

# 1956 in the United States

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Events from the year **1956 in the United States**.

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## Incumbents

### Federal Government

- President: Dwight D. Eisenhower (R-Kansas/New York)
- Vice President: Richard Nixon (R-California)
- Chief Justice: Earl Warren (California)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Sam Rayburn (D-Texas)
- Senate Majority Leader: Lyndon B. Johnson (D-Texas)
- Congress: 84th

## Governors and Lieutenant Governors

### Governors

- Governor of Alabama: Jim Folsom (Democratic)
- Governor of Arizona: Ernest McFarland (Democratic)
- Governor of Arkansas: Orval Faubus (Democratic)
- Governor of California: Goodwin Knight (Republican)
- Governor of Colorado: Edwin C. Johnson (Democratic)
- Governor of Connecticut: Abraham A. Ribicoff (Democratic)
- Governor of Delaware: J. Caleb Boggs (Republican)
- Governor of Florida: LeRoy Collins (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: Marvin Griffin (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: Robert E. Smylie (Republican)
- Governor of Illinois: William G. Stratton (Democratic)
- Governor of Indiana: George N. Craig (Republican)
- Governor of Iowa: Leo A. Hoegh (Republican)
- Governor of Kansas: Fred Hall (Republican)
- Governor of Kentucky: Happy Chandler (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: Robert F. Kennon (Democratic) (until May 8), Earl K. Long (Democratic) (starting May 8)
- Governor of Maine: Edmund Muskie (Democratic)
- Governor of Maryland: Theodore R. McKeldin (Republican)
- Governor of Massachusetts: Christian A. Herter (Republican)
- Governor of Michigan: G. Mennen Williams (Democratic)
- Governor of Minnesota: Orville L. Freeman (Democratic)
- Governor of Mississippi: Hugh L. White (Democratic) (until January 17), James P. Coleman (Democratic) (starting January 17)
- Governor of Missouri: Phil M. Donnelly (Democratic)
- Governor of Montana: J. Hugo Aronson (Republican)
- Governor of Nebraska: Victor E. Anderson (Republican)
- Governor of Nevada: Charles H. Russell (Republican)
- Governor of New Hampshire: Lane Dwinell (Republican)
- Governor of New Jersey: Robert B. Meyner (Democratic)
- Governor of New Mexico: John F. Simms (Democratic)
- Governor of New York: W. Averell Harriman (Democratic)
- Governor of North Carolina: Luther H. Hodges (Democratic)
- Governor of North Dakota: Clarence Norman Brunsdale (Republican)
- Governor of Ohio: Frank J. Lausche (Democratic)
- Governor of Oklahoma: Raymond D. Gary (Democratic)
- Governor of Oregon: Paul L. Patterson (Republican) (until February 1), Elmo Smith (Republican) (starting February 1)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: George M. Leader (Democratic)
- Governor of Rhode Island: Dennis J. Roberts (Democratic)
- Governor of South Carolina: George Bell Timmerman, Jr. (Democratic)
- Governor of South Dakota: Joe Foss (Republican)
- Governor of Tennessee: Frank G. Clement (Democratic)
- Governor of Texas: Allan Shivers (Democratic)
- Governor of Utah: J. Bracken Lee (Republican)
- Governor of Vermont: Joseph B. Johnson (Republican)
- Governor of Virginia: Thomas Bahnon Stanley (Democratic)
- Governor of Washington: Arthur B. Langlie (Republican)
- Governor of West Virginia: William C. Marland (Democratic)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Walter J. Kohler, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of Wyoming: Milward L. Simpson (Republican)

### Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: William G. Hardwick (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Nathan Green Gordon (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Harold J. Powers (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: Stephen L. R. McNichols (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: Charles W. Jewett (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: John W. Rollins (Democratic)

- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: S. Ernest Vandiver (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: J. Berkeley Larsen (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: John William Chapman (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Harold W. Handley (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: Leo Elthon (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: John McCuish (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Harry Lee Waterfield (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: C. E. "Cap" Barham (Democratic) (until May 8), Lether Frazar (Democratic) (starting May 8)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Sumner G. Whittier (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: Philip A. Hart (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Karl Rolvaag (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Carroll Gartin (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: James T. Blair, Jr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: George M. Gosman (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: vacant
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: vacant
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: Joseph Montoya (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: George DeLuca (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: vacant
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Clarence P. Dahl (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: John William Brown (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: Cowboy Pink Williams (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Roy E. Furman (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: John S. McKiernan (Democratic) (until month and day unknown), vacant (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: Ernest Hollings (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: L. Roy Houck (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: Jared Maddux (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: Ben Ramsey (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: Consuelo N. Bailey (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Allie Edward Stokes Stephens (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: Emmett T. Anderson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Warren P. Knowles (Republican)

## Events

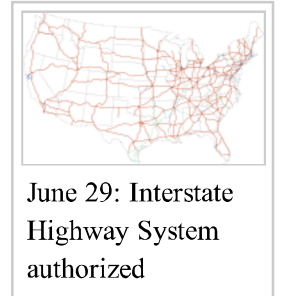
### January–March

- January 1 – Carl Perkins' record "Blue Suede Shoes" is released by Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee.
- January 8 – Operation Auca: Five U.S. missionaries are killed by the Huaorani of Ecuador shortly after making contact with them.
- January 22 – Redondo Junction train wreck in Los Angeles kills 30 people.
- February 14 – Dwight D. Eisenhower's doctors say that he is healthy enough to seek another term at the White House.
- February 22 – Elvis Presley enters the U.S. music charts for the first time, with *Heartbreak Hotel*.
- February 23 – Norma Jean Mortenson legally changes her name to Marilyn Monroe.
- February 29 – Eisenhower say he will seek re-election as president.
- March 11 – Laurence Olivier's film, *Richard III*, adapted from Shakespeare's play, premieres in the U.S. in theatres and on NBC Television, on the same day as an afternoon matinee. It is one of the first such experiments of its kind. Olivier is later nominated for an Oscar for his performance.
- March 12

- The Dow Jones Industrial Average closes above 500 for the first time rising 2.40 points, or 0.48%, to 500.24.
- 96 U.S. Congressmen sign the Southern Manifesto, a protest against the 1954 Supreme Court ruling (*Brown v. Board of Education*) desegregating public education.
- March 13 – Elvis Presley releases his first Gold Album titled *Elvis Presley*.
- March 15 – The Broadway musical *My Fair Lady* opens in New York City.
- March 21 – The 28th Academy Awards ceremony is held; *Marty* wins Best Picture.

## April–June

- April 2 – The first episode of *As the World Turns* is broadcast on the CBS television network
- April 14 – Videotape is first demonstrated at the 1956 NARTB (now NAB) convention in Chicago by Ampex. It is the demonstration of the first practical and commercially successful videotape format known as 2" Quadruplex.
- April 21 – Former U.S. First Daughter Margaret Truman marries Clifton Daniel.
- June 8 – General Electric/Telechron introduces model 7H241 "The Snooz Alarm", first snooze alarm clock ever.<sup>*Confirmation needed*</sup>
- June 14
  - President of the United States Dwight D. Eisenhower authorizes the phrase "under God" to be added to the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - The Flag of the United States Army is formally dedicated.<sup>[1]</sup>
- June 29
  - Actress Marilyn Monroe marries playwright Arthur Miller.
  - President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs the Federal Aid Highway Act, creating the Interstate Highway System
- June 30 – A TWA Lockheed Constellation and United Airlines Douglas DC-7 collide in mid-air over the Grand Canyon in Arizona, killing all 128 people aboard both aircraft in the deadliest civil aviation disaster to date; the accident leads to sweeping changes in the regulation of cross-country flight and air traffic control over the United States.

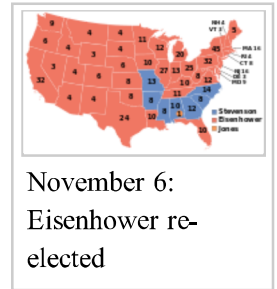


## July–September

- July 13 – Elvis Presley's recording of "Hound Dog" is released by RCA Records.
- July 24 – At New York City's Copacabana Club, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis perform their last comedy show together (their act started on July 25, 1946).
- July 25 – 72 kilometers (45 mi) south of Nantucket Island, the Italian ocean liner SS *Andrea Doria* sinks after colliding with the Swedish ship MS *Stockholm* in heavy fog, killing 51.
- July 30 – A Joint Resolution of Congress is signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, authorizing "In God We Trust" as the U.S. national motto.
- August 6 – After going bankrupt in 1955, the American broadcaster DuMont Television Network has its final broadcast, a boxing match from St. Nicholas Arena.
- August 11 – Artist Jackson Pollock dies in a car crash in Springs, New York.
- September 9 – Elvis Presley appears on *The Ed Sullivan Show* for the first time.

## October–December

- October 8 – Baseball pitcher Don Larsen of the New York Yankees throws the only perfect game in World Series history in Game 5 of the 1956 World Series against the Brooklyn Dodgers. Yogi Berra caught the game. Dale Mitchell was the final out. The New York Yankees won the series. Larsen was named series MVP.
- October 17 – The Game of the Century: 13-year-old Bobby Fischer beats GM Donald Byrne in the NY Rosenwald chess tournament.
- October 29 – The *Huntley-Brinkley Report* debuts on NBC-TV.
- November 3 – MGM's screen classic, *The Wizard of Oz*, is shown on television for the first time by CBS, as the final installment of their *Ford Star Jubilee*.
- November 6 – United States presidential election, 1956: Republican incumbent Dwight D. Eisenhower defeats Democrat challenger Adlai E. Stevenson in a rematch of their contest 4 years earlier.
- November 13 – *Browder v. Gayle*: The United States Supreme Court declares Alabama and Montgomery, Alabama laws requiring segregated buses illegal, thus ending the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
- December 2 – A pipe bomb planted by George Metesky explodes at the Paramount Theater in Brooklyn, New York, injuring 6 people.
- December 18 – *To Tell the Truth* debuts on CBS-TV.
- December 31 – Bob Barker makes his TV debut as host of the game show *Truth or Consequences*.



## Ongoing

- Cold War (1945–1991)
- Second Red Scare (1947–1957)

## Births

- January 1 – Mark R. Hughes, entrepreneur (died 2000)
- January 3 – Mel Gibson, actor and filmmaker
- January 7 – David Caruso, actor (*NYPD Blue*)
- January 9 – Kimberly Beck, actress
- January 10 – Shawn Colvin, singer
- January 20 – Bill Maher, actor, comedian and political analyst
- January 21 – Geena Davis, actress
- January 27 – Mimi Rogers, actress
- January 29 – Irlene Mandrell, actress and singer
- February 3
  - Nathan Lane, actor (*The Birdcage*)
  - Lee Ranaldo, musician (Sonic Youth)
- February 11 – Catherine Hickland, actress
- February 13 – Paul Stojanovich, television producer
- February 19
  - Kathleen Beller, actress
  - Roderick MacKinnon, biologist, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry
- February 24
  - Judith Butler, philosopher
  - Paula Zahn, television journalist (*CBS News*)
- February 29
  - Aileen Wuornos, serial killer (died 2002)
  - Mike Compton, mandolinist
- March 1 – Tim Daly, actor
- March 5 – Teena Marie, singer (died 2010)
- March 7 – Bryan Cranston, actor
- March 11 – Rob Paulsen, voice actor

- March 13 – Dana Delany, actress
- March 24 – Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft
- March 28 – Susan Ershler, mountaineer
- April 3 – Ray Combs, game show host and comedian (died 1996)
- April 4 – David E. Kelley, writer and television producer
- April 5 – Diamond Dallas Page, professional wrestler
- April 14 – Barbara Bonney, soprano
- April 16 – David McDowell Brown, astronaut (*Columbia Disaster*) (died 2003)
- April 18
  - John James, actor (*Dynasty*)
  - Melody Thomas Scott, actress
- April 21 – Phillip Longman, demographer
- May 4 – David Guterson, writer
- May 12 – Greg Phillinganes, keyboardist
- May 15 – Dan Patrick, sports commentator
- May 17
  - Sugar Ray Leonard, boxer
  - Bob Saget, actor and television host
- May 23 – Buck Showalter, baseball player and manager
- May 26 – Lisa Niemi, actress and dancer, widow of Patrick Swayze
- May 28 – Jerry Douglas, dobro player
- May 29 – La Toya Jackson, singer
- June 1 – Lisa Hartman-Black, actress, singer
- June 5 – Kenny G, grammy-award winning saxophonist
- June 9 – Patricia Cornwell, novelist
- June 11 – Joe Montana, football player
- June 15 – Robin Curtis, actress
- June 23 – Randy Jackson, musician and talent judge
- June 25 – Anthony Bourdain, chef, author and television personality
- June 26 – Chris Isaak, musician
- June 30 – Ronald Winans, musician (died 2005)
- July 1 – Alan Ruck, actor
- July 2 – Jerry Hall, model and actress
- July 9 – Tom Hanks, actor and director
- July 11 – Sela Ward, actress
- July 12
  - Mel Harris, actress
  - Sandi Patty, gospel singer
- July 16 – Tony Kushner, playwright
- July 18 – Sheila Aldridge, singer (*The Aldridge Sisters*)
- July 24
  - Charlie Crist, politician
  - Pat Finn, game show host and producer
- July 30 – Delta Burke, actress
- July 31
  - Michael Biehn, actor
  - Deval Patrick, 71st Governor of Massachusetts from 2007 to 2015.
- August 1 – Steve Green, Christian musician
- August 2 – Jim Neidhart, professional wrestler
- August 4 – Gerry Cooney, former boxer
- August 5 – Maureen McCormick, actress (*The Brady Bunch*)
- August 6 – Stephanie Kramer, actress (*Hunter*)
- August 10
  - Fred Ottman, professional wrestler
  - Charlie Peacock, Christian producer, singer-songwriter
- August 14 – Jackée Harry, actress and television personality
- August 18
  - Kelly Willard, Christian singer
  - Jon "Bermuda" Schwartz, drummer
- August 19 – Adam Arkin, actor
- August 20 – Joan Allen, actress
- August 21 – Jon Tester, United States Senator from Montana since 2007.
- August 22 – Paul Molitor, baseball player
- August 24 – John Culberson, politician
- August 26 – Mark Mangino, football coach
- August 29 – Mark Morris, choreographer
- September 1 – Bernie Wagenblast, editor and broadcaster
- September 11 – Phillip D. Bissett, politician
- September 12
  - Ricky Rudd, race car driver
  - Sam Brownback, United States Senator from Kansas from 1996 till 2011.
- September 15 – George Howard, jazz saxophone musician (died 1998)
- September 16 – David Copperfield, illusionist
- September 17 – Brian Andreas, writer, sculptor, painter, and publisher

- September 20
  - Gary Cole, actor
  - Debbie Morgan, actress
- September 21 – Jack Givens, basketball player
- September 24 – Gregory Peter Panos, futurist, writer, inventor, virtual reality expert, human simulation visionary
- September 25 – Jamie Hyneman, television co-host (*MythBusters*)
- September 26 – Linda Hamilton, actress (*The Terminator*)
- October 8 – Stephanie Zimbalist, actress (*Remington Steele*)
- October 16 – Marin Alsop, orchestral conductor
- October 17 – Mae Jemison, astronaut
- October 18 – Jim Talent, U.S. Senator from Missouri from 2002 to 2007
- October 21 – Carrie Fisher, actress (*Star Wars*) (died 2016)
- October 24 – Jeff Merkley, U.S. Senator from Oregon from 2009
- October 24 - Mary Lou Miller (Nagorski), loving mother
- October 26 – Rita Wilson, actress and producer
- November 8 – Steven Miller, record producer
- November 13 – Cynthia Carroll, businesswoman
- November 14 – Steve Stockman, accountant and politician
- November 15
  - Michael Hampton, American guitarist and producer (Parliament-Funkadelic and Kiddo)
  - Brian Douglas Wells, American delivery man (d. 2003)
- November 17 – Kelly Ward, actor
- November 18 – Warren Moon, football player
- November 20 – Bo Derek, actress and model
- November 26 – Dale Jarrett, race car driver
- November 27 – William Fichtner, actor
- November 29
  - Leo Laporte, author and television host
  - Eric Laakso, football player
- December 6 – Randy Rhoads, guitarist
- December 7 – Larry Bird, basketball player
- December 10 – Jacquelyn Mitchard, journalist and author
- December 11 – Lani Brockman, playwright
- December 18 – Ron White, comedian
- December 26 – David Sedaris, essayist
- December 30
  - Patricia Kalember, actress
  - Sheryl Lee Ralph, actress

## Deaths

- April 30 – Alben W. Barkley, 35th Vice President of the United States from 1949 to 1953 (born 1877)
- July 4 – Udo Keppler, cartoonist (*Puck*), born 1872
- August 11 – Jackson Pollock, artist (born 1912)
- 13 August – Lyonel Feininger, German-American painter


## See also

- List of American films of 1956

## References

1. "Other Flags - World Flags 101 - US Army Flag". Archived from the original on 2009-05-04. Retrieved 2009-04-06.

## External links

-  Media related to 1956 in the United States at Wikimedia Commons

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Categories: 1956 in the United States

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