

Biography



Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1933-1941

The First New Deal

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1882–1945

Strong-willed and optimistic, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the only president elected to office four consecutive times. Born in Hyde Park, New York, to the prestigious Roosevelt family, Franklin led a privileged life. While attending Harvard University, Roosevelt came under the influence of his distant cousin President Theodore Roosevelt's progressive political ideas. He married Theodore's niece, Eleanor Roosevelt, in 1905 and embarked on a remarkable political career.



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Serving first as a New York state senator, Roosevelt was then appointed assistant secretary of the Navy in 1913. His future seemed bright when, in 1921, he contracted polio, which paralyzed his legs. He continued to fight to regain his health and his political career. With the help of his wife, Eleanor, he succeeded and won election as governor of New York in 1928.

In 1932 Roosevelt won his first presidential election and promptly supported the creation of the vast economic recovery program called the New Deal. The program included bank reform, public works projects, and tax-relief efforts. It also expanded the powers of the presidency.

In 1941, at the beginning of his third term as president, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and America entered World War II. Roosevelt did not live to see the end of the war; he died in 1945.

1. What unique election record does Roosevelt hold?

2. What did Roosevelt hope to achieve with the New Deal?
