

1848 – 1920

Women's Suffrage Timeline

The women's suffrage movement was a 72-year campaign that won American women the right to vote, culminating in the 19th Amendment in 1920.

1848 — **Seneca Falls Convention**

The first women's rights convention in the United States is held in Seneca Falls, New York, organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott.

> **Why it mattered:** *Seneca Falls launched the organized women's suffrage movement, adopting a Declaration of Sentiments that declared all men and women are created equal and demanded the right to vote.*

1851 — **Sojourner Truth Speaks**

Sojourner Truth, a formerly enslaved woman and abolitionist, delivers a powerful speech at a women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio.

> **Why it mattered:** *Truth connected the fight for women's rights to the fight against slavery — and challenged those who argued women were too weak or delicate to deserve equal rights.*

1869 — **The Movement Splits**

The women's suffrage movement divides into two organizations: one pushing for a federal constitutional amendment, the other working state by state.

> **Why it mattered:** *The split slowed progress for two decades, but both strategies ultimately contributed to winning the vote.*

1869 — **Wyoming Grants Women the Vote**

The Wyoming Territory becomes the first government in the United States to grant women the right to vote.

> **Why it mattered:** *Wyoming proved women's suffrage could work — and the territory kept it when it became a state in 1890, giving the movement a powerful model to point to.*

Women's Suffrage Timeline *continued*

1872 — **Susan B. Anthony Arrested**

Susan B. Anthony is arrested for casting a ballot in the presidential election, knowing it was illegal for women to vote, and is fined $100.

> **Why it mattered:** *Anthony's arrest and trial drew national attention to the injustice of excluding women from the vote and made her one of the movement's most famous champions.*

1890 — **Movement Reunites**

The two suffrage organizations merge into the National American Woman Suffrage Association, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and later Susan B. Anthony.

> **Why it mattered:** *The reunified movement regained momentum and became the main force pushing for a constitutional amendment to give women the vote.*

1912–16 — **States Grant Suffrage**

Several western and midwestern states grant women the right to vote, adding political pressure on Congress for a national amendment.

> **Why it mattered:** *As more states granted suffrage, women who could vote used their power to demand action from Congress — making the federal amendment increasingly hard to avoid.*

1917 — **White House Pickets**

Suffragists led by Alice Paul begin picketing the White House every day, the first group ever to do so, carrying silent protest banners.

> **Why it mattered:** *The pickets, and the brutal treatment of arrested protesters who were force-fed in prison, drew public sympathy and put intense pressure on President Wilson.*

1919 — **19th Amendment Passes Congress**

Congress passes the 19th Amendment — prohibiting denial of the vote based on sex — and sends it to the states for ratification.

> **Why it mattered:** *After 71 years of organizing, marching, petitioning, and protest, women's suffrage had finally cleared Congress.*

1920 — **19th Amendment Ratified**

Tennessee becomes the 36th and deciding state to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, making it the law of the land.

> **Why it mattered:** *The 19th Amendment roughly doubled the number of eligible American voters overnight — one of the greatest expansions of democracy in US history.*