



War of Independence: executive summary

Key dates, overview, and official resources

Summary sheet by France-USA-Net.Com (1775-1783).

Key dates

Apr. 19, 1775 : Lexington and Concord: war begins

July 4, 1776 : Declaration of Independence

Oct. 1777 : Saratoga: diplomatic turning point

Feb. 6, 1778 : Franco-American treaties

Sept. 5, 1781 : Chesapeake naval victory

Oct. 19, 1781 : Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown

Sept. 3, 1783 : Treaty of Paris

Americans / British / French comparison

Criterion	Americans	British	French
Command	George Washington	Howe, Clinton, Cornwallis	Rochambeau, de Grasse
Peak strength	~20,000 Continentals + militia	~40,000+ regulars	~6,000 land + fleet
Navy	Emerging force	Leading global navy	Decisive at Chesapeake (1781)
Strategic goal	Independence	Restore royal authority	Weaken Great Britain
Decisive contribution	Home ground, mobilization	Discipline, cities	Money, fleet, Yorktown

Official sources

NPS American Revolution : <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/americanrevolution/index.htm>

National Archives, Declaration : <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/declaration-of-independence>

National Archives, Treaty 1778 : <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/treaty-of-alliance-with-france>

Library of Congress : <https://www.loc.gov/collections/continental-congress-and-constitutional-convention/>