

Harry S. Truman

33rd President, 1945–1953

Vice President: Alben W. Barkley

Born: May 8, 1884, in Lamar, Missouri

Died: December 26, 1972

Party: Democrat

Parents: John Anderson Truman and Martha Ellen Young

First Lady: Elizabeth (Bess) Virginia Wallace

Child: Margaret

Nickname: Man from Independence

Famous Firsts:

- He was the first president to take office during wartime.
- He was the first president to travel underwater in a modern submarine and was the first and only president to use the atomic bomb on another country.

Achievements:

- He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1934 and reelected in 1940.
- Truman represented the U.S. at the signing of the United Nations' charter in June 1945.
- He signed the NATO treaty for mutual defense among 12 nations.
- On March 13, 1947 Truman issued his policy for “containment” of Communism, later called the Truman Doctrine.
- When the Soviets blockaded West Berlin in 1948, Truman ordered an airlift to the city. Constant shuttles kept the West Berliners supplied with food, coal, and necessities.
- His Fair Deal increased Social Security benefits, raised the minimum wage from 40 cents to 75 cents per hour, and appropriated money for constructing low-income housing.
- He fired General MacArthur after MacArthur publicly voiced his unhappiness with Truman's refusal to allow a war with China.
- Truman began the fight to integrate schools.
- He appointed the first African American federal judge.
- He ended segregation in the army, navy, and marines.

Interesting Facts:

- Truman served as an artillery officer in WW I.
- He kept a sign on his desk that read, “The buck stops here.” Truman was known for his feisty character and occasional use of foul language.
- As a child he had to wear thick glasses. Because the glasses were expensive, he was not allowed to play contact sports and took piano lessons instead.
- After serving in WW I, he opened a men's clothing store in Kansas City.
- In the 1948 election, the *Chicago Tribune* ran a headline, “Dewey Defeats Truman.” However, Truman won the election.
- He did not have a middle name. The S. was only an initial.

