

Key Events and Battles of the Civil War

Event	Date	Location	Significance
Lincoln elected president	November 1860	U.S.	Though winning in the electoral college, Lincoln's lack of a popular majority (1.9 million out of 4.7 million votes cast) is an indication of the problems he would face with a divided nation
South Carolina secedes	December 1860	South Carolina	On news of Lincoln's election, South Carolina (site of nullification crisis in the 1830s) seceded from the Union
Confederacy formed	February 1861	Montgomery, Alabama	Seven states (South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas) formed the Confederacy, wrote their own constitution, and planned for survival as an independent nation
Lincoln inaugurated	March 1861	Washington, D.C.	Lincoln entered Washington D.C. in disguise because of societal unrest. Southerners began seizing federal forts in the south.
Ft. Sumter attacked	April 1861	Charleston, South Carolina	Lincoln decided to send "provisions" to Ft. Sumter but South Carolina sees this as an aggressive action and fires on Federal troops (the south now seen as the aggressor)
1 st Battle of Bull Run (Manassas),	July 21, 1861	Northern Virginia	Gen. McDowell leads 30,000 Union soldiers against Gen. Johnston's 22,000 Southern troops in an attempt to crush the rebels and go "On to Richmond." South scored a resounding victory as Union troops fled back to Washington D.C. in disarray. McDowell was replaced by Gen. McClellan
Ft. Henry & Ft. Donelson	February 1862	Tennessee rivers	Gen. Grant captures two forts on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. Confederates forced out of Kentucky and yielded much of Tennessee
Monitor vs. Merrimac	March 1862	Off Hampton Roads, Virginia	First ironclad naval battle in history ended in a draw as the Merrimac withdrew after a daylong exchange of fire. Union blockade of South was maintained
Shiloh (Pittsburgh Landing)	April 1862	Tennessee	Grant overcame Southern forces with heavy casualties on each side: 13,000 Union, 11,000 for South
New Orleans	April 1862	Louisiana	Farragut seizes New Orleans for Union after boldly attacking Southern position. 11 Southern ships sunk
Peninsular Campaign (Yorktown, Seven Days' Battle, Fair Oaks)	March-July 1862	Southern Virginia	After continual prodding by Lincoln, McClellan decided to attack Richmond via the South. He moved his large army down the Potomac River, marched on Richmond, and then assumed a defensive position rather than pushing for victory. Gen. Lee takes command of Southern troops.
2nd battle of Bull Run (Manassas)	August 1862	Northern Virginia	McClellan replaced by Gen. Pope. Gen. Lee and Gen. Stonewall Jackson defeat Union troops again at Manassas and Pope is replaced by McClellan
Antietam	September 1862	Maryland	Heavily outnumbered, Lee's troops face McClellan in bloody fighting. Over 23,000 casualties (more than all previous American wars combined). Lee retreated to Virginia
Emancipation Proclamation	September 23, 1862	Washington, D.C.	With victory at Antietam, Lincoln announced that on 1/1/1863, all slaves in the rebelling states would be free. Does not affect border states. Forces European nations to recognize that choosing sides in the Civil War was to take a stand on slavery
Fredericksburg	December 1862	Central Virginia	Gen. Burnside attacks Lee's fortified position and suffers 10,000 casualties (to Lee's 5000).

Vicksburg	July 1863	Mississippi	After a long siege, Vicksburg surrendered to Grant. All of Mississippi River is now under Union control. South cut in half.
Gettysburg	July 1863	Pennsylvania	Over 165,000 soldiers participate in the largest battle in the Western Hemisphere. After three days of fighting, Lee retreated. Total casualties: 23,000 Union, 28,000 Confederates
Chattanooga	November 1863	Tennessee	Reinforced with troops from the East, Grant was able to push Southern troops back and prepare for an assault on Atlanta and the heart of the Confederacy
Grant promoted to Lt. General and given command of all Union troops	March 1864	Washington, D.C.	Grant prepared for an assault on Richmond. When Lincoln's Cabinet complained that Grant is a drunk and sought to interfere with his command, Lincoln gave him unconditional support and asked not to be notified of his plans.
Wilderness & Spotsylvania	May 1864	Central Virginia	Lee stops Union troops at the Wilderness, but Grant resumed march to Richmond. Though suffering huge losses (55,000 men to South's 31,000), Grant stated "I propose to fight on this line if it takes all summer"
Petersburg	June 1864-- April 1865	South of Richmond, Virginia	Grant focused on important railroad junction and communication outside Richmond. Long siege of Petersburg begins with troops living in trenches which stretched for 50 miles
Atlanta to Savannah	September-December 1864	Georgia	Gen. Sherman destroys Atlanta and then sends troops on 300 mile destructive "march to the sea." Railroads torn up, buildings destroyed, crops burned in an attempt to break the will of the South
Lee surrenders	April 9, 1865	Appomattox Court House, Virginia	Lee, refusing to see his troops suffer any further, surrenders to Grant. Southern troops given generous terms of surrender but Confederacy forced into unconditional surrender.