

1973 in the United States

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Events from the year **1973 in the United States**.

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Incumbents

Federal Government

- President: Richard Nixon (R-California)
- Vice President:
 - until October 10: Spiro Agnew (R-Maryland)
 - October 10–December 6: *vacant*
 - starting December 6: Gerald Ford (R-Michigan)
- Chief Justice: Warren E. Burger (Minnesota)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Carl Albert (D-Oklahoma)
- Senate Majority Leader: Mike Mansfield (D-Montana)
- Congress: 92nd (until January 3), 93rd (starting January 3)

Governors and Lieutenant Governors

Governors

- Governor of Alabama: George Wallace (Democratic)
- Governor of Alaska: William A. Egan (Democratic)
- Governor of Arizona: Jack Richard Williams (Republican)
- Governor of Arkansas: Dale Bumpers (Democratic)
- Governor of California: Ronald Reagan (Republican)
- Governor of Colorado: John Arthur Love (Republican) (until July 16), John David Vanderhoof (Republican) (starting July 16)
- Governor of Connecticut: Thomas J. Meskill (Republican)
- Governor of Delaware: Russell W. Peterson (Republican) (until January 16), Sherman W. Tribbitt (Democratic) (starting January 16)
- Governor of Florida: Reubin Askew (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: Jimmy Carter (Democratic)
- Governor of Hawaii: John A. Burns (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: Cecil D. Andrus (Democratic)
- Governor of Illinois: Richard B. Ogilvie (Republican) (until January 8), Dan Walker (Democratic) (starting January 8)
- Governor of Indiana: Edgar Whitcomb (Republican) (until January 8), Otis R. Bowen (Republican) (starting January 8)
- Governor of Iowa: Robert D. Ray (Republican)
- Governor of Kansas: Robert Docking (Democratic)
- Governor of Kentucky: Wendell H. Ford (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: Edwin W. Edwards (Democratic)
- Governor of Maine: Kenneth M. Curtis (Democratic)
- Governor of Maryland: Marvin Mandel (Democratic)
- Governor of Massachusetts: Francis W. Sargent (Republican)
- Governor of Michigan: William Milliken (Republican)
- Governor of Minnesota: Wendell R. Anderson (Democratic)
- Governor of Mississippi: Bill Waller (Democratic)
- Governor of Missouri: Warren E. Hearnes (Democratic) (until January 8), Kit Bond (Republican) (starting January 8)
- Governor of Montana: Forrest H. Anderson (Democratic) (until January 1), Thomas Lee Judge (Democratic) (starting January 1)
- Governor of Nebraska: J. James Exon (Democratic)
- Governor of Nevada: Mike O'Callaghan (Democratic)
- Governor of New Hampshire: Walter R. Peterson, Jr. (Republican) (until January 4), Meldrim Thomson, Jr. (Republican) (starting January 4)
- Governor of New Jersey: William T. Cahill (Republican)
- Governor of New Mexico: Bruce King (Democratic)
- Governor of New York: Nelson Rockefeller (Republican) (until December 18), Malcolm Wilson (Republican) (starting December 18)
- Governor of North Carolina: Robert W. Scott (Democratic) (until January 5), James E. Holshouser, Jr. (Republican) (starting January 5)
- Governor of North Dakota: William L. Guy (Democratic) (until January 2), Arthur A. Link (Democratic) (starting January 2)
- Governor of Ohio: John J. Gilligan (Democratic)
- Governor of Oklahoma: David Hall (Democratic)
- Governor of Oregon: Tom McCall (Republican)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: Milton Shapp (Democratic)

- Governor of Rhode Island: Frank Licht (Democratic) (until January 2), Philip W. Noel (Democratic) (starting January 2)
- Governor of South Carolina: John C. West (Democratic)
- Governor of South Dakota: Richard F. Kneip (Democratic)
- Governor of Tennessee: Winfield Dunn (Republican)
- Governor of Texas: Preston Smith (Democratic) (until January 16), Dolph Briscoe (Democratic) (starting January 16)
- Governor of Utah: Calvin L. Rampton (Democratic)
- Governor of Vermont: Deane C. Davis (Republican) (until January 4), Thomas P. Salmon (Democratic) (starting January 4)
- Governor of Virginia: A. Linwood Holton, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of Washington: Daniel J. Evans (Republican)
- Governor of West Virginia: Arch A. Moore, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Patrick J. Lucey (Democratic)
- Governor of Wyoming: Stanley K. Hathaway (Republican)

Lieutenant Governors

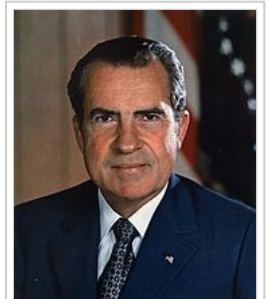
- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: Jere Beasley (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Alaska: H. A. Boucher (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Bob C. Riley (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Edwin Reinecke (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: John David Vanderhoof (Republican) (until July 16), Ted L. Strickland (Republican) (starting July 16)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: T. Clark Hull (Republican) (until June 7), Peter L. Cashman (Republican) (starting June 7)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: Eugene Bookhammer (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Florida: Thomas Burton Adams, Jr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: Lester Maddox (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii: George Ariyoshi (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: Jack M. Murphy (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: Paul Simon (Democratic) (until January 8), Neil Hartigan (Democratic) (starting January 8)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Richard E. Folz (Republican) (until January 8), Robert D. Orr (Republican) (starting January 8)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: vacant (until month and day unknown), Arthur A. Neu (Republican) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: Reynolds Shultz (Republican) (until January 8), Dave Owen (Republican) (starting January 8)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Julian Carroll (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: Jimmy Fitzmorris (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Maryland: Blair Lee III (political party unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Donald R. Dwight (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: James H. Brickley (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Rudy Perpich (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: William F. Winter (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: William S. Morris (Democratic) (until January 8), William C. Phelps (Republican) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: Thomas Lee Judge (Democratic) (until month and day unknown), Bill Christiansen (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: Frank Marsh (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Harry Reid (Democratic)

- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: Roberto Mondragón (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: Malcolm Wilson (Republican) (until December 18), vacant (starting December 18)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: Hoyt Patrick Taylor, Jr. (Democratic) (until January 6), Jim Hunt (Democratic) (starting January 6)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Richard F. Larsen (Republican) (until month and day unknown), Wayne G. Sanstead (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: John William Brown (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: George Nigh (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Ernest P. Kline (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: J. Joseph Garrahy (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: Earle Morris, Jr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: William Dougherty (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: John S. Wilder (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: Ben Barnes (Democratic) (until January 16), William P. Hobby, Jr. (Democratic) (starting January 16)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: John S. Burgess (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Henry Howell (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: John Cherberg (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Martin J. Schreiber (Democratic)

Events

January

- January 1 – CBS sells the New York Yankees for \$10 million to a 12-person syndicate led by George Steinbrenner (\$3.2 million more than CBS bought the Yankees for).
- January 14
 - Elvis Presley's concert in Hawaii. The first worldwide telecast by an entertainer watched by more people than watched the Apollo moon landings. However, it was not shown on the Eastern Bloc countries because of communist censorship.
 - Super Bowl VII: The Miami Dolphins defeat the Washington Redskins 14–7 to complete the NFL's first Perfect Season.
- January 15 – Vietnam War: Citing progress in peace negotiations, U.S. President Richard Nixon announces the suspension of offensive action in North Vietnam.
- January 20 – U.S. President Richard Nixon is inaugurated for his second term.
- January 22
 - *Roe v. Wade*: The U.S. Supreme Court overturns state bans on abortion.^[1]
 - Former U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson dies at his Stonewall, Texas, ranch, leaving no former U.S. President living until the resignation of Richard M. Nixon in 1974.
- January 23 – U.S. President Richard Nixon announces that a peace accord has been reached in Vietnam.
- January 27 – U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War ends with the signing of the Paris Peace Accords.



Richard Nixon, the President of the United States, began his second term on January 20

February

- February 11 – Vietnam War: The first American prisoners of war are released from Vietnam.
- February 12 – Ohio becomes the first U.S. state to post distance in metric on signs (see Metric system in the United States).
- February 13 – The United States Dollar is devalued by 10%.
- February 22 – Sino-American relations: Following President Richard Nixon's visit to mainland China, the United States and the People's Republic of China agree to establish liaison offices.
- February 27 – The American Indian Movement occupies Wounded Knee, South Dakota.^[2]

March

- March 17 – Many of the few remaining United States soldiers begin to leave Vietnam. One reunion of a former POW with his family is immortalized in the Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph *Burst of Joy*.
- March 23 – Watergate scandal (United States): In a letter to Judge John Sirica, Watergate burglar James W. McCord Jr. admits that he and other defendants have been pressured to remain silent about the case. He names former Attorney General John Mitchell as 'overall boss' of the operation.
- March 29 – The last United States soldier leaves Vietnam.

April

- April 3 – The first handheld cellular phone call is made by Martin Cooper in New York City.
- April 4 – The World Trade Center officially opens in New York City with a ribbon cutting ceremony.
- April 6
 - *Pioneer 11* is launched on a mission to study the solar system.
 - Ron Blomberg of the New York Yankees becomes the first designated hitter in Major League Baseball.
- April 17 – Federal Express officially begins operations, with the launch of 14 small aircraft from Memphis International Airport. On that night, Federal Express delivers 186 packages to 25 U.S. cities from Rochester, New York, to Miami, Florida.
- April 30 – Watergate scandal: President Richard Nixon announces that White House Counsel John Dean has been fired and that Attorney General Richard Kleindienst has resigned along with staffers H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman.

May

- May 3 – The Sears Tower in Chicago is finished, becoming the world's tallest building (held until 1998).
- May 5 – Secretariat wins the Kentucky Derby.
- May 8 – A 71-day standoff between federal authorities and American Indian Movement activists who were occupying the Pine Ridge Reservation at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, ends with the surrender of the militants.
- May 10 – The New York Knicks defeat the Los Angeles Lakers, 102–93 in Game 5 of the NBA Finals to win the NBA title.
- May 14 – Skylab, the United States' first space station, is launched.
- May 17 – Watergate scandal: Televised hearings begin in the United States Senate.
- May 25 – Skylab 2 (Pete Conrad, Paul Weitz, Joseph Kerwin) is launched on a mission to repair damage to the recently launched Skylab space station.

- May 30—Gordon Johncock wins the Indianapolis 500 in the *Patrick Racing Special Eagle-Offenhauser*, after only 133 laps, due to rain. (The race was begun May 28 but called due to rain.)

June

- June 9 – Secretariat wins the Belmont Stakes by 31 lengths becoming a Triple Crown winner and breaking a 25-year hiatus since 1948.
- June 16 – U.S. President Richard Nixon begins several talks with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev.
- June 22 – W. Mark Felt ("Deep Throat") retires from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- June 25 – Watergate scandal: Former White House counsel John Dean begins his testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee.



May 3: Sears Tower is completed

July

- July 1 – The United States Drug Enforcement Administration is founded.
- July 2 – The United States Congress passes the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA) mandating Special Education federally.
- July 5 – The catastrophic BLEVE (Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapor Explosion) in Kingman, Arizona, following a fire that broke out as propane was being transferred from a railroad car to a storage tank, kills 11 firefighters. This explosion has become a classic incident, studied in fire department training programs worldwide.
- July 12 – 1973 National Archives Fire: A major fire destroys the entire 6th floor of the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri.
- July 16 – Watergate Scandal: Former White House aide Alexander Butterfield informs the United States Senate Watergate Committee that President Richard Nixon had secretly recorded potentially incriminating conversations.
- July 28 – *Skylab 3* (Owen Garriott, Jack Lousma, Alan Bean) is launched, to conduct various medical and scientific experiments aboard *Skylab*.
- July 31 – A Delta Air Lines Flight 173 DC9-31 aircraft lands short of Boston's Logan Airport runway in poor visibility, striking a sea wall about 165 feet (50 m) to the right of the runway centerline and about 3,000 feet (914 m) short. All 6 crew members and 83 passengers are killed, 1 of the passengers dying several months after the accident.



May 14: Skylab is launched

August

- August 8 – The death of Dean Corll leads to the discovery of the Houston Mass Murders: 27 boys were killed by 3 men.
- August 15 – The U.S. bombing of Cambodia ends, officially halting 12 years of combat activity in Southeast Asia.

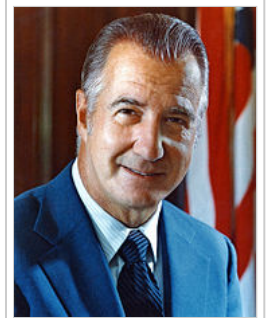
September

- September 11 – Chile's democratically elected government is overthrown in a military coup after serious instability. President Salvador Allende commits suicide during the coup in the presidential palace, and General Augusto Pinochet heads a U.S.-backed military junta that governs Chile for the next 16 years.

- September 20 – *The Battle of the Sexes*: Billie Jean King defeats Bobby Riggs in a televised tennis match, 6–4, 6–4, 6–3, at the Astrodome in Houston, Texas.
- September 22 – Henry Kissinger, United States National Security Advisor, starts his term as United States Secretary of State.
- September 28 – ITT is bombed in New York City by leftist terrorists protesting the restoration of the Chilean Constitution ordered by the Chilean judicial and legislative branches against the Allende administration.

October

- October 1 – The Ideal Toy Company debuts the Evel Knievel stunt-cycle, which would go on to become one of the best-selling toys of Christmas 1973.
- October 6 – *American Country Countdown*, a country music-oriented spinoff of the nationally syndicated radio program *American Top 40*, debuts with host Don Bowman. The countdown, featuring the top 40 country hits of the week according to the *Billboard magazine* Hot Country Singles chart, becomes a major success.
- October 10 – Spiro T. Agnew resigns as Vice President of the United States and then, in federal court in Baltimore, Maryland, pleads no contest to charges of income tax evasion on \$29,500 he received in 1967, while he was governor of Maryland. He is fined \$10,000 and put on 3 years' probation.
- October 20 – The Saturday Night Massacre: U.S. President Richard Nixon orders Attorney General Elliot Richardson to dismiss Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox. Richardson refuses and resigns, along with Deputy Attorney General William French Smith. Solicitor General Robert F. Bork, third in line at the Department of Justice, then fires Cox. The event raises calls for Nixon's impeachment.^[3]
- October 27 – The Canon City meteorite, a 1.4 kilogram chondrite type meteorite, strikes Earth in Fremont County, Colorado.



October 10: Spiro Agnew resigns as Vice President of the U.S.

November

- November 1 – Watergate scandal: Acting Attorney General Robert Bork appoints Leon Jaworski as the new Watergate Special Prosecutor. *Confirmation needed*
- November 3
 - Pan Am cargo flight 160, a Boeing 707-321C, crashes at Logan International Airport, Boston, killing 3.
 - Mariner program: NASA launches *Mariner 10* toward Mercury (on March 29, 1974, it becomes the first space probe to reach that planet).
- November 7 – The Congress of the United States overrides President Richard M. Nixon's veto of the War Powers Resolution, which limits presidential power to wage war without congressional approval.
- November 11 – Egypt and Israel sign a United States-sponsored cease-fire accord.
- November 16
 - Skylab program: NASA launches *Skylab 4* (Gerald Carr, William Pogue, Edward Gibson) from Cape Canaveral, Florida, on an 84-day mission.
 - U.S. President Richard Nixon signs the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act into law, authorizing the construction of the Alaska Pipeline.

"People have got to know whether or not their President is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook. I've earned everything I've got."

President Richard Nixon, November 17, 1973

- November 17 – Watergate scandal: In Orlando, Florida, U.S. President Richard Nixon tells 400 Associated Press managing editors "I'm not a crook."^[3]
- November 21 – U.S. President Richard Nixon's attorney, J. Fred Buzhardt, reveals the existence of an 18½-minute gap in one of the White House tape recordings related to Watergate.
- November 27 – The United States Senate votes 92–3 to confirm Gerald Ford as Vice President of the United States.

December

- December 3 – Pioneer program: *Pioneer 10* sends back the first close-up images of Jupiter.
- December 6 – The United States House of Representatives votes 387–35 to confirm Gerald Ford as Vice President of the United States; he is sworn in the same day.
- December 15 – Gay rights: The American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its DSM-II.
- December 16 – O.J. Simpson of the Buffalo Bills became the first running back to rush for 2,000 yards in a pro football season.
- December 28 – The Endangered Species Act is passed in the United States.

Ongoing

- Cold War (1945–1991)
- Space Race (1957–1975)
- Vietnam War, U.S. involvement (1962–1973)
- Détente (c. 1969–1979)
- Watergate scandal (1972–1974)
- Capital punishment suspended by *Furman v. Georgia* (1972–1976)
- 1973 oil crisis (1973–1974)
- 1970s energy crisis (1973–1980)
- DOCUMERICA photography project (1972-1977)

Births

- January 29 – Jason Schmidt, baseball player
- March 20 – Cedric Yarbrough, actor
- April 20 – Todd Hollandsworth baseball player and sportscaster
- May 12
 - Kendra Kassebaum, American actress and singer
 - Bobby Kent, American murder victim (d. 1993)
 - Travis Lutter, American mixed martial artist
- June 15 – Neil Patrick Harris, actor, producer, singer, comedian, magician, and television host
- August 3 – Chris Murphy, United States Senator from Connecticut since 2013.
- September 12 – Paul Walker, actor (d. 2013)
- November 14
 - Kareem Campbell, skateboarder
 - Lawyer Milloy, American football player
- December 12– Pamela L. Gay, astronomer
- December 21– Mike Alstott, American football player

Deaths

- January 22 – Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of the United States from 1963 till 1969, 37th Vice President of the United States from 1961 till 1963 (born 1908)
- January 24 – J. Carrol Naish, actor (born 1896)
- March 18 – William Benton, United States Senator from Connecticut from 1949 till 1953. (born 1900)
- December 20 – Bobby Darin, American singer, songwriter, musician, actor, dancer, impressionist and TV presenter (born 1936)

See also

- List of American films of 1973

References

1. James Stuart Olson, ed. (1999). "Chronology". *Historical Dictionary of the 1970s*. Greenwood Publishing Group. ISBN 978-0-313-30543-6.
2. Mitchell K. Hall (2008). "Chronology". *Historical Dictionary of the Nixon-Ford Era*. Scarecrow Press. ISBN 978-0-8108-6410-8.
3. "On This Day", *New York Times*, retrieved November 26, 2014

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