

Facts, Firsts and Precedents

The table below is sorted chronologically by date with the most recent at the top.

Facts, Firsts and Precedents

| Inaugural Event | President | Fact, First or Precedent |
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| Fifty-Sixth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 2009 | Barack H. Obama | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest attendance of any event in the history of Washington, DC • Largest attendance of any Presidential Inauguration in U.S. history • First African American to hold the office of President of the United States • First citizen born in Hawaii to hold the office • Highest viewership ever of the swearing-in ceremonies on the Internet • First woman, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, to emcee the ceremony • First inaugural webcast to include captioning • First swearing-in ceremony to include an audio description |
| Fifty-Fifth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 2005 | George W. Bush | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest inaugural platform to date. • First time anti-counterfeiting security has been designed into the tickets. • First live Web Cam of inaugural platform construction. • First inauguration with secure inaugural credentials. |
| Fifty-Fourth Inaugural Ceremonies | George W. Bush | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George W. Bush had hoped to use the Masonic Bible that had been used both by George Washington in |

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| January 20, 2001 | | <p>1789, and by his father, George H. W. Bush, in 1989. This historic Bible had been transported, under guard, from New York to Washington D.C. for the Inauguration but, due to inclement weather, a family Bible was substituted instead.</p> |
| Fifty-Third Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1997 | William J. Clinton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Inaugural ceremony broadcast live on the Internet. |
| Fiftieth Inaugural Ceremonies January 21, 1985 | Ronald W. Reagan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coldest Inauguration day on record, with a noon temperature of 7°F. • January 20th fell on Sunday, so Reagan was privately sworn in that day at the White House; public Inauguration on January 21st took place in the Capitol Rotunda, due to freezing weather |
| Forty-Ninth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1981 | Ronald W. Reagan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Inauguration held on the west front of the U.S. Capitol. • Reagan's first Inauguration was also the warmest on record with a noon temperature of 55 |
| Forty-Eighth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1977 | James E. Carter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jimmy Carter was the first President to walk from the Capitol to the White House in the parade following the swearing-in ceremony. • Carter requested that the Inaugural luncheon, hosted by the JCCIC be canceled. |
| Swearing-In of Vice President Gerald R. Ford after the resignation of President Richard M. Nixon | Gerald R. Ford | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First unelected Vice President to become President. • Ford assumed the Presidency upon the resignation of Richard M. Nixon. Facing impeachment proceedings for his role in the Watergate scandal and alleged cover-up, Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974. |

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| August 9, 1974 | | |
| Forty-Seventh Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1973 | Richard M. Nixon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Nixon became the first President to resign on August 9, 1974. |
| Forty-Sixth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1969 | Richard M. Nixon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Took the oath of office on two Bibles; both family heirlooms. Nixon's Inauguration included an official, three-faith prayer service, open to the public, in the West Auditorium of the State Department. |
| Forty-Fifth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1965 | Lyndon Baines Johnson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security for Johnson's Inauguration was tight following the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963. For the first time, the President rode in a bullet-proofed limousine. |
| Swearing-In of Vice President Lyndon Baines Johnson after the assassination of President John F. Kenn November 22, 1963 | Lyndon Baines Johnson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Johnson assumed the Presidency upon the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Kennedy was shot and killed by Lee Harvey Oswald on November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas. First time a woman administered the oath of office (U.S. District Judge Sarah T. Hughes swore in Johnson on Air Force One). First and only time a President took the oath of office on an airplane. |
| Forty-Fourth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1961 | John F. Kennedy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First time a poet, Robert Frost, participated in the Inaugural program First Roman Catholic to become President of the United States. |
| Forty-Third Inaugural Ceremonies | Dwight D. Eisenhower | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 20, 1957 fell on a Sunday, so Eisenhower was sworn in privately that day by Chief Justice Earl |

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| January 20, 1957 | | Warren in the White House East Room. His public Inauguration was held on Monday, January 21, 1957. |
| Forty-Second Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1953 | Dwight D. Eisenhower | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broke precedent by reciting his own prayer after taking the oath, rather than kissing the Bible. • First time the JCCIC hosted the Inaugural luncheon at the Capitol. |
| Forty-First Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1949 | Harry S Truman | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First televised Inaugural ceremony • Truman reinstated the Inaugural Ball |
| Swearing-In of Vice President Harry S Truman after the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt April 12, 1945 | Harry S Truman | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truman took the oath of office just two hours after he received word of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's death, which was caused by cerebral stroke. |
| Fortieth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1945 | Franklin D. Roosevelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and only President sworn in for a fourth term; had simple Inaugural ceremony at the White House. |
| Thirty-Ninth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1941 | Franklin D. Roosevelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and last time a President was Inaugurated for a third term. (The 22nd Amendment to the Constitution limited Presidential terms to two.) • President and Mrs. Roosevelt hosted 1,200 guests at the White House for a buffet luncheon consisting of tomato soup, salad, beef, ham, tongue, cake, ice cream, and coffee. |
| Thirty-Eighth Inaugural Ceremonies January 20, 1937 | Franklin D. Roosevelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President Inaugurated on January 20th, a change made by the 20th Amendment to the Constitution. • First time the Vice President was sworn-in outdoors on the same platform with the President. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The President and First Lady hosted around 600 guests for a buffet luncheon at the White House in the state dining room and East Room. They served hot coffee, sandwiches, and cake. |
| Thirty-Seventh Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1933 | Franklin D. Roosevelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt begin tradition of morning worship service by attending St. John's Church. FDR used the same Bible for all four of his Presidential Inaugurations. It is the oldest Inaugural Bible, printed in 1686, and the only one written in a modern foreign language: Dutch. The Roosevelts had planned to host a buffet luncheon at the White House for several hundred guests, but Mrs. Roosevelt cancelled the luncheon at the last minute out of respect for Senator Thomas J. Walsh, who died several days before. Senator Walsh had been chosen by Roosevelt to serve as attorney general. |
| Thirty-Sixth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1929 | Herbert C. Hoover | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Inaugural ceremony recorded by talking newsreel. President and Mrs. Hoover, Vice President Curtis, members of the JCCIC, members of the PIC, cabinet members, Chief Justice and Mrs. Taft, Speaker and Mrs. Longworth, and the G.A.R. guard of honor returned to the White House for a private luncheon before the parade. |
| Thirty-Fifth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1925 | Calvin Coolidge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Inaugural ceremony broadcast nationally by radio First time a former President, William H. Taft, administered the oath of office as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. |
| Swearing-In of Vice President Calvin Coolidge | Calvin Coolidge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coolidge assumed the Presidency upon the death of Warren G. Harding. Harding died of an apparent stroke |

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| after the death of President Warren G. Harding August 3, 1923 | | <p>on August 2, 1923, in San Francisco, California.</p> |
| Thirty-Fourth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1921 | Warren G. Harding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President to ride to and from his Inauguration in an automobile. • President and Mrs. Harding and their immediate family ate lunch at the White House immediately following the inauguration. The luncheon was arranged by outgoing President and Mrs. Wilson, following the tradition established in 1889, when President and Mrs. Cleveland invited the Harrisons to eat lunch at the White House before the parade. |
| Thirty-Third Inaugural Ceremonies March 5, 1917 | Woodrow Wilson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President to take the oath of office on Sunday. March 4, 1917 fell on a Sunday, so Wilson was sworn in privately on that day in the President's Room in the U.S. Capitol by Chief Justice Edward D. White. His public inauguration was held on Monday, March 5. <p>Read the First Lady's diary entry about the swearing-in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edith Bolling Galt Wilson was the first First Lady to accompany the President both to and from the Capitol • First time women participated in the Inaugural parade. |
| Thirty-Second Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1913 | Woodrow Wilson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaugural ball was suspended for the first time since 1853. Wilson requested that the ball be cancelled because he found it inappropriate for the solemn occasion. |
| Thirty-First Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1909 | William H. Taft | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inauguration took place in the Senate chamber because of blizzard. Strong winds toppled trees and telephone poles, trains were stalled and city streets unpassable. City workers shoveled sand and snow through half the night. It took 6,000 men and 500 wagons to clear |

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| | | <p>58,000 tons of snow and slush from the parade route.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helen Herron Taft became the first First Lady to accompany her husband on the return ride from the Capitol to the White House following his Inauguration. |
| Thirtieth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1905 | Theodore Roosevelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This was the first time telephone lines were installed at the U.S. Capitol for an Inauguration. |
| Swearing-In of Vice President Theodore Roosevelt after the assassination of President William McKinley September 14, 1901 | Theodore Roosevelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roosevelt became President upon the assassination of William McKinley, who was shot by Leon F. Czolgosz in Buffalo, New York on September 6, 1901. McKinley died on September 14, 1901. |
| Twenty-Ninth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1901 | William McKinley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First time the U.S. House joined with the U.S. Senate, creating the JCCIC, to make Inaugural arrangements |
| Twenty-Eighth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1897 | William McKinley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Inaugural ceremony recorded by a motion picture camera First President to have a glass-enclosed reviewing stand for the Inaugural parade First Inauguration at which Congress hosted a luncheon for the President and Vice President |
| Twenty-Fifth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1885 | Grover Cleveland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grover Cleveland is the only President to have served two non-consecutive terms, first in 1885 and again later in 1893. He is, therefore, referred to as the 22nd and 24th President of the United States. |
| Swearing-In of | Chester A. Arthur | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arthur became President upon the assassination of |

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| Vice President Chester Arthur after the assassination of President James Garfield September 20, 1881 | | James Garfield, who was shot by Charles J. Guiteau on July 2, 1881, in Washington, D.C., and died on September 19, 1881. Former Presidents Hayes and Grant were both present for the swearing-in ceremony on September 22. |
| Twenty-Fourth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1881 | James A. Garfield | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President to review the Inaugural parade from a stand built in front of the White House. |
| Twenty-Third Inaugural Ceremonies March 5, 1877 | Rutherford B. Hayes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 4, 1877 fell on Sunday, so Hayes privately took oath of office on Saturday, March 3 in the White House Red Room to ensure peaceful transition of power; the public Inauguration was on Monday, March 5. |
| Twenty-Second Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1873 | Ulysses S. Grant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coldest March 4 Inauguration Day; the noon temperature was 16 |
| Twenty-First Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1869 | Ulysses S. Grant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Johnson did not accompany President-elect Grant to the Capitol, nor did he attend the Inaugural ceremonies. Instead, he remained at the White House signing last-minute legislation. |
| Swearing-In of Vice President Andrew Johnson after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln April 15, 1865 | Andrew Johnson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham Lincoln had been shot at Ford's Theatre by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865. He died the next day. Johnson took the oath of office in the presence of cabinet members, several Senators and House members, and other dignitaries. |
| Twentieth Inaugural | Abraham Lincoln | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Americans participated in the Inaugural parade for the first time. |

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| Ceremonies March 4, 1865 | | |
| Nineteenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1861 | Abraham Lincoln | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lincoln's procession to the Capitol was surrounded by heavily armed calvary and infantry, providing an unprecedented amount of protection for the President-elect as the nation stood on the brink of war. |
| Eighteenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1857 | James Buchanan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Inauguration known to have been photographed. |
| Seventeenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1853 | Franklin Pierce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affirmed the oath of office rather than swear it Pierce was the first President to recite his speech entirely from memory. Cancelled the inaugural ball Pierce's Vice President did not attend the Inaugural ceremonies. He was very ill and had gone to Cuba to try to recover at the time of the Inauguration, and was sworn into office there on March 24, 1853. He died on April 18, 1853, one day after returning to his home in Alabama. |
| Sixteenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 5, 1849 | Zachary Taylor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 4, 1849 fell on a Sunday, so following precedent, Taylor was Inaugurated the next day, Monday, March 5, 1849. Three Inaugural balls were held that evening, and Taylor attended all of them. |
| Fifteenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1845 | James K. Polk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Inauguration covered by telegraph. First known Inauguration featured in a newspaper illustration; illustration appeared in the Illustrated London News. |

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| Swearing-In of Vice President John Tyler after the death of President William H. Harrison April 6, 1841 | John Tyler | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Vice President to assume Presidency upon the death of the President. |
| Fourteenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1841 | William H. Harrison | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrison was the first President to arrive in Washington, D.C. by train. • The first official Inaugural committee was formed by citizens of D.C. to plan the parade and Inaugural ball. |
| Thirteenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1837 | Martin Van Buren | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President who was not born a British subject • First time the President and President-elect rode to the Capitol together for the Inauguration |
| Twelfth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1833 | Andrew Jackson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last time Chief Justice John Marshall administered the oath office; he presided over nine Inaugurations, from Adams to Jackson. • Jackson's second Inauguration was the first time two Inaugural balls were held, one at Carusi's, and one at the Central Masonic Hall. |
| Eleventh Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1829 | Andrew Jackson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President to take the oath of office on the east front portico of the U.S. Capitol. • Outgoing President John Quincy Adams did not attend his successor's Inaugural Ceremony. Relations between the two men were not good after the bitter campaign of 1828. Jackson blamed the verbal attacks made by Adams and his political allies for the death of his wife. |
| Tenth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1825 | John Quincy Adams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adams was the first to wear long trousers, rather than knee breeches. |

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| Ninth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1821 | James Monroe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monroe's Inauguration was the first inauguration to fall on a Sunday. Monroe decided to hold the Inaugural ceremony on Monday, March 5, after consulting with Supreme Court justices. |
| Eighth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1817 | James Monroe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First President to take the oath of office and deliver the Inaugural address outdoors; ceremony took place on platform in front of the temporary Brick Capitol (where Supreme Court now stands). The original plan for Madison's second Inauguration called for a ceremony in the House chamber of the temporary Capitol, but when a small feud ensued between the Senate and the House of Representatives over what chairs would be used in the House chamber, the venue changed to an outdoor platform in front of the building. |
| Sixth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1809 | James Madison | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first Inaugural Ball was held the evening after the swearing-in ceremony. It took place at Long's Hotel and tickets cost \$4 each. |
| Fifth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1805 | Thomas Jefferson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inauguration held in the Chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives |
| Fourth Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1801 | Thomas Jefferson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First inauguration in Washington, DC • He broke precedent by walking to and from his swearing-in ceremony, rather than riding in a carriage as his predecessors did. • The Marine Band played at the Inauguration for the first time. (It has played at every Inauguration since.) • For the first time, a newspaper (the National Intelligencer) printed the Inaugural address the morning of the Inauguration. |

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| Third Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1797 | John Adams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First president to receive the oath of office from a Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court |
| Second Inaugural Ceremonies March 4, 1793 | George Washington | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First inauguration in Philadelphia, PA • Delivered the shortest inaugural address at just 135 words |
| First Inaugural Ceremonies April 30, 1789 | George Washington | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Inauguration |

Since 1901, the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies has been responsible for the planning and execution of the swearing-in ceremonies and the luncheon for the Inauguration of the President of the United States at the U.S. Capitol.

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