

1966 in the United States

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This is a list of notable events that took place in **1966 in the United States**.

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Incumbents

Federal Government

- President: Lyndon B. Johnson (D-Texas)
- Vice President: Hubert Humphrey (D-Minnesota)
- Chief Justice: Earl Warren (California)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: John William McCormack (D-Massachusetts)
- Senate Majority Leader: Mike Mansfield (D-Montana)
- Congress: 89th

Governors and Lieutenant Governors

Governors

- Governor of Alabama: George Wallace (Democratic)
- Governor of Alaska: William A. Egan (Democratic) (until December 5), Wally Hickel (Republican) (starting December 5)
- Governor of Arizona: Samuel Pearson Goddard, Jr. (Democratic)
- Governor of Arkansas: Orval Faubus (Democratic)
- Governor of California: Pat Brown (Democratic)
- Governor of Colorado: John Arthur Love (Republican)
- Governor of Connecticut: John N. Dempsey (Democratic)
- Governor of Delaware: Charles L. Terry, Jr. (Democratic)
- Governor of Florida: W. Haydon Burns (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: Carl E. Sanders (Democratic)
- Governor of Hawaii: John A. Burns (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: Robert E. Smylie (Republican)
- Governor of Illinois: Otto Kerner, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of Indiana: Roger D. Branigin (Democratic)
- Governor of Iowa: Harold E. Hughes (Democratic)
- Governor of Kansas: William H. Avery (Republican)
- Governor of Kentucky: Edward T. Breathitt (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: John J. McKeithen (Democratic)
- Governor of Maine: John H. Reed (Republican)
- Governor of Maryland: J. Millard Tawes (Democratic)
- Governor of Massachusetts: John A. Volpe (Republican)
- Governor of Michigan: George W. Romney (Republican)
- Governor of Minnesota: Karl F. Rolvaag (Democratic)
- Governor of Mississippi: Paul B. Johnson, Jr. (Democratic)
- Governor of Missouri: Warren E. Hearnes (Democratic)
- Governor of Montana: Tim M. Babcock (Republican)
- Governor of Nebraska: Frank B. Morrison (Democratic)
- Governor of Nevada: Grant Sawyer (Democratic)
- Governor of New Hampshire: John W. King (Democratic)
- Governor of New Jersey: Richard J. Hughes (Democratic)
- Governor of New Mexico: Jack M. Campbell (Democratic)
- Governor of New York: Nelson Rockefeller (Republican)
- Governor of North Carolina: Dan K. Moore (Democratic)
- Governor of North Dakota: William L. Guy (Democratic)
- Governor of Ohio: Jim Rhodes (Republican)
- Governor of Oklahoma: Henry Bellmon (Republican)
- Governor of Oregon: Mark Hatfield (Republican)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: William Scranton (Republican)
- Governor of Rhode Island: John Chafee (Republican)
- Governor of South Carolina: Robert Evander McNair (Democratic)
- Governor of South Dakota: Nils Boe (Republican)
- Governor of Tennessee: Frank G. Clement (Democratic)
- Governor of Texas: John Connally (Democratic)
- Governor of Utah: Calvin L. Rampton (Democratic)
- Governor of Vermont: Philip H. Hoff (Democratic)
- Governor of Virginia: Albertis S. Harrison, Jr. (Democratic) (until January 15), Mills E. Godwin, Jr. (Democratic) (starting January 15)
- Governor of Washington: Daniel J. Evans (Republican)
- Governor of West Virginia: Hulett C. Smith (Democratic)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Warren P. Knowles (Republican)
- Governor of Wyoming: Clifford P. Hansen (Republican)

Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: James B. Allen (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Alaska: Hugh Wade (Democratic) (until December 5), Keith Harvey Miller (Republican) (starting December 5)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Nathan Green Gordon (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Glenn Malcolm Anderson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: Robert Lee Knous (Democratic)

- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: Samuel J. Tedesco (Democratic) (until month and day unknown), Fred J. Doocy (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: Sherman W. Tribbitt (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: Peter Zack Geer (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii: William S. Richardson (Democratic) (until December 2), Thomas Gill (Democratic) (starting December 2)
- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: W. E. Drevlow (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: Samuel H. Shapiro (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Robert L. Rock (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: Robert D. Fulton (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: John Crutcher (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Harry Lee Waterfield (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: C. C. Aycock (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Elliot Richardson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: William G. Milliken (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Alexander M. Keith (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Carroll Gartin (Democratic) (until December 19), vacant (starting December 19)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: Thomas Eagleton (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: Ted James (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: Philip C. Sorensen (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Paul Laxalt (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: Mack Easley (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: Malcolm Wilson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: Robert W. Scott (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Charles Tighe (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: John William Brown (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: Leo Winters (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Raymond P. Shafer (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: Giovanni Folcarelli (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: vacant
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: Lem Overpeck (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: Jared Maddux (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: Preston Smith (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: John J. Daley (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Mills E. Godwin, Jr. (Democratic) (until January 15), Fred G. Pollard (Democratic) (starting January 15)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: John Cherberg (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Patrick J. Lucey (Democratic)

Events

January

- January 2 – A strike of public transportation workers in New York City begins (it will end January 13).
- January 3 – The first Acid Test is conducted at The Fillmore, San Francisco.
- January 11 – The first SR-71 Blackbird spy plane goes into service at Beale AFB.
- January 12 – United States President Lyndon Johnson states that the United States should stay in South Vietnam until Communist aggression there is ended.
- January 13 – Robert C. Weaver becomes the first African American Cabinet member, by being appointed United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

- January 17 – Carl Brashear, the first African American United States Navy diver, is involved in an accident during the recovery of a lost H-bomb which results in the amputation of his leg.
- January 18 – About 8,000 U.S. soldiers land in South Vietnam; U.S. troops now total 190,000.
- January 27 – The British government promises the U.S. that British troops in Malaysia will stay until more peaceful conditions occur in the region.
- January 29 – The first of 608 performance *Sweet Charity* opens at the Palace Theatre in New York City.

February

- February 8 – The National Hockey League awarded Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania a second NHL franchise, the Pittsburgh Penguins.
- February 9 – The National Hockey League awarded the Twin Cities area an NHL franchise, the Minnesota North Stars.
- February 28 – U.S. astronauts Charles Bassett and Elliot See are killed in a plane crash in St. Louis, Missouri.

March

- March 4 – The Beatles: In an interview published in The London *Evening Standard*, John Lennon comments, "We're more popular than Jesus now," eventually sparking a controversy in the United States.
- March 7 – Charles De Gaulle asks U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson for negotiations about the state of NATO equipment in France.
- March 8 – Vietnam War: U.S. announces it will substantially increase its number of troops in Vietnam.
- March 12 – Bobby Hull of the Chicago Blackhawks sets the NHL single season scoring record against the New York Rangers, with his 51st goal.
- March 16
 - *Gemini 8* (David Scott, Neil Armstrong) docks with an Agena target vehicle.
 - The last Studebaker production facility is closed.
- March 19 – The Texas Western Miners defeat the Kentucky Wildcats with 5 African-American starters, ushering in desegregation in athletic recruiting.
- March 22 – In Washington, D.C., General Motors President James M. Roche appears before a Senate subcommittee, and apologizes to consumer advocate Ralph Nader for the company's intimidation and harassment campaign against him.
- March 26 – Demonstrations are held across the United States against the Vietnam War.
- March 28 – Indira Gandhi visits Washington, D.C.
- March 29 – The 23rd Communist Party Conference is held in the Soviet Union; Leonid Brezhnev demands that U.S. troops leave Vietnam, and announces that Chinese-Soviet relations are not satisfying.

April

- April 13 – United States president Lyndon Johnson signs the 1966 Uniform Time Act, dealing with daylight saving time.
- April 18 – The 38th Academy Awards ceremony is held.
- April 19 – Bobbi Gibb becomes the first woman to run the Boston Marathon.
- April 21 – An artificial heart is installed in the chest of Marcel DeRudder in a Houston, Texas hospital.
- April 29 – U.S. troops in Vietnam total 250,000.
- April 30 – The Church of Satan is formed by Anton Szandor LaVey in San Francisco.

May

- May 5 – The Montreal Canadiens defeat the Detroit Red Wings to win the Stanley Cup.
- May 12
 - Busch Memorial Stadium opens in St Louis, Missouri.
 - Radio Peking claims that U.S. planes have shot down a Chinese plane over Yunnan (the U.S. denies the story the next day).
- May 15 – Tens of thousands of anti-war demonstrators again picket the White House, then rally at the Washington Monument.
- May 16
 - Bob Dylan's seminal album, *Blonde on Blonde* is released in the U.S.
 - In New York City, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. makes his first public speech on the Vietnam War.
- May 25 – In St. Louis, Missouri, U.S. Vice-President Hubert Humphrey and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall dedicate the Gateway Arch, as part of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.
- May 28 – Fidel Castro declares martial law in Cuba because of a possible U.S. attack.

June

- June 2 – Surveyor program: Surveyor 1 lands in Oceanus Procellarum on the Moon, becoming the first U.S. spacecraft to soft-land on another world.
- June 5 – Gemini 9: Gene Cernan completes the second U.S. spacewalk (2 hours, 7 minutes).
- June 6 – Civil rights activist James Meredith is shot while trying to march across Mississippi.
- June 8
 - An XB-70 Valkyrie prototype is destroyed in a mid-air collision with a F-104 Starfighter chase plane during a photo shoot. NASA pilot Joseph A. Walker and USAF test pilot Carl Cross are both killed.
 - Topeka, Kansas is devastated by a tornado that registers as an F5 on the Fujita Scale, the first to exceed US \$100 million in damages. Sixteen people are killed, hundreds more injured, and thousands of homes damaged or destroyed.^[1]
- June 13 – *Miranda v. Arizona*: The Supreme Court of the United States rules that the police must inform suspects of their rights before questioning them.^[2]
- June 18 – CIA chief William Raborn resigns; Richard Helms becomes his successor.
- June 29 – Vietnam War: U.S. planes begin bombing Hanoi and Haiphong.
- June 30 – The National Organization for Women (NOW) is founded in Washington, DC.

July

- July 4 – President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Freedom of Information Act, which goes into effect the following year.
- July 14 – Richard Speck murders 8 student nurses in their Chicago dormitory. He is arrested on July 17.
- July 18
 - *Gemini 10* (John Young, Michael Collins) is launched. After docking with an Agena target vehicle, the astronauts then set a world altitude record of 474 miles (763 km).
 - The Hough Riots break out in Cleveland, Ohio, the city's first race riot.

- July 28 – The U.S. announces that a Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance plane has disappeared over Cuba.
- July 29 – Bob Dylan is injured in a motorcycle accident near his home in Woodstock, New York. He is not seen in public for over a year.

August

- August 1 – Sniper Charles Whitman kills 13 people and wounds 31 from atop the University of Texas at Austin Main Building tower, after earlier killing his wife and mother.
- August 5 – Caesars Palace hotel and casino opens in Las Vegas.
- August 6 – Braniff Airlines Flight 250 crashes in Falls City, Nebraska, killing all 42 on board.
- August 7 – Race riots occur in Lansing, Michigan.
- August 10 – Lunar Orbiter 1, the first U.S. spacecraft to orbit another world, is launched.
- August 11 – The Beatles hold a press conference in Chicago, during which John Lennon apologizes for his "more popular than Jesus" remark, saying, "I didn't mean it as a lousy anti-religious thing."
- August 15 – It is announced that the *New York Herald Tribune* will not resume publication.
- August 16 – Vietnam War: The House Un-American Activities Committee starts investigating Americans who have aided the Viet Cong, with the intent to make these activities illegal. Anti-war demonstrators disrupt the meeting and 50 are arrested.
- August 24 – The Doors recorded self-titled debut LP.
- August 29 – The Beatles play their very last concert at Candlestick Park in San Francisco, California.



August 1:
University of Texas
at Austin Main
Building tower,
where Charles
Whitman committed
his shooting
rampage

September

- September 8–10 – State visit to the United States by the dictator, General Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma. He was honoured by a 21-gun salute and given the key to the city of Washington D.C., "a long-standing American tradition of welcome". Ne Win held talks with President Lyndon Johnson and with the highest ranking U.S. officials at the State Department who reaffirmed support for Burmese neutrality. Further talks were held with George Ball, acting Secretary of State, and with Averell Harriman, U.S. Ambassador at Large.^{[3][4]} Talks included an exchange of views on world issues and Burmese-American relations, and were officially described as "cordial", and the U.S. President and the General expressed mutual regard, according to a communiqué composed before the visit.^[5] The General visited Williamsburg in Virginia, Washington D.C., the United Nations in New York City where he was greeted by the Burmese Secretary General, U Thant, and Hawaii.^[6]
- September 8 – The classic science fiction series *Star Trek* premieres on NBC.
- September 12 – The Monkees television series premieres on NBC.
- September 16 – The Metropolitan Opera House opens at Lincoln Center in New York City to the world premiere of Samuel Barber's opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*.
- September 18 – Valerie Percy, the 21-year-old daughter of Senator Charles H. Percy, is stabbed and bludgeoned to death in the family mansion on Chicago's North Shore.

October

- October 1 – West Coast Airlines Flight 956 crashes with 18 fatal injuries and no survivors 5.5 miles (8.9 km) south of Wemme, Oregon. This accident marks the first loss of a DC-9.^[7]
- October 9 – The Baltimore Orioles defeat the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 4 of the World Series, 1–0, to sweep the series for their 1st World Championship; Frank Robinson wins the baseball's Triple Crown.
- October 15
 - U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signs a bill creating the United States Department of Transportation.
 - The U.S. Congress passes a bill for the creation of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.
 - ABC-TV telecasts a highly acclaimed 90-minute television adaptation of the musical *Brigadoon*, starring Robert Goulet, Peter Falk, and Sally Ann Howes. It wins many Emmy Awards and inaugurates a short-lived series of special television adaptations of famous Broadway musicals on ABC. Goulet stars in all but one of these specials.
- October 21 – The AFL-NFL merger is approved by the U.S. Congress.

November

- November 2 – The Cuban Adjustment Act comes into force, allowing 123,000 Cubans the opportunity to apply for permanent residence in the United States.
- November 8
 - Former Massachusetts Attorney General Edward Brooke becomes the first African American elected to the United States Senate since Reconstruction.
 - Actor Ronald Reagan, a Republican, is elected Governor of California.
- November 16 – U.S. doctor Sam Sheppard is acquitted in his second trial for the murder of his pregnant wife in 1954.
- November 17 – A spectacular Leonid meteor shower passes over Arizona, at the rate of 2,300 a minute for 20 minutes.
- November 27 – The Washington Redskins defeat the New York Giants 72–41 in the highest scoring game in National Football League history.
- November 28 – Truman Capote's Black and White Ball ('The Party of the Century') is held in New York City.

December

- December 15 – Walt Disney dies while producing *The Jungle Book*, the last animated feature under his personal supervision.
- December 18 – *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, narrated by Boris Karloff, is shown for the first time on CBS, becoming an annual Christmas tradition.
- December 26 – The first Kwanzaa is celebrated by Maulana Karenga, founder of Organization US (a black nationalist group) and later chair of Black Studies, at California State University, Long Beach from 1989 to 2002.

Undated

- The Congress of the United States creates the National Council for Marine Resources and Engineering Development.
- Jack L. Warner sells Warner Bros. Pictures to Seven Arts Productions, which eventually becomes Warner Bros.-Seven Arts.
- Paramount Pictures Corporation becomes a wholly owned subsidiary of Gulf+Western Industries, Inc.

Ongoing

- Cold War (1945–1991)
- Space Race (1957–1975)
- Vietnam War, U.S. involvement (1962–1973)

Births

- January 13 – Patrick Dempsey, screen actor and race car driver
- January 29 – Julie Ann Taylor, voice actress
- March 4 – Dav Pilkey, author and illustrator of children's literature
- April 22 – Jeffrey Dean Morgan, actor
- May 16 – Janet Jackson, singer
- June 30 – Mike Tyson, heavyweight boxer
- August 7 – Jimmy Wales, co-founder of Wikipedia
- August 14 – Halle Berry, film actress
- September 9 – Adam Sandler, actor, comedian, screenwriter, musician and film producer
- October 3 – Binyamin Ze'ev Kahane, American-born Israeli rabbi, settler leader and murder victim, died in Ofra, West Bank (d. 2000 in Israel)
- November 2 – David Schwimmer, screen actor
- December 9 – Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator from New York from 2009

Deaths

- February 1 – Buster Keaton, silent film comic actor and director (b. 1895)
- February 9 – Sophie Tucker, singer (b. 1887 in Ukraine)
- July 23 – Montgomery Clift, actor (b. 1920)
- August 3 – Lenny Bruce, comedian (b. 1925)
- 8 September — Walter Friedländer, German-American art historian (born 1873)
- October 13 – Clifton Webb, actor, dancer and singer (b. 1889)
- October 18 – Elizabeth Arden, cosmetics entrepreneur (b. 1878 in Canada)
- December 15 – Walt Disney, business magnate, animator, producer, director, screenwriter and voice actor (b. 1901)

See also

- List of American films of 1966

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