

Vietnam Timeline

1953 The U.S. gives France \$350 million to fight Communism in Vietnam

1954 The French leave Vietnam after being defeated at the battle of Dien Bien Phu

1956 U.S. military advisors begin training the South Vietnamese army

1958 South Vietnamese Communists known as the Viet Cong begin battling the South Vietnamese government.



1959 The 1st American soldier, Major Dale Buis, is killed in Vietnam.

1962 The U.S. begins to use agent orange, a pesticide sprayed from airplanes, to kill the jungle.

August 2, 1964 The U.S.S. Maddox is attacked by Vietnamese boats while patrolling in the Gulf of Tonkin.

This event would later be known as the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

August 7, 1964 The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution is approved by Congress. It authorizes President Lyndon Johnson to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." This allows President Johnson to send thousands of U.S. soldiers to Vietnam.

1965 The U.S. begins heavy bombing of North Vietnam. This would be known as Operation Rolling Thunder and it would continue for 3 years.

1965 The 1st U.S. combat troops arrive in Vietnam. The 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, arrive in Vietnam to defend the US airfield at Danang.

1965 The 1st major battle between the U.S. and North Vietnam happens in the Ia Drang Valley. The U.S. wins. The book and movie **We Were Soldiers** is about this battle.

1965 The 1st protest by college students against the Vietnam War happens at the University of Michigan.



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1967 Martin Luther King Jr. speaks out against the Vietnam War.

1968 The Tet Offensive. North Vietnamese and Viet Cong soldiers attack every major city in South Vietnam. Within days the offensive is defeated by the U.S. 40,000 Communists are killed. But, for the 1st time, many in the government and media begin to question whether the U.S. can win the Vietnam War.

1968 The number of U.S. troops in Vietnam reaches 510,000

1968 My Lai Massacre. U.S. soldiers murder 347 civilians in the village of My Lai. Later, Lieutenant William Calley would be convicted of murder and sentence to life in prison for the killings.



1968 Lyndon Johnson announce he will not run for President again.

1968 Major violence occurs at the Democratic convention in Chicago. TV stations carry the chaos live as Chicago police and demonstrators battle.



1968 Richard Nixon is elected President.

1969 Vietnamization is announced. The U.S. will slowly begin to pull out of Vietnam and South Vietnam will carry the burden of defeating the Communists.

1970 A massive anti-war demonstration happens in Washington D.C.

1970 Dow chemical admits they knew about the dangers of agent orange. Today it is widely accepted that Agent Orange can cause health problems such as birth defects and cancer.

1970 4 students are shot killed by National Guardsmen during an anti-war protest at Kent State University.

1970 The draft is reinstated

1970 Peace talks begin between the U.S. and North Vietnam



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1971 The number of U.S. troops in Vietnam falls to 156,000

1972 In order to speed up peace talks the U.S. begins unrestricted bombing of cities in North Vietnam

1973 The U.S. and North Vietnam sign the Paris Accords ending U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

1973 The last U.S. combat troops leave Vietnam

1974 North Vietnam renews attacks against South Vietnam. Without U.S. help South Vietnam begins to crumble.

1975 The capital of South Vietnam, Saigon, is captured by Communist forces. North Vietnam wins the war. Vietnam is unified under a single Communist government.

1977 President Jimmy Carter pardons people who refused to be drafted into the military during the Vietnam War



1982 The Vietnam Wall is dedicated in Washington D.C.

1995 During Bill Clinton's Presidency the U.S. and Vietnam reestablish diplomatic relations.

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