

History of the Republican Party aka GOP (Grand Old Party),

Formed in 1854 by anti-slavery activists and individuals who believed that government should grant western lands to settlers free of charge. The first informal meeting of the party took place in Ripon, Wisconsin, a small town northwest of Milwaukee. The first official Republican meeting took place on July 6, 1854, in Jackson, Michigan.



The name "Republican" was chosen because it alluded to equality and reminded individuals of Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party. At the Jackson convention, the new party adopted a platform and nominated candidates for office in Michigan.

In 1856, the Republicans became a national party when John C. Fremont was nominated for President under the slogan: "Free soil, free labor, free speech, free men, Fremont." Even though they were considered a "third party" because the Democrats and Whigs represented the two-party system at the time, Fremont received 33% of the vote. Four years later, Abraham Lincoln became the first Republican to win the White House.

The Republicans of the day worked to pass the Thirteenth Amendment, which outlawed slavery, the Fourteenth, which guaranteed equal protection under the laws, and the Fifteenth, which helped secure voting rights for African Americans.

The symbol of the Republican Party is the elephant. During the midterm elections way back in 1874, Democrats tried to scare voters into thinking President Grant would seek to run for an unprecedented third term. Thomas Nast, a cartoonist for Harper's Weekly, depicted a Democratic jackass trying to scare a Republican elephant – and both symbols stuck. For a long time, Republicans have been known as the "G.O.P." And party faithful thought it meant the "Grand Old Party."

The Union victory in the American Civil War allowed it a long period of dominance nationally, though it was uncompetitive in the South for more than a century after the war. Republican candidates won 14 of 18 presidential elections between 1860 and 1932.

The Republican Party also played a leading role in securing women the right to vote. In 1896, Republicans were the first major party to favor women's suffrage.

In 1912 the party split between a progressive wing led by Theodore Roosevelt and a conservative wing led by Pres. William Howard Taft; the rift enabled the Democratic candidate, Woodrow Wilson, to win that year's election.

The Republican Party's inability to counter the impact of the Great Depression led to its ouster from power in 1933; in 1953 the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower brought a moderate wing of the party to prominence.

The party's platform remained conservative, emphasizing anticommunism, reduced government regulation of the economy, and lower taxes.

In the 1950s the GOP gained new support from middle-class suburbanites and white Southerners disturbed by the integration policies of the national Democratic Party.

Republicans provided the crucial votes needed to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Richard Nixon, who narrowly lost the 1960 presidential race, won narrowly in 1968 and by a landslide in 1972, but he was forced to resign in 1974 as a result of the Watergate scandal.

Ronald Reagan, who had assumed the leadership of the conservative wing of the Republican Party after Barry Goldwater's defeat in the presidential election of 1964, won the presidency in 1980 and 1984; he introduced deep tax cuts and launched a massive buildup of U.S. military forces. This would lead to the eventual fall of the "Berlin Wall."

Reagan's vice president, George Bush, was elected in 1988 and enjoyed enormous popularity after success in the Persian Gulf War.

In 1994, when the Republicans regained control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years.

In 2000 George W. Bush narrowly won the presidency in one of the closest and most controversial elections in U.S. history. In 2004 he won reelection. In part because of growing opposition to the Iraq War, Republicans lost control of both the House and the Senate following the 2006 midterm elections.

Historical Timeline and Republican Presidents

March 20, 1854: The modern Republican Party is born in Ripon, Wisconsin.

June 17-19, 1856: First Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

November 6, 1860: Abraham Lincoln

January 1, 1863: President Abraham Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation.

1869: Ulysses S. Grant

1877: Rutherford B Hayes

1881: James A. Garfield

1881: Chester A Arthur

1889: Benjamin Harrison

November 25, 1874: Republican Elephant is Born

1897: William McKinley

1901: Theodore Roosevelt

1909: William Taft

November 7, 1916: Jeannette Rankin, the First Woman Elected to Congress in the History of the Republican Party

1921: Warren Harding

1923: Calvin Coolidge

1929: Herbert Hoover

1933 - 1953: The Depression, Democrats, World War II, and the Korean War

1953: Dwight Eisenhower

1969: Richard Nixon

August 9, 1974: Gerald Ford becomes President.

1981: Ronald Reagan.

"Ronald Reagan is elected President of the United States by uniting economic libertarians and social conservatives within the Republican Party. This coalition will enable the Republican Party to retain control of the presidency and the Senate for 20 of the next 28 years."

1989: George H.W. Bush

2001: George W. Bush

2017: Donald J. Trump

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