

# The American Revolution

U.S. History to 1877

## Reorganizing Empire

Tightening mercantilism

Molasses Act, 1733

*6p tax on French molasses, for trade regulation*

Lord Grenville's Sugar Act, 1764

*3p tax on French molasses, for revenue*

*Tried in Admiralty Courts in Nova Scotia*

Stamp Act, 1765

Admiralty Courts try offenders

Outrage & riots; boycotts

Samuel Adams: Sons of Liberty

## Conflict in the Empire

Committees of Correspondence

Stamp Act Congress

*Declaration of Rights and Grievances*

Constitutional arguments

Taxation without representation

"Virtual" representation

Parliament: Repeal & Declaratory Act

Power to "bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever"

Troops quietly moved from frontier to cities

## Rising tension

Townshend Acts, 1767, & the Quartering Act

“External tax” on paper, paint, lead, glass, and tea

Revenue used to pay salaries of governors, judges

Enforcement: admiralty courts; customs commissioners

Boston Massacre, 1770

Lord North’s tea tax

Tea Act, 1773

Boston Tea Party

## Intolerable Acts

Coercive Acts, 1774

Close Boston port until the tea is paid for

All Massachusetts officials appointed; town meetings limited

British officials could be tried only in Britain

Governors could quarter soldiers without assembly’s approval

Quebec Act, 1774

General Gage made governor of Massachusetts

First Continental Congress

Boycott

Declaration of Rights, 1774

## Years of Crisis: 1775

New England Restraining Act

General Gage

Lexington & Concord

## Years of Crisis: 1775

“Declaration of the Causes of Taking Up Arms”

Bunker Hill

# Years of Crisis: 1776

Olive Branch Petition

George III declares colonies in rebellion

Tom Paine's *Common Sense*

Hessians!

July 4: Declaration of Independence

## Declaration of Independence

**IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.**

**The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,**

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

## The Revolution begins

Dilemma: Continental Army

“Virtuous” militias better in theory than in battle

Standing army of hired troops

## The Revolution, 1776-1779

Long Island defeat, 1776

Tom Paine, *The Crisis*

*“These are the times that try men’s souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”*

Trenton and Princeton

Howe & Burgoyne attack 1777

Turning point: Saratoga, 1777

Valley Forge, 1777-78

## The Revolution, 1780-1781

Southern strategy

Lord Cornwallis

Yorktown

## Treaty of Paris 1783