

Causes of the American Revolution



The American Revolution was a war. The 13 colonies wanted to stop being ruled by Britain. Britain is a country across the ocean. These are 13 reasons the fight started.

1. **A big war cost a lot of money.** Britain fought a war in America called the French and Indian War. Britain won. But Britain owed a lot of money. Leaders in Britain wanted the colonists to help pay.
2. **Britain started bossing the colonies more.** For a long time, Britain let the colonies make many of their own rules. After the war, Britain watched them much more closely. Colonists did not like that.
3. **Colonists could not move west.** In 1763, Britain said, "Do not live west of the big mountains." Britain wanted less fighting with Native peoples. Many colonists wanted that land. They got angry.
4. **New taxes—and no vote.** Britain made the colonists pay new taxes. A tax is money you must give the government. Colonists had no one in Britain's law-making group to speak for them. They said, "No tax without a vote!"
5. **The Stamp Act.** In 1765, Britain taxed paper. That meant newspapers, licenses, and even playing cards. People used paper every day. Crowds said the tax was not fair. Britain took the tax away later. But Britain still said it could tax the colonies.
6. **Soldiers in people's homes.** A law said colonists had to give British soldiers a place to stay and food to eat. Families did not want soldiers in their towns or houses.
7. **Taxes on things from Britain.** Britain taxed things like glass, paint, paper, and tea. Colonists stopped buying those things. Britain sent more soldiers, especially to Boston.
8. **The Boston Massacre.** In 1770, a fight broke out in the street. British soldiers shot into a crowd. Five people died. One was Crispus Attucks. Many colonists said the soldiers should not be there.
9. **Letters between towns.** People in different towns wrote letters to each other. They shared news about the new laws. The 13 colonies started working together.
10. **Tea in the harbor.** Britain made a law about tea. In Boston, men dumped boxes of tea into the water. That is called the Boston Tea Party. Britain was very angry.
11. **Britain punished Boston.** Britain closed Boston's harbor. Ships could not bring in food and goods. Britain also took away some of Massachusetts's own meetings and rules. Other colonies sent help. More people thought, "This is our fight too."
12. **Ideas about rights.** Colonists believed people have rights. Rights are things no king should take away, like life and freedom. If a government takes those away, people said they can stand up.
13. **The colonies met, and then fighting began.** Leaders from the colonies met in 1774. They asked Britain to change. Britain said no. In April 1775, shots were fired at Lexington and Concord. The argument became a war.



Important to also know... Not everyone wanted a war. Some people stayed loyal to the king. Enslaved people, free Black people, Native peoples, and women all had different lives and different choices. These 13 reasons help explain why many colonists said, "We will not be ruled this way."