

Under British Rule

1765 -1774

Stamp Act

Boston Massacre

Boston Tea Party

First Continental Congress

Battles of Lex & Concord

In Revolt

1775 -1782

Crossing the Delaware

Battle of Saratoga

British Surrender at Yorktown

American Independence

1783 -1791

Constitutional Convention

Shay's Rebellion

First U.S. Congress convenes

George Washington elected president



The Virginia Resolves

Patrick Henry's resolutions challenged Parliament's authority to tax the colonies, transforming scattered frustration into a constitutional argument for self-government.

Newspapers connected thirteen colonies into a common political conversation. Patriot writers like Samuel Adams authored articles in the Boston Gazette to spread ideas of liberty and resistance throughout America.

The Press

The Pulpit

Clergymen framed liberty as a moral responsibility, encouraging Americans in their sermons to view resistance to tyranny as consistent with faith.



Cheap, widely circulated pamphlets brought constitutional debates to ordinary Americans and helped create a shared language of rights and liberty.

Political Pamphlets

Olive Branch Petition

The colonies' final appeal for reconciliation demonstrated that independence was not the original goal — but Britain's rejection made separation increasingly thinkable.



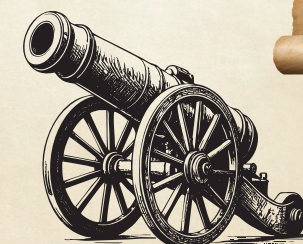
Thomas Paine transformed independence from a radical idea into a popular cause, persuading thousands that Americans could govern themselves.

Common Sense

Declaration of Independence

America's first national constitution united the states under a common government, turning the ideal of independence into a functioning political experiment.

Articles of Confederation



Benjamin Franklin and American diplomats secured French military support, proving the Revolution had become an international cause with a real chance of success.

Treaty of Alliance

Treaty of Paris recognizes American Independence

Great Britain formally recognized American independence, turning a revolutionary claim into an accepted political reality.



Essays by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay, and their Anti-Federalist opponents sparked a national debate over liberty and self-government.

Federalist & Anti-Federalist Papers

U.S. Constitution

The Constitution established a durable framework for republican self-government, balancing liberty with effective national institutions.



The Bill of Rights guaranteed fundamental freedoms and placed clear limits on government power, reinforcing the principle that rights belong to the people.

Bill of Rights