



## Timeline

- 1619** Dutch ship brings 20 Africans to Jamestown, Va., the first enslaved Africans in the U.S.

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- 1793** Eli Whitney's new cotton gin increases demand for slaves

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- 1793** Congress passes Fugitive Slave Act, making it a federal crime to assist a slave trying to escape

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- 1808** Congress bans importation of slaves

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- 1820** Missouri Compromise bans slavery above the southern border of the state

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- 1831** Nat Turner leads largest slave rebellion prior to Civil War

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- 1849** Harriet Tubman escapes to Philadelphia and subsequently helps about 300 enslaved people to freedom via the Underground Railroad

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- 1857** In *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, U.S. Supreme Court declares that Blacks are not citizens of the U.S. and that Congress cannot prohibit slavery

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- 1859** John Brown leads raid of U.S. Armory and Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, W.Va.

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- 1861** South secedes from Union and Civil War begins

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- 1863** President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free"

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- 1865** Civil War ends

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- 1865** Thirteenth Amendment is ratified, prohibiting slavery

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- 1868** Fourteenth Amendment is ratified, allowing Blacks to become citizens

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- 1870** Fifteenth Amendment is ratified, guaranteeing that right to vote cannot be denied because of race, color or previous condition of servitude

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- 1870** Hiram Revels becomes first Black member of Congress

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- 1896** U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that segregation doesn't violate the 14th Amendment's equal-protection clause as long as conditions provided are "separate but equal"

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- 1900** William H. Carney becomes first Black to be awarded Medal of Honor

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- 1909** NAACP is founded

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- 1926** Carter G. Woodson establishes "Negro History Week"

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- 1940** Hattie McDaniel becomes first Black to win an Academy Award

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- 1947** Jackie Robinson becomes first Black to play Major League Baseball

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- 1950** Ralph J. Bunche becomes first Black to win the Nobel Peace Prize

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- 1953** Willie Thrower becomes first Black to play quarterback in the National Football League

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- 1954** In *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka*, U.S. Supreme Court rules that racial segregation in public schools violates the 14th Amendment

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- 1955** An all-white jury acquits two white men who confessed to murdering a 14-year-old Black boy, Emmett Till, for allegedly whistling at a white woman

- 1955** Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a bus to a white man in Montgomery, Ala., leading to the Montgomery Bus Boycott

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- 1957** Little Rock Nine integrate Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas

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- 1960** Four Black students stage famous sit-in at a whites-only Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, N.C.

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- 1961** Freedom rides begin from Washington, D.C.

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- 1962** James Meredith becomes first Black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi. Violence prompts President Kennedy to send in 5,000 federal troops

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- 1963** More than 200,000 people march on Washington, D.C., in the largest civil-rights demonstration in U.S. history; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gives his "I Have a Dream" speech

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- 1963** Four young Black girls are killed in the bombing of a Birmingham, Ala., church

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- 1964** President Johnson signs Civil Rights Act of 1964, giving government more power to protect citizens against race, religion, sex or national-origin discrimination

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- 1965** Malcolm X, former minister in Nation of Islam and civil-rights activist, assassinated

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- 1965** Thousands participate in three protest marches from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., for Black voting rights

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- 1965** President Johnson signs Voting Rights Act of 1965

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- 1967** In *Loving v. Virginia* ruling, Supreme Court declares law prohibiting interracial marriages to be unconstitutional

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- 1967** Thurgood Marshall becomes first Black U.S. Supreme Court justice

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- 1968** Dr. King is assassinated

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- 1968** President Johnson signs Civil Rights Act of 1968, which prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of housing

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- 1972** Shirley Chisholm becomes first major party Black candidate to run for president

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- 1983** Vanessa Williams becomes first Black Miss America

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- 1984** Rev. Jesse Jackson becomes first Black to make serious bid for presidency

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- 1986** First observation of Dr. King's birthday as a national holiday

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- 1990** Douglas Wilder of Virginia becomes first Black to be elected governor

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- 1991** President George H.W. Bush signs Civil Rights Act of 1991, which strengthens laws on employment discrimination

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- 1993** Dr. Joycelyn Elders becomes first Black Surgeon General

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- 2001** General Colin Powell becomes first Black Secretary of State

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- 2009** Barack Obama becomes first Black president

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- 2014** Hundreds gather in various protests across the country after grand juries decline to indict Michael Brown's and Eric Garner's killers

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- 2015** Black Lives Matter gains momentum amid the shootings of unarmed Black citizens by white police officers

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- 2016** Announcement that Lt. Gen. Stayce D. Harris, highest-ranking Black woman pilot in all U.S. armed forces, to be inducted into Women in Aviation International's Pioneer Hall of Fame in March 2017

