

# 1997 in the United States

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Events from the year **1997 in the United States**.

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## Incumbents

### Federal Government

- President: Bill Clinton (D-Arkansas)
- Vice President: Al Gore (D-Tennessee)
- Chief Justice: William Rehnquist (Wisconsin) <sup>[1]</sup>
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia)
- Senate Majority Leader: Trent Lott (R-Mississippi)
- Congress: 104th (until January 3), 105th (starting January 3)

## Governors and Lieutenant Governors

### Governors

- Governor of Alabama: Fob James (Republican)
- Governor of Alaska: Tony Knowles (Democratic)
- Governor of Arizona: Fife Symington III (Republican) (until September 5), Jane Dee Hull (Republican) (starting September 5)
- Governor of Arkansas: Mike Huckabee (Republican)
- Governor of California: Pete Wilson (Republican)
- Governor of Colorado: Roy Romer (Democratic)
- Governor of Connecticut: John G. Rowland (Republican)
- Governor of Delaware: Thomas R. Carper (Democratic)
- Governor of Florida: Lawton Chiles (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: Zell Miller (Democratic)
- Governor of Hawaii: Ben Cayetano (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: Phil Batt (Republican)
- Governor of Illinois: Jim Edgar (Republican)
- Governor of Indiana: Evan Bayh (Democratic) (until January 13), Frank O'Bannon (Democratic) (starting January 13)
- Governor of Iowa: Terry E. Branstad (Republican)
- Governor of Kansas: Bill Graves (Republican)
- Governor of Kentucky: Paul E. Patton (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: Murphy J. Foster, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of Maine: Angus King (Independent)
- Governor of Maryland: Parris N. Glendening (Democratic)
- Governor of Massachusetts: William F. Weld (Republican) (until July 29), Paul Cellucci (Republican) (starting July 29)
- Governor of Michigan: John Engler (Republican)
- Governor of Minnesota: Arne H. Carlson (Republican)
- Governor of Mississippi: Kirk Fordice (Republican)
- Governor of Missouri: Mel Carnahan (Democratic)
- Governor of Montana: Marc Racicot (Republican)
- Governor of Nebraska: Ben Nelson (Democratic)
- Governor of Nevada: Bob Miller (Democratic)
- Governor of New Hampshire: Steve Merrill (Republican) (until January 9), Jeanne Shaheen (Democratic) (starting January 9)
- Governor of New Jersey: Christine Todd Whitman (Republican)
- Governor of New Mexico: Gary Johnson (Republican)
- Governor of New York: George Pataki (Republican)
- Governor of North Carolina: Jim Hunt (Democratic)
- Governor of North Dakota: Ed Schafer (Republican)
- Governor of Ohio: George Voinovich (Republican)
- Governor of Oklahoma: Frank Keating (Republican)
- Governor of Oregon: John Kitzhaber (Democratic)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: Tom Ridge (Republican)
- Governor of Rhode Island: Lincoln C. Almond (Republican)
- Governor of South Carolina: David Beasley (Republican)
- Governor of South Dakota: William J. Janklow (Republican)
- Governor of Tennessee: Don Sundquist (Republican)
- Governor of Texas: George W. Bush (Republican)
- Governor of Utah: Mike Leavitt (Republican)
- Governor of Vermont: Howard Dean (Democratic)

- Governor of Virginia: George Allen (Republican)
- Governor of Washington: Mike Lowry (Democratic) (until January 15), Gary Locke (Democratic) (starting January 15)
- Governor of West Virginia: Gaston Caperton (Democratic) (until January 13), Cecil H. Underwood (Republican) (starting January 13)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Tommy Thompson (Republican)
- Governor of Wyoming: Jim Geringer (Republican)

## Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: Don Siegelman (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Alaska: Fran Ulmer (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Winthrop Paul Rockefeller (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Gray Davis (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: Gail Schoettler (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: Jodi Rell (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: Ruth Ann Minner (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Florida: Buddy MacKay (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: Pierre Howard (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii: Mazie Hirono (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: Butch Otter (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: Bob Kustra (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Frank O'Bannon (Democratic) (until January 13), Joe E. Kernan (Democratic) (starting January 13)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: Joy Corning (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: Gary Sherrer (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Steve Henry (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: Kathleen Blanco (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Maryland: Kathleen Kennedy Townsend (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Paul Cellucci (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: Connie Binsfeld (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Joanne E. Benson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Ronnie Musgrove (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: Roger B. Wilson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: Denny Rehberg (Republican) (until January 6), Judy Martz (Republican) (starting January 6)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: Kim M. Robak (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Lonnie Hammargren (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: Walter Dwight Bradley (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: Betsy McCaughey (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: Dennis A. Wicker (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Rosemarie Myrdal (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: Nancy P. Hollister (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: Mary Fallin (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Mark S. Schweiker (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: Robert Weygand (Democratic) (until January 2), Bernard Jackvony (Republican) (starting January 2)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: Bob Peeler (Republican)

- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: Carole Hillard (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: John S. Wilder (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: Bob Bullock (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Utah: Olene S. Walker (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: Barbara W. Snelling (Republican) (until month and day unknown), Doug Racine (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Don Beyer (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: Joel Pritchard (Republican) (until January 15), Brad Owen (Democratic) (starting January 15)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Scott McCallum (Republican)

## Events

### January

- January 17 – A Delta II rocket carrying a military GPS payload explodes, shortly after liftoff from Cape Canaveral.
- January 20
  - U.S. President Bill Clinton is inaugurated for his second term.
- January 23
  - Mir Qazi is sentenced to death for a 1993 assault rifle attack outside CIA headquarters that killed 2 and wounded 3.
- January 26 – Super Bowl XXXI: The Green Bay Packers win the NFL Championship for the first time since 1967, defeating the New England Patriots 35–21 at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, Louisiana.



January 20: Bill Clinton, the President of the United States, begins his second term.

### February

- February 10 – The United States Army suspends Gene C. McKinney, Sergeant Major of the Army, its top-ranking enlisted soldier, after hearing allegations of sexual misconduct.
- February 13
  - The Dow Jones Industrial Average closes above 7,000 for the first time, gaining 60.81 to 7,022.44.
  - STS-82: Tune-up and repair work on the Hubble Space Telescope is started by astronauts from *Space Shuttle Discovery*.
- February 23
  - 1997 Empire State Building shooting
  - FBI agent Earl Edwin Pitts pleads guilty to selling secrets to Russia.
  - The North Hollywood shootout takes place between 2 heavily armed bank robbers and officers of the Los Angeles Police Department.

### March

- March 4 – U.S. President Bill Clinton bars federal funding for any research on alien cloning.
- March 9 – Rapper The Notorious B.I.G. is killed in a drive-by shooting in Los Angeles.
- March 13 – The Phoenix Lights are seen over Phoenix, Arizona.

- March 24 – The 69th Academy Awards, hosted by Billy Crystal, are held at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, California, with *The English Patient* winning Best Picture.
- March 26 – In San Diego, California, 39 Heaven's Gate cultists commit mass suicide at their compound.

## April

- April 16 – Houston socialite Doris Angleton is murdered, drawing suspicion to her estranged husband, Robert. His brother Roger confesses to the crime and the investigation reveals that Robert had amassed a fortune through illegal betting.
- April 18 – The Red River of the North breaks through dikes and floods Grand Forks, North Dakota and East Grand Forks, Minnesota, causing US\$2 billion in damage.

## May

- May – For the first time since December 1973, unemployment falls below 5%. It would remain below 5% until September 2001, during the early 2000s recession.
- May 2 – The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is dedicated in Washington, D.C.
- May 15 – The United States government acknowledges existence of the "Secret War" in Laos, and dedicates the Laos Memorial in honor of Hmong and other "Secret War" veterans.
- May 16 – U.S. President Bill Clinton issues a formal apology to the surviving victims of the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male and their families.
- May 22 – Kelly Flinn, the U.S. Air Force's first female bomber pilot certified for combat, accepts a general discharge in order to avoid a court martial.
- May 25 – Strom Thurmond becomes the longest-serving member in the history of the United States Senate (41 years and 10 months).
- May 27 – The second-deadliest tornado of the 1990s hits in Jarrell, Texas, killing 27 people.

## June

- June 2 – In Denver, Colorado, Timothy McVeigh is convicted on 15 counts of murder and conspiracy for his role in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.
- June 6 – In Lacey Township, New Jersey, high school senior Melissa Drexler gives birth in a toilet and leaves the newborn for dead in the trash.
- June 7
  - A computer user known as "\_eci" publishes his C source code on a Windows 95 and Windows NT exploit, which later becomes WinNuke. The source code gets wide distribution across the internet, and Microsoft is forced to release a security patch.
  - The Detroit Red Wings win their first Stanley Cup championship in 42 years, defeating the Philadelphia Flyers 4 games to 0. Red Wings goaltender Mike Vernon is awarded the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP.
- June 8 – A United States Coast Guard helicopter crashes near Humboldt Bay, California; all 4 crew members perish.
- June 12 – The United States Department of the Treasury unveils a new \$50 bill, meant to be more difficult to counterfeit.
- June 13 – A jury sentences Timothy McVeigh to death for his part in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.
- June 19 – The fast food chain McDonald's wins a partial victory in its libel trial, known as the McLibel case, against 2 environmental campaigners. The judge decides it was true that McDonald's targeted its advertising at children, who pestered their parents into visiting the company's restaurants.

- June 28 – During the Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson II boxing match in Las Vegas Mike Tyson bites off part of Holyfield's ear.

## July

- July 4 – NASA's Pathfinder space probe lands on the surface of Mars.
- July 15 – Spree killer Andrew Cunanan shoots fashion designer Gianni Versace to death outside Versace's Miami, Florida, residence.
- July 16 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average gains 63.17 to close at 8,038.88. It is the Dow's first close above 8,000. The Dow has doubled its value in 30 months.
- July 21 – The fully restored USS *Constitution* (aka "Old Ironsides") celebrates her 200th birthday by setting sail for the first time in 116 years.
- July 23 – Digital Equipment Corporation files antitrust charges against chipmaker Intel.



July 21: USS *Constitution* under sail

## August

- August 1 – Steve Jobs returns to Apple Computer, Inc at Macworld in Boston.
- August 6 – Microsoft buys a \$150 million share of financially troubled Apple Computer.

## September

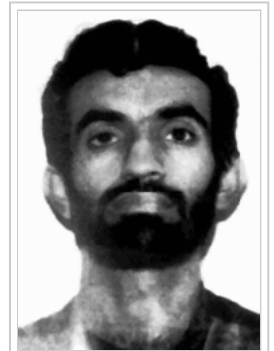
- September 4 – In Lorain, Ohio, the last Ford Thunderbird for 3 years rolls off the assembly line.
- September 29 – Forced Abortion Condemnation Act was introduced in the U.S. Congress.

## October

- October 1 – Luke Woodham walks into Pearl High School in Pearl, Mississippi and opens fire, killing 2 girls, after killing his mother earlier that morning.
- October 4
  - One million men gather for Promise Keepers' "Stand in the Gap" event in Washington, DC.
  - Loomis Fargo Bank Robbery: The second largest cash robbery in U.S. history (\$17.3 million, mostly in small bills) occurs at the Charlotte, North Carolina, office of Wells Fargo. An FBI investigation eventually results in 24 convictions and the recovery of approximately 95% of the stolen cash.
- October 15
  - Andy Green sets the first supersonic land speed record for the ThrustSSC team, led by Richard Noble of the UK. ThrustSSC goes through the flying mile course at Black Rock Desert, Nevada, at an average speed of 1,227.985 km/h (763.035 mph).
  - NASA launches the Cassini-Huygens probe to Saturn.
- October 16 – The first color photograph appears on the front page of the *New York Times*.
- October 26 – 1997 World Series: The Florida Marlins defeat the Cleveland Indians.
- October 27 – Stock markets around the world crash because of a global economic crisis scare. The Dow Jones Industrial Average follows suit and plummets 554.26, or 7.18%, to 7,161.15. The points loss exceeds the loss from Black Monday. Officials at the New York Stock Exchange for the first time invoke the "circuit breaker" rule to stop trading.
- October 28 – In the U.S., the Dow Jones Industrial Average gains a record 337.17 points, closing at 7,498.32. One billion shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange for the first time ever.
- October 30 – In Newton, Massachusetts, British au pair Louise Woodward is found guilty of the baby-shaking death of 8-month-old Matthew Eappen.

## November

- November – The Unemployment Rate drops to 4.6%, the lowest since October 1973.
- November 10
  - Telecom companies WorldCom and MCI Communications announce a US\$37 billion merger to form MCI WorldCom (the largest merger in U.S. history).
  - A Fairfax, Virginia, jury finds Mir Qazi guilty of murdering 2 CIA employees in 1993.
- November 12 – Ramzi Yousef is found guilty of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.
- November 19 – In Des Moines, Iowa, Bobbi McCaughey gives birth to septuplets in the second known case where all 7 babies are born alive, and the first in which all survive infancy.
- November 27 – NASA's Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission is launched, the start of the satellite component of the Clouds and the Earth's Radiant Energy System.



November 12:  
Ramzi Yousef  
guilty of planning  
the 1993 World  
Trade Center  
bombing

## December

- December 1 – Michael Carneal opens fire on a prayer group at Heath High School in West Paducah, Kentucky, killing 3 and injuring 5.
- December 3 – In Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, representatives from 121 countries sign a treaty prohibiting the manufacture and deployment of anti-personnel land mines. However, the United States, the People's Republic of China, and Russia do not sign the treaty.
- December 19 – James Cameron's *Titanic*, the highest-grossing film of all time until *Avatar* (2009), premiers in the US.

## Ongoing

- Iraqi no-fly zones (1991–2003)
- Dot-com bubble (c. 1995–c. 2000)

## Births

### January

- January 4 – Carmen LoPorto, actor
- January 8 – Jack Andraka, inventor
- January 14 – Joey Luthman, actor
- January 18 – Amber Lily, singer, actress, and dancer
- January 21 – Jeremy Shada, actor and singer
- January 23
  - Brennan Bailey, actor
  - Lexie Priessman, gymnast
- January 24
  - Jonah Bobo, actor
  - Dylan Riley Snyder, actor, singer, dancer



- January 27 – Peyton Ernst, artistic gymnast

## February

- February 7 – Matthew Gumley, actor
- February 8 – Kathryn Newton, actress
- February 9 – Molly Jepson, actress
- February 10 – Chloë Grace Moretz, actress
- February 13 – Prince Michael Jackson I, son of Michael Jackson
- [February 14] Cailin Richard
- February 12 – Shane Baumel, actor
- February 20 – Mitchie Brusco, skateboarder
- February 21 – Ben Rhodes, stock car racing driver
- February 25 – Isabelle Fuhrman, actress
- February 26 – Aidan Gould, actor

## March

- March 9 – Jessica Rogers, Brazilian-born swimming
- March 10 – Uriah Shelton, actor and singer
- March 14 – Simone Biles, artistic gymnast
- March 16 – Tyrel Jackson Williams, actor
- March 17 – Katie Ledecky, swimmer
- March 18 – Ciara Bravo actress and singer
- March 19 – Jahniqne Dessaline, track and field runner

## April

- April 12
  - Jacob Clemente, actor and dancer
  - Katelyn Ohashi, artistic gymnast

## May

- May 1 – Ariel Gade, actress
- May 2 – Perla Haney-Jardine, Brazilian-born actress
- May 9 – Zane Huett, actor
- May 12 – Odeya Rush, Israeli-born actress
- May 14 – Riley Griffiths, actor
- May 15 – Precious Doe, murder victim (died 2001)
- May 28 – Benni Cinkle, musician
- May 30
  - Peter Lenz, amateur motorcycle racer (died 2010)
  - Jake Short, actor

## June

- June 11 – John Hunter Nemechek, stock car racing driver
- June 20 – Maria Lark, Russian-born actress
- June 21 – Rebecca Black, singer

## July

- July 13 – Leo Howard, actor
- July 20 – Billi Bruno, actress
- July 22 – Field Cate, actor
- July 23 – Faresa Kapisi, track and field athlete

## August

- August 2 – Christina Robinson, actress
- August 5
  - Adam Irigoyen actor
  - Olivia Holt, actress
- August 10 – Kylie Jenner, model
- August 12 – Jordan Brown
- August 16 – Greyson Chance, singer
- August 19 – Joseph Castanon, actor and singer
- August 25 – Madison Desch, artistic gymnast

## September

- September 3 – Shavar McIntosh, actor
- September 10 – Leah Keiser, figure skater

## October

- October 4 – Brenden Foster, (died 2008)
- October 8
  - Bella Thorne, actress, dancer, singer, and model
- October 13
  - Daphne Blunt, actress
  - Aaron Refvem, actor
- October 15 – Adora Svitak, prodigy and author
- October 28 – Sierra McCormick, actress
- October 31 – Sydney Park, actress

## November

- November 1
  - Max Burkholder, actor
  - Alex Wolff, actor and musician
- November 11 – Nicole Axelrod, actress
- November 13 – Brent and Shane Kinsman, twin actors
- November 17 – Zach Bonner, philanthropist and founder of the non-profit charity Little Red Wagon Foundation
- November 19
  - The McCaughey septuplets
  - Rachel Parsons, ice dancer

## December

- December 11
  - Alexis Beucler, artistic gymnast
  - Ben Cook, actor
- December 15 – Stefania LaVie Owen, actress

## Full date unknown

- Milivi Adams (died 2002)
- Amanda Balon, actress, vocalist and dancer
- Ryan Carson, entrepreneur
- Thomas Horn, actor
- Lexi Peters, first female ice hockey player to appear in an EA Sports NHL Hockey video game

## Deaths

- January 1 – Townes Van Zandt, Country-folk music singer-songwriter (b. 1944)
- January 20 – Curt Flood, baseball player and sportscaster (b. 1938)
- January 24 – Dr. Jerry Graham, American wrestler and trainer (b. 1921)
- March 4 – Carey Loftin, actor and stuntman (b. 1914)
- March 9 – The Notorious B.I.G., rapper and murder victim (b. 1972)
- April 21 – Thomas H. D. Mahoney, professor and politician (b. 1913)
- May 17 – James Bennett Griffin, archaeologist and academic (b. 1905)
- September 9 – Burgess Meredith, actor (b. 1907)
- September 27 – Adriana Marines, murder victim (b. 1992)
- November 13 – Dawud M. Mu'Min, murderer (b. 1953)

## See also

- 1997 in American television
- List of American films of 1997

## References

- ↑ "William Rehnquist Biography". *biography.com*. A&E Television Networks. Retrieved 28 February 2016.

## External links

- Media related to 1997 in the United States at Wikimedia Commons

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