



THE BRITISH ACTS THAT LED TO REVOLUTION



After the French and Indian War, Britain made a string of new rules for the 13 colonies. The first, the Proclamation of 1763, was an order from King George III. The rest were laws, called acts, passed by Parliament. Some raised money to pay Britain's war debt and the cost of its soldiers in America. Others punished colonists who protested. Each one made more colonists angry.

	What it did	Why Britain made it	How colonists pushed back
Proclamation of 1763	Drew a line along the Appalachian Mountains and told colonists not to settle west of it; that land was kept for Native nations.	King George III issued it (it was not an act of Parliament) to keep peace with Native nations after Pontiac's War, when many nations attacked British forts.	Many colonists were angry because they had fought for that land; many settlers crossed the line anyway.
Sugar Act, 1764	Cut the tax on molasses from 6 pence to 3 pence a gallon but collected it; smugglers could be tried by a judge with no jury.	To raise money to help pay Britain's war debt and the cost of defending the colonies, and to stop smuggling.	Colonists said trials with no jury took away their right to a trial by jury; many merchants had smuggled to avoid the tax.
Quartering Act, 1765	Made colonies house British soldiers in barracks, inns or empty buildings and give them supplies such as firewood.	To house and supply the roughly 10,000 British soldiers kept in North America to guard the new lands.	The New York assembly refused to pay for everything the law asked.
Stamp Act, 1765	Taxed printed paper: newspapers, legal papers, licenses, pamphlets, playing cards and dice needed a stamp.	To raise money from the colonies to help pay for their defense and Britain's war debt.	"No taxation without representation"; the Stamp Act Congress; Sons of Liberty forced stamp agents to quit; a boycott. Ended in 1766.
Townshend Acts, 1767	Taxed glass, lead, paint, paper and tea brought into the colonies, and allowed writs of assistance to search ships, warehouses and homes.	To raise money to pay royal governors and judges, so they would not depend on colonial assemblies.	Another boycott; the Daughters of Liberty made homespun cloth. In 1770 Parliament ended every tax except the one on tea.
Tea Act, 1773	Let the British East India Company sell tea in the colonies more cheaply, but the price still included the tax on tea.	To help the East India Company, which had huge amounts of unsold tea.	Boston leaders would not let the tea be unloaded; on December 16, 1773, men dressed as Mohawk dumped 342 chests into Boston Harbor.
Intolerable Acts (Coercive Acts), 1774	The Boston Port Act closed Boston Harbor until the tea was paid for; other laws limited town meetings, let officials be tried elsewhere and housed soldiers in more buildings.	To punish Massachusetts for the Boston Tea Party and bring it under control; General Gage became governor.	Other colonies sent food to Boston; leaders from 12 colonies met at the First Continental Congress and agreed to stop trading with Britain.