

**Names with bulleted descriptions are Presidents of the United States of America*

Person	Why they're important
John Adams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Revolution leader who protested Stamp Act Helped draft Declaration of Independence President during times of war in Europe Alien and Sedition Acts contributed to his unpopularity and the fall of his party
John Quincy Adams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Became president after election was decided in the House of Representatives Secretary of State under James Monroe After leaving office as president, served in House of Representatives, the only president to do so
Samuel Adams	American Revolutionary War leader who helped to organize the Sons of Liberty and the Massachusetts Committee of Correspondence
Jane Addams	Progressive Era reformer in the settlement house movement who founded the Hull House in Chicago
Susan B. Anthony	Woman's rights leader who was most active in the woman's suffrage movement but also worked for women's property rights and rights of married women
Chester A. Arthur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vetoed Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) but signed another act reducing the Chinese immigration ban to ten years Supported Pendleton Act (1883) that enacted civil service reform Worked to reform American restrictive tariffs
John Brown	Extreme abolitionist who believed in the use of violence to promote his cause (Bleeding Kansas and the raid on Harpers Ferry)
William Jennings Bryan	Populist who supported farmers and free silver, ran for president in 1896 and 1900
James Buchanan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In office when Dred Scott v Sandford decision was issued and John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry occurred Took no action in response to the secession of South Carolina and six other states claiming he lacked the power to act
George H. W. Bush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inherited budget deficit, savings and loan scandal, and legacy of Iran-Contra Affair from the Reagan administration In office when Cold War ended, and communist governments in Eastern Europe and Soviet Union fell Led the United States in the Persian Gulf War against Iraq
George W. Bush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Took office after a close election in which a dispute over ballot recounts in Florida was decided by the Supreme Court in Bush v. Gore (2000) Conservative domestic agenda included tax cuts, No Child Left Behind, creation of Department of Homeland Security, and attempts to privatize social security After attacks of September 11, 2001, declared war on international terrorism and ordered US forces into Afghanistan to defeat Taliban and al Qaeda extremists Led the US into a war against Iraq Left office with historically low approval ratings, nation in major recession, and controversy that included Iraq War, treatment of prisoners, conduct of Justice Department, and balancing of liberty versus security in a democracy
John C. Calhoun	Outspoken southern leader and advocate of states' rights, favored nullification and extension of slavery into the territories
Andrew Carnegie	Industrialist and philanthropist who built Carnegie Steel Company, defended social Darwinism
Rachel Carson	Writer, scientist, and environmentalist whose book, <i>Silent Spring</i> (1962) identified the hazards of agricultural pesticides
Jimmy Carter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic problems included inflation and oil shortages Supported international human rights and Panama Canal treaties Opposed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan Greatest success was the Camp David Accords, which led to peace between Egypt and Israel
Fidel Castro	Won Cuban revolution and headed Cuba from 1959-2008, allied with Soviet Union in 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis
Cesar Chavez	Latino leader of California farm workers from 1962 until his death in 1993, organized the United Farm Workers (UFW) to help migrant farm workers gain better pay and working conditions

Grover Cleveland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded the civil service Only president to serve two nonconsecutive terms In second term confronted major depression that began with Panic of 1893 An anti-imperialist, he opposed annexation of Hawaii In 1894, sent federal troops to end Pullman Strike
Bill Clinton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic policies centered on health care and social security reform, as well as economic issues, such as reduction of the national deficit Secured approval of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) Backed NATO intervention against Serbia to stop ethnic cleansing Impeached by the House of Representatives in 1998 on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice, but acquitted by the Senate
Calvin Coolidge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presidency marked by conservative, laissez-faire attitudes toward business Presided over "Coolidge prosperity" Kellogg-Briand Pact signed during his administration Immigration Act (1924) setting national quotas passed during his presidency
Jefferson Davis	American statesman and leader of the Confederacy during the American Civil War, serving as President of the Confederate States of America for its entire history
Eugene V. Debs	Union organizer and Socialist presidential candidate in every election from 1890s until World War I
Dorothea Dix	19 th century reformer who revolutionized mental health reform
Stephen Douglas	Illinois Senator whose Kansas-Nebraska Act included his idea of popular sovereignty, Lincoln-Douglas debates (1858) made Lincoln nationally known
Frederick Douglass	Former slave, abolitionist, and lecturer; active in Underground Railroad, supported Women's Suffrage, attended Seneca Falls Convention
W.E.B. Du Bois	African American civil rights leader, cofounder of NAACP, influenced Harlem Renaissance by publishing African Americans in <i>The Crisis</i> , opposed Marcus Garvey's "back to Africa" movement and disagreed with Booker T. Washington by pressing for civil and political, not just economic equality for African Americans
Dwight Eisenhower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commander of Allied forces in Europe during World War II Issued Eisenhower Doctrine Approved the 1956 Federal Highway Act Sent troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to support school desegregation In office when Alaska and Hawaii became 49th and 50th states
Edward K. "Duke" Ellington	Songwriter, band leader, jazz composer, pianist, and a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance
F. Scott Fitzgerald	Novelist whose works reflect climate of the "roaring twenties", wrote <i>The Great Gatsby</i>
Millard Fillmore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiated passage of the Compromise of 1850 Supported enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law and opposed secessionists angering both Northerners and Southerners Failure of Compromise of 1850 marked end for Whig Party
Gerald Ford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only president not to be elected by the American public; appointed as vice president under Nixon and succeeded to the presidency after Nixon's resignation Pardoned Nixon for which he was both criticized and praised Worked to restore faith in government after Watergate crisis
Henry Ford	Industrialist who headed Ford Motor Company, innovative production methods reduced the cost of producing cars
Benjamin Franklin	Philadelphia statesman, diplomat, scientist, and writer in revolutionary period; drafted the 1754 Albany Plan of Union; member of the Second Continental Congress and helped to write the Declaration of Independence; delegate to the Constitutional Convention
Betty Friedan	Women's rights activist whose book <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> encouraged women to find their own identity outside of marriage, helped to found the National Organization for Women (NOW) and National Women's Political Caucus
James Garfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assassinated after four months in office
William Lloyd Garrison	Abolitionist editor of newspaper called <i>The Liberator</i> published 1831-1865 demanding immediate end to slavery
Marcus Garvey	African American nationalist leader who advocated pride and self-help as a means of empowerment; founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, a nationalist and separatist group that wanted a separate black economy and urged African Americans to emigrate to Africa; ideas influenced the 1960's Black Power movement
Samuel Gompers	Organizer and president of American Federation of Labor, a craft union for skilled workers; stressed issues such as wages and hours

Ulysses S. Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil War military leader who served as General-in-Chief of the Union army • Transcontinental railroad completed and 15th Amendment ratified during his presidency • Credit Mobiler and the Whiskey Ring scandals marred his presidency
Alexander Hamilton	Co-writer of <i>The Federalist Papers</i> , first secretary of the treasury, promoted US economic development
Warren G. Harding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led nation into “Roaring Twenties” on a call for “normalcy” • Administration known for corruption and scandals, including the Teapot Dome Scandal
Benjamin Harrison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected president with most electoral but not popular votes • Supported Sherman Antitrust Act • Encourage conservation of forest reserves • Favored US expansion in the Pacific Ocean and building of a canal in Central America
William Henry Harrison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While governor of Indiana Territory, led military actions against Native Americans in the Battle of Tippecanoe (1811) • First president to dies in office, served one month
Rutherford B. Hayes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election decided through compromise, preventing a constitutional crisis after a dispute over electoral votes • Federal troops removed from the South, marking the end of Reconstruction
William Randolph Hearst	Newspaper publisher whose yellow journalism style helped create public pressure for the Spanish-American War
Ernest Hemingway	Novelist whose writings expressed conflict and concern created by changing American values including: <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> (1926), <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> (1929), <i>For Whom the Bell Tolls</i> (1940), <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> (1951)
Alger Hiss	An American lawyer, government official, author, and lecturer. He was involved in the establishment of the United Nations both as a U.S. State Department and U.N. official. Hiss was accused of being a Soviet spy in 1948 and convicted of perjury in connection with this charge in 1950.
Herbert Hoover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used government resources against the Great Depression without success • Opposed direct relief • Used federal troops against the World War I veterans’ “Bonus Army”
Langston Hughes	Poet, playwright, and novelist who wrote about the African American experience, a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance
Saddam Hussein	Long-time Iraqi dictator who invaded Kuwait causing Persian Gulf war, removed from power in 2003 during Iraq War and hanged in 2006
Andrew Jackson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hero of Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812 • Opposed Calhoun and nullification of 1828 tariff • Vetoed re-chartering of Second National Bank • Supported Native American removal policy • Associated with Jacksonian Democracy—the start of mass politics and nominating conventions • Used spoils system to give jobs to supporters
Thomas Jefferson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major author of the Declaration of Independence • Opposed Federalists • Favored limited, decentralized government • Opposed Hamilton’s financial plan and Alien and Sedition Acts • Negotiated the Louisiana Purchase from France which doubled the size of the nation
Andrew Johnson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impeached by House after bitter disagreements with Congress over Reconstruction; acquitted by a single vote in Senate • 13th and 14th amendments were ratified during his presidency
Lyndon B. Johnson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoted antipoverty programs and civil rights through his Great Society program • Used the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution to expand the Vietnam War • Division over his war policy led to his decision not to seek reelection • President during a period of active civil rights movements for African Americans and women
John F. Kennedy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoted the New Frontier program (which centered on containment), the Peace Corps, and the Alliance for Progress • Successfully resolved the Cuban missile crisis • Assassinated in 1963
Robert Kennedy	Attorney general (1961-1963), assassinated in June 1968. His tenure is best known for its advocacy for the African-American Civil Rights Movement, crusade against organized crime and the mafia, and diplomacy during the Berlin Crisis of 1961.

Abraham Lincoln	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Became nationally known as a result of the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858 • First Republican to be elected president • Used war powers of the presidency during Civil War to achieve his goal of preserving the nation • Issued Emancipation Proclamation; gave Gettysburg Address • Assassinated before he could act on his plans for Reconstruction
Martin Luther King Jr.	Civil rights leader who advocated civil disobedience and nonviolent demonstrations to achieve change; founded Southern Christian Leadership Conference, led Montgomery Alabama bus boycott, and Selma to Montgomery voting rights march; gave “I Have a Dream” speech; won Nobel Peace Prize; assassinated in 1968
Robert La Follette	Governor of Wisconsin whose program became the model for progressive reform
Robert E. Lee	A career military officer who is best known for having commanded the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in the American Civil War
Meriwether Lewis and William Clark	Explorers who led the 1804-1806 expedition to survey lands included in the Louisiana Purchase
Sinclair Lewis	Novelist whose work <i>Main Street</i> attacked middle class values
John Locke	British enlightenment writer whose ideas influenced the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution; believed in natural rights and the consent of the governed
Huey Long	Populist governor of Louisiana and US senator
Douglas MacArthur	Led US troops in the Pacific in World War II, commander of US occupation forces in Japan after World War II; relieved of command by Truman after publicly disagreeing with him about the conduct of the Korean War
James Madison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Called the “Father of the Constitution” • One author of the Virginia Plan • Wrote 29 of The Federalist Papers • Proposed the Bill of Rights to Congress • Gained popularity after the War of 1812
Malcolm X	Leader of the 1960’s Black Power movement; assassinated in 1965
George C. Marshall	Army chief of staff during World War II and secretary of state under President Truman; promoted the Marshall Plan which assisted the economic recovery of Europe after World War II
John Marshall	Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court (1801-1835), established prestige of the Supreme Court and strengthened power of the federal government in cases such as <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> and <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i>
Thurgood Marshall	African American attorney who argued <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> before the Supreme Court in 1954 and was appointed to that Court in 1967, the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court
Joseph McCarthy	Republican Senator who led a campaign to root out suspected Communists in American life
William McKinley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President during a period of expansionism marked by Spanish-American War • Annexed Hawaii • Open Door Policy issued by his secretary of state • Assassinated in 1901
James Monroe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established US foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere with the Monroe Doctrine • Settled boundaries with Canada and acquired Florida • President during this “Era of Good Feelings” • Supported and signed the Missouri Compromise (1820)
Baron de Montesquieu	French Enlightenment philosopher who admired the British system of republican government
JP Morgan	An American financier, banker, philanthropist and art collector who dominated corporate finance and industrial consolidation during his time, his steel company merged in 1901 with the Carnegie Steel Company and several other steel and iron businesses, including Consolidated Steel and Wire Company to form the United States Steel Corporation
Lucretia Mott	An American Quaker, abolitionist, a women's rights activist, and a social reformer.
Ralph Nader	Consumer rights crusader; wrote <i>Unsafe at Any Speed</i> (1965) to expose the lack of safety standards for cars
Thomas Nast	Caricaturist and editorial cartoonist who was the "Father of the American Cartoon". He was the scourge of Boss Tweed and the Tammany Hall political machine. Among his notable works were the creation of the modern version of Santa Claus and the political symbol of the elephant for the Republican Party.
Richard Nixon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursued a “Vietnamization” policy and increased bombing followed by a 1973 cease-fire in Vietnam • Relaxed relations with USSR and China • Resigned as president because of the Watergate affair
Frank Norris	Naturalist writer whose 1901 novel, <i>The Octopus</i> , told of the struggle between the railroad and California wheat growers

Barack Obama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First African American to be elected president • Took office facing a major economic crisis that included high unemployment, collapsing housing market, falling stock market, rising health care costs, and banks and auto companies facing insolvency • Began draw down of US troops in Iraq while increasing troop levels in Afghanistan • Appointed first Hispanic, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, to US Supreme Court • Major legislation passed included Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Robert Oppenheimer	Physicist who led the American effort to build the first atomic bomb
Thomas Paine	English-born writer and political philosopher whose influential pamphlet <i>Common Sense</i> (1776) pressed for independence from Great Britain
Rosa Parks	African American civil rights activist whose 1955 refusal to give up her seat to a white person led to the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott and helped launch the civil rights movement
Alice Paul	Suffragist, feminist, and women's rights activist, and the main leader and strategist of the 1910s campaign for the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which prohibits gender discrimination in the right to vote.
Matthew Perry	Led 1853-1854 naval mission to open Japan to world trade and negotiated US trading rights with Japan
Franklin Pierce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Englander who supported Kansas-Nebraska Act • Gadsden Purchase ratified during his presidency • Trade treaty with Japan became effective during his administration, due to the efforts of Commodore Matthew Perry
James K. Polk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign policy aimed at fulfilling goal of Manifest Destiny • With slogan "54' 40 or fight" campaigned for all of Oregon country settled for Oregon Treaty with Great Britain • Supported Tyler's annexation of Texas • Led nation in Mexican War (1846-1848) • Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave the US the Mexican Cession, which included California
Terence Powderly	Politician and labor union leader, best known as head of the Knights of Labor in the late 1880s.
Joseph Pulitzer	Publisher of the <i>New York Journal</i> whose "yellow journalism" helped provoke the Spanish-American War
Ronald Reagan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took a conservative viewpoint on social issues, such as abortion and prayer in school • Based his supply-side economic policy (or "Reaganomics") on the belief that government works against individual initiative • Presidency marked by trade and federal budget deficits • Arms control agreements signed with the USSR • Foreign policy aimed at keeping communism out of Latin America • Popularity damaged and foreign policy weakened by Iran-Contra scandal
Jacob Riis	Journalist, photographer, and social reformer of the Progressive Era; used writings and photographs to show the need for better housing for the poor, such as in his 1890 book <i>How the Other Half Lives</i>
John D. Rockefeller	Industrialist and philanthropist, founder of Standard Oil Company
Eleanor Roosevelt	Political activist and First Lady; early and long-time activist for rights for African Americans and women; played a key role in creation of United Nations Declaration on Human Rights
Franklin Delano Roosevelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Deal policies and leadership in World War II increased the power of the federal government • Tried to expand number of Supreme Court justices when the Court opposed New Deal programs • Pushed for social welfare legislation, such as the Social Security Act • New Deal programs criticized as both inadequate and too extreme • Urged cooperation in Western Hemisphere under the Good Neighbor Policy • Supported Japanese American internment during World War II • Only president to serve more than two terms
Theodore Roosevelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive governor of New York • Presidential programs called the Square Deal • Known as a trustbuster, conservationist, reformer, and nationalist • Used the power of presidency to regulate economic affairs of the nation and to expand its role in Asia and the Caribbean • Issues the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine
Julius and Ethel Rosenberg	Convicted and executed for treason in 1953 during the era of McCarthyism
Jean-Jacques Rousseau	French Enlightenment philosopher; influence the Declaration of Independence with his arguments in support of government by the consent of the governed
Sacajawea	Native American guide for part of the Lewis and Clark expedition

Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti	Italian immigrants and anarchists executed for armed robbery and murder at the height of the antiradical, anti-immigrant feelings of the 1920's, cleared by the Massachusetts governor in 1977 some 50 years later
Margaret Sanger	Pioneering advocate of birth control; founder of a birth-control lobbying group that became Planned Parenthood in 1942
Upton Sinclair	Muckraking journalist of the Progressive Era; influenced the passage of the 1906 Meat Inspection Act with his novel <i>The Jungle</i> , which deals with the exploitation of the poor and the factory conditions that led to contaminated meat
Adam Smith	In <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> (1776), this Scottish political economist rejected mercantilism and advocated a free enterprise system, the basis of modern capitalism; argued for free trade, the division of labor, competition, individual freedom, supply and demand, and laissez-faire as necessary for a sound economy
Elizabeth Cady Stanton	Leading crusader for women's rights, also for abolition and temperance; began women's rights movement with Seneca Falls Convention in New York in 1848; wrote Declaration of Sentiments
Lincoln Steffens	Muckraking journalist, editor, and reformer; wrote about corruption in government and business in his 1906 novel <i>The Shame of the Cities</i>
John Steinbeck	Author who wrote <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> which describes the effect of the drought that created the Dust Bowl on a group of farmers forced to leave Oklahoma and work as migrant laborers in California
Thaddeus Stevens	A member of the United States House of Representatives from Pennsylvania and one of the leaders of the Radical Republican faction of the Republican Party during the 1860s.
Harriet Beecher Stowe	Writer whose emotional, controversial, and best-selling novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), focused attention on slavery and contributed to the start of the Civil War
William Howard Taft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy of "dollar diplomacy" gave diplomatic and military support to US business investments in Latin America • Continued Progressive Era policies of business regulation, but his conservative tariff and conservation policies split the party
Ida Tarbell	Muckraking journalist whose <i>History of Standard Oil Company</i> exposed Rockefeller's unfair and often ruthless business practices
Zachary Taylor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Point graduate and military hero of the Mexican War • A Virginian, a slave owner, and a nationalist, he opposed secession • Died in office after 16 months as president
Harry Truman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made decision to drop two atomic bombs on Japan in 1945 to end World War II • Began the policy of containment of communism with the Truman Doctrine • Supported economic recovery in Europe through the Marshall Plan • Continued the New Deal philosophy with his Fair Deal • Entered the Korean War during his presidency
Sojourner Truth	Gave herself the name; was an African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist; born into slavery in Ulster County, New York, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826; during the Civil War helped recruit black troops for the Union Army; after the war tried unsuccessfully to secure land grants from the federal government for former slaves
Harriet Tubman	An African-American abolitionist, humanitarian, and Union spy during the American Civil War; born into slavery and escaped and subsequently made more than thirteen missions to rescue more than 70 slaves using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad; later helped John Brown recruit men for his raid on Harpers Ferry, and in the post-war era struggled for women's suffrage
Mark Twain	Author and humorist of the late 19 th and early 20 th centuries, famous, in part, for his homespun stories about life along the Mississippi River
William "Boss" Tweed	Politician most notable for being the "boss" of Tammany Hall, the Democratic Party political machine that played a major role in the politics of 19th century New York City and State.
John Tyler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First vice president to come into presidency on the death of president • Texas annexed by congressional vote largely because of his influence • His pro South and pro states' rights positions resulted in his expulsion from the Whig Party
Martin Van Buren	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First New Yorker to become president • Opposed Texas annexation because slavery issue divided his party
Voltaire	French Enlightenment philosopher who praised British institutions and rights and influenced framers of the Constitution; wrote against religious intolerance and persecution
Earl Warren	Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court (1953-1969); landmark cases such as Brown v. Board of Education and Miranda v. Arizona marked his tenure—improved civil rights and increased the rights of those accused of crimes
Booker T. Washington	African American educator, author, and leader; founded Tuskegee Institute; urged vocational education and self-improvement rather than confrontation as the way for African Americans to gain racial equality

<p>George Washington</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commanded the Continental army during the American Revolution • President of the Constitutional Convention • Set precedents that were followed by other presidents such as forming a cabinet • Strengthened new government through support of Hamilton's financial policies and use of force against the Whiskey Rebellion • Kept peace through Proclamation of Neutrality and Jay Treaty • Set basis of US foreign policy in his Farewell Address
<p>Ida Wells-Barnett</p>	<p>African American journalist, suffragist, and reformer; launched a national crusade against lynching in the 1890's; cofounder of the NAACP and of the National Association of Colored Women</p>
<p>Woodrow Wilson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive Era president whose program was known as New Freedom • Reform regulation included Clayton Antitrust Act, Federal Reserve System, Federal Trade Commission Act, and Underwood Tariff Act • Led the nation during World War I • Supported the Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations, which the Senate failed to approve
<p>John Peter Zenger</p>	<p>German immigrant, printer, and journalist; tried for criminal libel for criticizing New York governor in his paper; his case was an early step in establishing freedom of the press</p>

**Much of the information for this chart was taken from the 2012 Prentice Hall Brief Review, United States History and Government by Briggs/Fish Petersen*