

Chronology of Black Achievement

- 1619: Blacks Arrive at Jamestown on Dutch slave ship
- 1620: The original justification for slavery is that a man or woman is not a Christian
- 1640: The defining characteristic for slavery changes to skin color
- 1664: Carolina Colony enacts slave codes
- 1664: Maryland enacts slave codes
- 1670: Massachusetts enacts slave codes
- 1682: New York enacts slave codes
- 1690: Connecticut enacts slave codes
- 1700: Pennsylvania enacts slave codes
- 1704: New Jersey enacts slave codes
- 1705: Virginia enacts slave codes
- 1706: Delaware enacts slave codes
- 1712: New York leaders suppress slave revolt
- 1739: Stono Slave revolt in South Carolina led by a black slave named 'Cato'
- 1740: South Carolina enacts slave codes
- 1741: New Hampshire enacts slave codes
- 1753: North Carolina enacts slave codes
- 1762: Entrepreneur Samuel Fraunces Opens New York City's Most Cherished Revolutionary War Site: The Fraunces Tavern
- 1770: Georgia enacts slave codes
- 1770: Crispus Attucks is the first man to die in the American Revolution
- 1772: Chicago is Settled by Jean DuSable
- 1776: Lemuel Haynes Helps Lay the Foundation for Abolition
- 1777: Vermont becomes the first colony to abolish slavery.
- 1778: General George Washington invites blacks to join the Continental Army
- 1787: Blacks found New York's African Free School
- 1791: The First Black Man of Science, Benjamin Banneker, Surveys Washington, D.C.
- 1793: Congress passes the Fugitive Slave Act, making it a crime to aid an escaped slave
- 1793: Eli Whitney invents the cotton gin, helping to institutionalize slavery by making cotton the primary southern crop
- 1799: Richard Allen becomes the first ordained black minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church
- 1800: Gabriel Prosser leads the first major slave revolt in U.S. history; the revolt is betrayed and 35 slaves, including Prosser, are hanged
- 1808: Importation of slaves to the United States ends
- 1816: The African Methodist Episcopal Church is formally recognized and elects Richard Allen as its first bishop
- 1817: The American Colonization Society is established to transport blacks to Africa, leading to the founding of the Republic of Liberia in 1847
- 1820: Congress enacts the Missouri Compromise, which admits Missouri as a slave state, Maine as a free state, and western territories above Missouri's southern border to be free soil
- 1821: African Grove Theatre is founded in New York City as blacks begin parallel institution building

- 1822: Denmark Vesey plans Charleston slave revolt but is betrayed; he and 34 others are hanged
- 1823: Legendary Mountain Man James Beckwourth Enters the Rockies
- 1827: Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm start the first black periodical, 'Freedom's Journal'
- 1829: Black abolitionist David Walker publishes "Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World" . . . , calling for a slave revolt, though radical for the time, some white abolitionists support him
- 1831: White abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison publishes the antislavery newspaper 'The Liberator'
- 1831: Nat Turner slave revolt in Virginia emboldens northern abolitionists and entrenches southern attitudes toward slavery
- 1833: William Lloyd Garrison and others found the American Anti-Slavery Society
- 1834: British Empire abolishes slavery
- 1839: Joseph Cinque leads successful slave revolt aboard the slave ship Amistad.
- 1843: Black abolitionist Henry Highland Garnet calls upon slaves to murder their masters at the National Convention of Free People of Color
- 1847: Frederick Douglass begins publication of the antislavery newspaper, the North Star
- 1848: The Free Soil Party opposes the extension of slavery into the western territories
- 1849: Harriet Tubman Uses Underground Railroad to Become Free
- 1850: Congress passes Compromise of 1850, which calls for a stricter Fugitive Slave Act and a better balance between slave and free states in the western territories
- 1850: Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'
- 1851: Sojourner Truth Delivers Famous "Ain't I a Woman?" Speech
- 1853: William Wells Brown, a former slave, abolitionist, historian, and physician, publishes 'Clotel,' the first novel by an African American
- 1854: Lincoln University, the first black university, is founded:
- 1854: Congress passes the Kansas-Nebraska Act, repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and increasing tensions between the north and south
- 1855: Frederick Douglass Publishes My Bondage and My Freedom
- 1855: John Mercer Langston, elected clerk of Brownhelm Township in Ohio, is the first black to win an elective political office in the United States
- 1856: Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church found Wilberforce University
- 1856: Pro-slavery forces sack Lawrence, Kansas; white abolitionist John Brown sacks Pottawatomie Creek
- 1857: Dred Scott decision pushes nation toward Civil War
- 1859: The U.S. Supreme Court declares the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 constitutional, further increasing north south tensions
- 1859: Abolitionist John Brown captures the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, trying to inspire a slave revolt
- 1860: Following the election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States, South Carolina secedes and is followed in 1861 by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee
- 1861: The Civil War begins
- 1861: Pinckney Pinchback runs the Confederate blockade to New Orleans and recruits a

- company of black volunteers for the Union, the Corps d'Afrique.
- 1862: Black slave Robert Smalls seizes a Confederate frigate in Charleston harbor and turns it over to the Union
- 1862: The second Confiscation Act is passed, stating that slaves in regions of the Confederacy occupied by the Union Army shall be free
- 1862: President Abraham Lincoln allows blacks to join the Union army
- 1863: The Morrill Act, known as the Homestead Act, is passed, allowing settlers to claim 160 acres of land after they have lived on it for five years
- 1863 : Lincoln Signs Emancipation Proclamation on January first
- 1863: Black Regiment Storms Fort Wagner in the Civil War
- 1865: Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, prohibiting slavery, is ratified.
- 1866: The 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments, known as the Buffalo soldiers are created by the U.S. Army to fight in the Indian Wars
- 1868: Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, defining citizenship is ratified
- 1868: Amateur National Association of Baseball Players votes to bar black baseball players
- 1869: Hiram Rhoades Revels becomes the first African American U.S. Senator
- 1870: Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, giving blacks the right to vote, is ratified.
- 1870: Robert Brown Elliot is elected to Congress
- 1873: Mifflin Gibbs becomes the first African American elected a Municipal Judge in the U.S.
- 1875: Robert Smalls, former slave, is elected to House of Representatives
- 1875: Congress passes Civil Rights Act
- 1877: Henry Flipper is the first black to graduate from West Point
- 1881: Booker T. Washington Opens Tuskegee Institute
- 1881: T. Thomas Fortune publishes 'The New York Globe.' which later becomes 'The New York Age,' and prophesies the Long and Bitter Struggle for Equality
- 1883: U.S. Supreme Court declares 1875 Civil Rights Act unconstitutional
- 1884: John Roy Lynch is elected Chairman of the Republican Convention
- 1887: Granville T. Woods, known as the "Black Edison," patents the Induction Telegraph System
- 1890: T. Thomas Fortune founds the Afro-American League, the forerunner of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; coins term Afro-American
- 1890: Louisiana passes 'Jim Crow law' requiring railroads to provide separate cars for Blacks and Whites
- 1893: Ida B. Wells-Barnett crusades against black lynching in America and pioneers tactic of economic boycott of white owned businesses
- 1893: Black surgeon, Daniel Hale Williams, performs the first Open Heart Surgery
- 1896: In Plessy v. Ferguson, the U.S. Supreme Court decides that segregation is constitutional, making possible the South's the repressive Jim Crow laws
- 1896: Black scientist George Washington Carver joins the Tuskegee institute and goes on to develop more than 300 useful products, many derived from the peanut
- 1899: Scott Joplin publishes the "Maple Leaf Rag"
- 1903: W.E.B. DuBois Publishes Souls of Black Folks

- 1903: Madam C.J. Walker becomes the first black woman millionaire with her cosmetics company
- 1904: Scott Joplin and Ma Rainey Initiate the Merger of Two Cultures
- 1908: Black boxer, Jack Johnson, wins the Heavyweight Boxing Championship
- 1908: Black Cowboy and naturalist George McJunkin discovers folsom spear point in New Mexico
- 1909: Matthew Henson Discovers the North Pole
- 1909: W.E.B. Du Bois Founds the NAACP
- 1910: W.E.B. Du Bois founds the 'Crisis' Magazine, the official Media Organ of the NAACP
- 1914: Jamaican born Marcus Garvey organizes the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the African Communities League.
- 1920: The National Negro Baseball League is Formed
- 1924: George Washington Carver delivers first speech on the need for sustainable technologies
- 1925: Black author, educator and philosopher, Alain Locke, leads Harlem Renaissance
- 1926: Star pitcher, Satchel Paige joins the National Negro Baseball League
- 1929: Black entrepreneur, S.B. Fuller incorporates Fuller Products Company
- 1931: Sammy Davis Jr. begins his film career
- 1935: Mary McLeod Bethune founds National Council of Negro Women
- 1936: Jesse Owens wins four gold medals of 1936 Olympics
- 1938: Joe Louis beats German, Max Schmelling for World Heavyweight title
- 1939: Hattie McDaniel Wins the Oscar
- 1940: First Black General, Benjamin O. Davis, is Stepping Stone to Desegregation of U.S. Army
- 1940: Black doctor, Charles Drew, designs means of storing Plasma rather than whole blood in blood banks
- 1941: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issues Executive Order 8802, barring discrimination in all defense contracts and establishing the committee of Fair Employment Practices to investigate all violations
- 1943: Duke Ellington's Band Performs "Black, Brown and Beige" at Carnegie Hall
- 1947: Black baseball player, Jackie Robinson, breaks baseball's color barrier
- 1948: Satchel Paige joins the Cleveland Indians
- 1948: President Harry Truman issues historic executive order, ending segregation in the United States armed forces
- 1950: Ralph Bunche Wins the Nobel Peace Prize
- 1950: Herman Branson discovers DNA's alpha helix
- 1950: Gwendolyn Brooks becomes the first black to win the Pulitzer Prize
- 1954: U.S. Supreme Court strikes down segregation in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas
- 1955: Rosa Parks Refuses to Give Up Her Seat to a White Passenger on a Montgomery Bus
- 1956: Althea Gibson, First Black Woman To Win a Tennis Grand Slam Event
- 1957: President Dwight D. Eisenhower sends federal troops to little Rock Arkansas to protect 9 black students attending an all white high school
- 1957: Congress creates Civil Right Commission to investigate voting rights for blacks

- 1959: Lorraine Hansberry's Play 'A Raisin in the Sun' is Produced
- 1960: Track star Wilma Rudolf becomes first American woman to win three gold medals at Olympic Games
- 1960: Lunch counter sit-ins organized by black students desegregates lunch counters throughout the south
- 1961: President John F. Kennedy issues Executive Order 10925, which creates the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity
- 1961: James Farmer, director of the Congress of Racial Equality organizes Freedom Rides throughout the south
- 1963: Black actor Sidney Poitier wins Academy Award for 'Lilies of the Field'
- 1963: Medgar Evers is gunned down in the driveway of his Mississippi home
- 1963: Martin Luther King Jr. leads demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, which leads to desegregation of the city's facilities.
- 1963: Martin Luther King Jr. Delivers His "I have a Dream Speech"
- 1964: Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, barring discrimination against minorities in employment and places of public accommodation, and protecting voting rights and advancing school desegregation
- 1965: Congress passes the Voting Rights Act, outlawing registration tests and putting voter registration under control of the US government.
- 1965: President Johnson issues Executive Order 11246, enforcing affirmative action for the first time
- 1965: Malcom X, leader of Black nationalism movement is assassinated
- 1967: Muhammad Ali Refuses Induction into the U.S. Army on Religious Grounds
- 1967: Thurgood Marshall, First Black U.S. Supreme Court Justice
- 1968: Congress passes the 1968 Civil Rights Act, forbidding discrimination in housing
- 1968: Civil rights leader Martin Luther King is assassinated
- 1976: Alex Haley publishes "Roots: The Saga of An American Family"
- 1978: U.S. Supreme Court in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke rules to ensure that affirmative action does not provide greater opportunities for minorities at the expense of the rights of the majority
- 1980: In Fullilove v. Klutznick the U.S. Supreme Court rules that some modest quotas are perfectly constitutional
- 1980: Black entrepreneur Robert L. Johnson founds Black Entertainment Television
- 1982: Alice Walker publishes the Pulitzer Prize winning, "The Color Purple"
- 1983: Guy Bluford is the first African American to travel in Space
- 2001: President George W. Bush appoints Colin Powell Secretary of State
- 2001: President George W. Bush appoints Dr. Condaleeza Rice National Security Administration advisor
- 2003: Supreme Court rules (5-4) on the University of Michigan Law School's policy, that race can be one of many factors considered by colleges when selecting their students because it furthers "a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body"