



James Buchanan Summary

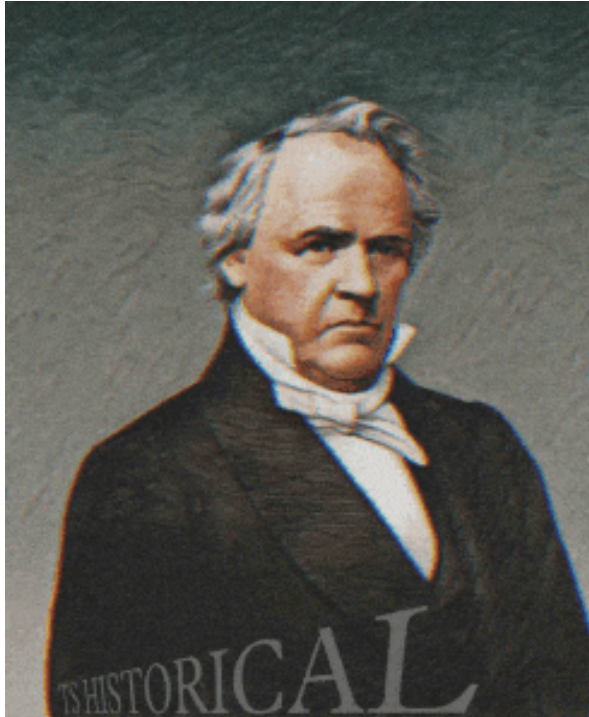
James Buchanan (1857–61) was the 15th [President of the United States of America](#). After being licensed to the law in 1812, he quickly built a prosperous legal business. He was chosen to the Pennsylvania parliament in 1814 and then worked in the **U.S. Household of Delegates (1821–31)**, the **U.S. Senator (1821–34)**, and the **Russian Foreign Ministry (1832–34)**. (1834–45). He served as minister of state in [President James K. Polk's](#) administration (1845–49).

He contributed to the Ostend Manifesto while serving as ambassador to Britain (1853–1856). He defeated **John C. Frémont** in the 1856 presidential election and won as a Democrat. Despite having a background in administration and law, he had the guts to address the slavery situation head-on and was unsure if Kansas qualified as a slave-holding territory.

[Abraham Lincoln](#) was able to prevail in the 1860 election as a result of the subsequent split in his movement. Despite condemning South Carolina's subsequent secession and sending soldiers to Fort Sumter, he did not take additional action to address the growing issue. The only governor who never got married was him.

Explore the full [list of Presidents in the United States](#) to understand their legacy and impact.

Fast Facts



James Buchanan (1857–61) was the 15th President of the United States of America

Born	April 23, 1791, Cove Gap, Pennsylvania
Died	June 1, 1868, in Lancaster near Pennsylvania
Wife	Bachelor (Never Married)
Parents	James Buchanan, Sr. > Elizabeth Spear



James Buchanan Early Life

James Buchanan sr. married **Elizabeth Speer**, of Scottish Presbyterian descent from the nationalist community, and was the parents of Buchanan. His dad had come to America in 1783 and had been employed as a storekeeper. After graduating from **Dickinson University** in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, around 1809, Buchanan went to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to pursue a legal education. After being licensed to the court in 1812, he quickly built a prosperous legal business. He entered politics because of his oratory talent.

Buchanan is still the sole president who has never been married. He got committed to **Ann C. Coleman**, a rich Pennsylvania father's child, around 1819 at 27 years old. He called off the wedding for an unclear reason, and Coleman passed away, presumably by suicide. When Buchanan was a congressman, he lived in housing with Senators William R. King from Alabama, a fellow bachelor. This caused some eyebrows to rise in Washington, but in keeping with the social mores of the day, the connection was kept private.

Harriet Lane, a 27-year-old niece, served as his hostess once James Buchanan was elected president. After her mom, Buchanan's sister, passed away when she turned twelve years old, Buchanan functioned as her protector and was in charge of her schooling. When he served as ambassador to Great Britain, he brought her along to [England](#), where she quickly grew acclimated to being put in the spotlight. She was well-liked in the capital of the [United States](#) and was given the moniker "**Democratic Princess**."

James Buchanan's Political Career in the Past

James Buchanan was a Conservative who participated in the Pennsylvania assembly (1814–16) and the U.S. Upper house (1821–31). In the 1820s, while his party fell apart, Buchanan joined the newly formed Democratic Establishment. He served as the American ambassador to St. Petersburg under the [Andrew Jackson](#) government from



1831 to 1833. He was a senatorial from 1834 to 1845 and the governor from 1845 to 1849 in the James K. Polk presidency. While Buchanan served as head of state, Texas was annexed, and the [Mexican-American conflict](#) ensued.

Although Buchanan had little impact on the conflict, he was more actively involved in the border disputes between Britain for Oregon. Notwithstanding the 1844 election ad's promise of "Fifty-four forty or battle," a truce was signed to end the conflict. Both times, the United States obtained substantial amounts of land. In 1844, Buchanan pursued the presidency's candidacy but eventually backed Polk. After failing to win the presidential bid after 1848, Buchanan left the public sector and didn't return until 1853, after President [Franklin Pierce](#) named him envoy to Britain.

Although he believed that enslavement was ethically wrong, Buchanan was inclined to support the South within Parliament. He did not get the nation to abolish the system by "introducing evils immeasurably greater." He believed that releasing the enslaved people and turning them into the new owners would be a larger crime, "ending slavery by the killing of a high-minded, and also the gallant race among men inside the South."

He supported this same Wilmot Proviso that banned the spread of slavery into American territories in 1846. He backed the **Agreement of 1850**, an effort to keep the number of Senate races evenly distributed across enslaved persons and independent states. He was a major contributor to the writing of the Ostend Manifesto, which suggested that America take Cuba off Spain when serving as ambassador to Britain when he was in [Europe](#).

James Buchanan's 1856 Presidential Campaign

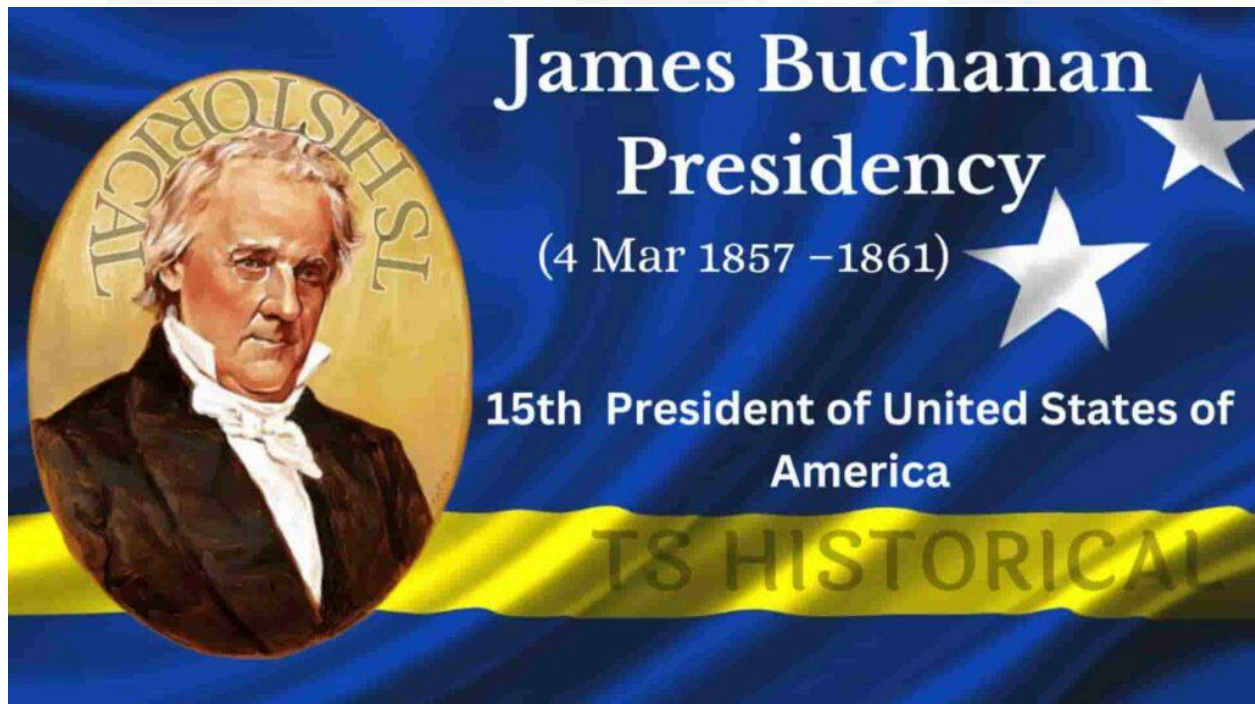
He had the opportunity to discreetly dodge the **Kansas-Nebraska Agreement** controversy that was then engulfing the nation in the slavery issue, thanks to his duty abroad. He didn't explicitly run for president, but he agreed to the campaign on his account. It mirrored his opinions in the National Party Convention's program, which included backing the **Runaway Slave Act**.

With the exception of Maryland and unites states that did not allow slavery, he captured each slave county and the president. Buchanan branded Republicans as a "destructive"



and "territorial" organization that had unjustly treated the south during his victory address.

James Buchanan's Presidency (1857–1861)



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Inauguration

By March 4, 1857, **James Buchanan became president** for the first time. In his inauguration speech, Buchanan vowed to hold office for just one term. To safeguard the rights of slaveholders in federal regions, he advocated for the adoption of national slave legislation. He made a reference to the Dred Scott Constitutional Court decision, which was still ongoing at the time and which he claimed would finally put an end to enslavement.



Personnel of James Buchanan

Four Confederate and three Midwesterners, most of whom were regarded as Southern supporters, made up Buchanan's administration. Most of Pierce's appointees were kept in place, while those with connections to Democratic rivals Pierce and Douglas were withdrawn. He alienated Breckinridge by failing to designate any supporters of Stephen A. Douglas, which caused division within the party.

Getting Involved With in Dred Scott Investigation

According to the petition, Congress lacks the authority under the constitution to forbid slave-holding. Chief Justice Taney issued the ruling rejecting the enslaved plaintiff's appeal for release two days following Buchanan's accession.

James Buchanan Crisis of 1857

Tennessee native Catron said that he most likely had to make the judgment on specific reasons public. A Pennsylvania member joined the high court Southern plurality when Buchanan urged him to do so, allowing the determination to be made public. The decision infuriated Northerners, who condemned it rather than shattering the Republican agenda.

The failure of 1,400 financial institutions and 5,000 enterprises signaled the start of the Panic of 1857. The panic started in the summertime of that year. Buchanan concurred with the people from the south who blamed excessive speculation for the economic disaster. He advised the states to limit the institutions to a grading of \$3 for \$1 of gold to lower the supply of paper and inflation.

James Buchanan Bloody Kansas

The **Kansas-Nebraska Agreement of 1854** established the Kansas Colony and allowed its residents to allow slavery. As a result, there was fighting among pro- and anti-slavery immigrants, leading to the "Bleeding Kansas" era. If Kansas is acknowledged as a free nation, some of those in Georgia and Mississippi have called



for independence. A majority of Kansas' citizens had to approve the state's charter before it could be presented to Congress for ratification as a territory.

His first action would have been to deny the new constitution of the pro-slavery Lecompton administration, something he did without calling for a vote on the issue. He sent federal officials to negotiate a deal that would have enabled him to approve a new constitution unless it did not include slavery.



James Buchanan Bloody Kansas

To get democratic support for the Lecompton Constitutional, **Patrick Henry Buchanan** offered privileges, favoritism positions, and even money in exchange for votes. Additionally, he sent a telegram denouncing the "communist regime" in Topeka and equating it to the Utah Mormons.

Northern States, Conservatives, and Know-Nothings opposed the legislation in the House. In return for embracing the LECOMPTON CONSTITUTION, the 1858 English



Act promised Kansans speedy independence and considerable public resources. Buchanan supported this proposal. Kansans resoundingly rejected the LECHAMPTON Convention in a vote in August 1858.

James Buchanan Voting for Midterms in 1858

The outcome of the Illinois assembly polls in 1859 determined whether William H. Douglas would be re-elected to Senator. In Illinois, Patrick Henry Buchanan campaigned runners for the assembly against the Conservatives and the Douglas Liberals, working via government patronage appointments. This demonstrated how much Buchanan disliked Douglas, and maybe it handed the election to the Republicans. Ultimately, the parliamentary elections were won by the Douglas Republicans, and Douglas was re-elected to the parliament.

In his view, these laws, which would've provided public lands for the construction of land-grant universities, were unlawful. Most of Buchanan's program was thwarted by the Democratically controlled Congress, and his repeals increased partisan strife.

James Buchanan Foreign Affairs

The goal of Congressman James Buchanan's initial international relations was to displace the United Kingdom as the dominant power in Latin America. After discussions involving the British, he persuaded them to hand up the Mosquito Coastal for Nicaragua and, indeed, the Bay Islanders to Honduras. The Paraguay voyage, which Buchanan had authorized in 1858 as retaliation for Paraguay shooting just on the USS River Witch, culminated in an explanation and compensation money from Paraguay.

James Buchanan Voting in 1860

Despite holding the lead after each vote, Douglas could not secure the 1860 Republican presidential nominee. Some people in the south disagreed with the outcome and instead put Chief Executive **Breckinridge** as their personal candidate. Due to his hatred of Douglas, Buchanan was unable to bring the party together and only grudgingly backed Breckenridge. In a race with four candidates—including John Bell of a Patriotic Union Party—Lincoln, a Democrat, prevailed.



Buchanan's rival **Winfield Scott**, the military's general in charge, forewarned him throughout October that at least seven counties would probably split from the nation as a result of Lincoln's victory. While he cautioned that there were few accessible troops, he advised that a sizable contingent of union soldiers and guns be sent to certain areas to guard federal land.

Congress had ignored requests for a more powerful militia since 1857 and permitted the army to deteriorate to a pitiful state. Buchanan disregarded Scott's advice because he disregarded Scott. Following Lincoln's victory, Buchanan gave War Secretary Floyd orders to bolster southern garrisons with almost throughout weapons and troops. However, Floyd convinced Buchanan to reverse the orders.

Congress had ignored requests for a more powerful militia until 1857 and permitted the military to deteriorate to a pitiful state. Buchanan gave War Chief Floyd the command to bolster southern garrisons with them through these troops and weapons, but Floyd convinced Buchanan to change his mind.

James Buchanan Secession

He argued that while states had no right to rebel, the national govt had no authority to stop them. The only solution he offered was "an interpretative addendum," which affirmed the legality of enslavement in the united states, the prohibition on the sale of runaway slaves, and self-government in the territories. Both the South and the North harshly denounced the speech for failing to put an end to independence.

In an effort to stop Southern territories from declaring independence from the Union, he tried to win over centrists in the Rural South. He advocated for changes to the constitution that prohibited enslavement in the cities and regions. Notwithstanding an accounting scandal, he declined to remove the Undersecretary of Department John B. Floyd but delivered weapons to the Confederate nations instead.

A new group of pro-Union, Southern-leaning cabinet ministers supplanted Buchanan's government. By January 5, Buchanan made the decision to deploy the *Glory of the Western*, carrying 250 soldiers and equipment, to relieve Fort Sumter. The vessel was obliged to head back toward the North without any soldiers or provisions since he



neglected to request Robert Anderson continue providing cover fire for that too. President-elect Lincoln refused Buchanan's request to covertly call for a nationwide vote on the subject of slavery.

James Buchanan Post-presidency and Death (1861–1868)

In letters to old coworkers, he stated that the Confederate assault on Fort Sumter signaled the commencement of the American National War and expressed his sympathy for the United. A condemning resolution put up by the Senate eventually failed.



James Buchanan Burial Place

In 1866, Mr. **James Buchanan's** Government on the Brink of Revolt was released. At the time of 77, he passed away from **aspiration pneumonia** in June 1868. He was buried



in Lancaster's Woodward Mount Burial. After catching sick, that swiftly got worse owing to his senior age. His autobiography was published.

Some Questions Regarding James Buchanan

How did James Buchanan handle the slave issue?

Abolishing slavery in whatsoever area won from Mexico inside the Mexican-American War was the Wilmot Proviso, which Buchanan supported in 1846. Southerners effectively opposed the Wilmot Proviso on his side.

Was James Buchanan seen as a successful leader?

Historians condemn his failure to stop the southern nations from seceding or to discuss the issue of enslavement. He is frequently considered the worst governor in American memory and is commonly regarded as one of the least desirable presidents.

What does James Buchanan have the most clout for?

The 15th Leader of the Free World, James Buchanan, was in office from 1857 until 1861, just before the American Revolutionary War. He is still the first president chosen to represent Pennsylvania and has remained single his whole life.