George Washington (February 22, 1732 – December 14, 1799) was the commander of the Continental Army in the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783) and the first President of the United States of America (1789–1797). For his central role in the formation of the United States, he is often referred to as "the father of his country." The Continental Congress appointed Washington commander-in-chief of the American revolutionary forces in 1775. The following year, he forced the British out of Boston, lost New York City, and crossed the Delaware River in New Jersey, defeating the surprised enemy units later that year.

As a result of his strategy, Revolutionary forces captured the two main British combat armies at Saratoga and Yorktown. Negotiating with Congress, the colonial states, and French allies, he held together a tenuous army and a fragile nation amid the threats of disintegration and failure. Following the end of the war in 1783, King George III asked what Washington would do next and was told of rumors that he'd return to his farm; this prompted the king to state, "If he does that, he will be the greatest man in the world." Washington did return to private life and retired to his plantation at Mount Vernon.

He presided over the Philadelphia Convention that drafted the United States Constitution in 1787 because of general dissatisfaction with the Articles of Confederation. Washington became President of the United States in 1789 and established many of the customs and usages of the new government's executive department. He sought to create a nation capable of surviving in a world torn asunder by war between Britain and France. His unilateral Proclamation of Neutrality of 1793 provided a basis for avoiding any involvement in foreign conflicts. He supported plans to build a strong central government by funding the national debt, implementing an effective tax system, and creating a national bank.

Washington avoided the temptation of war and a decade of peace with Britain began with the

Jay Treaty in 1795; he used his prestige to get it ratified over intense opposition from the Jeffersonians. Although never officially joining the Federalist Party, he supported its programs and was its inspirational leader. Washington's farewell address was a primer on republican virtue and a stern warning against partisanship, sectionalism, and involvement in foreign wars.

Washington was awarded the very first Congressional Gold Medal with the Thanks of Congress.

Washington died in 1799, and the funeral oration delivered by Henry Lee stated that of all Americans, he was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."