

Asians in America -- A Brief Historical Overview

Key:	C = Chinese	F = Filipino	AI = Asian Indians	all = all Asians
	J = Japanese	K = Korean	SE = Southeast Asians	

Group(s)	Date	Event
C, F	1600's	Chinese and Filipino's reach Mexico on the ships of the Manila galleon.
C	1830's	Several Chinese "sugar masters" at work in Hawaii. Chinese sailors and peddlers arrive in New York City.
C	1848	Gold discovered in California. Chinese arrive to serve as indentured servants.
C	1850	758 Chinese in the US.
C	1852	First group of 195 Chinese contract laborers land in Hawaii. Over 20,000 Chinese enter California.
		Missionary William Speer opens a mission for the Chinese in San Francisco.
C	1850-64	Chinese, fleeing the chaos of the Taiping Rebellion in China, arrive in Hong Kong and eventually, the US.
C	1860	34,933 Chinese in the US.
C	1865	Central Pacific Railroad Co. recruits Chinese workers to build the first, transcontinental railroad.
J	1868	Japanese arrive as contract workers for the sugar plantations in Hawaii.
C	1870	Naturalization Act excludes Chinese from citizenship and forbids the entry of wives of laborers. Most early Chinese American communities were essentially bachelor societies.
C	1870's	"Yellow Peril" and "Cheap Chinese Labor" became the scapegoats for economic woes during a nationwide recession. Anti-Chinese sentiment grows.
C	1870's & 1880's	Anti-Chinese rioting and mob violence in California, Colorado, Washington, Wyoming and Nevada.
J	1877	Japanese Christians establish the "Gospel Society" in San Francisco -- the first immigrant association formed by the Japanese in the US.
C	1881	Sit Moon becomes pastor of the first Chinese Christian Church in Hawaii.
C	1882	Chinese Exclusion Act is passed. Suspending immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years, it also prohibits the Chinese from gaining naturalized US citizenship. Chinese only immigrant group specifically excluded by name from US by law.
J	1883	Japanese replace the Chinese as cheap labor.
J	1890's	Start of significant Japanese immigration. Many were male laborers in Hawaii.
C	1892	Geary Act prohibits Chinese immigration for another 10 years. Chinese are required to register. The Act also denies the bail for writ of habeas corpus.
F	1898	The Philippines are annexed to the US following the Spanish-American war. 31,000 Filipino laborers go to Hawaii.
C	1902	Congress "indefinitely" extends the Exclusion Act against Chinese immigration and the denial of naturalization.
K	1903	First Korean contract laborers arrive in Hawaii. They form the "Korean Evangelical Society." In 1904 Koreans begin to settle on the mainland.
AI	1904	Punjabi Sikhs begin to enter British Columbia.
K	1905	Koreans establish the Korean Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles.
all	1906	California's "Anti-Miscegenation" Law prohibits marriage between whites and "Mongolians."
F	1906	Beginning of Filipino farm labor in Hawaii.
J	1907	"Gentleman's Agreement" restricts Japanese immigration of laborers.
AI	1908	Asian Indians are driven out of a number of cities in Canada and the US.

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AI	1910	Administrative measures are used to restrict the influx of Asian Indians into California.
all	1910	Supreme Court extends the 1870 Naturalization Act to other Asians, excluding them from citizenship.
K	1910's	Large-scale immigration of Korean laborers, picture brides and political refugees to the US.
all	1924	Exclusionary Immigration Act completely ends Asian immigration, except for Filipinos who are "subjects of the US."
F	1925	Legislative Act made Filipinos ineligible for US citizenship unless they served three years in the US Navy.
all	1927-30's	Great Depression coincided with anti-Asian attacks and riots, especially against Filipinos.
F	1934	Tydings-McDuffie Act gave the Philippine Islands independence and a US immigration quota of 50 persons per year.
J	1942-45	Executive Order 9066 puts 110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry (primarily US citizens) in 10 internment camps. Millions of dollars were lost in property and possessions.
C	1943	Chinese Exclusion Act is repealed.
C	1947	Amendment to the 1945 War Brides Act allows Chinese American veterans to bring their brides into the US. This increases the number of Chinese women in the US, affecting the predominantly bachelor society that had developed.
all	1952	A clause of the McCarran-Walter Act grants the right of naturalization to foreign born Asians. A quota of 100 immigrants annually from Asian countries is set.
all	1965	National Origin Act raises the Asian immigration quota to 20,000 per year. The same as for Europeans.
all	1967	Anti-miscegenation laws are ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.
K	1971	Martial law is established in South Korea. Korean immigration increases.
F	1972	Martial law is established in the Philippines. Filipino immigration increases.
SE	1975	War in Vietnam concludes. The bulk of 150,000 Indochinese refugees settle in the US These are the "Evacuees."
Vietnamese	1975-80	Vietnamese settling in the US in this era are largely "Boat People."
all	1980	US Census reports 3.5 million or 1.5% of the population is Asian American, double the 1970 census.
J	1989	Pres. George Bush signs into law a reparation program to pay each surviving Japanese American internee \$20,000.
all	1990	US Census reports 7.3 million or 3% of the population is Asian American, double the 1980 census. This makes Asian Americans the fastest growing segment of the US population.