

US History Review Unit 1 Study Guide

1. The Revolutionary Era



[Benjamin Franklin](#) | Benjamin Franklin (January 17, 1706 - April 17, 1790) was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. He was a leading author, printer, political theorist, politician, postmaster, scientist, musician, inventor, satirist, civic activist, statesman, and diplomat. As a scientist, he was a major figure in the American Enlightenment and the history of physics for his discoveries and theories regarding electricity. He invented the lightning rod, bifocals, the Franklin stove, and a carriage odometer. He facilitated many civic organizations, including a fire department and a university.

As a writer, he is known for Poor Richard's Almanac and his autobiography. He was the oldest figure of the American Revolution. Franklin also was the only person to sign the three documents that established the United States: the Declaration of Independence, the peace treaty with Britain that ended the Revolutionary War, and the Constitution. He convinced France to help the colonists during the American Revolution. He was also a member of the 2nd Continental Congress.

[Thomas Paine](#) | Thomas Paine (January 29, 1737 – June 8, 1809) was an English-American political activist, author, political theorist and revolutionary. As the author of two highly influential pamphlets at the start of the American Revolution, he inspired the Patriots in 1776 to declare independence from Britain. His ideas reflected Enlightenment era rhetoric of transnational human rights. He has been called "a corsetmaker by trade, a journalist by profession, and a propagandist by inclination. He wrote the Pamphlet "[Common Sense](#)" and argued that the colonists should separate from England.



[George Washington](#) | George Washing (February 22, 1732 – December 14, 1799) was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, commander in chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War, and the first President of the United States. He also presided over the convention that drafted the Constitution, which replaced the Articles of Confederation. The Constitution established the position of President of the United States, which Washington was the first to hold.

[Thomas Jefferson](#) | Thomas Jefferson (April 13, 1743 – July 4, 1826) was an American Founding Father, the principal author of the [Declaration of Independence](#) (1776) and the third President of the United States (1801–1809). At the beginning of the American Revolution, he served in the Continental Congress, representing Virginia and then served as a wartime Governor of Virginia (1779–1781). Just after the war ended, from mid-1784 Jefferson served as a diplomat, stationed in Paris. In May 1785, he became the United States Minister to France.



Causes of the American Revolution

- ✚ The British taxed the colonies for revenue to pay for the [French and Indian War](#)
- ✚ “No taxation without Representation!” – Colonists resented being taxed without having a voice in British Parliament
- ✚ Tax acts passed by the British included the Stamp Act, Sugar Act, and Tea Act
- ✚ [The Boston Massacre](#)
- ✚ [The Intolerable Acts](#)

Declaration of Independence (1776) | It listed grievances against King George III and justified the American colonies breaking away from England. It was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which announced that the thirteen American colonies, then at war with Great Britain, regarded themselves as independent states, and no longer a part of the British Empire. Instead they now formed a new nation - the United States of America.

Unalienable Rights | Rights that cannot be taken away: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Loyalists | Americans who supported Great Britain during the revolution

Patriots | Americans who favored independence from Great Britain during the revolution

Boston Tea Party (1773) | The Boston Tea Party of December 16, 1773, took place when a group of Massachusetts Patriots known as the Sons of Liberty, protesting the monopoly on American tea importation recently granted by the British Parliament to the East India Company, seized 342 chests of tea in a midnight raid on three tea ships and threw them into Boston, Massachusetts harbor.

2. The Revolutionary War (1775-1783)

The Battle of Saratoga (1777) | The turning point in the American revolution. The French entered the war as allies to the colonists. The battles were fought eighteen days apart on the same ground, 9 miles (14 km) south of Saratoga, New York (September 19 and October 7, 1777). The battles conclusively decided the fate of British General John Burgoyne's army in the American War of Independence and are generally regarded as a turning point in the war.

The Battle of Yorktown (1781) | Major British defeat that effectively ended the war. General George Washington, commanding a force of 17,000 French and Continental troops, began a siege known as the Battle of Yorktown against British General Lord Charles Cornwallis and a contingent of 9,000 British troops at Yorktown, Virginia. It was the most important battle of the Revolutionary War. The culmination of the Yorktown campaign, it proved to be the last major land battle of the American Revolutionary War in North America, as the surrender by Cornwallis of his army prompted the British government to negotiate an end to the conflict.

Treat of Paris (1783) | The British formally recognize American independence.

3. The War of 1812

War of 1812 | In the War of 1812, the United States took on the greatest naval power in the world, Great Britain, in a conflict that would have an immense impact on the young country's future. Causes of the war included British attempts to restrict U.S. trade, the Royal Navy's impressment of American seamen and America's desire to expand its territory. The United States suffered many costly defeats at the hands of British, Canadian and Native American troops over the course of the War of 1812, including the capture and burning of the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., in August 1814. Nonetheless, American troops were able to repulse British invasions in New York, Baltimore and New Orleans, boosting national confidence and fostering a new spirit of patriotism. The ratification of the Treaty of Ghent on February 17, 1815, ended the war but left many of the most contentious questions unresolved. Nonetheless, many in the United States celebrated the War of 1812 as a "second war of independence," beginning an era of partisan agreement and national pride. It was during this conflict that Francis Scott Key, while trapped aboard a British ship, penned the lyrics to our national anthem "The Star-Spangled Banner."



4. The United States Constitution

INFLUENCES

[Magna Carta \(1215\)](#) | Limited the King of England's powers; provided for a trial by jury.

[English Bill of Rights \(1687\)](#) | Influenced the Constitution by laying down limits on the powers of the crown and sets out the rights of Parliament and rules for freedom of speech in Parliament, the requirement to regular elections to Parliament and the right to petition the monarch without fear of retribution. It also outlawed cruel and unusual punishment. It reestablished the liberty of people to bear arms for their defense within the rule of law. These ideas about rights reflected those of the political thinker John Locke.

[Virginia House of Burgesses](#) | The first form of representative government in the colonies. Thomas Jefferson was a member.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

[Declaration of Independence \(1776\)](#) | The Bill of rights and the Constitution addressed grievances from the Declaration of independence. It also listed the unalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

[The Articles of Confederation \(1781\)](#) | First form of government established by the 13 states. The United States Constitution replaced it because it was a weak form of central government. Specific weaknesses included:

- ✚ No executive branch to enforce laws
- ✚ Congress could not collect taxes
- ✚ No national court system
- ✚ Each state only one vote in Congress, regardless of population

[Federalist papers \(1787 – 1788\)](#) | Were a series of essays written to encourage ratification of the constitution. The authors included Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison.

IMPORTANT FACTS

1781 | Delegates from the 13 states drafted the United States Constitution.

Ratification | Means to formally approve something. Before it could go into effect, the votes of 9 out of 13 states were needed to ratify the Constitution.

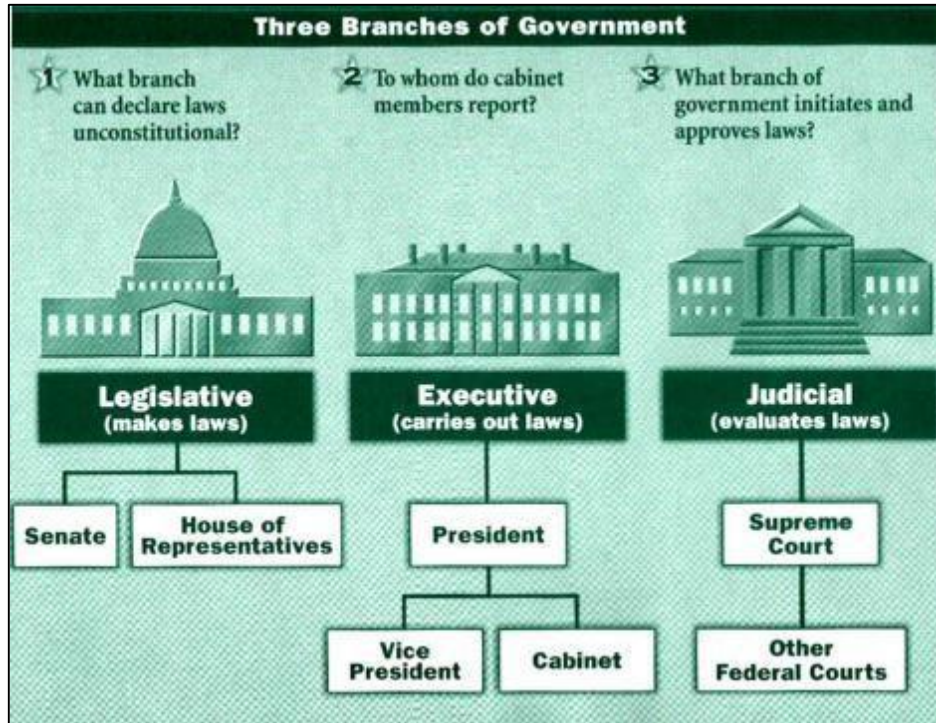
Preamble to the Constitution (Introduction that states its purpose) | “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

IMPORTANT IDEAS IN THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

Separation of Powers | Divides the powers of government into three branches

- 1. Legislative Branch** – Makes the laws
- 2. Executive Branch** – Executes the laws
- 3. Judicial Branch** – Interprets the laws

Checks and Balances | Make sure no branch of the government becomes too powerful. For example, the President can veto a bill, Congress can impeach a president, and the Supreme Court can rule a law unconstitutional.



Federalism | Power is shared between the state and national government

Limited Government | Power of the government is restricted by the U.S. Constitution. "No one is above the law."

Republicanism | A system where people vote for elected representatives to run the government.

Popular Sovereignty | The people hold the ultimate power and are the source of the government's legitimacy, power, and authority. "We the people".

Constitutional Republic | A republic form of government where powers are limited by law or a formal constitution, and chosen by a vote amongst at least some sections of the populace.

[THE BILL OF RIGHTS](#)

- ✚ First 10 amendments to the Constitution
- ✚ Protect individual rights and liberties
- ✚ The Bill of Rights was necessary in order for some states to ratify the Constitution

1st Amendment | Freedom of speech, religion and press; right to assemble; right to petition

2nd Amendment | Right to bear arms

3rd Amendment | No quartering of troops during peace time

4th Amendment | No unlawful search and seizure

5th Amendment | No double jeopardy, do not have to testify against yourself

6th Amendment | The right to a fast and public trial

7th Amendment | Trial by jury

8th Amendment | No cruel or unusual punishment

9th Amendment | Rights reserved to the people

10th Amendment | Powers reserved to the states



[Full text of the Bill of Rights](#)

[Full text of the United States Constitution](#)

[The Founding Fathers](#)

5. The Civil War & Reconstruction (1861-1877)



Nullification Crisis | Argument between South Carolina and the federal government over the role of the national government:

- ✚ South Carolina opposed a high tariff (tax on imports) implemented by the national government to promote American manufacturing over European manufacturing
- ✚ The tariff benefitted the industrial north while adversely affecting the Southern states who depended on cheap imports that they themselves could not produce
- ✚ South Carolina claimed that states had the right to reject (or nullify) any national law that was to its disadvantage
- ✚ The federal government disagreed and threatened military action
- ✚ A compromise was reached through Kentucky Senator [Henry Clay](#)

Causes of the Civil War

- ✚ Differences between the North and South over slavery, taxation, and states' rights, particularly the right to own slaves in the South
- ✚ Increased anti-slavery sentiment in the North and activities of abolitionists (those who proposed ending slavery)
- ✚ Abraham Lincoln was elected president

THE EVENTS THAT CAUSED THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

(<http://www.historynet.com/causes-of-the-civil-war>, 2013)

Introduction | The Northern and Southern sections of the United States developed along different lines. The South remained a predominantly agrarian economy while the North became more and more industrialized. Different social cultures and political beliefs developed. All of this led to disagreements on issues such as taxes, tariffs and internal improvements as well as states rights versus federal rights.

Slavery | The burning issue that led to the disruption of the union, however, was the debate over the future of slavery. That dispute led to secession, and secession brought about a war in which the

Northern and Western states and territories fought to preserve the Union, and the South fought to establish Southern independence as a new confederation of states under its own constitution.

The agrarian South utilized slaves to tend its large plantations and perform other duties. On the eve of the Civil War, some 4 million Africans and their descendants toiled as slave laborers in the South. Slavery was interwoven into the Southern economy even though only a relatively small portion of the population actually owned slaves. Slaves could be rented or traded or sold to pay debts. Ownership of more than a handful of slaves bestowed respect and contributed to social position, and slaves, as the property of individuals and businesses, represented the largest portion of the region's personal and corporate wealth, as cotton and land prices declined and the price of slaves soared.

[The Dred Scott Decision](#) | Dred Scott was a slave who sought citizenship through the American legal system, and whose case eventually ended up in the Supreme Court. The famous Dred Scott Decision in 1857 denied his request stating that no person with African blood could become a U.S. citizen. Besides denying citizenship for African-Americans, it also overturned the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which had restricted slavery in certain U.S. territories. Learn more about Dred Scott

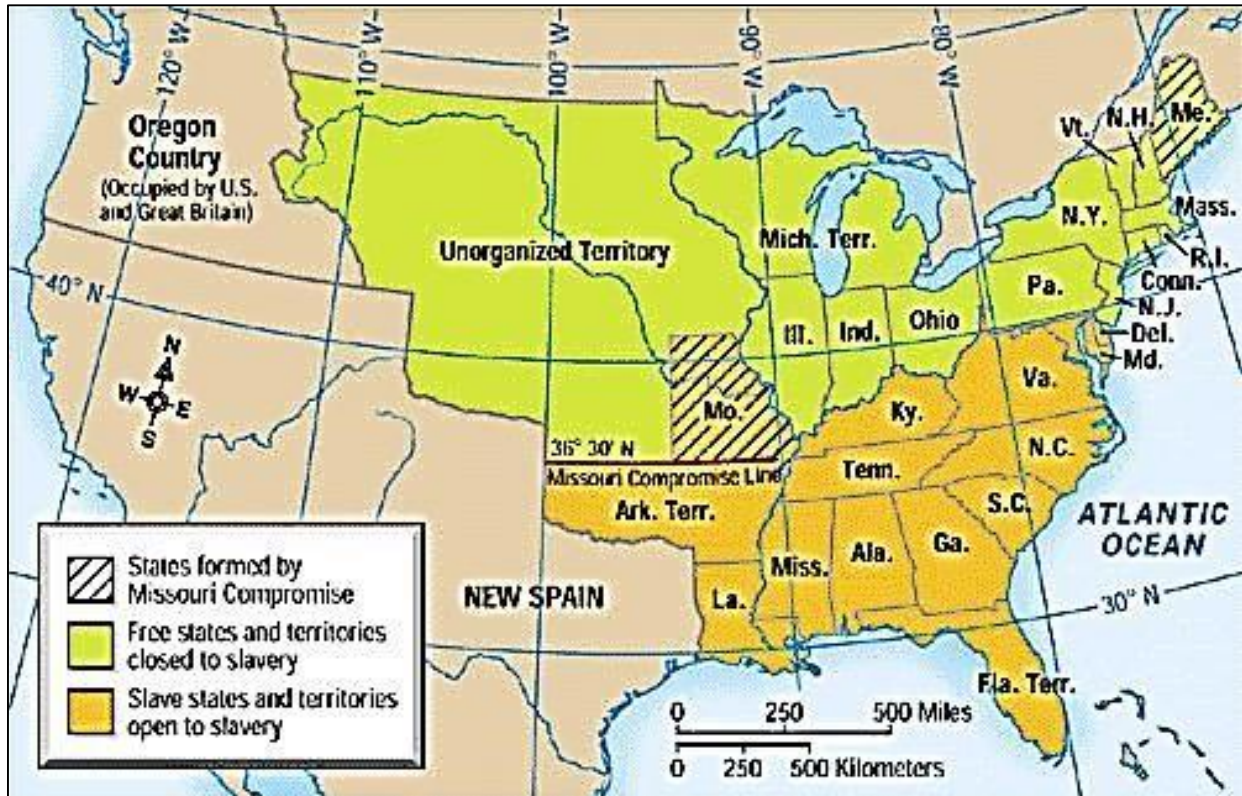
[States' Rights](#) | States' Rights refers to the struggle between the federal government and individual states over political power. In the Civil War era, this struggle focused heavily on the institution of slavery and whether the federal government had the right to regulate or even abolish slavery within an individual state. The sides of this debate were largely drawn between northern and southern states, thus widened the growing divide within the nation. Learn more about States' Rights.

[Abolitionist Movement](#) | By the early 1830s, those who wished to see that institution abolished within the United States were becoming more strident and influential. They claimed obedience to "higher law" over obedience to the Constitution's guarantee that a fugitive from one state would be considered a fugitive in all states. The fugitive slave act along with the publishing of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin helped expand the support for abolishing slavery nationwide. Learn more about the Abolitionist Movement.

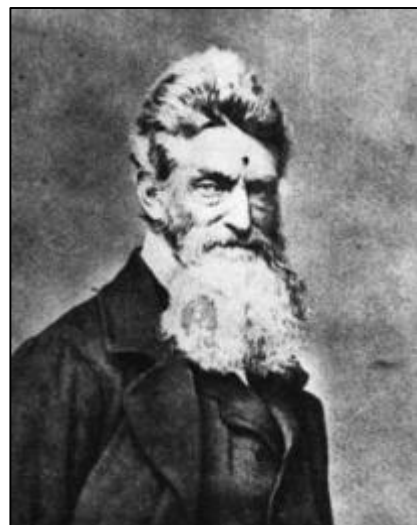
[Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin](#) | Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel Uncle Tom's Cabins was published in serial form in an antislavery newspaper in 1851. Within two years it was a nationwide and worldwide bestseller. Depicting the evils of slavery, it offered a vision of slavery that few in the nation had seen before. The book succeeded at its goal, which was to start a wave of anti-slavery sentiment across the nation. Upon meeting Stowe, President Lincoln remarked, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war." Learn more about Harriet Beecher Stowe and Uncle Toms Cabin

[The Underground Railroad](#) | Some abolitionists actively helped runaway slaves to escape via "the Underground Railroad," and there were instances in which men, even lawmen, sent to retrieve runaways were attacked and beaten by abolitionist mobs. To the slave holding states, this meant Northerners wanted to choose which parts of the Constitution they would enforce, while expecting the South to honor the entire document. The most famous activist of the underground railroad was Harriet Tubman, a nurse and spy in the Civil War and known as the Moses of her people.

The Missouri Compromise | Additional territories gained from the U.S.–Mexican War of 1846–1848 heightened the slavery debate. Abolitionists fought to have slavery declared illegal in those territories, as the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 had done in the territory that became the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. Advocates of slavery feared that if the institution were prohibited in any states carved out of the new territories the political power of slaveholding states would be diminished, possibly to the point of slavery being outlawed everywhere within the United States. Pro- and anti-slavery groups rushed to populate the new territories.



John Brown (May 9, 1800 – December 2, 1859) | Brown was an American abolitionist who believed armed insurrection was the only way to overthrow the institution of slavery in the United States. In 1859, Brown led an unsuccessful raid on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry that ended with his capture. Brown's trial resulted in his conviction and a sentence of death by hanging.



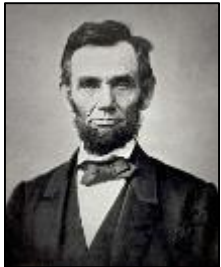
The Raid On Harper's Ferry | On the night of October 16, 1859, Brown and a band of followers seized the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia), in what is believed to have been an attempt to arm a slave insurrection. They were dislodged by a force of U.S. Marines led by Army lieutenant colonel Robert E. Lee. Brown was swiftly tried for treason against Virginia and hanged. Southern reaction initially was that his acts were those of a mad fanatic, of little consequence. But when Northern abolitionists made a martyr of him, Southerners came to believe this was proof the North intended to wage war against white Southerners. Brown's raid became a step on the road to war.

[The Election Of Abraham Lincoln](#) | When the Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln won the 1859 presidential election, Southern fears that the Republicans would abolish slavery reached a new peak. Lincoln was an avowed opponent of the expansion of slavery but said he would not interfere with it where it existed.

[Southern Secession](#) | Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America.

[Confederate Attack on Fort Sumter](#) | On April 10, 1861, knowing that resupplies were on their way from the North to the federal garrison at Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, provisional Confederate forces in Charleston demanded the fort's surrender. The fort's commander, Major Robert Anderson, refused. On April 12, the Confederates opened fire with cannons.

[Abraham Lincoln \(February 12, 1809 – April 15, 1865\)](#) | Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States, serving from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. He was the first



Republican President and his election encouraged the South to secede from the Union. Lincoln successfully led the United States through one of its greatest constitutional, military, and moral crises—the American Civil War—preserving the Union. Reared in a poor family on the western frontier, Lincoln was mostly self-educated, and became a country lawyer, a Whig Party leader, Illinois state legislator during the 1830s, and a one-term member of the United States House of Representatives during the 1840s.

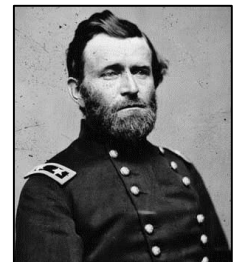
[Emancipation Proclamation \(1863\)](#) | Was an order issued to all segments of the Executive branch (including the Army and Navy) of the United States by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, during the American Civil War. It was based on the president's constitutional authority as commander in chief of the armed forces; it was not a law passed by Congress. It proclaimed all those enslaved in Confederate territory to be forever free.

[Gettysburg Address](#) | It was a speech given by Lincoln after the battle of Gettysburg.

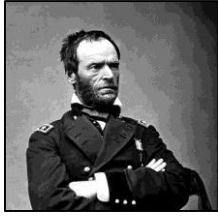
KEY GENERALS OF THE CIVIL WAR

The Union (North):

[Ulysses S. Grant \(April 27, 1822 – July 23, 1885\)](#) | was the 18th President of the United States (1869–1877) following his highly successful role as a war general in the second half of the Civil War. Under Grant, the Union Army defeated the Confederate military; having effectively ended the war and secession with the surrender of Robert E. Lee's army at Appomattox. As president he led the Radical Republicans in their effort to eliminate Confederate nationalism and slavery.



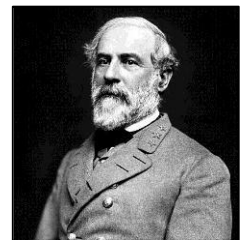
[William Tecumseh Sherman \(February 8, 1820 – February 14, 1891\)](#) | Sherman was



an American soldier, businessman, educator and author. He served as a General in the Union Army during the American Civil War (1861–65), for which he received recognition for his outstanding command of military strategy as well as criticism for the harshness of the "scorched earth" policies that he implemented in conducting total war against the Confederate States. Some declared that Sherman was "the first modern general".

The Confederates (South):

[Robert E. Lee \(January 19, 1807 – October 12, 1870\)](#) | was an American career military officer who is best known for having commanded the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in the American Civil War. He is best known for his victories in the Battle of second Manassas (second Bull Run), and the Battle of Chancellorsville. Named General-In-Chief of all Confederate Armies on February 6, 1865, his tenure in this position was cut short by his surrender to General Grant at the Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865.



[Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson \(January 21, 1824 – May 10, 1863\)](#) | Jackson was a Confederate general during the American Civil War, and one of the best-known Confederate commanders after General Robert E. Lee.

[Civil War \(1861-1865\)](#) | War between the North (The Union) and South (Confederate States of America)

IMPORTANT BATTLES OF THE CIVIL WAR

[The First Battle of Bull Run \(1861\)](#) | On July 21, 1861, Union and Confederate armies clashed near Manassas Junction, Virginia, in the first major land battle of the American Civil War. It was a Confederate victory that gave the South a surge of confidence and shocked many in the North, who realized the war would not be won as easily as they had hoped.

[Shiloh \(1862\)](#) | Just as Northerners were shocked into reality by the First Battle of Bull Run, so too were Southerners by the Battle of Shiloh. In April 1862, Union General Ulysses S. Grant engaged Confederate forces at Shiloh, Tennessee, in an incredibly bloody battle. Tens of thousands of men died. By the end of the bloodbath, Grant had won and demonstrated to the Confederates that Lincoln was serious about maintaining the Union.

[Antietam \(1862\)](#) | Lee made an aggressive push into the border states to try to defeat the Union on its own turf. In September 1862, Lee's army met General George McClellan's troops at the Battle of Antietam, which resulted in more than 23,000 casualties—the bloodiest single day of battle of the entire war. Lee was forced to retreat back to Confederate territory.

[The War at Sea](#) | While the armies battled on land, the Union and Confederate navies clashed on the high seas. At the very beginning of the war, Lincoln bypassed Congress and ordered a naval blockade of all Southern ports. The South's economy relied almost entirely on cotton trade with

Britain, so Lincoln hoped the blockade would strangle the Confederacy financially. The Confederate navy, though small, proved a formidable adversary.

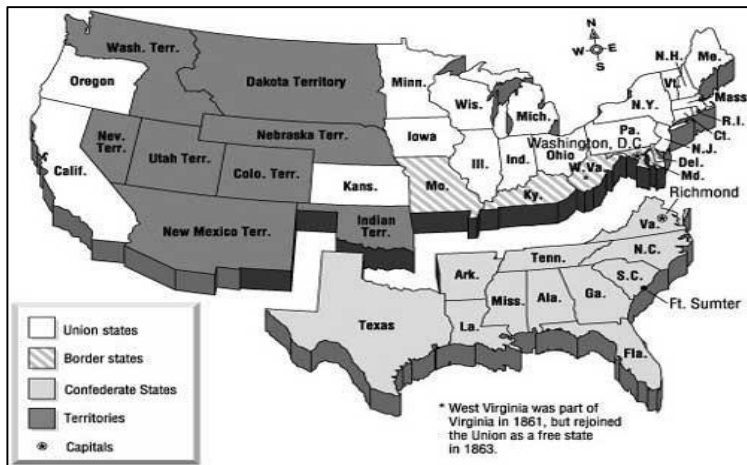
Gettysburg (1863) | Undaunted by his failure at Antietam, Lee marched into Northern territory again in the summer of 1863, this time into Pennsylvania. There, he met Union forces at the Battle of Gettysburg in early July. At the end of a bloody three-day struggle in which more than 50,000 died, Lee was once again forced to retreat. The battle was a resounding victory for the North and a catastrophe for the South.

Vicksburg (1863) | At the same time Lee was losing in the North, Grant was besieging the city of Vicksburg, Mississippi, in the West. Eventually, the trapped Confederates caved in to Grant's demand for an unconditional surrender. This major victory at the Battle of Vicksburg gave the Union control of the Mississippi River and thus split the Confederacy in half.

Union Victory at Appomattox (1865) | In April 1865, Ulysses S. Grant's forces broke through Robert E. Lee's defenses and forced the Confederates to retreat. The Confederate forces burned their capital city, Richmond, behind them as they retreated in order to render it useless to the Union armies. His men malnourished and heavily outgunned, Lee chose to surrender. Several days later, on April 9, 1865, Lee surrendered to Grant formally and unconditionally at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. Grant accepted the surrender and provided the Southerners food for their march home. Jefferson Davis and other ranking Confederates, meanwhile, had been captured fleeing Virginia. The Civil War was over.



Lee surrenders to Grant
Appomattox Courthouse



RESULTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

- ✚ Robert E. Lee surrenders at Appomattox Courthouse and the South loses the war
- ✚ Lincoln was assassinated five days after the war
- ✚ The Southern economy was devastated while the Northern economy became stronger than before the war ✚ Reconstruction began

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction (1865-1877) | The period after the Civil War in the U.S. when the southern states were reorganized and reintegrated into the Union.

CIVIL WAR/RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

- ✚ **13th Amendment** | Abolished slavery and involuntary servitude except for a crime
- ✚ **14th Amendment** | Made former slaves citizens, gave equal protection under the law for all citizens
- ✚ **15th Amendment** | African-American males were given the right to vote

19TH CENTURY TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

Steam Engine | In 1781 James Watt patented a steam engine that produced continuous rotative motion. These 10hp engines enabled a wide range of manufacturing machinery to be powered. The engines could be sited anywhere that water and coal or wood fuel could be obtained. By 1883, engines that could provide 10,000 hp were feasible. Steam engines could also be applied to vehicles such as traction engines and the railway locomotives. Steam engines powered locomotives (trains) and steam ships. The stationary steam engine was an important component of the Industrial Revolution, overcoming the limitations imposed by shortage of sites suitable for water mill and allowing factories to locate where water power was unavailable.



Rifles | Rifling is the cutting of spiral grooves on the inside of a firearm's barrel to improve range and accuracy. The first American military rifle to be mass-produced was the 1861 Springfield Rifled Percussion Musket. The average soldier could load and accurately fire the long-arm three times per minute. The development of a conical projectile that was smaller than the gun barrel, but expanded when fired to meet the gun's rifling made the weapons easier to load. Over one million Springfields were produced from 1861-1873.

References

Sparknotes. (2013). The Civil War. Available from <http://www.sparknotes.com/history/american/civilwar/section7.rhtml>