



Contacts:

Lisa Miner, Museum of Science and Industry, (773) 947-6005

Beth Boston, Museum of Science and Industry, (773) 947-6003

Brian Packer, Museum of Science and Industry, (773) 947-3133

WHITE HOUSE CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

1790: Congress votes to build and furnish a house for the nation's president.

1792: After a contest, James Hoban, an Irishman living in Charleston, South Carolina, is selected as architect.

1800: On November 1, John Adams is the first president to move into the unfinished house. It was then referred to in various contexts as the "President's House," "President's Palace," and "Presidential Mansion."

1814: The War of 1812 continues. On August 24, the British set fire to the White House.

1814: Madison rehires James Hoban to rebuild the White House exactly as it was before the fire.

1817: The Monroes move into the reconstructed White House.

1824: The South Portico is added.

1830: The North Portico is completed and used as the formal entrance.

1833: Running water is piped in for the first time from three separate reservoirs.

1837: Central heating is installed. To ensure proper performance a full-time fireman lived in the White House.

1848: Gas lighting is installed. Gas elements replaced candles in all the chandeliers, except one, which Sarah Polk insisted remain lit by candles.

1857: Greenhouses are added to the west lawn.

1879: The house's first telephone is installed. Alexander Graham Bell gave personal instructions to President Hayes on how to use the new device.

1881: A hydraulic elevator is installed. It is replaced by an electric elevator in 1898.

1891: Electric lighting is installed. President Benjamin Harrison refused to personally turn on the switches for fear of being shocked.

1901: Theodore Roosevelt makes the title "White House" official.

1902: Steel beams are installed in the floors to help support the structural strain on the house.

1902: Theodore Roosevelt builds a "temporary" executive office building on the West Lawn.

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1909: The Oval Office is added to the West Wing.

1909: The White House receives its first cars. President Taft arranged for the purchase of a White steam touring car and a Pierce-Arrow limousine.

1929: The West Wing is destroyed by an electrical fire.

1934: The West Wing has been rebuilt and is expanded.

1933: Franklin D. Roosevelt adds a swimming pool in order to assist with his polio therapy.

1942: Franklin D. Roosevelt adds a bomb shelter. A four feet concrete shell that was reinforced with steel, it contained food, water, communications, heat and power.

1942: The East Wing is constructed.

1948: Truman adds a controversial balcony to the South Portico.

1948: The house's foundation, walls and floors are removed and reinstalled within the original outer shell. The Truman family moves out until reconstruction is complete.

1965: The historic house installs its first fire alarm.

2000: The 200th anniversary of the occupancy of the White House is celebrated.

2009: To stress the importance of locally grown food, First Lady Michelle Obama plants an organic vegetable garden. It will provide food for the first family's meals and formal dinners.

THE WHITE HOUSE ... BY THE NUMBERS

- 168 feet long
- 55,000 square feet
- 132 rooms
- 35 bathrooms
- 6 levels
- 412 doors
- 147 windows
- 28 fireplaces
- 7 staircases
- 1 kitchen garden
- 500+ miles of fiber-optic cable
- 1 curator
- 300 place settings of china commissioned by Mrs. Clinton
- 3 elevators
- 5,000 visitors per day
- 5 full-time chefs
- 570 gallons of paint to cover the exterior
- 1 tennis court
- 1 swimming pool
- 1 movie theater
- 1 bowling alley
- 1 jogging track
- 13 gardeners
- 18 acres of land
- Over 1.5 million visitors per year