

Early Foundations & Pre 1960s

- 1867 Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, a German lawyer, publicly comes out as homosexual, advocating for the decriminalisation of homosexuality
- 1897 Magnus Hirschfeld, a German physician, founds the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, the first organisation to advocate for gay rights
- 1924 The Society for Human Rights, the first known gay rights organisation in the US, is founded by Henry Gerber in Chicago
- 1950 The Mattachine Society is founded in LA by Harry Hay & others, becoming one of the earliest sustained gay rights organisations in the US
- 1955 The Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organisation in the US, is founded in San Francisco by Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon

1960s: Early Activism & Stonewall

- 1962 Illinois becomes the first US state to decriminalise homosexual acts between consenting adults in private
- 1965 The first Reminder Day picket is held at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, organised by the Mattachine Society & other early LGBT groups
- 1966 The Compton's Cafeteria Riot occurs in San Francisco, one of the first recorded transgender riots in the United States.

1960s: Early Activism & Stonewall (cont)

- 1969 The Stonewall Riots begin on June 28 in New York City after a police raid at the Stonewall Inn. The riots are considered a pivotal event in the fight for LGBT rights, leading to the formation of many advocacy organizations.

1970s: The Movement Gains Momentum

- 1970 The first Gay Pride marches are held in New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago to commemorate the anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.
- 1973 The American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).
- 1974 Kathy Kozachenko becomes the first openly gay American elected to public office, winning a seat on the Ann Arbor, Michigan city council.
- 1977 Harvey Milk is elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, becoming one of the first openly gay elected officials in the U.S.
- 1978 Harvey Milk is assassinated along with Mayor George Moscone. The rainbow flag, designed by Gilbert Baker, is first used as a symbol of LGBT pride.
- 1979 The first National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights takes place, drawing an estimated 100,000 participants.

1980s: The AIDS Crisis & Increased Activism

- 1981 The first cases of AIDS are reported, initially referred to as GRID (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency). The epidemic has a profound impact on the gay community.
- 1982 Wisconsin becomes the first U.S. state to outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation.
- 1983 The U.S. Congress passes the first legislation to fund AIDS research and treatment.
- 1986 The Supreme Court upholds sodomy laws in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, ruling that consensual homosexual acts are not protected by the right to privacy.
- 1987 The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) is founded in New York City, using direct action to raise awareness and advocate for AIDS research and treatment.
- 1987 The second National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights draws hundreds of thousands of participants.

1990s: Legal Battles & Cultural Shifts

- 1993 "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is implemented, allowing gays and lesbians to serve in the military as long as they do not disclose their sexual orientation.
- 1996 The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is signed into law, defining marriage for federal purposes as the union of one man and one woman, and allowing states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages granted under the laws of other states.



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1990s: Legal Battles & Cultural Shifts (cont)

- 1998 Matthew Shepard, a gay student at the University of Wyoming, is brutally murdered, leading to increased awareness and advocacy for hate crime legislation.
- 1999 California becomes the first state to legalize domestic partnerships, providing same-sex couples with limited legal rights and benefits.

2000s: Marriage Equality & Legal Advances

- 2000 Vermont becomes the first state to legalize civil unions, granting same-sex couples similar rights to marriage.
- 2003 The Supreme Court overturns sodomy laws in *Lawrence v. Texas*, ruling that consensual sexual conduct is protected under the right to privacy.
- 2004 Massachusetts becomes the first U.S. state to legalize same-sex marriage following the state Supreme Court's decision in *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*.
- 2008 California voters pass Proposition 8, banning same-sex marriage, leading to legal battles and eventual overturning.
- 2009 President Barack Obama signs the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act into law, expanding federal hate crime laws to include crimes motivated by sexual orientation and gender identity.

2010s: Achieving Marriage Equality

- 2010 "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is repealed, allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the military.
- 2013 The Supreme Court strikes down DOMA in *United States v. Windsor*, recognizing the federal rights of legally married same-sex couples.
- 2013 The Supreme Court also rules on *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, effectively restoring same-sex marriage in California.
- 2015 The Supreme Court rules in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right nationwide, legalizing it across the United States.

2020s: Continuing Advocacy & New Challenges

- 2020 The Supreme Court rules in *Bostock v. Clayton County* that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- 2021 President Joe Biden signs executive orders aimed at preventing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in various areas, including housing, healthcare, and education.
- 2021 The Equality Act, which seeks to expand federal civil rights laws to explicitly include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity, is passed by the House of Representatives but faces challenges in the Senate.

2020s: Continuing Advocacy & New Challenges (cont)

- 2023 Continued advocacy for the Equality Act and other protections, as well as responses to legislative efforts in some states to restrict the rights of transgender individuals, especially in healthcare and sports.