

# Richard nixon

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



CATE LARSEN//PD7RICHARD NIXON11/26 Richard Nixon; the name alone brings to mind terrible words along the lines of scandal and failure. Nixon was the 37th president of the United States. He was also the first and last president to resign from office. However, the scandals leading to Nixon's resignation definitely overshadowed his humble beginnings and the accomplishments he made as president during the notorious decades of the Cold War. Richard Milhous Nixon was born to Francis and Hannah Nixon on January 9, 1913 on a lemon ranch his father built in Yorba Linda, California.

His early life was marked by financial hardship and by the deaths of his brothers. In 1922, after the failure of the ranch, Frank Nixon opened a grocery store in which the entire Nixon family worked in order to make ends meet. Nixon was always an active student, pursuing his interests in student government, drama, and football while living at home and helping to run the family's store. After marrying Pat Ryan in 1940, Nixon moved on to join a law firm and enlist in the Navy. Further careers prior to his Presidency involved Congressman and Senator.

As a two-term congressman, he served on the Education and Labor Committee and supported the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Act, which greatly restricted the powers of labor unions. Nixon moved on to take the role of the California Senate seat in 1950. Nixon's prominence as an anti-Communist soon brought him national attention. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Republican candidate for president in 1952, selected Nixon as his running mate. As Vice President, Nixon took on major duties in the Eisenhower Administration.

Under Eisenhower, Nixon made the vice presidency a visible and important office. In July 1959, Eisenhower sent Nixon to the Soviet Union to represent the United States at the opening of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, the Soviet capital. While touring the exhibit with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, the pair stopped at a model of an American kitchen. There they engaged in an improv discussion about the American standard of living that quickly escalated into an exchange over the two countries ideological and military strength.

Nixon's performance in the "kitchen debate" further raised his stature back in the United States. Nixon was so popular with the American people that he went on to run for President himself in 1960, but he lost by a narrow margin to John F. Kennedy. After losing another minor election Nixon publically announced his political career was over. The Nixon family moved to New York during what Nixon himself later referred to as his "wilderness years." In January 1968, Nixon decided to once again seek the nomination of the Republican Party for president.

Portraying himself as a figure of stability in a time of national upheaval, Nixon promised a return to traditional values and "law and order." Nixon shocked the world by not only winning his party's nomination but dominating the race and becoming the 37th president of the United States. Nixon's first term of presidency was full of accomplishments. Once in office, Nixon and his staff faced the problem of how to end the Vietnam War. Nixon made a nationally televised address on November 3, 1969, calling on Americans to

renew their confidence in the government and back his policy of seeking a negotiated peace in Vietnam.

Earlier that year, Nixon and his Defense Secretary Melvin Laird had unveiled the policy of "Vietnamization," which entailed reducing American troop levels in Vietnam and transferring the burden of fighting to South Vietnam. Nixon not only succeeded in ending American fighting in Vietnam but improved relations with the U. S. S. R. and China. Other accomplishments while in office included revenue sharing, the end of involuntary drafting of soldiers, new anti-crime laws, and a broad environmental program. He appointed Justices of conservative philosophy to the Supreme Court.

Nixon was also President during 1969 when the first men landed on the moon, a thrilling success for America against Russia in the race for space. But this wasn't the end of Nixon's success. Richard Nixon's most acclaimed achievements came in his quest for world stability. Nixon's foreign policy aimed to reduce international tensions by forging new links with old rivals. After being reelected by popular vote to a second term as president in 1972, Nixon paid visits in February to Beijing and Moscow where he reduced tensions with China and the U.

S. S. R, permanently opening communications with China. Nixon's trip was the first high-level contact between the United States and the People's Republic of China in more than twenty years, and it ushered in a new era of relations between Washington and Beijing. In May 1972 Nixon worked with Russia to produce the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, the first ever comprehensive and detailed nuclear weapons limitation pact between the

two superpowers. The Watergate scandal rocked Nixon's presidency which had thus far been successful.

During the election campaign of 1972, the Democratic National Committee had offices inside the Watergate building. On June 17, 1972, police caught five men trespassing inside the hotel. The men were attempting to hide bugs inside these offices. The FBI reported that the Watergate break-in was part of widespread spying and sabotage designed to help President Nixon win reelection. More and more people connected to Nixon resigned, were fired, or were convicted of crimes dealing with their involvement in the Watergate scandal. Meanwhile, the U.

S. Senate Watergate Committee began court hearings. When the Senate Watergate Committee and a case prosecutor asked to hear tape recordings of all office calls to Nixon's office since 1971, the President refused to hand the tapes over. Nixon's popularity slowly began to sap. The U. S. Supreme Court ordered Nixon to hand over tapes of 64 White House conversations. Days later, the House Judiciary Committee passed one of three articles required to impeach the President. The following month, on August 8, 1974, Nixon announced his resignation.

It was the first time in history that a U. S. president had resigned. Gerald Ford was sworn in as President the next day. Such controversies all but overshadowed Nixon's other initiatives in his second term, such as the signing of the Paris peace accords ending American involvement in the Vietnam war in January 1973; two summit meetings with Brezhnev, in June 1973 in Washington and in June and July 1974 in Moscow; and the

administration's efforts to secure a general peace in the Middle East following the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

However, faced with what seemed almost certain impeachment, Nixon announced on August 8, 1974, that he would resign the next day to begin "that process of healing which is so desperately needed in America." Vice President Ford took over as president of the United States. On September 8, 1974, Ford pardoned Nixon for "all offenses against the United States" which Nixon "has committed or may have committed or taken part in" during his presidency. In response, Nixon issued a statement in which he said that he regretted "not acting more decisively and forthrightly in dealing with Watergate. Thus ended the controversial presidency of Richard Nixon. Based on his humble beginnings and the major accomplishments he did make during his presidency, I personally do not view Nixon as a bad president. It's unfortunate that Watergate overshadowed all the good he did for our country. Being a successful president during such a controversial time as the Cold War was not easy, yet Nixon managed to escort America into a time of peace after decades of turmoil.

So the next time I think of Nixon, the name won't bring scandalous words to mind. Words of success will appear in their place because after all, Nixon was a human like the rest of us, and humans make mistakes. BIBLIOGRAPHY - 1) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard\\_Nixon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon) 2) <http://watergate.info/chronology/brief.shtml> 3) <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0760621.html>