

Jewish American Timeline

Pre Diaspora 2000 BC – 70 AD

- Circa 2000 BC – Abraham, the Biblical patriarch of Jewish culture is born in Mesopotamia
 - Abraham has three sons, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob
- Circa 1700 BC – Jacob enters Egypt with 70 families of Israel
- Circa 1500 BC – Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt in what is called the Exodus
 - This event traditionally marks the formation of Israelites as a people with twelve tribes named after Jacob's sons
- Circa 1450 BC – Israelites conquer Caanan under Joshua
- Circa 1000 BC – King Solomon begins building Temple at Jerusalem
- Circa 920 BC – Caanan is divided into Israel in the north and Judah in the south
- Circa 700 BC – Babylonians conquer Judah and Jews enter Babylonian captivity
- Circa 600 BC – Jews return to Israel and Judah
- 333 BC – Alexander the Great conquers Persia and Israel comes under the influence of Greece
- 63 BC – Rome conquers Israel

Roman Diaspora 70 AD – 1654

- 70 – Temple at Jerusalem is destroyed by the Romans and the Diaspora of Jews throughout the Roman Empire begins
 - Jews separate into two distinct cultural groups
 - Ashkenazi Jews live in northern and central Europe
 - Sephardic Jews inhabit the Middle East, Northern Africa and the Iberian Peninsula of Spain
 - By 1000 AD the Jewish population is estimated at 10 million world wide
- 1096 – During the first Crusade, Jewish communities flourishing along the Rhine and the Danube are utterly destroyed
- 1147 – During the Second Crusade, Jewish communities in France are destroyed
- 1290 – Jews are banished from England
- 1394 – Jews are driven out of France
- 1492 – Jews are expelled from Spain
- 1300 – 1600 – Jews disperse into eastern Europe and Muslim controlled Middle East

The First Wave of Jewish American Immigrants 1654 – 1820

- 1654 – The *Ste. Catherine* brings 23 refugee Jews from Brazil to New Amsterdam (present day New York) in North America

- 1655 – Influenced by wealthy Jewish merchants in Amsterdam, the Dutch West India Company allows Jewish settlers to live in New Netherlands
 - The new Jewish Americans are granted the rights to trade, travel and stand guard
- 1657 – Jewish Americans are granted the right of citizenship
- 1658 – Jewish immigrants arrive in Newport Rhode Island
- 1664 – New Amsterdam is taken by England and renamed New York
- 1670 – John Locke's *Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina* extends religious rights to Jewish Americans
- 1682 – More Jewish immigrants arrive in New York
- 1700 – Population of Jewish Americans reaches 300
- 1705 – Luis Moses Gomez wins a Denization Document from the Crown of England, granting the Gomez family the same privileges given to English colonials residing in New York
- **1714 – Luis Gomez opens up thriving fur trade with American Indians in upper New York**
- 1720 – Portuguese inquisition spurs Jewish immigration to North America
- 1730 – Jewish Americans build America's first Synagogue, Shearith Israel in Lower Manhattan
- 1733 – General James Oglethorpe founds Georgia Colony and allows in 41 Jewish settlers
- 1749 – Congregation Beth Elohim is established in Charleston, South Carolina
- 1763 – Congregation Jeshuat Israel is founded in Newport, Rhode Island
- 1775 – Francis Salvatore, elected to the South Carolina Provincial Congress, is the first Jewish American to hold elective office in America
- 1776 – American Independence declared from Great Britain
 - Jewish American population reaches 2000
 - Francis Salvador is the first Jewish American to die fighting for American freedom
 - **Leading Jewish American trader, Aaron Lopez, gives money and ships to support the American Revolution**
- **1778 – Haym Salomon helps finance the American Revolution**
- 1788 – The U.S. Constitution is ratified
 - Jewish Americans are permitted to hold Federal office
 - Mordecai Manuel Noah is appointed U.S. Consul at Tunis in Africa
- 1817 – Jewish Americans settle in Cincinnati, Ohio
- **1819 – Reformer and teacher, Rebecca Gratz Founds the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**
- 1820 – Jewish American population reaches 5000

The Second Wave of Jewish American Immigrants 1820 – 1880

- 1823 – The first Jewish American periodical, *The Jew*, is published

- 1838 – Leading reformer, Rebecca Gratz establishes Hebrew Sunday School in Philadelphia
- **1843 – B’nai B’rith is Founded in New York City by twelve Jewish Americans**
- **1844 – David Levy Yulee of Florida is the first Jewish American elected U.S. Senator**
 - Lewis Charles Levin from Pennsylvania is the first Jewish American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives
- 1848 – Revolutions and riots in Central Europe drive increased Jewish immigration to America
- 1850 – At the urging of Captain Uriah P. Levy, the U.S. Congress abolishes flogging in the United States Navy
- 1851 – Judah P. Benjamin is elected Senator from Louisiana
- **1860 – Uriah P. Levy becomes first Jewish Commodore in U.S. Navy**
- 1861 – American Civil War begins
- 1862 – Judah P. Benjamin is named Secretary of State for the Confederacy
 - General Ulysses S. Grant expels Jewish civilians from the Department of the Tennessee (Grant later rescinds the order)
 - President Abraham Lincoln appoints Jacob Frankel the first Jewish chaplain in the United States Army
- 1863 – General Edward S. Salomon becomes the hero of the Battle of Gettysburg when he leads his troops in repulsing Pickett’s Charge
- 1867 – Maimonides College, the first Rabbinical school in America, is founded in Philadelphia
- 1871 – First Jewish American newspaper, *The Watchman*, is published
- **1873 – Levi Strauss patents his trademark Levi Blue Jeans**
- 1875 – Isaac Mayer Wise founds Hebrew Union College, the Rabbinical seminary of the Reform Movement, in Cincinnati
- 1877 – Prominent Jewish American banker Joseph Seligman is barred from registering at the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga, New York, marking the growth of an anti-Semitic movement in the U.S.
- 1880 – The population of Jewish Americans reaches 250,000

The Third Wave of Jewish American Immigrants 1880 – 1924

- 1881 – May Laws restricting the movements and conduct of Jews are enacted in Russia
 - Pogroms (massacres) against Jews begin in Russia and Eastern Europe
- 1882 – The first Yiddish theater production is staged in New York
- 1886 – Statue of Liberty is unveiled in New York Harbor
- 1893 – Hannah G. Solomon founds National Council of Jewish Women in Chicago
- 1897 – Jewish Daily Forward is founded in New York
 - First Zionist Congress is held in Basel, Switzerland

- **1903 – Oscar Straus is the first Jewish American to hold a Cabinet position, when he is appointed Secretary of Labor and Commerce by President Theodore Roosevelt**
 - Emma Lazarus’s Poem is inscribed on the Statue of Liberty
 - Kishinev massacre spurs Jewish emigration from Russian Empire
- **1907 – Physicist Albert A. Michelson is the first American and the first Jewish American to win the Nobel Prize in Physics**
- **1912 – Magician Harry Houdini debuts his most famous escape trick, the Chinese Water Torture Cell**
- 1913 – Trial of Leo Frank in Atlanta leads to the founding of the B'nai B'rith’s Anti-Defamation League
 - National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods founded in Cincinnati
- 1915 – Leo Frank is lynched by a mob in Georgia, marking the beginning of a rise in anti-Semitism in the U.S.
- 1916 – Louis Brandeis is the first Jewish American appointed to the Supreme Court
- 1917 – Britain’s Balfour Declaration favors the establishment of a Jewish Homeland in Palestine
- 1918 – Jewish American Congress is Founded
- 1920 – Henry Ford begins his anti-Semitic campaign in his newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*
- 1922 – Mordecai M. Kaplan founds the Society for the Advancement of Judaism
- **1924 – George Gershwin Debuts Rhapsody in Blue**
 - The population of Jewish Americans reaches 4,000,000
 - The Immigration Act of 1924 severely limits immigration into the U.S.

Modern Jewish American History 1924 – Present

- **1925 – Edna Ferber is the first Jewish American to win the Pulitzer Prize in fiction**
 - Florence Prag Khan is the first Jewish American woman to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives
- **1927 – Al Jolson stars in Warner Brothers’ *The Jazz Singer*, a drama of Jewish American assimilation**
 - David Sarnoff Founds NBC radio
- **1933 – Physicist Albert Einstein leaves Germany for the United States**
- 1935 – President Franklin Delano Roosevelt appoints Henry Morgenthau Jr. Secretary of the Treasury
 - Nuremberg Laws deprive German Jews of their civic rights
 - **The Marx brothers release *A Night at the Opera***
- 1938 – Synagogues and Jewish businesses are destroyed throughout Germany on the night of November 9-10, which comes to be known as Kristallnacht
 - **Painter Max Weber Founds Linear Expressionism**
 - **Slugger Hank Greenberg hits 58 homeruns to lead the majors**
- **1939 – The *St. Louis* carrying 907 Jewish refugees is turned away from U.S. shores**

- **Albert Einstein pens letter urging U.S. government to develop the atomic bomb**
- David Sarnoff introduces television at New York World's Fair
- 1941 – U.S. enters World War II after Japan attacks Pearl Harbor
- **1942 – Physicist Robert Oppenheimer leads American team to develop the first atom bomb**
 - Nazi Germany begins Final Solution to murder all Jews in Europe
 - American Rabbi, Stephen Wise receives Reigner telegram confirming Nazi's Final Solution
- 1945 – World War II ends
 - **Bess Myerson is the First Jewish American to be crowned Miss America**
- **1946 – Aaron Copland debuts 3rd Symphony**
- **1947 – David Sarnoff launches NBC television**
- **1948 – Brandeis University is founded**
 - David Ben Gurion proclaims Israel an independent country
 - United States recognizes the existence of the State of Israel
- **1949 – Arthur Miller produces *Death of a Salesman***
- **1953 – Jonas Salk develops the first Polio Vaccine**
- **1954 – Admiral Hyman Rickover starts America's nuclear navy with the successful launch of the submarine, *U.S.S. Nautilus***
- 1957 – The U.S. has the world's largest Jewish population
- 1960 – Albert Sabin develops an oral polio vaccine
- **1963 – Betty Friedan writes *The Feminine Mystique* and launches the renewal of the women's movement**
- **1964 – Murray Gell-Mann postulates the existence of quarks**
- **1965 – Bob Dylan shocks the Newport Folk Festival by fusing 'rock and roll' with folk music**
 - **Sandy Koufax pitches perfect game and sets a major league record for hurling no hitters**
- 1967 – Israel defeats Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq in "Six Day War"
- **1968 – Mike Wallace establishes investigative TV journalism**
- 1969 – Physicist Murray Gell-Mann wins Nobel Prize for Physics
 - Golda Meir is elected Prime Minister of Israel
- **1970 – Author Judy Blume leads a change in children's literature, introducing more realistic themes**
 - Bella Abzug is elected to Congress
 - **Paul Samuelson wins Nobel Prize in Economics**
- **1972 – Mark Spitz wins seven gold medals while setting seven world records at the Munich Olympics**
 - Hebrew Union College ordains Sally J. Priesand as the first woman rabbi in the United States
 - Gloria Steinem founds *Ms. Magazine*
- 1973 – Henry Kissinger is the first Jewish American Secretary of State
- **1976 – Milton Friedman wins Nobel Prize in Economics**

- Saul Bellow wins the Nobel Prize for Literature
- 1977 – Rosalind Sussman Yalow wins Nobel Prize for Medicine
 - **Woody Allen wins Oscar for Annie Hall**
- 1978 – Isaac Bashevis Singer receives Nobel Prize for Literature
- 1983 – Jeffrey Brotman founds Costco
- 1986 – Elie Wiesel wins Nobel Peace Prize
- 1992 – Diane Feinstein and Barbra Boxer are the first Jewish American women elected to the U.S. Senate
- **1993 – Ruth Bader Ginsburg is appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court**
 - U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum opens
 - **Steven Spielberg wins the Oscar as best director for *Schindler's List***
- **1996 – Sergy Brin founds Internet giant Google**
- 1998 – Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance is founded
- 2000 – Senator Joseph Lieberman is the first Jewish American nominated for the vice president by a major political party
- **2004 – Mark Zuckerberg launches Facebook**
- **2008 – Paul Krugman wins the Nobel prize in Economics**
- **2009 – Jewish American Doll debuted by American Girl Company, Inc.**