

## Vice President of the United States (President of the Senate) The United States Senate

[Chapter 1: Introduction](#)

[Chapter 2: Constitutional Origins & Structural Changes](#)

[Chapter 3: The Individuals](#)

[Chapter 4: Complete List of Vice Presidents](#)

### Introduction

Holding the least understood, most ridiculed, and most often ignored constitutional office in the federal government, American vice presidents have included some remarkable individuals. Fourteen of the former vice presidents became president of the United States—more than half of them after a president had died. One defeated the sitting president with whom he served. One murdered a man and became a fugitive. One joined the Confederate army and led an invasion of Washington, D.C. One was the wealthiest banker of his era. Three received the Nobel Peace Prize and one composed a popular melody. One served as a corporal in the Coast Guard while vice president. One had cities in Oregon and Texas named after him. Two resigned from the office. Two were never elected by the people. One was the target of a failed assassination plot. Another was mobbed in his car while on a goodwill mission. Seven died in office—one in his room in the U.S. Capitol and two fatally stricken while on their way to preside over the Senate. And one piano-playing vice president suffered political repercussions from a photograph showing him playing that instrument while a famous movie actress posed seductively on top of it.

As is apparent from such examples, the men who served as vice president of the United States varied greatly in their talents and aptitude for the post. What they generally had in common was political ambition and experience in public office. Most hoped the position would prove a stepping stone to the presidency, but some—older and near the close of their careers—simply hoped that it would offer a quiet refuge from the pressures and turmoil of political life.

The stories of these diverse individuals illustrate the development of the vice presidency itself—that colorful, important, and routinely disparaged American political institution.

### Constitutional Origins & Structural Changes

#### Electoral system

Our Constitution's framers created the vice presidency almost as an afterthought. In setting up a system for electing presidents, they devised an electoral college and provided that each of its members was to vote for two persons, "of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves." In those days when loyalty to one's state was stronger than to the new nation, the framers recognized that individual electors might be inclined to choose a leader from their own immediate

political circle, creating the danger of a crippling deadlock, as no one candidate would win a plurality of all votes cast. By being required to select one candidate from outside their own states, electors would be compelled to look for individuals of national stature. Under the system the framers created, the candidate receiving the most electoral votes would be president. The one coming in second would be vice president.

In the election of 1800, however, the constitutional system for electing presidents broke down, as both Jefferson and Aaron Burr received the same number of electoral votes. This impasse threw the contest into the House of Representatives, where for thirty-five separate ballots, neither candidate was able to gain a majority. When the stalemate was finally broken, the House elected Jefferson president, thus making Aaron Burr our third vice president. Within four years of this deadlocked election, Congress had passed, and the necessary number of states had ratified, the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution, instituting the present system wherein electors cast separate ballots for president and for vice president.

### **Presidential succession**

Although the office of vice president did not exist under the Continental Congresses or the Articles of Confederation, the concept of a concurrently elected successor to the executive was not without precedent for the framers of the Constitution in 1787. Prior to the Revolution, lieutenant governors presided over the governors' councils of the royal colonies—which, in their legislative capacities, functioned as upper houses. John Adams was certainly familiar with this arrangement, since the lieutenant governor presided over the upper house in his own state of Massachusetts. After the states declared their independence, they adopted new constitutions, retaining, in some instances, earlier forms recast to meet current needs. As Alexander Hamilton noted in *The Federalist* No. 68, New York's 1777 constitution provided for "a Lieutenant Governor chosen by the people at large, who presides in the senate, and is the constitutional substitute for the Governor in casualties similar to those, which would authorise the vice president to exercise the authorities and discharge the duties of the president." The U.S. Constitution established the office of vice president primarily to provide a successor in the event of the president's death, disability, or resignation.

The document, however, was vague about the way that presidential succession would work, stating only that, in cases of presidential death or disability, the "Powers and Duties of the said Office . . . shall devolve on the Vice President" (Article II, section 1). What did "devolve" mean? Would the vice president become acting president until another was chosen, or would he become president in his own right? A half century would pass before the nation would have to address that murky constitutional language. Although the Constitution's framers kept their intentions about presidential succession shrouded in ambiguity, they left no doubt about vice-presidential succession. There was to be none. "[I]n the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of the President of the United States" the Senate would simply choose a president *pro tempore*.

The framers' failure to provide a method for filling a vice-presidential vacancy continued to plague the nation. In 1792 Congress made a first stab at addressing the problem by adopting the Presidential Succession Act, providing that, if a president should die when there was no vice president, the Senate president pro tempore and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in that order, would succeed to the office. In 1886, responding to a concern that few presidents pro tempore had executive branch experience, Congress altered the line of succession to substitute for the congressional officials cabinet officers in order of rank, starting with the secretary of state. In 1947, after the vice presidency had been vacant for most of a presidential term, Congress again changed the line of succession. Concerned that cabinet officers had not been elected, it named the House Speaker as the first official to succeed if a president died during a vacancy in the vice presidency, followed by the president pro tempore.

Finally, after the death of President John F. Kennedy in 1963 and the resulting vice-presidential vacancy, Congress debated a constitutional amendment related to the structure of the vice presidency. In 1967, the Twenty-fifth Amendment, addressing presidential vacancy and disability, became part of our Constitution. The absence of any provision for filling a vice-presidential vacancy had become intolerable in the modern era. Added impetus for the change came from a growing public concern at the time about the advanced ages of President pro tempore Carl Hayden, who was 80, and House Speaker John W. McCormack, who was 76. The amendment states that the president may appoint a vice president to fill a vacancy in that office, subject to approval by both houses of Congress. Before a decade had passed, the provision was used twice, first in 1973 when President Richard M. Nixon appointed Gerald R. Ford to replace Spiro Agnew, who had resigned, and again in 1974, with the appointment of Nelson Rockefeller after Nixon himself resigned and Ford became president. The amendment also sets forth very specifically the steps that would permit the vice president to serve as acting president if a president becomes "unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office." Each of these changes further reflected the increased importance of the office.

### **Vice-Presidential Duties**

The framers also devoted scant attention to the vice president's duties, providing only that he "shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be evenly divided" (Article I, section 3). In practice, the number of times vice presidents have exercised this right has varied greatly. John Adams holds the record at 29 votes, followed closely by John C. Calhoun with 28. Since the 1870s, however, no vice president has cast as many as 10 tie-breaking votes. While vice presidents have used their votes chiefly on legislative issues, they have also broken ties on the election of Senate officers, as well as on the appointment of committees in 1881 when the parties were evenly represented in the Senate.

The vice president's other constitutionally mandated duty was to receive from the states the tally of electoral ballots cast for president and vice president and to open the certificates "in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives," so that the

total votes could be counted (Article II, section 1). Only a few happy vice presidents—John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Martin Van Buren, and George H.W. Bush—had the pleasure of announcing their own election as president. Many more were chagrined to announce the choice of a rival candidate for the office.

Several framers ultimately refused to sign the Constitution, in part because they viewed the vice president's legislative role as a violation of the separation of powers doctrine. Elbridge Gerry, who would later serve as vice president, declared that the framers "might as well put the President himself as head of the legislature." Others thought the office unnecessary but agreed with Connecticut delegate Roger Sherman that "if the vice-President were not to be President of the Senate, he would be without employment, and some member [of the Senate, acting as presiding officer] must be deprived of his vote."

The first two vice presidents, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, did much to shape the nature of the office and set many precedents. During most of the 19th century, the degree of influence and the role played within the Senate depended chiefly on the personality and inclinations of the individual involved. Some had great parliamentary skill and presided well, while others found the task boring, were incapable of maintaining order, or chose to spend most of their time away from Washington, leaving the duty to a president pro tempore. Some made an effort to preside fairly, while others used their position to promote the political agenda of the administration.

During the 20th century, the role of the vice president has evolved into more of an executive branch position. Now, the vice president is usually seen as an integral part of a president's administration and presides over the Senate only on ceremonial occasions or when a tie-breaking vote may be needed. Yet, even though the nature of the job has changed, it is still greatly affected by the personality and skills of the individual incumbent.

## **The Individuals**

### **Political Experience**

Most of our former vice presidents have brought to that office significant public service experience, including as members of Congress or state governors. Some came to their role as president of the Senate already familiar with the body, having served as U.S. senators. Several vice presidents later returned to serve again in the Senate, among them former President Andrew Johnson. Two vice presidents, George Clinton and John C. Calhoun, held the office under two different presidents.

Of the 14 vice presidents who fulfilled their ambition by achieving the presidency, eight succeeded to the office on the death of a president, and four of these were later elected president. Two vice presidents, Hannibal Hamlin and Henry Wallace, were dropped from the ticket after their first term, only to see their successors become president months after taking office, when the assassination of Abraham Lincoln made Andrew Johnson president and the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt raised Harry Truman to the presidency. Similarly, when Spiro Agnew resigned, he was replaced under the 25th Amendment by

Gerald R. Ford, who became president when Richard M. Nixon resigned less than a year later.

The vice presidency was generally held by men of mature years, with most of them in their 50s or 60s when they took office. The youngest, John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky, was 36 at the beginning of his term. At 72, Alben Barkley, another Kentuckian, was the oldest when his term began.

### **The First Two Vice Presidents: Adams and Jefferson**

The nation's first vice presidents were men of extraordinary ability. Both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson gained the office as runners-up in presidential contests, with the support of those who believed they were amply qualified to hold the top office. Each recognized, in assuming this new and as yet loosely defined position, that his actions would set precedents for future vice presidents. But one precedent established by Adams and Jefferson would not be repeated for over three decades; although both men won election as president immediately following their terms as vice president, no sitting vice president would repeat this pattern until 1836, when Martin Van Buren succeeded Andrew Jackson. The gap thereafter was even longer. More than 150 years elapsed before George H.W. Bush won the presidency in 1988 at the conclusion of his eight years as Ronald Reagan's vice president.

During his two vice-presidential terms, Adams maintained a cordial relationship with the president, who sought his advice only occasionally. In the Senate, Adams played a more active role, particularly during his first term. On at least one occasion, he persuaded senators to vote against legislation he opposed, and he frequently lectured the body on procedural and policy matters. He supported Washington's policies by casting 29 tie-breaking votes, a number that no successor has equaled.

Thomas Jefferson, learning in 1797 that he had been elected vice president, expressed his pleasure at remaining close to his beloved Monticello. "A more tranquil and unoffending station could not have been found for me. It will give me philosophical evenings in the winter [while at the Senate] and rural days in the summer [at Monticello]." Unlike Adams, who shared the political beliefs of the president with whom he served, Jefferson and President Adams belonged to different political parties. Although two later vice presidents, George Clinton and John C. Calhoun, joined with anti-administration forces in their efforts to prevent the reelection of the presidents with whom they served, Jefferson's situation would prove to be unique in the nation's history. No one expected Jefferson to be Adams' principal assistant. Instead, he devoted his four-year term to preparing himself for the 1800 presidential election and to drafting a guidebook on legislative procedure. Jefferson hoped that his *Manual of Parliamentary Practice* would allow him and his successors to preside over the Senate with fairness, intelligence, and consistency. That classic guide has retained its usefulness to both the Senate and the House of Representatives through the intervening two centuries.

## Nineteenth-Century Vice Presidents

Adoption of the 12th Amendment, together with the strategy employed by the Republicans in their successful effort to capture the presidency in 1800—and to retain it for the next quarter century—proved to have a serious impact on the overall quality of individuals drawn to the vice presidency.

Aaron Burr, whose refusal to defer to Jefferson had precipitated the electoral crisis of 1800, became one of the most maligned and mistrusted figures of his era and, without question, the most controversial vice president of the early republic. He was also a man of extraordinary ability, and a key player in New York politics—a consideration of overriding importance for Republicans, given the fact that New York's electoral votes accounted for over 15 percent of the total needed to achieve an electoral majority.

Burr was the first of a series of vice presidents who hailed from the northern states, chosen more for their ability to bring geographical balance to presidential tickets headed by Virginia Republicans than for their capacity to serve as president. During the quarter century that the "Virginia dynasty" presidents (Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe) held sway, the vice presidency was the province of men widely regarded as party hacks or men in the twilight of illustrious careers. Much of the scholarship on the vice presidency makes but passing mention of these individuals, or focuses on their obvious shortcomings. But these vice presidents (Burr, George Clinton, Elbridge Gerry, and Daniel D. Tompkins)—all of them New Yorkers, with the single exception of Elbridge Gerry, a Massachusetts man—helped cement the "Virginia-New York" alliance that enabled the Jeffersonian Republicans to control the presidency for six consecutive terms. Their ties to local and state party organizations, which they maintained during their vice-presidential terms, helped ensure the continued allegiance of northern Republicans. For the most part, these vice presidents presided over the Senate with an easy or indifferent hand, while a series of presidents *pro tempore* attended to administrative matters at the beginning and end of each legislative session.

John C. Calhoun's vice presidency stands in vivid contrast to the experience of his immediate predecessors. He accepted the second office, under President John Quincy Adams, after his 1824 presidential bid failed. A man of formidable intellect and energy, Calhoun approached his legislative duties with a gravity, dedication, and concern for maintaining order not seen since the time of Adams and Jefferson. A scrupulous guardian of the Senate's written rules, he disdained its unwritten customs and practices. After a quarter century of ineffective or incapacitated vice presidents, the Senate chafed under Calhoun's tutelage and began a lengthy examination of the role of its presiding officer. Calhoun also served as President Andrew Jackson's first vice president, from 1829 to 1833, but his endorsement of "nullification" effectively killed his chances of becoming president. In 1836, his successor and rival, Martin Van Buren, became the first vice president since Jefferson to win the presidency.

Richard Mentor Johnson, Martin Van Buren's vice president, came to the office along a unique path not yet followed by any subsequent vice president. The 12th Amendment provides that if no vice-presidential candidate receives a majority, the Senate shall

decide between the two highest vote getters. A controversial figure who had openly acknowledged his slave mistress and mulatto daughters and devoted himself more to the customers of his tavern than to his Senate duties, Johnson received one electoral vote less than the majority needed to elect. The Senate therefore met on February 8, 1837, and elected Johnson by a vote of 33 to 16.

Johnson's successor, John Tyler, wrote an important chapter in American presidential and vice-presidential history in 1841 when William Henry Harrison became the first president to die in office. Interpreting the Constitution in a way that might have surprised its framers, Vice President Tyler refused to consider himself as acting president. What "devolved" on him at Harrison's death were not the "powers and duties" of the presidential office, he contended, but the office itself. Tyler boldly claimed the presidency, its full \$25,000 salary (vice presidents were paid only \$5,000), and all its prerogatives. Congressional leaders and members of Harrison's cabinet who were inclined to challenge Tyler eventually set aside their concerns in the face of the accomplished fact. Nine years later, when Vice President Millard Fillmore succeeded to the presidency after Zachary Taylor's death, no serious question was raised about the propriety of such a move.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the vice presidency remained essentially a legislative position. Those who held it rarely attended cabinet meetings or otherwise involved themselves in executive branch business. Their usefulness to the president generally ended with the election. While those who had served in Congress might offer helpful political information and connections to a presidential candidate, or might attract electoral votes in marginal states, their status and value evaporated after inauguration day. In fact, as political circumstances altered during their first term, some presidents began considering a new running mate for the reelection campaign. Abraham Lincoln, for example, had no need of Vice President Hannibal Hamlin of Maine for a second term, since his state was certain to vote to reelect Lincoln in 1864. Success being less assured in the border state of Tennessee, party leaders chose Senator Andrew Johnson to replace Hamlin in the second position.

Relegated to presiding over the Senate, a few 19th-century vice presidents took that task seriously. Men such as George Dallas, Levi Morton, and Garret Hobart studied the Senate's rules and precedents and presided most effectively. Others, such as Henry Wilson—Ulysses Grant's second vice president—spent their time as they pleased. As vice president, Wilson wrote a three-volume history of slavery before dying in his Capitol office.

The vice presidency in the 19<sup>th</sup> century seldom led to the White House, because vice presidents of the era were rarely men of presidential stature. Of the 21 individuals who held that office from 1805 to 1899, only Martin Van Buren managed to be elected president. Four others achieved the presidency only because the incumbent died, and none of those four "accidental presidents" subsequently won election in his own right.

## Twentieth-Century Vice Presidents

The 20<sup>th</sup> century began without a vice president. Vice President Garret Hobart had died in November 1899, leaving the office vacant, as it had been on 10 previous occasions for periods ranging from a few months to nearly four years. The nation had gotten along just fine. No one much noticed Hobart's absence.

People noticed the next vice president. Cowboy, scholar, naturalist, and impetuous enthusiast for numerous ideas and causes, Theodore Roosevelt owed his nomination to the desire of New York state political bosses to get him out of the state's politics. The former Rough Rider held presidential ambitions and worried that the job could be "a steppingstone to . . . oblivion." He also felt that he lacked the financial resources needed to entertain on the grand scale expected of his immediate predecessors. Roosevelt argued in vain that the party should find someone else, but Republican leaders wanted him, believing he would bring a new kind of glamour and excitement to President William McKinley's candidacy for reelection. When Roosevelt's magnetic presence at the national convention fired the enthusiasm of his partisans, the nomination was his. Roosevelt then defied conventional practice by waging an active national campaign for the ticket, publicizing the Republican cause in a way that President McKinley could not. Had not an assassin's bullet in September 1901, which killed President McKinley, propelled Roosevelt to the White House, his impact on the vice presidency during a four-year term would most likely have been profound. In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt became the first vice president who succeeded to the presidency to be elected president in his own right.

For the next 40 years, the role of the office grew slowly but perceptibly. Party leaders rather than presidential candidates continued to make vice-presidential selections to balance the ticket, often choosing someone from a different party faction who was not personally close to the presidential nominee. In fact, Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Herbert Hoover protested the individuals selected to be their running mates. The feeling was often mutual. When Charles Curtis gave the customary vice-presidential inaugural address in the Senate Chamber, he omitted any reference to his running mate, Herbert Hoover. A few minutes later, President Hoover returned the favor by neglecting to mention Curtis in his official inaugural remarks on the Capitol's east portico.

The principal 20<sup>th</sup>-century growth in the vice president's role occurred when the national government assumed a greater presence in American life, beginning with the New Deal era and extending through the cold war years. That era brought to the vice presidency such major political leaders as House Speaker John "Cactus Jack" Garner and Senate Majority Leaders Alben Barkley and Lyndon Johnson. This distinguished cast of elected vice presidents also included Senators Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, Hubert Humphrey, Walter Mondale, and Al Gore. The group also includes George H. W. Bush, whose previous experience ranged from the House of Representatives to the Central Intelligence Agency. With the exception of Garner and possibly Truman, these men



were selected not by party leaders but by the presidential candidates themselves. Competence and compatibility became the most sought-after qualities in a running mate. These characteristics were especially evident in the Harry Truman-Alben Barkley and William Clinton-Al Gore tickets, both of which set aside the traditional selection considerations of geographical and ideological balance.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the focus of the vice presidency shifted dramatically from being mainly a legislative position to a predominately executive post. As modern-era presidents began playing an increasing role as legislative agenda setters, their vice presidents regularly attended cabinet meetings and received executive assignments. Vice presidents represented their presidents' administrations on Capitol Hill, served on the National Security Council, chaired special commissions, acted as high-level representatives of the government to foreign heads of state, and assumed countless other chores—great and trivial—at the president's direction. Beginning with Lyndon Johnson, they have occupied spacious quarters in the Executive Office Building and assembled staffs of specialists to extend their reach and influence. Walter Mondale expanded the vice president's role as presidential adviser, establishing the tradition of weekly lunches with the president, and subsequent vice presidents have continued to be active participants in their administrations.











Expansion of the office did not come without a cost, however. In assuming substantive policy responsibilities, vice presidents often ran afoul of cabinet secretaries whose territories they invaded. As administration lobbyists, they also irritated members of Congress. In 1969, President Nixon pledged to give his vice president a significant policymaking role and—for the first time—an office in the White House itself. Spiro Agnew was determined to make the most of that role and to expand his legislative functions as well. Since he lacked previous legislative experience, he had the Senate parliamentarian tutor him on the intricacies of Senate floor procedure. Soon he began to inject himself into the course of Senate proceedings, contrary to the well-worn practice that constrained his predecessors. During the debate over the Anti-Ballistic-Missile Treaty, Agnew approached Idaho Republican Senator Len Jordan and asked how he was going to vote. "You can't tell me how to vote!" said the shocked senator. "You can't twist my arm!" At the next regular luncheon of Republican senators, Jordan accused Agnew of violating the separation of powers by lobbying on the Senate floor, and announced the "Jordan Rule." Under his rule, if the vice president tried to lobby him on anything, the senator would automatically vote the other way. Agnew concluded from this experience, "After trying for a while to get along with the Senate, I decided I would go down to the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue and try playing the executive game."

### **The Vice Presidency Today**

In the modern era, each individual vice president has shaped the office to meet his interests and the needs of the president. Increasingly, the office has become more associated with the duties and responsibilities of the executive branch, while maintaining its ties to the legislature through the vice president's constitutional role as "president of the Senate."

The shift of the vice presidency from the legislative to the executive branch reached its pinnacle under President George W. Bush, when Richard Cheney emerged as “more than a vice president.” Having previously served as a presidential chief of staff, Cheney redefined his office by taking on more of the day-to-day managerial responsibilities of the presidency. This fit the inclinations of a president who preferred to act as a chief executive officer who made policy decisions, and delegated to his vice president the details of policymaking. During the 2008 presidential election, however, candidates from both parties rejected his model, suggesting the return to a more traditional role for the vice president.










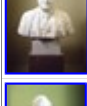

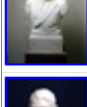
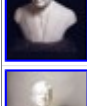
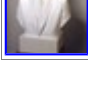
### Complete List of Vice Presidents

|   | Name/Party  | Presidency        | Term   |
|---|---|-------------------|--|
|    | <a href="#">John Adams</a> (F)                        | George Washington | 1789-1797  |
|    | <a href="#">Thomas Jefferson</a> <sup>[1]</sup> (R)   | John Adams        | 1797-1801  |
|    | <a href="#">Aaron Burr</a> <sup>[2]</sup> (R)         | Thomas Jefferson  | 1801-1805  |
|   | <a href="#">George Clinton</a> (R)                    | Thomas Jefferson  | 1805-1809  |
|  | <a href="#">George Clinton</a> (R)                    | James Madison     | 1809-1812; died in office April 20, 1812; vice presidency remained vacant until 1813.    |
|  | <a href="#">Elbridge Gerry</a> (R)                    | James Madison     | 1813-1814; died in office November 23, 1814; vice presidency remained vacant until 1817. |
|  | <a href="#">Daniel D. Tompkins</a> <sup>[3]</sup> (R) | James Monroe      | 1817-1825  |
|  | <a href="#">John C. Calhoun</a> <sup>[4]</sup> (NR)   | John Quincy Adams | 1825-1829  |
|  | <a href="#">John C. Calhoun</a> (D)                   | Andrew Jackson    | 1829-1832; resigned December 28, 1832; vice presidency remained vacant until 1833.       |
|  | <a href="#">Martin Van Buren</a> <sup>[5]</sup> (D)   | Andrew Jackson    | 1833-1837  |

Source URL: [http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice\\_President.htm#1](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice_President.htm#1)  
 Saylor URL: <http://www.saylor.org/courses/polsc332/#5.3>

|   |   |                     |  |
|---|---|---------------------|--|
|    | <a href="#">Richard Mentor Johnson</a> <sup>[6]</sup> (D) | Martin Van Buren    | 1837-1841  |
|    | <a href="#">John Tyler</a> <sup>[7]</sup> (D)             | William H. Harrison | 1841; succeeded to presidency on April 6, 1841; vice presidency remained vacant until 1845.      |
|    | <a href="#">George Mifflin Dallas</a> (D)                 | James K. Polk       | 1845-1849  |
|    | <a href="#">Millard Fillmore</a> (W)                      | Zachary Taylor      | 1849-1850; succeeded to presidency on July 10, 1850; vice presidency remained vacant until 1853. |
|    | <a href="#">William Rufus King</a> (D)                    | Franklin Pierce     | 1853; died in office April 18, 1853; vice presidency remained vacant until 1857.                 |
|    | <a href="#">John C. Breckinridge</a> (D)                  | James Buchanan      | 1857-1861  |
|    | <a href="#">Hannibal Hamlin</a> (R)                       | Abraham Lincoln     | 1861-1865  |
|  | <a href="#">Andrew Johnson</a> <sup>[8]</sup> (D)         | Abraham Lincoln     | 1865; succeeded to presidency on April 15, 1865; vice presidency remained vacant until 1869.     |
|  | <a href="#">Schuyler Colfax</a> (R)                       | Ulysses S. Grant    | 1869-1873  |
|  | <a href="#">Henry Wilson</a> (R)                          | Ulysses S. Grant    | 1873-1875; died in office on November 22, 1875; vice presidency remained vacant until 1877.      |
|  | <a href="#">William A. Wheeler</a> (R)                    | Rutherford B. Hayes | 1877-1881  |
|  | <a href="#">Chester A. Arthur</a> (R)                     | James A. Garfield   | 1881; succeeded to presidency on September 20, 1881; vice presidency remained vacant until 1885. |
|  | <a href="#">Thomas A. Hendricks</a> (D)                   | Grover Cleveland    | 1885; died in office on November 25, 1885; vice presidency remained vacant until 1889.           |
|  | <a href="#">Levi P. Morton</a> (R)                        | Benjamin Harrison   | 1889-1893  |

Source URL: [http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice\\_President.htm#1](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice_President.htm#1)  
Saylor URL: <http://www.saylor.org/courses/polsc332/#5.3>

|   |  |                    |   |
|---|--|--------------------|---|
|    | <a href="#">Adlai E. Stevenson</a> (D)   | Grover Cleveland   | 1893-1897   |
|    | <a href="#">Garret A. Hobart</a> (R)     | William McKinley   | 1897-1899; died in office on November 21, 1899; vice presidency remained vacant until 1901.       |
|    | <a href="#">Theodore Roosevelt</a> (R)   | William McKinley   | 1901; succeeded to presidency on September 14, 1901; vice presidency remained vacant until 1905.  |
|    | <a href="#">Charles W. Fairbanks</a> (R) | Theodore Roosevelt | 1905-1909   |
|    | <a href="#">James S. Sherman</a> (R)     | William H. Taft    | 1909-1912; died in office on October 30, 1912; vice presidency remained vacant until 1913.        |
|    | <a href="#">Thomas R. Marshall</a> (D)   | Woodrow Wilson     | 1913-1921   |
|   | <a href="#">Calvin Coolidge</a> (R)      | Warren G. Harding  | 1921-1923; succeeded to presidency on August 3, 1923; vice presidency remained vacant until 1925. |
|  | <a href="#">Charles G. Dawes</a> (R)     | Calvin Coolidge    | 1925-1929   |
|  | <a href="#">Charles Curtis</a> (R)       | Herbert C. Hoover  | 1929-1933   |
|  | <a href="#">John Nance Garner</a> (D)    | Franklin Roosevelt | 1933-1941   |
|  | <a href="#">Henry A. Wallace</a> (D)     | Franklin Roosevelt | 1941-1945   |
|  | <a href="#">Harry S. Truman</a> (D)      | Franklin Roosevelt | 1945; succeeded to presidency on April 12, 1945; vice presidency remained vacant until 1949.      |
|  | <a href="#">Alben W. Barkley</a> (D)     | Harry Truman       | 1949-1953   |
|  | <a href="#">Richard M. Nixon</a> (R)     | Dwight Eisenhower  | 1953-1961   |

Source URL: [http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice\\_President.htm#1](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice_President.htm#1)  
Saylor URL: <http://www.saylor.org/courses/polsc332/#5.3>

|   |   |                   |  |
|---|---|-------------------|--|
|    | <a href="#">Lyndon B. Johnson</a> (D)                     | John Kennedy      | 1961-1963; succeeded to presidency on November 22, 1963; vice presidency remained vacant until 1965.           |
|    | <a href="#">Hubert H. Humphrey</a> (D)                    | Lyndon B. Johnson | 1965-1969  |
|    | <a href="#">Spiro T. Agnew</a> (R)                        | Richard Nixon     | 1969-1973; resigned on October 10, 1973; vice presidency remained vacant until December 6, 1973.               |
|    | <a href="#">Gerald R. Ford</a> <sup>[9]</sup> (R)         | Richard Nixon     | 1973-1974; succeeded to presidency on August 9, 1974; vice presidency remained vacant until December 19, 1974. |
|    | <a href="#">Nelson A. Rockefeller</a> <sup>[10]</sup> (R) | Gerald Ford       | 1974-1977  |
|    | <a href="#">Walter F. Mondale</a> (D)                     | Jimmy Carter      | 1977-1981  |
|    | <a href="#">George H.W. Bush</a> (R)                      | Ronald Reagan     | 1981-1989  |
|   | <a href="#">J. Danforth Quayle</a> (R)                    | George H.W. Bush  | 1989-1993  |
|  | <a href="#">Albert A. Gore, Jr.</a> (D)                   | William Clinton   | 1993-2001  |
|  | <a href="#">Richard B. Cheney</a> (R)                     | George W. Bush    | 2001-2009  |
|  | <a href="#">Joseph R. Biden, Jr.</a> (D)                  | Barack Obama      | 2009-2017  |

### [Key to Political Party Abbreviations](#)

<sup>1</sup>Jefferson ran against Adams for president. Since he received the second highest electoral vote, he automatically became vice president under the system that existed at the time. "Republican" refers to two different parties widely separated in time: Jeffersonian Republicans of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the present Republican party, which was founded in the 1850s. The service dates should make clear which of the two parties is intended.

<sup>2</sup>In the nation's early years, electors did not differentiate between their votes for president and vice president, and the runner-up for president became vice president. In 1800 Jefferson and Burr each received 73 electoral votes, thus sending the election to the House of Representatives, which selected Jefferson as president. Burr automatically became vice president. This stalemate led to adoption of the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution in 1804.

<sup>3</sup>By 1820 the Federalist party was defunct, and a period of party realignment began that continued until 1840 when the Whig and Democratic parties became established. In the interim, party affiliations underwent considerable flux. For much of that time, the split fell between the supporters and opponents of Andrew Jackson. The pro-Jackson forces evolved into the Democratic party, while those opposing Jackson eventually coalesced into the Whig party.

<sup>4</sup>All the presidential candidates in 1824 were Republicans - although of varying persuasions - and Calhoun had support for the vice-presidency from both the Adams and Jackson camps. As no presidential candidate received the necessary majority of electoral votes, the House of Representatives made the decision. Calhoun, however, received a clear majority (182 of 260) of the vice-presidential electoral votes.

<sup>5</sup>The Democratic party was not yet formally created during Jackson's two terms as president but developed later from his supporters.

<sup>6</sup>Since no vice presidential candidate received a majority of the electoral vote in the 1836 election, the U.S. Senate elected Richard M. Johnson as vice president on February 8, 1837. Johnson's election is the only time the Senate has exercised this constitutional authority, granted by the Twelfth Amendment, which provides, "if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President."

<sup>7</sup>Although Tyler ran on the Whig ticket, he remained a Democrat throughout his life.

<sup>8</sup>Johnson was a War Democrat, who ran on a fusion ticket with Republican President Abraham Lincoln.

<sup>9</sup> Lyndon Johnson's succession to the presidency in 1963 following the assassination of John F. Kennedy left the vice presidency vacant for the sixteenth time in U.S. history. To avoid such a vacancy in the future, Congress passed and the states ratified the Twenty-fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1967, allowing for the appointment and confirmation of a new vice president if such a vacancy occurs. Gerald Ford became the first Vice President to be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Congress pursuant to the Twenty-fifth Amendment. Ford took the oath of office as vice president on December 6, 1973, and served until August 9, 1974, when he succeeded to the presidency.

<sup>10</sup>Following succession to the presidency after the resignation of Richard Nixon in 1974, Gerald Ford nominated Nelson Rockefeller as vice president, as prescribed by the Twenty-fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Rockefeller took the oath of office in the Senate chamber on December 19, 1974. Television cameras that had been recently installed in the Senate chamber in anticipation of a possible impeachment trial of Richard Nixon were instead used to televise the swearing in of Vice President Rockefeller. This marked the first time television cameras had been allowed in the Senate chamber.

---

Essays adapted from Mark O. Hatfield, with the Senate Historical Office, *Vice Presidents of the United States, 1789-1993* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1997).