

Chinese American Timeline

Ancient China

- 2100 BC – Bronze Age begins in China
- Circa 1500 BC - Chinese writing system invented
- 221 BC – China is unified for the first time under the Qin Dynasty

0 AD – Christ is Born

Chinese Contact North America

- 476 – Hwui Shan, a Buddhist monk, travels to the coast of present day California
- **600 – Li Yan Chu writes the first account of a Hwui Shan's exploration**
- Circa 850 – Chinese invent gunpowder
- 1431 – Chinese Admiral Zheng He sails to west coast of North America and trades with California's coastal Indians
- **1823 - Chinese Entrepreneur, Hung Tai, introduces sugar mills to Hawaii**
- 1842 – 1864 – Floods, famine and war engulf southern China, spurs immigration to the United States

1848 – Gold discovered at Sutter's Mill, California

The First Wave of Chinese Immigration Begins

- 1849 – First Chinese gold miners land in California
- 1850 – California imposes Foreign Miner's Tax on Chinese gold miners. The tax is ruled unconstitutional in 1870
- 1852 – 195 Chinese Contract Laborers land in Hawaii
- 1854 – People v. Hall rules that Chinese cannot give testimony in court against whites
- **1854 - Yung Wing graduates Yale and becomes the first Chinese American to graduate from a U. S. college**
- **1854 – Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, known as the Chinese 6 Companies, is formed**
- **1865 – Central Pacific Railroad Co. recruits Chinese workers for the first transcontinental railroad**
- 1869 – First transcontinental railroad completed
- 1879 – California's second constitution prevents municipalities and corporations from employing Chinese
- **1882 – Chinese Exclusion Act is passed by the United States Congress, suspending immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years**
- **1884 – Joseph and Mary Tape sue San Francisco school board to enroll their Chinese daughter Mamie in a public school**
- **1886 – In Yick Wo v. Hopkins Chinese Americans win suit against unfair regulation in San Francisco**
- 1892 – Geary Law renews Chinese Exclusion Act for another ten years
- 1898 – In United States v. Wong Kim Ark, the U.S. Supreme Court decides that Chinese born in the U.S. cannot be stripped of their citizenship

- First Chinese American newspaper, Wah Mei Sun Po (Chinese American News) is founded in Los Angeles by Mg Poon Chew
- 1904 – Chinese Exclusion Act extended indefinitely
- **1906 – San Francisco earthquake and fire destroys Chinatown**
 - Earthquake destroys immigration records, so Chinese immigrants and creates the opportunity for paper sons – immigrants who claim they are U.S. citizens and have the right to bring wives and children to America
- 1910 – Angel Island opens in San Francisco Bay as an official west coast immigration station
- **1911 – American citizen Sun Yat-Sen is elected first president of China**
- 1924 – Immigration Act virtually cuts off all Chinese immigration
- 1937 – Sino-Japanese war begins officially when Japanese troops invade Manchuria
- **1943 – The Chinese Exclusion Act is repealed**

The Second Wave of Chinese Immigration to the United States Begins

- **1946 – Wing F. Ong is elected to the Arizona House of Representatives**
- 1949 – Chinese Communists under Mao Tse Tung win control of Mainland China
 - Chinese Nationalists under General Chiang Kai Shek takeover Taiwan
 - U.S. breaks off diplomatic ties with People Republic of China
- 1952 - The Walter-McCarran Immigration and Naturalization Act repeals the Asian Exclusion Act of 1924 and allows a small token of Asians to immigrate to the U.S. with right of citizenship
- **1959 – Hiram Fong is sworn in as Hawaii's first United States Senator**
 - Judge Delbert Wong of Los Angeles is the first Chinese American appointed as judge in the continental United States
- 1965 - Immigration Act of 1965 allows the admission of 20,000 immigrants per year from China
- 1972 - President Richard Nixon's trip to the People's Republic of China opens up diplomatic relations with Communist China
- **1973 – Martial Artist and film actor Bruce Lee dies**
- **1974 – March Fong Eu is elected Secretary of State for California**
- **1976 – Samuel C.C. Ting wins Nobel Prize for Physics**
- 1979 – U.S. re-establishes diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China
- **1982 - Maya Ying Lin Designs the Vietnam War Memorial**
- **1983 - Andrew and Peggy Cherng Found Panda Express**
 - Lily Lee Chen of Monterey Park becomes the first Chinese American female to serve as Mayor of an American City
- **1985 - Yo-Yo Ma Wins First Grammy**
- **1989 - Amy Tan Writes *The Joy Luck Club***
 - Michael Chang wins the French Open
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- **1991 - John Sie Finds Cable powerhouse Starz Encore**
- **1994 - Jerry Yang Co-founds Yahoo**
- **1996 - *Time Magazine's* Man of the Year is AIDS Researcher David Ho**

- Michelle Kwan wins both the U.S. and World Championships in figure skating
- 1997 – Steven Chu wins Nobel Prize for Physics
 - Tiger Woods wins the Masters and the first of his major golf championships
- 1998 - Daniel C. Tsui wins Nobel Prize for Physics
- 2000 - Chinese American population is 2,879,636
- **2004 – Astronaut Dr. Leroy Chiao Votes from Space in the Presidential Election**
- 2005 – Steven Chen founds You Tube
- 2009 – Steven Chu named Secretary of Energy in President Obama’s Cabinet