

Dates to Remember

September 3, 1783

The United States and Great Britain sign the Treaty of Paris and Great Britain signs a separate treaty with France and Spain.

December 23, 1783

General George Washington resigns his commission as the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army.

January 14, 1784

The official end of the Revolutionary War takes place when Congress ratifies the Treaty of Paris.

February 24, 1785

Congress appoints John Adams to be the United States ambassador to Great Britain.

March 10, 1785

Congress appoints Thomas Jefferson to be the United States ambassador to France.

March 28, 1785

Delegates from Maryland and Virginia meet at Mt. Vernon to discuss navigation conflicts on the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. George Washington serves as host and it becomes known as the Mount Vernon Conference.

May 25, 1787

The Constitutional Convention opens with a quorum of seven states in Philadelphia to discuss revising the Articles of Confederation. Eventually, all states but Rhode Island are represented.

July 13, 1787

Congress passes the Northwest Ordinance which sets up a process by which a territory becomes a state. The ordinance also calls for the banning of slavery in the Northwest Territory.

July 16, 1787

Roger Sherman proposes the Connecticut Compromise – an agreement between the two extremes of the Virginia and New Jersey Plans that dealt with representation in the legislative branch of government (Congress). It has also been referred to as the Great Compromise.

September 17, 1787

All 12 state delegations approve the Constitution, 39 delegates sign it of the 42 present, and the Convention formally adjourns.

October 27, 1787

A series of articles in support of the ratification are published in New York's "The Independent Journal." They become known as the "Federalist Papers."

December 7, 1787

Delaware is the first state to ratify the Constitution.

June 21, 1788

The Constitution becomes effective for the ratifying states when New Hampshire is the ninth state to ratify it.

February 4, 1789

The first presidential election takes place but the results will not be known until April 6.

March 4, 1789

The first Congress under the Constitution convenes in New York City.

April 1, 1789

Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg from Pennsylvania is chosen as the first Speaker of House.

April 6, 1789

George Washington is elected the first President of the United States under the Constitution with 69 electoral votes. John Adams is elected Vice President with 34 votes.

Fun Zone: Dates to Remember *(Continued)*

April 30, 1789

George Washington is inaugurated as the first President of the United States.

June 8, 1789

James Madison introduces the proposed Bill of Rights in the House of Representatives.

July 27, 1789

Congress organizes the first executive department and names it the Department of State on September 15.

August 7, 1789

Congress organizes the War Department.

September 2, 1789

Congress organizes the Treasury Department.

September 11, 1789

Alexander Hamilton is appointed Secretary of the Treasury.

September 24, 1789

Congress establishes a Supreme Court, 13 district courts, 3 ad hoc circuit courts, and the position of Attorney General.

September 25, 1789

Congress approves 12 amendments and sends them to the states for ratification.

September 26, 1789

Edmund Randolph is appointed Attorney General, John Jay as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of State.

November 20, 1789

New Jersey is the first state to ratify the Bill of Rights.

February 2, 1790

The Supreme Court convenes for the first time.

May 29, 1790

Rhode Island is the last state to ratify the Constitution.

December 6, 1790

The capital of the country “moves” from New York to Philadelphia until the new capital along the Potomac is completed.

March 4, 1791

Vermont becomes a part of the Union as the 14th state.

December 15, 1791

Virginia ratifies the Bill of Rights, and 10 of the 12 proposed amendments become part of the U.S. Constitution.



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