



# TIMELINE OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA 1501-1865

A recap of 364 years, 132860  
days and 3188640 hours we  
spent in **BONDAGE**

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## **TIMELINE OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA 1501-1865**

### **1501**

African Slaves in the New World Spanish settlers bring slaves from Africa to Santo Domingo (now the capital of the Dominican Republic).

### **1522**

Slave Revolt: the Caribbean Slaves rebel on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, which now comprises Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

### **1562**

Britain Joins Slave Trade. John Hawkins, the first Briton to take part in the slave trade, makes a huge profit hauling human cargo from Africa to Hispaniola.

### **1581**

Slaves in Florida Spanish residents in St. Augustine, the first permanent settlement in Florida, import African slaves.

### **1612**

The first commercial tobacco crop is raised in Jamestown, Virginia.

### **1619**

Twenty slaves in Virginia Africans brought to Jamestown are the first slaves imported into Britain's North American colonies. Like indentured servants, they were probably freed after a fixed period of service.

### **1626**

The Dutch West India Company imports 11 black male slaves into the New Netherlands.

### **1636**

Colonial North America's slave trade begins when the first American slave carrier, Desire, is built and launched in Massachusetts.

## **1640**

John Punch, a runaway black servant, is sentenced to servitude for life. His two white companions are given extended terms of servitude. Punch is the first documented slave for life.

## **1640**

New Netherlands law forbids residents from harboring or feeding runaway slaves.

## **1641**

The D'Angola marriage is the first recorded marriage between blacks in New Amsterdam.

## **1641**

Massachusetts is the first colony to legalize slavery.

## **1643**

The New England Confederation of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven adopts a fugitive slave law.

## **1650**

Connecticut legalizes slavery.

## **1652**

Rhode Island passes laws restricting slavery and forbidding enslavement for more than 10 years.

## **1652**

Massachusetts requires all black and Indian servants to receive military training.

## **1654**

A Virginia court grants blacks the right to hold slaves.

## **1657**

Virginia passes a fugitive slave law.

## **1660**

Charles II, King of England, orders the Council of Foreign Plantations to devise strategies for converting slaves and servants to Christianity.

## **1662**

Hereditary Slavery Virginia law decrees that children of black mothers “shall be bond or free according to the condition of the mother.”

## **1662**

Massachusetts reverses a ruling dating back to 1652, which allowed blacks to train in arms. New York, Connecticut, and New Hampshire pass similar laws restricting the bearing of arms.

## **1663**

In Gloucester County, Virginia the first documented slave rebellion in the colonies takes place.

## **1663**

Maryland legalizes slavery.

## **1663**

Charles II, King of England, gives the Carolinas to proprietors. Until the 1680s, most settlers in the region are small landowners from Barbados.

## **1664**

New York and New Jersey legalize slavery.

## **1664**

Maryland is the first colony to take legal action against marriages between white women and black men.

## **1664**

The State of Maryland mandates lifelong servitude for all black slaves. New York, New Jersey, the Carolinas, and Virginia all pass similar laws.

## **1666**

Maryland passes a fugitive slave law.

## **1667**

Virginia declares that Christian baptism will not alter a person's status as a slave.

## **1668**

New Jersey passes a fugitive slave law.

## **1670**

The State of Virginia prohibits free blacks and Indians from keeping Christian (i.e. white) servants.

## **1674**

New York declares that blacks who convert to Christianity after their enslavement will not be freed.

## **1676**

In Virginia, black slaves and black and white indentured servants band together to participate in Bacon's Rebellion.

## **1680**

The State of Virginia forbids blacks and slaves from bearing arms, prohibits blacks from congregating in large numbers, and mandates harsh punishment for slaves who assault Christians or attempt escape.

## **1682**

Virginia declares that all imported black servants are slaves for life

## **1684**

New York makes it illegal for slaves to sell goods.

## **1688**

The Pennsylvania Quakers pass the first formal antislavery resolution.

## **1691**

Virginia passes the first anti-miscegenation law, forbidding marriages between whites and blacks or whites and Native Americans.

## **1691**

Virginia prohibits the manumission of slaves within its borders. Manumitted slaves are forced to leave the colony.

## **1691**

South Carolina passes the first comprehensive slave codes.

## **1694**

Rice cultivation is introduced into Carolina. Slave importation increases dramatically.

## **1696**

The Royal African Trade Company loses its monopoly and New England colonists enter the slave trade.

## **1700**

Pennsylvania legalizes slavery.

## **1702**

New York passes An Act for Regulating Slaves. Among the prohibitions of this act are meetings of more than three slaves, trading by slaves, and testimony by slaves in court.

## **1703**

Massachusetts requires those masters who liberate slaves to provide a bond of 50 pounds or more in the event that the freedman becomes a public charge.

## **1703**

Connecticut assigns the punishment of whipping to any slaves who disturb the peace or assault whites.

## **1703**

Rhode Island makes it illegal for blacks and Indians to walk at night without passes.

## **1705**

Slaves as Property Describing slaves as real estate, Virginia lawmakers allow owners to bequeath their slaves. The same law allowed masters to “kill and destroy” runaways.

## **1705**

The Virginia Slave Code codifies slave status, declaring all non- Christian servants entering the colony to be slaves. It defines all slaves as real estate, acquits masters who kill slaves during punishment, forbids slaves and free colored peoples from physically assaulting white persons, and denies slaves the right to bear arms or move abroad without written permission.

## **1705**

New York declares that punishment by execution will be applied to certain runaway slaves.

## **1705**

Massachusetts makes marriage and sexual relations between blacks and whites illegal.

## **1706**

New York declares blacks, Indians, and slaves who kill white people to be subject to the death penal

## **1706**

Connecticut requires that Indians, mulattos, and black servants gain permission from their masters to engage in trade.

## **1708**

The Southern colonies require militia captains to enlist and train one slave for every white soldier.

## **1708**

Rhode Island requires that slaves be accompanied by their masters when visiting the homes of free persons.

## **1708**

Blacks outnumber whites in South Carolina.

## **1710**

New York forbids blacks, Indians, and mulattos from walking at night without lighted lanterns.

## **1711**

Pennsylvania prohibits the importation of blacks and Indians.

## **1711**

Rhode Island prohibits the clandestine importation of black and Indian slaves.

## **1712**

Pennsylvania prohibits the importation of slaves.

## **1712**

Slave Revolt: New York Slaves in New York City kill whites during an uprising, later squelched by the militia. Nineteen rebels are executed.

## **1712**

New York declares it illegal for blacks, Indians, and slaves to murder other blacks, Indians, and slaves.

## **1712**

New York forbids freed blacks, Indians, and mulatto slaves from owning real estate and holding property.

## **1712**

In Charleston, South Carolina slaves are forbidden from hiring themselves out.



## **1715**

Rhode Island legalizes slavery.

## **1715**

Maryland declares all slaves entering the province and their descendants to be slaves for life.

## **1717**

New York enacts a fugitive slave law.

## **1723**

Virginia abolishes manumissions.

## **1724**

French Louisiana prohibits slaves from marrying without the permission of their owners.

## **1730-1750**

The number of male and female slaves imported to the North American British colonies balances out for the first time.

## **1731**

The Spanish reverse a 1730 decision and declare that slaves fleeing to Florida from Carolina will not be sold or returned.

## **1732**

Slaves aboard the ship of New Hampshire Captain John Major kill both captain and crew, seizing the vessel and its cargo.

## **1733**

Quaker Elihu Coleman's A Testimony against That Anti-Christian Practice of MAKING SLAVES OF MEN is published.

## **1735**

Under an English law Georgia prohibits the importation and use of black slaves.

## **1735**

Georgia petitions Britain for the legalization of slavery.

## **1735**

Louis XV, King of France, declares that when an enslaved woman gives birth to the child of a free man, neither mother nor child can be sold. Further, after a certain time, mother and child will be freed.

## **1738**

Georgia's trustees permit the importation of black slaves.

## **1738**

Spanish Florida promises freedom and land to runaway slaves.

## **1739**

Slaves in Stono, South Carolina rebel, sacking and burning an armory and killing whites. Some 75 slaves in South Carolina steal weapons and flee toward freedom in Florida (then under Spanish rule). Crushed by the South Carolina militia, the revolt results in the deaths of 40 blacks and 20 white. The colonial militia puts an end to the rebellion before slaves are able to reach freedom in Florida.

## **1740**

South Carolina passes the comprehensive Negro Act, making it illegal for slaves to move abroad, assemble in groups, raise food, earn money, and learn to read English. Owners are permitted to kill rebellious slaves if necessary.

## **1740**

Georgia and Carolina attempt to invade Florida in retaliation for the territory's policy toward runaways.

## **1749**

Georgia repeals its prohibition and permits the importation of black slaves.

## **1751**

George II repeals the 1705 act, making slaves real estate in Virginia.

## **1758**

Pennsylvania Quakers forbid their members from owning slaves or participating in the slave trade.

## **1760**

New Jersey prohibits the enlistment of slaves in the militia without their master's permission.

## **1767**

The Virginia House of Burgess boycotts the British slave trade in protest of the Townsend Acts. Georgia and the Carolinas follow suit.

## **1770**

Escaped slave, Crispus Attucks, is killed by British forces in Boston, Massachusetts. He is one of the first colonists to die in the war for independence.

## **1772**

James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw's writes the first autobiographical slave narrative.

## **1773**

The first separate black church in America is founded in South Carolina.

## **1773**

Slaves in Massachusetts unsuccessfully petition the government for their freedom.

## **1773**

Phillis Wheatley becomes the first published African-American poet when a London publishing company releases a collection of her verse.

## **1774**

The First Continental Congress bans trade with Britain and vows to discontinue the slave trade after the 1st of December.

## **1774**

Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Georgia prohibit the importation of slaves.

## **1774**

Virginia takes action against slave importation.

## **1775**

The slave population in the colonies is nearly 500,000. In Virginia, the ratio of free colonists to slaves is nearly 1:1. In South Carolina it is approximately 1:2.

## **1775**

Georgia takes action against slave importation.

## **1775**

Abolitionist Society Anthony Benezet of Philadelphia founds the world's first abolitionist society. Benjamin Franklin becomes its president in 1787.

## **1775**

In April, the first battles of the Revolutionary war are waged between the British and Colonial armies at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. Black Minutemen participate in the fighting.

## **1775**

In July, George Washington announces a ban on the enlistment of free blacks and slaves in the colonial army. By the end of the year, he reverses the ban, ordering the Continental Army to accept the service of free blacks.

## **1775**

In November, Virginia Governor John Murray, Lord Dunmore, issues a proclamation announcing that any slave fighting on the side of the British will be liberated.

## **1776**

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, members of the Continental Congress sign the Declaration of Independence.

## **1776**

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers, forbids its members from holding slaves.

## **1776**

Delaware prohibits the importation of African slaves.

## **1777**

Vermont is the first of the thirteen colonies to abolish slavery and enfranchise all adult males.

## **1777**

New York enfranchises all free propertied men regardless of color or prior servitude.

## **1778**

Rhode Island forbids the removal of slaves from the state.

## **1778**

Virginia prohibits the importation of slaves.

## **1780**

Delaware makes it illegal to enslave imported Africans.

## **1780**

Pennsylvania begins gradual emancipation.

## **1780**

A freedom clause in the Massachusetts constitution is interpreted as an abolishment of slavery. Massachusetts enfranchises all men regardless of race.

## **1783**

American Revolution Ends Britain and the infant United States sign the Peace of Paris treaty.

## **1784**

Abolition Effort Congress narrowly defeats Thomas Jefferson's proposal to ban slavery in new territories after 1800. 1790—First United States Census Nearly 700,000 slaves live and toil in a nation of 3.9 million people.

## **1793**

Fugitive Slave Act The United States outlaws any efforts to impede the capture of runaway slaves.

## **1794**

Cotton Gin Eli Whitney patents his device for pulling seeds from cotton. The invention turns cotton into the cash crop of the American South—and creates a huge demand for slave labor.

## **1808**

United States Bans Slave Trade Importing African slaves is outlawed, but smuggling continues.

## **1820**

Missouri Compromise Missouri is admitted to the Union as a slave state, Maine as a free state. Slavery is forbidden in any subsequent territories north of latitude .

## **1822**

Slave Revolt: South Carolina Freed slave Denmark Vesey attempts a rebellion in Charleston. Thirty-five participants in the ill-fated uprising are hanged.

## **1831**

Slave Revolt: Virginia Slave preacher Nat Turner leads a two-day uprising against whites, killing about 60. Militiamen crush the revolt then spend two months searching for Turner, who is eventually caught and hanged. Enraged Southerners impose harsher restrictions on their slaves.

## **1835**

Censorship Southern states expel abolitionists and forbid the mailing of antislavery propaganda.

## **1846-1848**

Mexican-American War Defeated, Mexico yields an enormous amount of territory to the United States. Americans then wrestle with a controversial topic: Is slavery permitted in the new lands?

## **1847**

Frederick Douglass's Newspaper Escaped slave Frederick Douglass begins publishing the North Star in Rochester, New York.

## **1849**

Harriet Tubman Escapes After fleeing slavery, Tubman returns south at least 15 times to help rescue several hundred others.

## **1850**

Compromise of 185 In exchange for California's entering the Union as a free state, northern congressmen accept a harsher Fugitive Slave Act.

## **1852**

Uncle Tom's Cabin Published Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel about the horrors of slavery sells 300,000 copies within a year of publication.

## **1854**

Kansas-Nebraska Act Setting aside the Missouri Compromise of 1820, Congress allows these two new territories to choose whether to allow slavery. Violent clashes erupt.

## **1857**

Dred Scott Decision The United States Supreme Court decides, seven to two, that blacks can never be citizens and that Congress has no authority to outlaw slavery in any territory.

## **1860**

Abraham Lincoln of Illinois becomes the first Republican to win the United States Presidency.

## **1860**

Southern Secession South Carolina secedes in December. More states follow the next year.

## **1861-1865**

United States Civil War Four years of brutal conflict claim 623,000 lives.

## **1863**

Emancipation Proclamation President Abraham Lincoln decrees that all slaves in Rebel territory are free on January 1, 1863.

## **1865**

Slavery Abolished The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution outlaws slavery.