

Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Biographies**



# George Washington

George Washington grew up in Colonial Virginia. His father, who was a landowner and a planter, died when Washington was eleven, and he was raised by his older brother. Washington excelled at his studies. When he was sixteen, he went to work as a surveyor, where he measured properties and made maps. He later led the Virginia militia during the French and Indian War.

Washington married a widow named Martha Dandridge Custis. After his older brother died, Washington, his wife, and her two children from her first marriage moved to the family's Mount Vernon estate. Washington won a seat in the Virginia legislature. Additionally, as the American colonists grew increasingly discontent under British rule, Washington was one of Virginia's representatives at the First and Second Continental Congresses. He was appointed general of the Continental Army at the start of the American Revolution in 1775.

The Continental Army did not have the supplies or the military training of the British Army, but Washington was a dedicated leader, and the Americans finally defeated the British in 1781. Several years later, Washington was one of the drafters of the U.S. Constitution.

In 1789, George Washington became the first U.S. president. As such, he shaped what the office became. Many of Washington's choices are still part of the presidency today. For example, he created the first presidential cabinet. He also left office after two terms, believing that no American president should hold power for too long. He died two years later, on December 14, 1799.

Why is George Washington important to American history?

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