

3.4 Fighting for Independence

How did the United States manage to win the Revolutionary War?

Evaluate

Review Flashcards

Key Events of the American Revolution

The outcome of the [American Revolution](#) was a result of American tactics, international assistance, good fortune, and Americans' advantage of fighting in their own communities.

Americans lost the [Battle of Bunker Hill](#) because they ran out of ammunition. But they inflicted heavy casualties using unconventional tactics.

[George Washington](#)'s victory at the [Battle of Trenton](#) inspired a renewed faith in the rebels' prospects for winning the war.

General Gates's win for the Americans at the [Battle of Saratoga](#) convinced the French to support the colonists' rebellion with arms, troops, and ships.

After 1778, the British shifted the focus of the war to the South. They captured Charleston, South Carolina, but then made little progress.

The [Battle of Yorktown](#) was the final battle of the war. With the help of the French navy, the [Continental Army](#) trapped the British on a small peninsula at [Yorktown](#), Virginia, and bombarded them ceaselessly until General Cornwallis surrendered.

The [Treaty of Paris](#) guaranteed American independence from Britain.

Why Does It Matter?

Victory brought independence and began a new era for Americans.

Watch this video to learn more about the Revolutionary War.

Key Figures of the American Revolution

People of all walks of life participated in the American Revolution on one side or the other.

Many Americans remained loyal to Britain, and therefore were called [Loyalists](#).

[Benjamin Franklin](#) worked to persuade France to support the revolution. From 1778 on, France supplied soldiers and ships to the Americans.

Many women supported the army and [militias](#) as nurses, cooks, and seamstresses.

Civilians collected and passed on crucial information and provided the supplies needed by troops.

Writers such as Thomas Paine boosted [Patriot](#) morale and converted British Loyalists.

Over 20,000 African American soldiers fought for the British Army. Many were promised [emancipation](#); few received it.

Roughly 15,000 Native Americans fought on both sides of the war. For most, their main interest was to preserve their homelands.

Why Does It Matter?

Battles were only one aspect of a war that involved the entire society. Civilians, including women, all contributed to the Revolutionary cause. African Americans and Native Americans also contributed.

How did General Washington create a disciplined

army using a group of untrained colonists?

Unlikely Victors

Fighting against powerful, experienced British forces, American colonists used new tactics to gain advantages.

Instead of fighting in rows on empty fields, Americans relied on unconventional means, such as snipers and ambushes.

Washington's surprise crossing of the Delaware River the day after Christmas was key to the American victory at Trenton.

Despite the cold and the lack of adequate food and clothing, Washington's leadership enabled the Continental Army to maintain morale through the winter of 1777–1778 at [Valley Forge](#).

The military effort benefited from a national information network that relied on civilians.

Because of distance, the British suffered from poor communications and difficulty in supplying the troops.

Why Does It Matter?

The United States became an inspiration to others who lived under foreign domination. The Patriots' flexibility and determination have remained an inspiring example throughout the country's history.

The British army surrendered at Yorktown in 1781. This victory ended the American Revolution.

