

# Famous American Presidents

## Penny – Abraham Lincoln – (“Honest Abe” is also on the 5 dollar bill)



Abraham Lincoln was president of the United States from 1861 until his shocking assassination in 1865. The colorful stories about Lincoln's life really are true: He was born in a log cabin and grew up on the American frontier, educated himself by reading borrowed books, and worked splitting fence rails and clerking in a general store, and then as a country lawyer, long before he became president. He served in the Illinois General

Assembly for eight years and in the U.S. House of Representatives for one term (1847-49) before his election as the nation's first Republican president in 1860. As president he is best remembered for leading the US through the Civil War and freeing slaves with the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation; for delivering the Gettysburg Address, the most famous speech in American history; and for his tragic assassination by John Wilkes Booth.



## Nickel – Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson was the third president of the United States and one of the writers of the Declaration of Independence. One person said Thomas Jefferson could "calculate an eclipse, survey an estate, tie an artery, plan an edifice, try a cause, break a horse, dance a minuet, and play the violin."

Besides serving two terms as president, Jefferson served as vice-president, secretary of state, minister to France, congressman, governor of Virginia; he also started the University of Virginia and served as president of the American Philosophical Society. For all that, Jefferson is best remembered as a strong supporter of human rights and the lead writer of the Declaration of Independence. High points of his presidency include the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon and the exploration of the west by Lewis and Clark.



## Dime – Franklin D. Roosevelt

President Franklin D. Roosevelt managed to pull Americans out of the Great Depression and lead them to victory in World War II. His support of an active federal government shaped American politics through the rest of the 20th century. FDR's package of government-supported public works and social programs was known collectively as the New Deal. Roosevelt was so popular he was elected four times -- a long run which led to the passage of the 22nd Amendment, restricting presidents to two terms. He died in office only a few months into his fourth term.



## Quarter – George Washington – (He is also on the 1 dollar bill)

George Washington is often called "the father of his country" for his crucial role in fighting for, creating and leading the United States of America in its earliest days. Washington was a surveyor, farmer and soldier who rose to command the Colonial



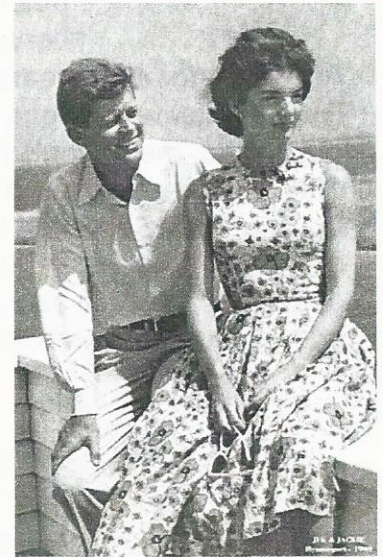
forces in the Revolutionary War. He held this army together -- most famously during a bitterly cold winter at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in 1777-78 -- and eventually led them to victory over the British. His success in the war made him a tremendously popular figure in America even after he retired to his farm at Mount Vernon in 1783. He was the natural choice to serve as the country's first president in 1789 after the new United States Constitution was approved. He served two terms, refused a third, and returned to his Virginia farm. In 1798 he was again commissioned as Commander in Chief of the Army, a title he held until his death 18 months later.



### Half Dollar – John F. Kennedy

John F. Kennedy's 1963 assassination was one of the most shocking public events of the 20th century. Kennedy served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. A Democrat, "JFK" was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1946. In 1952 he moved up to the U.S. Senate. He married Jacqueline Bouvier on 12 September

1953; they had two children, Caroline and John Jr. (A third child, Patrick, was born in 1963 and died two days later.) JFK became President in 1960; he came into office with a reputation for youthful charm, impatience, intelligence and energy. Kennedy was shot to death by Lee Harvey Oswald during an open-car motorcade in Dallas, Texas on 22 November 1963; two days later, Harvey was shot and killed by another man, Jack Ruby.



### 20 Dollar Bill – Andrew Jackson

A veteran of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, Andrew Jackson was popularly known as "Old Hickory" for his ruggedness. He gained national fame when he ran the British out of New Orleans in 1815, and he governed the Florida territory from 1821-23. Elected to the U.S. Senate in 1823, he went on to win the 1828 presidential election. Jackson was re-elected in 1832, then followed the example of George Washington and chose not to seek a third term. Jackson, in ill health, returned to his estate in Tennessee. Jackson worked to limit the power of the wealthy and he was a strong supporter of states' rights against the federal government. His presidency included expansion in Texas, wars with the Indians (Native Americans) and his rejection of the Bank of the United States.

