



## [The Reagan Era](#)

### **In A Nutshell**

Ronald Reagan won the U.S. presidency in 1980, at the end of a decade of humiliation and frustration for the American people. Using his affable personality as a potent political weapon, Reagan helped to restore confidence in the country's future and went on to convert millions of Americans to his conservative political ideology. During the 1980s, Reagan oversaw a sustained economic recovery, driven primarily by one of the great bull markets of all time on Wall Street. Soaring profits in the stock market minted millionaires by the thousands, lending the Reagan era a certain gold-rush aura as more people attained spectacular wealth than ever before in American history. Looking beyond America's borders, the 1980s brought first heightened tension and then unexpected victory in the decades-old Cold War with the Soviet Union; the peaceful collapse of the global Communist bloc Reagan once denounced as an "Evil Empire" stood as a monumental triumph in American foreign policy.

Economic and diplomatic successes notwithstanding, Reagan's presidency still had its flaws—a widening gulf between the rich and ordinary working Americans, some serious foreign-policy blunders, and worsening race relations. Despite these limitations, Reagan left office with high approval ratings and today many Americans rank him among the greatest presidents ever. Perhaps most importantly, Reagan's powerful ideology continues to shape the contours of American politics to the present day. There is a strong case to be made that we're all still living in the Age of Reagan today.

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## **Brain Snacks - Trivia**

Following his inauguration in 1980, Ronald Reagan redecorated the Oval Office by taking down the portrait of Democratic President Harry Truman and replacing it with a portrait of Republican Calvin Coolidge, who once declared that "The business of America is business." Ronald Reagan was the first divorced President of the United States.

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