A Brief History of New York City

Based on the video “Timescapes” produced by the Museum of the City of New York

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New York City Map

- Manhattan
- Bronx
- Queens
- Brooklyn
- Staten Island
- Newark Liberty International Airport
- LaGuardia Airport
- John F. Kennedy International Airport
New York City and Long Island
New York City in Recent Times
A view of Mannahatta in the early 17th century (early 1600s)
Henry Hudson and his ship the Half Moon
A painting depicting Peter Minuit and his Dutch compatriots purchasing Mannahatta from the Lenape.
A 1660 map of Dutch New Amsterdam
Where do the names of the boroughs come from?

A painting depicting Jonas Bronck purchasing land from the Lenape.
Left: A slave market where slaves are bought and sold.

Right: A pamphlet announcing an upcoming sale of slaves from Sierra Leone.
How did New York get its name?

The American Revolution and the Battle for New York, 1776

Washington withdrew the remnants of Putnam’s force to Manhattan island during the night of 23–24 August.

The British crossed at Morristown on the night of 26–27 August.
Pictures of the inauguration of George Washington as the first U.S. President here in New York City, the capital of the United States in 1789.
Washington was here! Or was he?
On the left: Fraunces Tavern, located at Pearl and Broad Streets.
On the right: Trinity Church, located at Broadway and Wall Street.
Clipper ships, the fastest ships in the world in the early 1800s.
Shipyards along the East River in Manhattan

Harbor ships
Left: A steamboat loaded with cotton from the South.

Right: Workers unloading bales of cotton in New York City.
Left: The street plan or grid for New York City’s future expansion.

Right: Mayor DeWitt Clinton
The 363-mile, man-made Erie Canal across New York State.
Scenes of industrial New York City.
The draft riots of July 1863, the worst riots in U.S. history.
Above: The design for Central Park by Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux.
Below: An aerial view of Central Park today.
The Brooklyn Bridge is completed in 1883 at a cost of 15 million dollars.
The Gilded Age, a tale of two cities: Fifth Avenue mansions (above); Tenement living on the lower east side of Manhattan (below)
Left: A photograph by Jacob Riis.

Right: A photograph by Lewis Hine.
The largest wave of immigrants in history arrive in New York between 1880 and 1920. To process the huge number of immigrants, Ellis Island is built in 1892.
The main building on Ellis Island

The Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island
Early 1900’s New York is the second most populous city in the world after London.
The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in 1911 brought about reforms in working conditions in sweatshops and building codes.
During the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, some of New York’s most famous cultural institutions are built.

Left: American Museum of Natural History, completed in 1877.

Right: The New York Public Library, completed in 1911.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, completed in 1880.

Grand Central Terminal, completed in 1913.
Elevated rail lines or “el” lines.
A video of a trolley ride through New York City in the early 1900s.
Inspecting the first New York City subway line before the grand opening in 1904.
The Park Row Building, completed in 1899.

The Woolworth Building, completed in 1913.
Bridges over the East River

The Williamsburg Bridge, completed in 1903

The Manhattan Bridge, completed in 1909

The Queensboro Bridge, completed in 1909
The Harlem Renaissance

Harlem Renaissance writers

Outside and inside the legendary Cotton Club

The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s

Lyrics to “Take the A Train”
Greenwich Village

Abstract expressionist artists

A painting by Hans Hofmann

The Village Vanguard, founded by Max Gordon in 1935

Bob Dylan
Jackie Robinson, the first African American to join a major league baseball team in 1947.

“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”

Jackie Robinson
Robert Moses’ New York

The RFK (Triboro) Bridge

A Queens swimming pool

Jones Beach

The Cross Bronx Expressway
Fort Apache, the Bronx

An abandoned neighborhood.

Subway graffiti

The Fort Apache police precinct.

Residents protest the film.

A South Bronx policeman (Paul Newman) with his girl friend, a nurse.
Hostos Community College, CUNY

The original building, a converted tire factory.

Protesting for more space

Celebrating 45 years
A new immigration center in Queens.
Safe neighborhood playgrounds.
The Terrorist Attacks on 9/11.

The second plane approaches the tower.
The 9/11 Memorial

One World Trade Center under construction
The Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy
Income Inequality

Geographic Distribution of Median Income by Quintile in NYC

Source: Census 2010
CUNY High Performance Computing Center
Gentrification and Affordable Housing
The Past

How would you describe New York City’s history? What patterns or themes do you see? What are the city’s greatest achievements? What challenges has it had to overcome?
The Future

How do you see the future of New York? What are the biggest challenges it faces? What must be done to meet these challenges?