

The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History
By Michael H. Hart

Number	Person	Time Frame	Occupation	Reason(s) for Being Placed on the List
1	Muhammad	570-632	Secular and religious leader	Prophet; Founder of Islam; Wrote the Koran
2	Isaac Newton	1642-1727	Scientist	Many scientific and mathematical inventions/theories
3	Jesus Christ	c. 6BC-c. 30	Prophet; Spiritual leader	Founder of Christianity
4	Buddha	563BC-483BC	Spiritual leader	Founder of Buddhism
5	Confucius	551BC-479BC	Philosopher; Teacher	Created Confucianism
6	St. Paul	c. 4-c. 64	Christian apostle	His writings in the New Testament of the Bible
7	Ts'ai Lun	c. 105	Political official in imperial China	Invented paper
8	Johann Gutenberg	1400-1468	Inventor	Inventor of printing (printing press)
9	Christopher Columbus	1451-1506	Explorer	Discovery of the Americas led to world-wide exploration
10	Albert Einstein	1879-1955	Scientist	Theory of relativity
11	Louis Pasteur	1822-1895	Chemist and biologist	Germ theory and preventive inoculation
12	Galileo Galilei	1564-1642	Scientist	Developed the scientific method; Invented the telescope
13	Aristotle	384BC-322BC	Philosopher and scientist	Wrote over 170 books on astronomy, zoology, geography, etc; Originated the study of formal logic
14	Euclid	c. 300 BC	Teacher	Wrote Elements, greatest textbook on geometry
15	Moses	13 th c. BC	Prophet	Political figure who led the Hebrews in the Exodus from Egypt; Wrote five books of the Bible (the Jewish Torah); Encouraged the belief of monotheism (belief in one god)
16	Charles Darwin	1809-1882	Biologists	Originated the theory of organic evolution by means of natural selection
17	Shih Huang Ti	259BC-210BC	Chinese Emperor	United China by force of arms and instituted a set of sweeping reforms
18	Augustus Caesar	63BC-14	Political leader	Founder of the Roman Empire
19	Nicolaus Copernicus	1473-1543	Lawyer; Astronomer	Copernican Theory (First to assert the Earth revolves around the sun)
20	Antoine Laurent Lavoisier	1743-1794	Scientist	Organized the system of chemical theory

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21	Constantine the Great	c. 280-337	Political leader	First Christian emperor of the Roman Empire
22	James Watt	1736-1819	Inventor	Inventor of the first practical steam engine and key figure in the Industrial Revolution
23	Michael Faraday	1791-1867	Inventor	Invented the first electric motor; Discovered electromagnetic induction
24	James Clerk Maxwell	1831-1879	Physicist	Developed a set of four equations that best express the basic laws of electricity and magnetism
25	Martin Luther	1483-1546	Teacher and author	Chiefly responsible for the beginning of the Reformation period; The start of Protestantism
26	George Washington	1732-1799	Political leader	Military leader and first president of the United States
27	Karl Marx	1818-1883	Philosopher	Principal originator of “scientific socialism”; His writings form the theoretical basis of Communism
28	Orville Wright & Wilbur Wright	1871-1948 1867-1912	Inventors	Invented the first airplane
29	Genghis Khan	c. 1162-1227	Emperor	Ruthless leader who eventually ruled the largest empire in all of history
30	Adam Smith	1723-1790	Philosopher	Wrote The Wealth of Nations; Leading figure in the development of economic theory
31	William Shakespeare	1550-1604	Playwright and poet	Wrote at least 36 plays (including Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Julius Caesar, and Othello), 154 sonnets, and a few longer poems
32	John Dalton	1766-1844	Scientist	Introduced the atomic hypothesis into the mainstream of science
33	Alexander the Great	356BC-323BC	Political leader and conqueror	Conquered and controlled vast amounts of land; Brought together Greek and Middle Eastern civilizations which resulted in cultural diffusion
34	Napoleon Bonaparte	1769-1821	General and Emperor	Great military leader; Authorized the sale of land to the USA (known as the Louisiana Purchase)

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35	Thomas Edison	1847-1931	Inventor	Developed over 1,000 inventions including the phonograph and the practical incandescent light bulb
36	Anton van Leeuwenhoek	1632-1723	Government worker	Discovered microbes
37	William T. G. Morton	1819-1868	Dentist	Introduced the use of anesthesia in surgery
38	Guglielmo Marconi	1874-1937	Inventor	Invented the radio
39	Adolf Hitler	1889-1945	Political leader	Leader of the Nazi party; Leader of Germany during WWII; Masterminded the Holocaust
40	Plato	427BC-347BC	Philosopher	Wrote over 36 books (including the Republic); Considered one of the great fathers of Western thought
41	Oliver Cromwell	1599-1658	Military leader	Man most responsible for eventual establishment of parliamentary democracy as the English form of government
42	Alexander Graham Bell	1847-1922	Inventor	Invented the telephone
43	Alexander Fleming	1881-1955	Physician	Discovered penicillin
44	John Locke	1632-1704	Philosopher	First writer to put together a coherent form of the basic ideas of constitutional democracy
45	Ludwig Van Beethoven	1770-1827	Composer	Wrote nine symphonies, 32 piano sonatas, five piano concertos, ten sonatas for the piano and violin, a series of magnificent string quartets, vocal music, theater music, and much more
46	Werner Heisenberg	1901-1976	Physicist	Played a significant role in the creation of quantum mechanics
47	Louis Daguerre	1787-1851	Inventor	Developed the first practical method of photography
48	Simon Bolivar	1783-1830	Political leader	Given the title, The Liberator; He led the liberation of five S. American countries from Spanish rule
49	Rene Descartes	1596-1650	Philosopher, scientist, and mathematician	Invented analytic geometry

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50	Michelangelo	1475-1564	Artist	His work (paintings, statues, drawings, etc.) profoundly influenced the development of European painting and sculpture
51	Pope Urban II	1042-1099	Religious leader	Gave the order to start the First Christian Crusades
52	‘Umar ibn al-Kattab	c. 586-644	Religious leader	After Muhammad, Umar was the principle figure in the spread of Islam
53	Asoka	c. 300BC-c. 232BC	Political leader	Third ruler of the Mauryan dynasty and considered the most important monarch in the history of India
54	St. Augustine	354-430	Theologian	His writings profoundly influenced Christian doctrines and attitudes throughout the Middle Ages
55	William Harvey	1578-1657	Physician	Discovered the circulation of blood and the function of the heart
56	Ernest Rutherford	1871-1937	Physicist	Originated the study of nuclear physics
57	John Calvin	1509-1564	Theologian	Influential Protestant leader who developed Calvinism (importance of the Bible, dedication to hard work, etc.)
58	Gregor Mendel	1822-1884	Monk and teacher	Discovered the basic principles of heredity
59	Max Planck	1858-1947	Physicist	Generally considered to be the father of quantum mechanics (developed Planck’s theory)
60	Joseph Lister	1827-1912	Surgeon	Introduced the use of antiseptic measures in surgery
61	Nikolaus August Otto	1832-1891	Inventor	Built the first four-stroke internal combustion engine
62	Francisco Pizarro	c. 1475-1541	Adventurer and conqueror	Conquered the Inca Empire of Peru
63	Hernando Cortes	1485-1547	Adventurer and conqueror	Conquered the Aztec Empire of Mexico
64	Thomas Jefferson	1743-1826	Political leader	Third president of the United States; Author of the Declaration of Independence

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65	Queen Isabella I	1451-1504	Political ruler	Financed Columbus's voyage across the Atlantic Ocean; Instituted the Spanish Inquisition
66	Joseph Stalin	1879-1953	Political leader	Ruthless dictator of the Soviet Union
67	Julius Caesar	100BC-44Bc	Military and political leader	Played a significant role in the downfall of the Roman Republic; Under his leadership, Roman troops conquered Gaul which provided security for the Roman Empire
68	William the Conqueror	c. 1027-1087	Monarch	Led the Norman conquest of England which resulted in the blend of the French and Anglo-Saxon cultures
69	Sigmund Freud	1856-1939	Psychologist	Originator of psychoanalysis
70	Edward Jenner	1749-1823	Physician	Developed and popularized the technique of vaccination as a preventive measure against smallpox
71	William Conrad Rontgen	1845-1923	Scientist	Developed the use of X-rays
72	Johann Sebastian Bach	1685-1750	Composer	Considered to be one of the two or three composers of all time; First man to successfully combine the differing national styles of music which existed in Western Europe
73	Lao Tzu	4 th c. BC	Author	Wrote Tao Te Ching; This book is the basis for Taoism
74	Voltaire	1694-1778	Historian and philosopher	Wrote numerous books – most famous, Candide; Influenced political thought which ultimately resulted in the French Revolution
75	Johannes Kepler	1571-1630	Astronomer	Discovered the laws of planetary motion
76	Enrico Fermi	1901-1954	Scientist	Designed the first nuclear reactor
77	Leonhard Euler	1707-1783	Mathematician and physicist	One of the most brilliant and prolific scientists of all time; Wrote 32 full length books concerning practical applications of laws of mechanics

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78	Jean-Jacques Rousseau	1712-1778	Philosopher	Major influence on educational theory; Important factor in the rise of Romanticism in literature
79	Niccolo Machiavelli	1469-1527	Political philosopher	Wrote the Prince – a book often called the “handbook for dictators”
80	Thomas Malthus	1766-1834	Parson (member of the clergy) and professor of history and political economy	First person to stress the overwhelming importance of the problem of overpopulation and to bring this problem to the attention of the intellectual world
81	John F. Kennedy	1917-1963	Political leader	President of the United States; The person who was primarily responsible for instituting the Apollo Space Program
82	Gregory Pincus	1903-1967	Biologist	Led the way in the development of the oral contraceptive pill
83	Mani	216-276	Prophet	Founder of Manichaeism – a religion which, though extinct today, at its height had a very large number of followers
84	Vladimir Lenin	1870-1924	Political leader	Leader principally responsible for the establishment of Communism in Russia
85	Sui Wen Ti	541-604	Emperor	Reunified China after it had been badly divided for hundreds of years; As a result, China continues on the path of a powerful nation
86	Vasco da Gama	c. 1460-1524	Explorer	Discovered the direct sea route from Europe to India by sailing around Africa
87	Cyrus the Great	c. 590BC-529BC	Military and political leader	Founder of the Persian Empire (united most of the ancient Middle East into a single state stretching from India to the Mediterranean Sea)

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88	Peter the Great	1672-1725	Political leader	Generally acknowledged to be the most outstanding of the Russian czars (emperor); His policy of westernization was a major factor in the transformation of Russia into a great power
89	Mao Zedong	1893-1976	Political leader	Led the Communist party in China; Vastly transformed China politically, economically, socially, and culturally
90	Francis Bacon	1561-1626	Politician and philosopher	The first great philosopher to realize that science and technology could transform the world, and an effective advocate of scientific investigation
91	Henry Ford	1863-1947	Industrialist	Introduced the theory of mass production into modern industry
92	Mencius	c. 371BC-c. 289BC	Philosopher	Wrote, Book of Mencius; Immensely influential writer in China
93	Zoroaster	c. 628BC-c. 551BC	Prophet	Founder of Zoroastrianism, a religion that has endured for over 2,500 years and still has followers today
94	Queen Elizabeth I	1533-1603	Monarch	Her 45 year reign was marked by economic prosperity, a great literary flowering, and the rise of England to first rank among the world's naval powers
95	Mikhail Gorbachev	1931-	Political leader	Soviet leader who led the decline and fall of the old Soviet regime and the democratization of the new Russia
96	Menes	c. 3100 BC	Monarch	Original king of the first Egyptian dynasty; First ruler to unite Egypt
97	Charlemagne	742-814	Emperor	Medieval emperor was the king of Franks, conqueror of Saxony, founder of the Holy Roman Empire, and one of the foremost rulers in European history

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98	Homer	8 th c. BC?	Author	Wrote the Iliad and Odyssey; Influenced Greek poets and playwrights
99	Justinian I	483-565	Emperor	Emperor renowned for the great codification of Roman law that was carried out during his reign; Later formed the basis for the development of the law in many European countries
100	Mahavira	c. 599BC-c. 527BC	Religious leader	Founder of Jainism

Honorable Mentions and Interesting Misses

Abraham	Aesop	Howard H. Aiken	Susan B. Anthony	St. Thomas Aquinas
Archimedes	Aristarchus of Samos	Richard Arkwright	Neil Armstrong	Charles Babbage
Jeremy Bentham	Antoine Henri Becquerel	Otto von Bismarck	Niels Bohr	Louis de Broglie
Nicolas Sadi Carnot	Cheops (Khufu)	Winston Churchill	Karl von Clausewitz	Rudolf Clausius
Marie Curie	Gottlieb Daimler	Dante Alighieri	King David	Democritus
Mary Baker Eddy	Robert C. W. Ettinger	George Fox	Benjamin Franklin	Frederick the Great
Betty Friedan	Galen	Mohandas K. Gandhi	Karl Friedrich Gauss	Hammurabi
Henry VIII	Henry the Navigator	Theodor Herzl	Hippocrates	Thomas Hobbes
James Hutton	Ikhnaton	Isaiah	Joan of Arc	Immanuel Kant
Kemal Ataturk	John Maynard Keynes	Har Gobind Khorana	Martin Luther King, Jr.	Alfred C. Kinsey
Gustav Kirchhoff	Kublai Khan	Georg W. F. Hegel	Gottfried W. von Leibniz	Etienne Lenoir
Leonardo da Vinci	Abraham Lincoln	Liu Pang	Louis XIV	James Madison
Ferdinand Magellan	The Virgin Mary	Meiji Tenno	Dmitri Mendeleev	Montesquieu
Maria Montessori	Samuel Morse	Wolfgang Mozart	Muawiyah I	Gerard K. O'Neill
Blaise Pascal	Ivan Pavlov	Pablo Picasso	Marco Polo	Ptolemy
Pythagoras	Ronald Reagan	Rembrandt	Franklin D. Roosevelt	Sankara
Erwin Schrodinger	William B. Shockley	Joseph Smith	Socrates	Sophocles
Sun Yat-sen	William Henry Talbot	Tamurlane	Edward Teller	Henry David Thoreau
Charles H. Townes	Harry S. Truman	Alessandro Volta	Selman A. Waksman	James D. Watson
Robert Watson-Watt	Mary Wollstonecraft	Frank Lloyd Wright	Boris Yeltsin	Vladimir Zworykin