

# Timeline

1789

U.S. Constitution is ratified. The terms "persons," "people" and "electors" allow for interpretation to include men and women.

1837

Oberlin College in Ohio becomes first coeducational college in the U.S.

1839

Mississippi becomes first state to grant married women the right to hold property in their own names, independent of their husbands.

1840

Catherine Brewer becomes first woman to receive a bachelor's degree, from Georgia Female College (now Wesleyan College) in Macon, Georgia.

1843

Isabella Baumfree takes the name Sojourner Truth and goes on to become a famed abolitionist and women's rights activist.

1848

First women's rights convention is held in Seneca Falls, New York to sign the Declaration of Rights and Sentiments. The document, modeled after the U.S.'s Declaration of Independence to demand equal rights for women, was signed by 68 women and 32 men.

1849

-Elizabeth Blackwell becomes first woman to receive a medical degree, from Geneva Medical College (now SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York).

-Harriet Tubman escapes to Philadelphia and helps about 300 enslaved people escape to the North for freedom via the Underground Railroad, a network of secret routes and safehouses to aid slaves' escapes.

1869

First women's suffrage law is passed in the territory of Wyoming.

1872

-Susan B. Anthony is arrested for trying to vote in Rochester, New York.

-Victoria Claflin Woodhull becomes first woman Presidential candidate, for the Equal Rights Party

1916

-Jeannette Rankin of Montana becomes first woman elected to Congress.

-Reproductive activist Margaret Sanger founds what is now Planned Parenthood. Though its history is complex and tainted with the eugenicist beliefs of the time, it goes on to help many

women have access to reproductive healthcare and education.

1920

19th Amendment gives women right to vote.

1924

Miriam Ferguson (Texas) and Nellie Tayloe Ross (Wyoming) become first women elected as governors.

1932

-Amelia Earhart becomes first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.  
-Hattie Caraway of Arkansas becomes first woman elected to Senate.

1938

Fair Labor Standards Act establishes minimum wage without regard to gender.

1940

Hattie McDaniel is the first African American to win an Oscar for her role in "Gone With the Wind.":

1955

First lesbian organization in U.S., Daughters of Bilitis, is founded.

1960

The first oral contraceptive, Enovid, was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

1963

Congress passes Equal Pay Act.

1964

-Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination on basis of race, color, religion, national origin or sex.  
-Patsy Mink becomes the first Asian-American woman and first minority woman elected to Congress.

1967

Muriel Siebert becomes first woman to own a seat on the New York Stock Exchange.



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U.S. Congress

1970

Nonprofit women's rights organization Our Bodies, Ourselves publishes a book of the same name. The book is controversial because it discusses women's sexuality and reproduction, but it is widely read and becomes a symbol for the women's rights movement at the time.

1972

Title IX bans gender discrimination in federally funded education programs.

1973

In *Roe v. Wade*, Supreme Court protects woman's right to terminate pregnancy.

1978

Pregnancy Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination "on basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions."

1981

Sandra Day O'Connor becomes first woman Supreme Court justice.

1982

For the first time, more women than men receive bachelor's degrees.

1984

- In *Roberts v. United States Jaycees*, Supreme Court prohibits public organizations from refusing membership to someone because of gender.
- Democrat Geraldine Ferraro is first major-party woman vice presidential nominee with presidential nominee Walter Mondale.

1987

Congress declares March as National Women's History Month.

1989

Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw, a legal scholar and activist, coins the term "intersectionality" to describe the specific forms of compounding discrimination people face based on their race, class, sexuality, gender and ability.

1993

Family and Medical Leave Act provides job protection and leave for family and medical issues.

1996

Peggy Bird (Kewa), Darlene Correa (Laguna Pueblo) and Genne James (Navajo) found the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women in New Mexico as crimes against indigenous women go underreported and neglected by law enforcement.

1997

- Madeleine Albright becomes first woman Secretary of State.
- Small Business Administration Administrator Aida Alvarez becomes first Latina to hold Cabinet-level position.

1998

Supreme Court rules that employers are liable for workplace sexual harassment.

1999

Eileen Collins becomes first woman to pilot and command a space shuttle. She is also a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel.

2001

Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao becomes first Asian woman Cabinet member.

2002

Halle Berry is the first Black woman to win an Academy Award for best actress.

2006

Activist Tarana Burke founds the MeToo movement, to help support women and girls of color in underserved areas who experience sexual abuse. It later becomes a worldwide, star-studded movement when Alyssa Milano tweets about it in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein sexual assault allegations.

2007

Nancy Pelosi becomes first woman Speaker of the House.

2008

Hillary Clinton becomes only former first lady to run for president.

2009

- President Obama signs into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, intended to reduce the pay gap between men and women.
- Sonia Sotomayor becomes first Latina Supreme Court justice.

2014

- Ava DuVernay becomes the first African American woman nominated for Golden Globe for best director.
- Actor and LGBTQ rights activist Laverne Cox becomes the first transgender woman nominated for an Emmy for her role in "Orange is the New Black."



Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women



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2015

Two big accounting firms elect their first women CEOs, Cathy Engelbert at Deloitte and Lynne Doughtie at KPMG.

2016

-Hillary Clinton becomes the first woman presidential nominee for a major political party.  
-Kamala Harris becomes California's third female U.S. senator and first of Jamaican or Indian descent.  
-Massachusetts passes a first of its kind law, effective July 1, 2018, forbidding employers from asking about salary history on job interviews and requiring men and women be paid equally if they do "comparable work."

2017

-The Women's March on Washington brings nearly 500,000 activists to D.C. to protest for women's rights. Sister protests take place across the country.  
-Kelly Grier becomes the first woman to lead EY in the U.S.  
-Michelle Buck appointed first female CEO of Hershey in the company's 123-year history.

2018

-Some of Hollywood's most notable women unveil Time's Up, an initiative to help working-class women fight back against sexual assault.  
-Hundreds of thousands of women and allies turn out for the second Women's March.  
-Former AT&T senior Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Cynthia Marshall becomes the CEO of the Dallas Mavericks and is the first Black woman CEO in the NBA.  
-Yalitza Aparicio is the first indigenous Mexican woman to be nominated for best actress at the Oscars, after her performance as a housekeeper in the acclaimed film "Roma."  
-Seventeen Black women made history by winning judicial seats in Harris County, Texas. The 17 Democratic candidates were elected under a campaign they called "Black Girl Magic Texas."  
-A record number of 117 women were ultimately sent to Congress this cycle — a significant jump from 2016 when 89 women were elected. Of these 117, 42 are women of color.

Some of these congresswomen of color include

- Ayanna Pressley, the first African-American House member from Massachusetts
- Rashida Tlaib, the first Palestinian-American elected to Congress and along with Ilhan Omar, one of the first two Muslim women elected to Congress
- Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who, at age 29, becomes the youngest congresswoman ever
- Ilhan Omar, the first naturalized citizen from Africa and first Somali-American elected to the United States Congress, and the first minority woman to serve as a U.S. representative for Minnesota. Along with Rashida Tlaib, Omar was one of the first two Muslim congresswomen elected.

2019

-Kathy Warden becomes CEO of Northrop Grumman on January 1, 2019.

-Ruth E. Carter and Hannah Beachler make history for their work on the film, "Black Panther." Carter is the first Black woman to win an Academy Award for Best Costume Design and Beachler is the first Black woman to win an Academy Award for Best Production Design.  
-Cardi B becomes the first female rapper to win a GRAMMY Award for Best Rap Album.  
-The U.S. women's national soccer team wins the World Cup, bolstering their demands for equal pay.

2020

-Katie Sowers of the San Francisco 49ers becomes the first woman to coach at the Super Bowl. She is also the first openly gay NFL coach.



[Women's March 2017 Washington, D.C., United States Marchers, Mobilus In Mobili, CC BY-SA 4.0](#)



U.S. Congress