

The Top 10 Greatest Presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry ... Dwight Eisenhower, and Ronald Reagan

Charles River Editors



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Includes pictures.

Includes bibliographies for further reading.

*Includes a table of contents.

Every American is taught a pristine narrative of the life and legacy of George Washington and can easily recite the highlights and myths of Washington's life. Thomas Jefferson was instrumental in authoring the Declaration of Independence, laying out the ideological groundwork of the notion of states' rights, leading one of the first political parties, and overseeing the expansion of the United States during his presidency. Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) is one of the most famous Americans in history and one of the country's most revered presidents. Schoolchildren can recite the life story of Lincoln, the "Westerner" who educated himself and became a self made man, rising from lawyer to leader of the new Republican Party before becoming the 16th President of the United States. Lincoln successfully navigated the Union through the Civil War but didn't live to witness his crowning achievement, becoming the first president assassinated when he was shot at Ford's Theater by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865.

Teddy Roosevelt is on Mount Rushmore and might be America's greatest 20th century president, but if he's not it might be because of his own relative. Whether Franklin Delano Roosevelt was America's greatest 20th century president or not, there's no question that he was the most unique. A well-connected relative of Theodore Roosevelt, FDR was groomed for greatness until he was struck down by what was widely believed to be polio at the time. Nevertheless, he persevered, rising through New York politics to reach the White House just as the country faced its greatest challenge since the Civil War, beginning his presidency with one of the most iconic lines ever spoken during an inaugural address.

Among America's presidents, Harry Truman's presidency produced some of the nation's most crucial decisions and left one of the nation's most unique legacies. The new president had to usher America through victory in Europe in his first month and decide to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki a few months later, but the end of World War II produced only the first of many consequential decisions Truman would face during his nearly 8 years in office. As president, Truman would lay the groundwork for the next 50 years of American foreign policy, as the architect of Cold War containment, the man who signed off on the Marshall Plan, and the commander-in-chief during much of the Korean War.

Despite being one of America's oldest presidents, Eisenhower redefined the public relations nature of the office, in addition to positioning America during the Cold War standoff with the Soviet Union. But Eisenhower's most lasting contribution as president was the construction of the interstate highway system, and it was in the final year of his presidency that his administration planned and implemented the Apollo space program that would land men on the Moon in 1969. By the time he died in 1969, President Nixon aptly described Eisenhower as "the world's most admired and respected man, truly the first citizen of the world."

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