

# Anniversary of the March on Washington Quick Guide



**Who:** 250,000 peaceful demonstrators, 80% who were African American. The March's most famous leader was Martin Luther King Jr. and this is where he gave his famous "I have a dream" speech.

**What:** The March was to demonstrate the dire need for improvement in the treatment of African Americans in terms of their legal, economic and human rights.

The goals of the March were:

- Passage of meaningful civil rights legislation.
- Immediate elimination of school segregation.
- A program of public works, including job training, for the unemployed.
- A federal law prohibiting discrimination in public or private hiring.
- A \$2-an-hour minimum wage nationwide.
- Withholding federal funds from programs that tolerate discrimination.
- Enforcement of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution by reducing congressional representation from states that disenfranchise citizens.
- A broadened Fair Labor Standards Act to currently excluded employment areas.
- Authority for the Attorney General to institute lawsuits when constitutional rights are violated.

**When:** Wednesday August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1963. The March marked the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, which gave 3.1 million of the 4 million slaves in the U.S. at the time their freedom in 1863.

**Where:** The March took place on the National Mall in the United States' capital Washington, D.C.

**Why:** Although African Americans had been given legal rights, like the right to vote, these and many other laws were not being enforced, but rather inhibited across the country and particularly in the South. Racial tensions had been growing, and non-violent protests were gaining traction. It was time for a massive demonstration to call for real equality and protection under the law.

**How:** When the call went out for the March demonstrators came from all over the country on buses, trains, and automobiles. Famous civil rights leaders and musicians spoke and performed to a peaceful and unified crowd of a quarter of a million people.

\*Reference: Wikipedia