher, though his ambitions were always to enter politics.
- His first political job was in Washington, D.C. as an aide to a Texas congressman.
- During the Great Depression, Johnson worked as the Texas director of the National Youth Administration, and by age 28 won a seat in the House of Representatives.
- Johnson served in the Naval Reserve during World War II without having to give up his House seat, and after six terms won a seat in the Senate.
- Johnson quickly became a powerful senator, working his way up to Senate majority leader.
- In the 1960 presidential election Johnson lost the primary to John F. Kennedy, but was quickly selected as Kennedy's running mate to balance the ticket. He was Protestant to Kennedy's Catholic, Southern to Kennedy's Northern, and a veteran politician to Kennedy's inexperience.
- Johnson became president after Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Johnson's ability to sway lawmakers to vote in his favor was honed during his time in the House and Senate and that, coupled with a Democratic



NOTABLE QUOTE

“This is what America is all about. It is the uncrossed desert and the unclimbed ridge. It is the star that is not reached and the harvest that is sleeping in the unplowed ground.” — from his inaugural address Jan. 20, 1965

majority in Congress when he won election in 1964, helped him push through his domestic agenda.

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

- Johnson's domestic policy was called “The Great Society.” He wanted to end poverty and achieve racial equality. Among other aspects of the agenda: A bill was passed establishing a Department of Housing and Urban Development. Colleges and school districts — especially poorer ones — were given federal aid. More government funding overall was devoted to the poor in Johnson's “War on Poverty.”
- The president followed through on Kennedy's vision of improving civil rights by passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and passed the Voting Rights Act.
- Johnson took over the presidency with the conflict in Vietnam escalating, and increased the presence of American troops there. After reports American naval vessels were attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, authorizing the president to take whatever measures necessary to protect the armed forces.
- Americans' opposition to war increased as Johnson's term went on, and he opted not to run for another in 1968.





The Presidency

RICHARD NIXON

37th president (1969-1974)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Born in California in 1913, Richard Nixon attended Whittier College and Duke University Law School before beginning the practice of law.
- During World War II, he served as a Navy lieutenant commander in the Pacific.
- On leaving the service, he was elected to Congress from his California district. In 1950, he won a U.S. Senate seat. Two years later, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower selected Nixon, age 39, to be his running mate.
- Nominated for president by acclamation in 1960, he lost by a narrow margin to John F. Kennedy. In 1968, he again won his party's nomination, and went on to defeat Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and third-party candidate George C. Wallace.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Reconciliation was the first goal set by President Nixon. The nation was painfully divided, with turbulence in cities and war overseas.
- After successfully ending American fighting in Vietnam and improving international relations with the USSR and China, Nixon became the only president to ever resign from the office, as a result of the Watergate scandal.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- His accomplishments while in office included revenue sharing, the end of the draft, new anticrime laws and a broad environmental program. As he had promised, he appointed justices of conservative



NOTABLE QUOTE

"People have got to know whether or not their president is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook. I earned everything I've got."

philosophy to the Supreme Court. One of the most dramatic events of his first term occurred in 1969, when American astronauts made the first moon landing.

- His summit meetings with Russian leader Leonid I. Brezhnev produced a treaty to limit strategic nuclear weapons. In 1974, his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, negotiated disengagement agreements between Israel and its opponents, Egypt and Syria.
- In his 1972 bid for office, Nixon defeated Democratic candidate George McGovern by one of the widest margins on record.
- Within a few months, his administration was embattled over the so-called "Watergate" scandal, stemming from a break-in at the offices of the Democratic National Committee during the 1972 campaign. The break-in was traced to officials of the Committee to Re-elect the President. A number of administration officials resigned; some were later convicted of offenses connected with efforts to cover up the affair. Nixon denied any personal involvement, but the courts forced him to yield tape recordings which indicated that he had, in fact, tried to divert the investigation.
- As a result of unrelated scandals in Maryland, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigned in 1973. Nixon nominated, and Congress approved, House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford as vice president.
- Faced with what seemed almost certain impeachment, Nixon announced on Aug. 8, 1974, that he would resign the next day to begin "that process of healing which is so desperately needed in America."

— White House Historical Association, via WhiteHouse.gov



GERALD FORD

38th president (1974-1977)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Gerald Ford was born in Omaha, Nebraska, but moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, when his mother left a troubled relationship with his father. She remarried in Michigan and Ford, who was born Leslie Lynch King Jr., changed his name to Gerald Rudolph Ford Jr., in honor of his stepfather, after he graduated college.
- Ford was a star center on the University of Michigan football team, and he turned down contracts with the Detroit Lions and Green Bay Packers to attend law school at Yale University, where he also coached football.
- After graduating law school Ford returned to Michigan to practice law, and after the attack on Pearl Harbor served in the Navy during World War II.
- Ford's growing interest in politics culminated with a successful bid for a seat in the United States House of Representatives in 1948, where he served until he was picked to become Richard Nixon's vice president in December 1973.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Ford's presidency is unique in that he is the first man to achieve the office without having been elected to either the presidency or the vice presidency. He was named Spiro Agnew's



NOTABLE QUOTE

"I have not sought this enormous responsibility, but I will not shirk it ... In all my public and private acts as your President, I expect to follow my instincts of openness and candor with full confidence that honesty is always the best policy in the end. My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over. Our Constitution works; our great Republic is a government of laws and not of men. Here the people rule." – upon being sworn in as president on Aug. 9, 1974

replacement by Richard Nixon after Agnew resigned. He then succeeded to the presidency eight months later after Nixon's resignation.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- President Ford suffered an immediate decline in popularity when, a month into his time in office, he issued a pardon to President Nixon for his role in the Watergate scandal. He hoped the pardon would put Watergate behind him, but instead it angered many Americans — as well as members of Congress — who wanted to see Nixon face consequences.
- Ford's time in office was dominated by an economic decline. Inflation and unemployment were at their highest levels since World War II and the country increased its dependence on foreign oil, the price of which kept increasing.
- Ford inherited America's up-and-down relationship with the Soviet Union, and worked to continue the policy of detente between the countries.
- The book on the Vietnam War closed during Ford's presidency when he ordered the evacuation from Saigon of all United States personnel and South Vietnamese citizens with connections to the U.S.
- Ford narrowly edged Ronald Reagan for the Republican nomination in the 1976 election, but he lost the presidency to Jimmy Carter, ending his time in office.





The Presidency

JIMMY CARTER

39th president (1977-1981)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Jimmy Carter grew up on a peanut farm in Plains, Georgia. He studied at the United States Naval Academy and after graduating worked in the submarine service, where the Navy was building its first nuclear-powered submarines. Carter was responsible for teaching nuclear engineering.
- After his father died Carter returned home to work on the peanut farm and became involved in the community. He served on the county board of education, then won a Georgia state Senate seat. He worked to resist strong segregationist sentiment in the area, and this reputation hurt him in his first bid for governor of Georgia. In the next election, in 1970, he was able to win and immediately set to ending segregation in Georgia.
- Carter took a couple of steps toward national exposure before running for president in the 1976 election, including becoming the campaign chairman of the Democratic National Committee. But in fact it was his Washington outsider status that helped him win in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Water-gate scandal.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Carter campaigned on a platform of honesty and worked to maintain his moral character throughout his presidency. His distaste for the kinds of deals Congress negotiated in exchange for favors led to a rocky relationship, and despite his ability to work with Congress he



NOTABLE QUOTE

“America did not invent human rights. In a very real sense, human rights invented America.”

was never a very popular president while he was in office.

- Carter’s administration saw an increase in tensions with the Soviet Union, including an American boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- Carter’s experience with nuclear energy was part of his success around America’s energy policies while he was in office. Although fuel prices increased and there were notoriously long lines at gas stations in 1979 due to international incidents, America’s dependence on foreign energy sources decreased during Carter’s term.
- President Carter’s time in office is mainly remembered for two foreign policy events, one of which was a success and the other a main reason why he lost his bid for re-election: In 1978 Carter negotiated the Camp David Accords, named for the presidential retreat where Carter met with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Carter helped negotiate a peace treaty that resulted in Begin and Sadat winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. As much as the Camp David Accords were a highlight of his administration, the Iran Hostage Crisis was the exact opposite. Sixty-six Americans were held at the American embassy in Teheran, Iran, in retaliation for Carter allowing the exiled Shah to come to the United States for refuge and medical treatment. A failed rescue attempt preceded a deal for the release of the hostages at the end of Carter’s term.



RONALD REAGAN

40th president (1981-1989)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Ronald Reagan was born in Illinois and attended Eureka College near Peoria. After graduating he became a radio sports announcer, and in 1937 he won a movie contract in Hollywood. In the ‘30s, ‘40s and ‘50s he appeared in 53 films.
- As president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan became embroiled in disputes over the issue of communism in the film industry; his political views shifted from liberal to conservative. He toured the country as a television host, becoming a spokesman for conservatism.
- In 1966 he was elected governor of California by a margin of a million votes; he was re-elected in 1970.
- Reagan won the Republican presidential nomination in 1980 and chose as his running mate former Texas Congressman and United Nations Ambassador George Bush. Voters troubled by inflation and by the yearlong confinement of Americans in Iran swept the Republican ticket into office.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Reagan’s presidency saw a restoration of prosperity at home, with the goal of achieving “peace through strength” abroad. At the end of his two terms in office, Reagan viewed with satisfaction the achievements of his innovative program known as the Reagan Revolution, which aimed to reinvigorate the American people and reduce their reliance upon government. He felt he had fulfilled his campaign pledge of 1980 to restore “the great, confident roar of American progress and growth and optimism.”

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

- Sixty nine days after taking office, Reagan was shot by a would-be assassin. He left the hospital after 13 days, and no formal invocation of



NOTABLE QUOTE

“There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace. General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” – from his remarks at the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin June 12, 1987

presidential succession took place.

- Reagan obtained legislation to stimulate economic growth, curb inflation, increase employment and strengthen national defense. He embarked upon a course of cutting taxes and government expenditures, refusing to deviate from it when the strengthening of defense forces led to a large deficit.
- In 1986 Reagan obtained an overhaul of the income tax code, which eliminated many deductions and exempted millions of people with low incomes. At the end of his administration, the nation was enjoying its longest recorded period of peacetime prosperity without recession or depression.
- Also in 1986 Reagan was embroiled in the Iran-Contra Affair, in which arms were traded for hostages and the proceeds given to anti-communist rebels the Contras in Nicaragua.
- During his two terms he increased defense spending 35 percent but sought to improve relations with the Soviet Union. In dramatic meetings with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, he negotiated a treaty that would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles.
- Reagan declared war against international terrorism, sending American bombers against Libya after evidence came out that Libya was involved in an attack on American soldiers in a West Berlin nightclub.
- By ordering naval escorts in the Persian Gulf, he maintained the free flow of oil during the Iran-Iraq war. In keeping with the Reagan Doctrine, he gave support to anti-communist insurgencies in Central America, Asia and Africa.

— White House Historical Association, via WhiteHouse.gov





The Presidency

GEORGE H.W. BUSH

41st president (1989-1993)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- George Bush grew up in a wealthy family that stressed giving back through public service. His father was an investment banker and later a U.S. senator from Connecticut.

- Bush served in the Navy and was a pilot during World War II. At 19, he was the youngest pilot in the Navy. On one of his 58 combat missions his plane was shot down and he was rescued at sea.

- Bush attended Yale University after the war and upon graduating moved to Texas, where he worked in the oil industry.

- Bush entered politics by serving as a Republican Party chairman in Texas. After losing an election for a U.S. Senate seat, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1966.

- Bush served as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and as chairman of the Republican National Committee under Richard Nixon. When Gerald Ford became president he was named the U.S. envoy to the People's Republic of China and then the director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

- Bush ran for the Republican nomination for president in the 1980 election, but when it became clear Ronald Reagan was going to win he became the vice presidential nominee. Bush's experience as vice president helped him win the presidency in the 1988 presidential election.



NOTABLE QUOTE

After winning the Republican nomination for president in 1988: "Read my lips: No new taxes."

Iraq invaded Kuwait, the United States announced "Operation Desert Shield," and when the diplomatic approach failed to produce changes, "Operation Desert Storm," involving air strikes and a ground war. The Persian Gulf War lasted less than two months and was a great success for President Bush.

- Though his popularity soared after the Persian Gulf War, the slow economy and the fact that he raised taxes after promising not to do so led to his loss in the 1992 presidential election.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- By winning the 1988 election, Bush became the first sitting vice president to win a presidential election since Martin Van Buren in 1836.

- Bush was the first post-Cold War president, and he continued the work that had begun at the end of his vice presidency. He was involved in negotiations with the Soviet Union that saw both countries reduce their nuclear arsenals, as well as negotiations over a reunified Germany's admittance into NATO.

SUCCESSIONS AND FAILURES

- Bush's one term in office was dominated by foreign affairs. In addition to dealing with the repercussions from the end of the Cold War, the administration was involved in "Operation Just Cause," where American troops were sent to

Panama to remove Manuel Noriega from power. It resulted in Noriega's arrest and conviction on drug charges. The U.S. sent troops to Somalia to help ease a humanitarian crisis and unsuccessfully tried to intervene in the conflicts resulting from the breakup of Yugoslavia. In 1990, when



BILL CLINTON

42nd president (1993-2001)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- William Jefferson Clinton grew up in Arkansas and in high school was able to attend a mock political convention in Washington, D.C. On that trip Clinton was able to shake President Kennedy's hand during a ceremony at the White House Rose Garden. Clinton's political ambitions from that day on were to become president of the United States.

- Clinton returned to Washington for college, where he attended Georgetown University and worked as a clerk for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He also won a Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford University in England for two years.

- Clinton graduated from Yale Law School (where he would meet future wife Hillary Rodham) and returned to Arkansas where he would be elected governor at age 32. He served one term before losing a bid for re-election (becoming the youngest former governor in American history), then won four more terms as governor of Arkansas.

- Clinton won the presidential election in 1992 despite allegations of marital infidelity, which he addressed directly, as well as criticism over his avoidance of the Vietnam War draft. Controversies would follow Clinton throughout his time in office.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve. The bad days are part of it. I didn't run to have a pleasant time. I ran to have a chance to change the country. And if the bad days come with it, that's part of life. And it's humbling and educational. It keeps you in your place."

package that led to an economic boom but passed through Congress with no Republican votes. Republicans took control of Congress midway through Clinton's first term.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Clinton was the first Democratic president to win back-to-back terms since Franklin Roosevelt, and he was also the second president in history to be impeached.

- Despite her involvement in the Whitewater investigation, Hillary Rodham Clinton was one of the most active first ladies in history, particularly in her work around health care reform.

SUCCESSIONS AND FAILURES

- The Clintons were investigated for questionable real estate dealings on the Whitewater River in Arkansas, and in 1998 President Clinton was accused of having an affair with a White House intern. Investigators believed he was not only lying to investigators about the affair but having others lie as well, and Congress determined there was enough evidence for an impeachment. Clinton was acquitted.

- Clinton had mixed results intervening – or not acting quickly enough to intervene – in foreign affairs in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

- On the domestic front, Clinton worked with Republicans in Congress on some issues, like passing the North American Free Trade Agreement, but struggled to work through others, like an economic





The Presidency

43 GEORGE W. BUSH

43rd president (2001-2009)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- George W. Bush was born in Connecticut, the oldest of former president George H.W. and Barbara Bush's six children.
- The family moved to Texas shortly after George was born, but Bush attended a prestigious high school in Massachusetts as well as Yale University.
- Bush served in the Air National Guard after graduating college, then returned to Texas to work in the oil industry.
- Bush's early political ventures involved an unsuccessful run for a U.S. House of Representatives seat and helping with his father's presidential campaign. Once George H.W. Bush won election the younger Bush returned to Texas and was involved in a group that purchased the Texas Rangers baseball team.
- George W. Bush was elected governor of Texas before running for president in 2000, an election clouded by controversy over vote counts in Florida. The decision over whether the election results, which declared Bush the winner, were valid went all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- President Bush's Cabinet featured Colin Powell, the first African-American secretary of state, and later Condoleezza Rice, the first African-American woman to serve in that position.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them." – from his address to the nation on the evening of Sept. 11, 2001

- The aftermath of the 9/11 attacks saw President Bush make a number of executive decisions, from the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, to authorizations allowing the president to use force against those involved in the attacks or to prevent future attacks, to the Patriot Act, which allowed for such measures as expanded surveillance, improvements in U.S. intelligence and increased domestic security.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- On Sept. 11, 2001, hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Virginia, while another plane believed to be headed to the U.S. Capitol or White House crashed in Pennsylvania. After the attack on America the United States sent troops to Afghanistan to attack al-Qaida and the Taliban.
- The U.S. also went to war with Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power. The war centered around the notion that Iraq had stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, but President Bush wanted to invade Iraq before rigorous investigations by the United Nations were completed.

- Hurricane Katrina resulted in devastating flooding in New Orleans in 2005. The federal government was accused of negligence in its response to the natural disaster, which killed more than 1,800 and left more than 400,000 homeless.



44 BARACK OBAMA

44th president (2009-2017)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Barack Obama was born in Hawaii to a white mother from Kansas and a black father from Kenya. His father left home when Obama was 2 years old and died in Kenya when Barack was 21.
- He was mostly raised by his maternal grandparents in Hawaii, but also spent a few years in Indonesia with his mother and Indonesian stepfather when he was a child.
- Obama studied at Occidental College and Columbia University, then worked as a community organizer in Chicago before attending Harvard Law School.
- Obama worked as a lawyer before winning a seat in the Illinois state Senate, and in 2004 he won an election to represent Illinois in the United States Senate.
- Also in 2004, Obama gained national attention when he delivered the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

- Obama instantly made history by winning the 2008 presidential election, becoming the first African-American president of the United States.



NOTABLE QUOTE

"If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer." – on Election Night in 2008, after being elected the first African-American president of the United States

- He became one of four U.S. presidents to win the Nobel Peace Prize when he received the award in 2009.

SUCCESES AND FAILURES

- Obama began his time in office facing an economic crisis. He passed a \$700 billion relief program for the major banks and some auto industries, and an \$800 billion economic stimulus package to help the economy recover.
- He worked to reform American health care, and after much effort managed to pass the Affordable Care Act through Congress despite much Republican resistance.
- President Obama inherited the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan when he took office. He worked on withdrawing American troops from those areas while still battling al-Qaida and its affiliates.
- He scored a major military victory in 2011 when he ordered an attack by a team of Navy SEALs that resulted in the death of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.
- President Obama tried but failed to push gun control measures through Congress after a series of gun violence tragedies that took place during his time in office. He supported legislation calling for universal background checks on all gun purchases as well as a ban on sales of assault weapons.





The Presidency

DONALD TRUMP

45th president (2017-)



BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Donald Trump grew up in Queens, New York, the son of a real estate developer.
- After college, including graduating from prestigious business college Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Trump joined the family business and eventually took it over. His work made him one of the most recognizable figures in New York City, and eventually due to his work on Fifth Avenue with Trump Tower and with casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, he achieved a more national profile.
- Trump considered running for president before the 2016 election, even campaigning as a member of the Reform Party in 2000, but used his fame to comment on political matters instead of running for office.
- In 2004 Trump produced and starred in “The Apprentice,” an NBC reality series where candidates competed for a chance to work for The Trump Organization.
- Trump used his popularity from the show, as well as his position as an outspoken critic of President Obama, to launch a campaign for the 2016 presidential election.

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

- Trump ran for president with the campaign slogan “Make

America Great Again.” He promised to build a wall along the Mexican border that he said he would get Mexico to pay for, to keep Mexican immigrants from coming into the country; repeal the Affordable Care Act; and follow a policy of “Americanism, not globalism.”

- Trump emerged from a crowded field of Republican candidates to win the nomination and face former first lady, U.S. senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

• Despite derogatory comments about women throughout his campaign, a lawsuit settlement involving his venture Trump University, and alleged ties to Russia, Trump won the electoral college vote, though he lost the popular vote to Clinton, and became the 45th president of the United States.

NOTABLE QUOTE

“In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving. We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action, constantly complaining but never doing anything about it. The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action.” – from his inaugural address Jan. 20, 2017

WHILE IN OFFICE

- Trump quickly issued executive orders once in office that included starting the wall along the Mexican border, repealing the ACA, and banning travel ban to the U.S. from seven – then six – Muslim-majority countries.

• Trump spent his first few months in office building his Cabinet. Many of his nominees drew criticism from Demo-

crats before being passed through the Republican-controlled Congress.



PRESIDENTIAL POWERS

Checks and balances remain, but the chief of state has unilateral options, too

By **Melissa Erickson**

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While the United States is a country that runs on a system of checks and balances, with each branch of government wielding different powers established in the Constitution, the president stands alone. As the most powerful player with unparalleled potential to lead the country, the president commands impressive tools such as executive orders to make his will into action.

But how do the president’s executive orders fit into the American system of checks and balances? To find some answers, two experts, Mark Major, a senior lecturer in the political science department at Pennsylvania State University and author of “The Unilateral Presidency and the News Media: The Politics of Framing Executive Power,” and Mitchell Sellers, an assistant professor in the political science department at Temple University, examine how our system prevents the president or any branch from exercising too much power.

CIVICS 101

Back in school we learned that the three branches of government operate with separate powers. At the most basic: The legislative branch (Congress) makes the laws. The executive branch (president) executes the laws. The judicial branch (courts) interprets the laws.

Each branch also has powers to keep the others in check. For example, when Congress passes a law, the president can veto it, but Congress can override a veto with enough votes. The Supreme Court can declare a law unconstitutional, and the Senate approves the president’s nominees for court justices.

Less well-known are the unilateral powers of the president, or the ways a president can act without the support of Congress and the courts, Major said. Executive orders are just one type of unilateral power available to the president. Others include signing statements, presidential proclamations (such as the Emancipation Proclamation), national security directives and presidential memorandums, Major said.

NOT MENTIONED IN CONSTITUTION

One of the first things that should be known about a president’s executive orders is that they are “a derived power” that is not clearly stated in the Constitution, Sellers said. Instead, they “originate out of tradition starting with Washington and continuing through Trump,” Major said.

“Presidents rely on predecessors for experience and power. Once one president acts in a certain way, others will follow,” Major said.

Historically, presidents use executive orders to direct policy and set agendas, and they are most commonly used in the first 100 days of a presidency and toward the end, Sellers said.

“They want to start by making big changes, then later they’ll use different

strategies and work with the legislature to get things done,” he said.

Often used as a way to jump-start promises made on the campaign trail, executive orders are actually not that common these days. Issuing executive orders as a presidential strategy peaked under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who issued on average 307 each year of his historically long tenure, 1933-45. Former President Barack Obama issued the least amount in the past 120 years, 35 on average, followed by former President George W. Bush with 36 and former President Bill Clinton with 46, according to the Pew Research Center.

Executive orders walk a fine line between achieving policy objectives and not making Congress or the courts react.

“It’s a delicate calculator between what do I want to achieve and what can I get away with. Presidents act alone but within the system of checks and balances,” Major said.

CUTTING THROUGH GRIDLOCK

In recent years, Washington has been plagued by partisan gridlock, and executive orders are a useful tool for a president to make things happen.

“If everything has to be approved by Congress, nothing would get done,” said Sellers, who called it “reasonable” for presidents to have some unilateral power.

Any policy change needs to be grounded in existing law, but with so much legislation adopted over the last 200-plus years, that’s not difficult to do, Sellers said.





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“Presidents act alone but within the system of checks and balances.”

MARK MAJOR, AUTHOR AND SENIOR LECTURER IN
POLITICAL SCIENCE AT PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

RECENT EXAMPLES OF EXECUTIVE ACTION:

Question: Why could a federal appeals court in Seattle stop the president’s travel ban?

Background: On Jan. 27, President Trump signed an executive order barring any non-U.S. citizen from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia or Yemen from entering the United States. The courts got involved, and a U.S. District Court in Seattle, Washington, granted a restraining order halting the travel ban.

Answer: “While the president acted alone, his actions are still within the context of checks and balances. They’re subject to policy and judicial review. States can challenge an order, and it’s up to the courts to decide,” Major said.

In deciding to put the order on hold, a three-judge panel noted that the states of Washington and Minnesota had raised serious concerns about religious discrimination and that due diligence wasn’t served. In essence, “The courts did a cost-benefit analysis and found that enforcing the order would increase harm on citizens” while showing no evidence that any foreigner was responsible for a terrorist act on U.S. soil, Sellers said. “The hardship was greater than the treatment,” he said.

What was extraordinary was the immediate and swift pushback from the courts less than two weeks after Trump took office, Major said.

“The president usually gets the final words, but not always. The political system is capable of checking the president,” Major said.

Question: Does having a Congressional majority and president of the same party erode the power of checks and balances?

Answer: Having one party in charge of both Congress and the presidency can be a

cause for cheer or concern, Major said.

“With a unified government, congressional oversight tends to drop and drop dramatically,” said Major, referencing the current political climate as well as Obama’s first two years in office.

Surprisingly, research shows that presidents act alone and issue more executive orders under a unified government, not when the opposing party is in power in Congress, Major said. With “friends” in Congress who will not get in the president’s way, he is more likely to issue executive orders, Major said.

Question: Congress has to vote to go to war, but the president is the commander in chief – is that why unilateral action like drone strikes is OK?

Answer: When it comes to war powers there’s a stark contrast to the theory written in the Constitution and the practice of the political system, Major said.

“Congress has the sole authority to declare war, but the president executes the action. There’s large wiggle room and leeway when it comes to foreign policy,” Major said.

Since the “war on terror” is not an officially defined war, the president has temporary abilities to strike opponents, Sellers said. The president is able to “get around it because we never declared war. It’s part of a military conflict effort,” he said.

Additionally, whether Congress doesn’t want the responsibility or it’s been taken away, the evolution of national security now falls more directly on the president’s shoulders.

“Over the years Congress has gradually given responsibility to the executive branch,” Major said.

LEGISLATION BY OTHER MEANS

Partisanship plays a huge role in how people view executive actions, Major said.

“When you’re on the outside looking in, everybody becomes a constitutional scholar.

When your side is not in power, it looks unconstitutional. When you are, it looks like a valuable policy tool,” Major said. So Democrats accuse Republican presidents of overreaching and acting like kings, and Republicans attack Democratic presidents for having too much power and acting like tyrants.

“Ultimately, the conversation needs to be on the nature of unilateral action. Should the president have these types of power? We need to look at the issue rather than have a partisan lens,” Major said.

More than 15,000 executive actions have been made, spanning everything from domestic policy, space travel and agriculture to science and technology, immigration, the environment and more. In addition to the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all slaves living in the Confederacy in 1863, some of the most well-known executive orders include:

- **Indian Appropriations Act of 1871**, which empowered the government to remove by force if necessary Native Americans from ancestral homelands and create reservations.

- **Executive Order 7034:** As part of President Roosevelt’s New Deal in 1935, this created the Works Progress Administration to increase employment for the jobless during the Depression.

- **Executive Order 9066:** Japanese-American internment, which authorized in 1942 the detention of more than 110,000 Japanese-Americans on the West Coast for the duration of World War II.

- **Executive Order 9981:** Desegregation of the armed forces in 1948, which was part of a plan to extend civil rights to African Americans and phase out all-black units of the military.

- **Executive Order 10924:** President John F. Kennedy created the Peace Corps, which was one of his campaign promises, as a trial program paid for by discretionary funds.



The United States

CONSTITUTION

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I

SECTION 1

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

SECTION 2

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. (Note: changed by section 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment.) The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any

State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

SECTION 3

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, (Note: changed by the Seventeenth Amendment.) for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies. (Note: changed by the Seventeenth Amendment.)

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall

be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

SECTION 4

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, (Note: changed by section 2 of the Twentieth Amendment.) unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

SECTION 5

Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall,





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without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

SECTION 6

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

SECTION 7

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

SECTION 8

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide

for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States; To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court; To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy; To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings; -- And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

SECTION 9

The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for

each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed. No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken. (Note: see the Sixteenth Amendment.)

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

SECTION 10

No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing it's inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Controll of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE II

SECTION 1

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an



Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President. (Note: changed by the Twelfth Amendment.)

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected. (Note: changed by the Twenty-Fifth Amendment.)

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation: "I do solemnly

swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

SECTION 2

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

SECTION 3

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

SECTION 4

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

ARTICLE III

SECTION 1

The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall

hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

SECTION 2

The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority; -- to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls; -- to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction; -- to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party; -- to Controversies between two or more States; -- between a State and Citizens of another State; (Note: changed by the Eleventh Amendment.) -- between Citizens of different States, -- between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects. (Note: changed by the Eleventh Amendment.)

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

SECTION 3

Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attained.

ARTICLE IV

SECTION 1

Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

SECTION 2

The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all





The Presidency

Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due. (Note: changed by the Thirteenth Amendment.)

SECTION 3

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

SECTION 4

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence.

ARTICLE V

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE VI

All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

ARTICLE VII

The ratification of the conventions of nine states, shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the states so ratifying the same.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Amendments I-X ratified Dec. 15, 1791

AMENDMENT I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

AMENDMENT II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

AMENDMENT III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

AMENDMENT IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or

things to be seized.

AMENDMENT V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

AMENDMENT VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

AMENDMENT VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

AMENDMENT VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

AMENDMENT IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

AMENDMENT X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

AMENDMENT XI (Ratified Feb. 7, 1795)

The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed



to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by Citizens of another State, or by Citizens or Subjects of any Foreign State.

AMENDMENT XII (Ratified June 15, 1804)

The Electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate; -- The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted; -- The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President. (Note: superseded by section 3 of the Twentieth Amendment.) -- The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

AMENDMENT XIII (Ratified Dec. 6, 1865)

SECTION 1

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

SECTION 2

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XIV (Ratified July 9, 1868)

SECTION 1

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal

protection of the laws.

SECTION 2

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

SECTION 3

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

SECTION 4

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

SECTION 5

The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

AMENDMENT XV (Ratified Feb. 3, 1870)

SECTION 1

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SECTION 2

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XVI (Ratified Feb. 3, 1913)

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

AMENDMENT XVII (Ratified April 8, 1913)

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue

writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

AMENDMENT XVIII (Ratified Jan. 16, 1919)

SECTION 1

After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

SECTION 2

The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

SECTION 3

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress. (Note: This amendment was repealed by the Twenty-First Amendment.)

AMENDMENT XIX (Ratified Aug. 18, 1920)

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XX (Ratified Jan. 23, 1933)

SECTION 1

The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

SECTION 2

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

SECTION 3

If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.

SECTION 4

The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.





The Presidency

SECTION 1

Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

SECTION 2

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

AMENDMENT XXI (Ratified Dec. 5, 1933)

SECTION 1

The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2

The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

SECTION 3

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

AMENDMENT XXII (Ratified Feb. 27, 1951)

SECTION 1

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President, when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

SECTION 2

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

AMENDMENT XXIII (Ratified March 29, 1961)

SECTION 1

The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct: A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

SECTION 2

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXIV (Ratified Jan. 23, 1964)

SECTION 1

The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

SECTION 2

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXV (Ratified Feb. 10, 1967)

SECTION 1

In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

SECTION 2

Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

SECTION 3

Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

SECTION 4

Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

AMENDMENT XXVI (Ratified July 1, 1971)

SECTION 1

The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.

SECTION 2

The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXVII (Ratified May 7, 1992)

No Law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

— Source: American Bar Association; all punctuation and spelling kept from the original documents except notes in parentheses

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Contact the president or vice president via <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>.
- Find and contact your state's U.S. senators at https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm.
- Find and contact your state's U.S. members of Congress at <http://www.house.gov/representatives/>.

[house.gov/representatives/](http://www.house.gov/representatives/).

- Find and contact your state's governor via <https://www.usa.gov/state-governor>.
- The website <https://www.congress.gov/state-legislature-websites> will direct you to your state legislature's site, where you can usually enter your address or

ZIP code to find out who represents your district.

- Get links to contact mayors, county executives, tribal governments and more at <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>.

Source: USA.gov



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