



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

UF | **IFAS Extension**
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Rural Health

1.1. History of the Military

Authors

Stacy M. Phillips, MSW

Maria M. Rossi, PhD

Jon Parker, MAMFT, NCC, LPC, LMHC

Heidi Radunovich, PhD, Licensed Psychologist

Justin Foxworth HMCS (SW/AW/FMF), USN, Retired

Michelle A. Parisi, PhD RDN



A Brief History of the Military

The U.S. military was established during the American Revolution on June 14, 1775, with the first formal fighting force, the Continental Army. The Army, Navy, and Marine Corps were each established that year. The Coast Guard was established in 1790. The Air Force was established in 1947, and most recently, the Space Force was established in 2019 (Military.com, n.d.).

[U.S. Military History](https://www.military.com/history)

<https://www.military.com/history>.

The U.S. military is civilian controlled, and the ultimate authority is the President of the United States, who serves as the Armed Forces Commander in Chief in a civilian rather than a military capacity. This power is vested in him or her through Article II of the U.S. Constitution; Article I of the Constitution, however, gives the U.S. Congress the power to declare war.

This purposeful separation of powers instituted by the founding fathers underscored a fear of large standing armies and their potential to impede a free and democratic society. The U.S. military is an agency of the U.S. government, whose role is to implement the policies set by Congress and the Commander in Chief (U.S. Const. sec II, § 1).

Conscription, or universal military service (UMS), is the mandatory enlistment in a country's armed forces. It was also referred to as "*the draft*." The United States has used systems of conscription

since the Revolutionary War era and officially ended the draft in 1973. Since then, the U.S. military has been all-volunteer based. But all males are still required to submit their names just in case the draft is re-institutionalized during a time of need.

The major military conflicts the U.S. has been involved in are shown spans from 1775 to 2021 (Figure 1.1a).

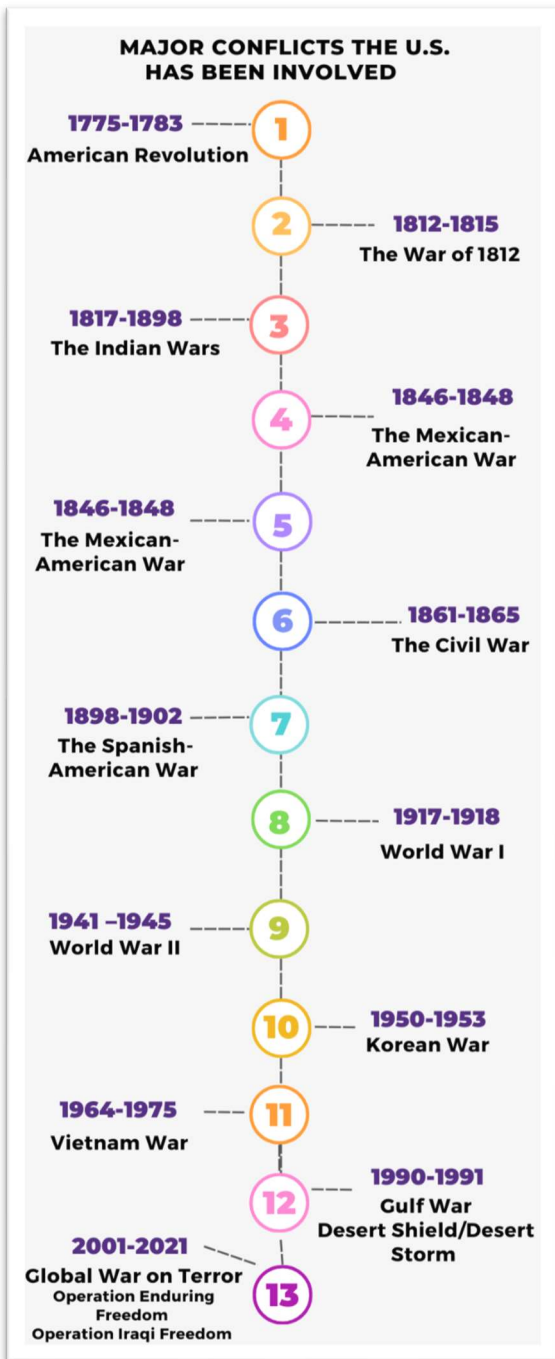


Figure 1.1a
Conflicts in which the U.S. Has Been Involved by Chronologic Order
Source:
Infoplease Staff, 2020

References

Infoplease Staff. (2020). Military Conflicts in U.S. History. Infoplease.com.

<https://www.infoplease.com/us/military/military-conflicts-us-history>

Military.com. (n.d.). U.S. Military History. Military.com. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from

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U.S. Constitution: Constitutional Annotated: Presidential Power and Commander in Chief Clause,

Section II, § 1. [https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artII-S2-C1-1-](https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artII-S2-C1-1-11/ALDE_00013473/)

[11/ALDE_00013473/](https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artII-S2-C1-1-11/ALDE_00013473/)