Inauguration

The inauguration of the President of the United States…

- occurs upon the commencement of a new term of a President of the United States
- The president has to make an oath or affirmation before he can "enter on the Execution" of the office of the presidency.
- developed from a simple oath-taking ceremony to a day-long event, including parades, speeches, and balls
- Inauguration day was originally on March 4, four months after election day, but this was changed to noon on January 20 by the Twentieth Amendment in 1933.
- Since 1981, the ceremony has been held at the Capitol's West Front
- The inaugural celebrations usually last ten days, from five days before the inauguration to five days after.
- Inauguration Day is a Federal holiday
- In addition to the public, the attendees at the ceremony generally include Members of Congress, Supreme Court justices, high-ranking military officers, former presidents, living Medal of Honor recipients, and other dignitaries.
- The outgoing president attends the inauguration, barring those cases where succession was due to his death.
- Since 1937, the vice president-elect takes the oath of office at the same ceremony before the president-elect.
- Immediately after the vice-presidential oath, the United States Marine Band will perform four *ruffles and flourishes*, followed by *Hail, Columbia*
- At noon, the new presidential term begins. At about that time, the president-elect takes the oath of office, traditionally administered by the Chief Justice of the United States:

  > *I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.*

- Immediately after the presidential oath, the United States Marine Band will perform four *ruffles and flourishes*, followed by *Hail to the Chief*, while simultaneously, a 21-gun salute is fired from Taft Park, north of the Capitol.
- Newly sworn-in presidents usually give a speech referred to as an inaugural address.
- Since 1937, the ceremony has incorporated two or more prayers. Musical works and poetry readings have been included on occasion.
- Since 1953, the president and vice president have been guests of honor at a luncheon held by the United States Congress immediately following the inaugural ceremony.
- It has become tradition for the president to parade down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House.
- The day after the inauguration, a prayer service is held at the Washington National Cathedral
- The security for the inaugural celebrations is a complex matter, involving not only the Secret Service, but other Federal law enforcement agencies.