



## [The American Revolution](#)

### **In A Nutshell**

The American Revolution began as a transatlantic dispute over parliamentary authority and policy, as American colonists chafed against British measures to reconsolidate their hold over their North American empire. This difference of opinion grew into a crisis of authority when colonists expressed their opposition by rioting, burning effigies of English officials, organizing vigilante associations, and pledging boycotts of imported goods. The colonists did not initially think of themselves as waging a war for independence, but rather believed they were defending their natural rights as Englishmen to resist misguided and corrupt government officials and representatives. With every new British assertion of authority, the colonists redoubled their activism, and the stakes got higher and higher. The colonists' faith in their sovereign, King George III, was dashed by his rejection of their appeals and his condemnation of their protests as an unlawful rebellion. Once they lost all faith in the righteousness and reason of the monarchy, the American Patriots rejected it outright and set forth not only to win independence but also to build a new kind of society in place of the old.

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## Brain Snacks - Trivia

The Quartering Act of 1774 enabled the governor of Massachusetts to commandeer housing for British officers and soldiers, but *it never actually stated that soldiers could commandeer private homes*. Instead, it specified "uninhabited houses, out-houses, barns, or other buildings." The 1774 Quartering Act was actually a clarification of previous legislation that Parliament had passed in 1765 and renewed and amended annually. Only the original 1765 act included taverns, alehouses, and inns among the locations that officials could commandeer for the regulars. Even then, provinces were to pay innkeepers and tavern owners for the use of their property. Tales of officers knocking on doors to demand lodging for British troops appear to be legends without any substantive basis in contemporary evidence. When he went on his famous midnight ride to warn the Massachusetts countryside of the British army's approach, Paul Revere delivered the news by calling out that "The Regulars are coming out!"—not "The British are coming!" as legend (and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow) would have it.

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