

U.S. History Timeline 2000 - 2010

2000	<p>According to the census, the nation's population numbers more than 280 million (April 1).</p> <p>No clear winner is declared in the close presidential election contest between Vice President Al Gore and Texas governor George W. Bush (Nov. 7). More than a month after the presidential election, the U.S. Supreme Court rules against a manual recount of ballots in certain Florida counties, which it contends would violate the Constitution's equal protection and due process guarantees. The decision provokes enormous controversy, with critics maintaining that the court has in effect determined the outcome of the election(Dec. 12).</p> <p>Bush formally accepts the presidency, having won a slim majority in the electoral college but not a majority of the popular vote (Dec. 13).</p>
2001	<p>George W. Bush is inaugurated as the 43rd president (Jan. 20).</p> <p>Two hijacked jetliners ram twin towers of World Trade Center in worst terrorist attack against U.S.; a third hijacked plane flies into the Pentagon, and a fourth crashes in rural Pennsylvania. More than 3,000 people die in the attacks (Sept. 11).</p> <p>U.S. and Britain launch air attacks against targets in Afghanistan after Taliban government fails to hand over Saudi terrorist Osama bin Laden, the suspected mastermind behind the Sept. 11 attacks (Oct. 7). Following air campaign and ground assault by Afghani opposition troops, the Taliban regime topples (Dec. 9); however, the hunt for bin Laden and other members of al-Qaeda terrorist organization continues.</p>
2002	<p>In his first State of the Union address, President Bush labels Iran, Iraq, and North Korea an “axis of evil” and declares that U.S. will wage war against states that develop weapons of mass destruction (Jan. 29).</p> <p>President Bush signs legislation creating a new cabinet department of Homeland Security. (Nov. 25).</p>
2003	<p>Space shuttle <i>Columbia</i> explodes upon reentry into Earth's atmosphere, killing all seven astronauts on board (Feb. 1). War waged by the U.S. and Britain against Iraq begins (March 19). President Bush signs \$350 billion tax-cut bill (May 28).</p>
2004	<p>The U.S. returns sovereignty to an interim government in Iraq, but maintains roughly 135,000 troops in the country to fight a growing insurgency (June 28).</p> <p>Four hurricanes devastate Florida and other parts of the southern United States (Aug. and Sept.).</p>
2005	<p>The U.S. engagement in Iraq continues amid that country's escalating violence and fragile political stability.</p> <p>Hurricane Katrina wreaks catastrophic damage on Mississippi and Louisiana; 80% of New Orleans is flooded (Aug. 29–30). All levels of government are criticized for the delayed and inadequate response to the disaster.</p> <p>Sandra Day O'Connor announces her retirement as a Supreme Court Justice (July 1). Chief Justice William H Rehnquist passes away after battling thyroid cancer (Sept. 3). John G. Roberts assumes the role of chief justice (Sept. 29).</p>
2006	<p>The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the population of the United States has reached 300 million (Oct. 17).</p>
2007	<p>California Democrat Nancy Pelosi becomes the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives (Jan. 4).</p> <p>Male student kills two in a Virginia Tech dorm. Two hours later, he kills 30 more in a classroom building before committing suicide. The shooting rampage is the most deadly in U.S. history. Fifteen others are wounded (April 16).</p>

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	<p>The minimum wage in the U.S. increases to \$5.85, up from \$5.15. It's the first increase in 10 years. The wage will increase 70 cents each year through 2009, when it reaches \$7.25 an hour (July 24).</p> <p>An eight-lane interstate bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that is packed with cars breaks into sections and falls into the river, killing 13 people (Aug. 1).</p> <p>In highly anticipated testimony, Gen. David Petraeus tells members of the House Foreign Affairs and Armed Services committees that the U.S. military needs more time to meet its goals in Iraq. Petraeus rejects suggestions that the U.S. shift from a counterinsurgency operation to training Iraqi forces and fighting terrorists. Instead, he says the U.S. must continue all three missions (Sep 10).</p>
2008	<p>After months of campaigning and primary races, Barack Obama and John McCain are finally chosen as the presidential nominees for the Democratic and Republican parties, respectively (June 3). After months of unraveling, the economy finally comes crashing down in 2008, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbling 4.4% in one day, Lehman Brothers filing for bankruptcy, and Bush putting mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac under government conservatorship (Sept.).</p> <p>Democrats perform well across the board in the November elections. Barack Obama becomes the first African-American to be elected President, with 52.8% of the vote. In Congress, Democrats retain majorities in both the House and the Senate, with 57 Senators and 178 Representatives (Nov. 4).</p>
2009	<p>(Jan. 22) President Obama signs executive orders closing all secret prisons and detention camps run by the CIA, including the infamous Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba, and banning coercive interrogation methods.</p> <p>(Feb. 7) The Senate votes in favor of a \$168 billion package that gives rebates of \$300-\$600 for individuals earning up to \$75,000 and to couples with incomes up to \$150,000. Families will be eligible for up to \$300 in rebates for each child.</p> <p>(Feb. 17) President Obama signs the \$787 billion stimulus package into law. The president's hope is that the package will create 3.5 million jobs for Americans in the next two years.</p> <p>(March 2) Insurance giant American International Group reports a \$61.7 billion loss for the fourth quarter of 2008. A.I.G. lost \$99.3 billion in 2008. The federal government, which has already provided the company with a \$60 billion loan, will be giving A.I.G. an additional \$30 billion. Nearly 80% of A.I.G. is now owned by the federal government.</p> <p>(April 26) After confirming 20 cases of swine flu in the United States, including eight in New York City, the U.S. declares the outbreak a public health emergency.</p> <p>(June 25) Michael Jackson, lifelong musician, pop singer, and superstar, dies at age 50.</p> <p>(Aug. 6) The Senate approves, 68 to 31, the nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court. She's the first Hispanic Supreme Court justice and the third woman to serve on the Court.</p> <p>(Aug. 25) Senator Edward "Ted" Kennedy, a fixture in the Senate for 46 years, dies of brain cancer at the age of 77.</p> <p>(Nov. 5) A shooting at the Fort Hood army post in Texas kills 13 and injures 29. Ten of those killed are military personnel. Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, an army psychiatrist, is charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder.</p> <p>(Dec. 25) A Nigerian man on a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit allegedly attempted to ignite an explosive device hidden in his underwear. The alleged bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, told officials later that he was directed by the terrorist group Al Qaeda.</p>

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2010	<p>(Jan. 22) An explosion and fire on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico sends millions of gallons of oil into the sea. The spill kills 11 and is the largest off-shore spill in U.S. history as well as one of the largest spills in world history.</p> <p>(Aug. 5) The United States Senate votes 63 to 37 to confirm President Obama's most recent nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court, Elena Kagan, as the newest Justice. Kagan is only the fourth woman to ever hold this position, and she'll be the third female member of the current bench, joining Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor. Kagan is the former dean of Harvard Law School; she'll be the only member of the current Supreme Court to have no previous experience as a judge.</p> <p>(Dec. 18) The Senate votes 65 to 31 in favor of repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell, the Clinton-era military policy that forbids openly gay men and women from serving in the military. Eight Republicans side with the Democrats to strike down the ban. The repeal is sent to President Obama for his final signature. The ban will not be lifted officially until Obama, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, and Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, agree that the military is ready to enact the change and that it won't affect military readiness.</p>
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