



# TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER  
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## VOTING RIGHTS CARDS

TEACHERS: PLEASE CUT THIS TIMELINE INTO A SET OF STRIPS, OR VOTING RIGHTS CARDS AND DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS.

### 1776–1789

The Articles of Confederation and the Constitution leave to the states the power to decide who gets to vote.

### 1790

Enslaved men and women are denied the right to vote in all 13 states. Free women are denied the right to vote in 12 of 13 states.

Free men of color are denied the right to vote in 3 of 13 states.

### 1790–1820

Four states change their laws, taking the right to vote away from men of color.

Massachusetts changes its laws, taking the right to vote away from most Native American men. New Jersey changes its laws, taking the right to vote away from women.

### 1821–1830

States change their laws, expanding the right to vote for white men.

### 1831–1844

Three more states change their laws, taking the right to vote away from Black and Native American men.

### 1845–1864

States expand voting rights for white men. The last property requirement for white men is lifted. New York votes to keep property restrictions in place for Black voters.

### 1848

The federal government expands voting rights for some Mexican Americans living in some Southwestern states and territories.

### 1870

The 15th Amendment is ratified: Black men gain the right to vote throughout the United States.

**1865–1874**

When there aren't enough polling places, lines get very long very quickly. Too few polling places in cities, or distant polling places in rural areas, can mean that voting might take almost an entire day.

**1875–1885**

Congress denies voting rights to Chinese American men.

The Supreme Court upholds the denial of voting rights to Native American men.

**1886–1900**

Former Confederate states continue to deny the vote to Black men. States deny voting rights to more people convicted of crimes.

**1901–1919**

Every former Confederate state now denies Black men their right to vote through a poll tax. Western territories and states deny voting rights to people who don't speak English.

Western states and territories (along with Michigan and New York) expand voting rights for women.

**1920**

The 19th Amendment is ratified: Women are legally granted the right to vote throughout the United States.

**1921–1940**

Jim Crow laws continue to deny Black men the right to vote throughout the South.

Court cases and some state laws continue to refuse the right to vote to Native Americans.

**1941–1960**

New federal laws open citizenship to Asian Americans.

States throughout the country restrict voting rights with literacy tests; The Supreme Court rules that this is constitutional.

**1961**

The 23rd Amendment is ratified: Residents of Washington, D.C. gain the right to vote.

**1964**

The 24th Amendment is ratified: Poll taxes are now unconstitutional.

**1965**

The Voting Rights Act Passes: All Black people of all ages—not just men—can exercise their right to vote throughout the South for the first time.

**1971**

The 26th Amendment is ratified: The voting age is lowered to 18.

**1970–1975**

The Voting Rights Act is expanded: People who don't speak English have their right to vote protected.

**1984**

Federal law expands voting rights for people with disabilities.

**2000**

The Supreme Court rules against allowing Puerto Ricans to vote for President.

**2002**

The U.S. Senate votes not to expand the right to vote to those convicted of felonies.

**2000–present**

Voter ID requirements expand across the U.S.

**2013**

The Supreme Court overturns some parts of the Voting Rights Act.

**2014–present**

States formerly restricted by the Voting Rights Act pass laws restricting voting.

**2015–present**

States allow automatic voter registration, registering voters when they interact with government agencies like public assistance programs or the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).