

WOMEN IN STATE LEGISLATURES 1996

In 1996, **1,545**, or **20.8%** of the 7,424 state legislators in the United States are women. Women currently hold **344**, or 17.3%, of the 1,984 state senate seats and **1,201**, or 22.1%, of the 5,440 state house or assembly seats. Since 1969, the number of women serving in state legislatures has increased five-fold.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Women Legislators</u>	<u>% of Total Legislators</u>
1969	301	4.0
1971	344	4.5
1973	424	5.6
1975	604	8.0
1977	688	9.1
1979	770	10.3
1981	908	12.1
1983	991	13.3
1985	1,103	14.8
1987	1,170	15.7
1989	1,270	17.0
1991	1,368	18.3
1993	1,524	20.5
1995	1,532	20.6
1996	1,545	20.8

The party breakdown for women serving in state legislatures in 1996 is:

	<u>Total Legislators</u>		<u>State Senators</u>		<u>State Reps.</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Democrats	849	55.0	192	55.8	657	54.7
Republicans	678	43.9	138	40.1	540	45.0
Nonpartisans*	12	0.8	12	3.5	---	---
Independents	<u>6</u>	<u>0.4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0.6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0.3</u>
Total	1,545	100.1	344	100.0	1,201	100.0

The ten states with the **highest percentages** of women state legislators are:

<u>State</u>	<u>% Women</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>% Women</u>
Washington	39.5	Oregon**	30.0
Nevada	34.9	New Hampshire	29.7
Colorado	33.0	Maryland	28.7
Arizona**	30.0	Idaho	28.6
Vermont**	30.0	Kansas	27.9

The ten states with the **lowest percentages** of women state legislators are:

<u>State</u>	<u>% Women</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>% Women</u>
Alabama	3.6	Mississippi	11.49
Kentucky	8.0	Arkansas	12.6
Oklahoma	10.7	South Carolina	12.9
Louisiana	11.1	Tennessee	13.6
Pennsylvania	11.46	North Dakota	14.3

In 1894, the first women state legislators were elected to serve in the United States. Three Republican women were elected to the Colorado House of Representatives: Clara Cressingham; Carrie C. Holly; Frances Klock. The first woman state senator, Democrat Martha Hughes Canon, was elected to the Utah State Senate in 1896.***

* In Nebraska, where the legislature is unicameral, legislators are elected on a nonpartisan basis.

** States with the exact same percentage (AZ, OR & VT) are given the same rank; since there is a tie, no state is ranked fifth or sixth. States which round out to the same figure, but are not exactly the same, are ranked differently.

*** Source: Utah Governor's Commission for Women.

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STATE	STATE RANK	SENATE		TOTAL WOMEN/ TOTAL SENATE	HOUSE		TOTAL WOMEN/ TOTAL HOUSE	TOTAL WOMEN/ TOTAL LEGIS.	% WOMEN OVERALL
		D	R		D	R			
AL	50	1	0	1/35	4	0	4/105	5/140	3.6
AK	20	2	2	4/20	4	5 (1 ind)	10/40	14/60	23.3
AZ*	4	3	5	8/30	7	12	19/60	27/90	30.0
AR	44	0	1	1/35	14	2	16/100	17/135	12.6
CA	27	3	1 (1 ind)	5/40	16	3	19/80	24/120	20.0
CO	3	5	5	10/35	12	11	23/65	33/100	33.0
CT	11	4	4	8/36	30	12	42/151	50/187	26.7
DE	25	2	4	6/21	0	7	7/41	13/62	21.0
FL	30	3	3	6/40	20	5	25/120	31/160	19.4
GA	35	6	2	8/56	22	12	34/180	42/236	17.8
HI	29	5	0	5/25	6	4	10/51	15/76	19.7
ID	9	4	3	7/35	5	18	23/70	30/105	28.6
IL	21	5	5	10/59	15	16	31/118	41/177	23.2
IN	23	7	7	14/50	6	13	19/100	33/150	22.0
IA	34	4	6	10/50	7	10	17/100	27/150	18.00
KS	10	3	11	14/40	12	20	32/125	46/165	27.9
KY	49	0	2	2/38	5	4	9/100	11/138	8.0
LA	47	2	0	2/39	11	2 (1 ind)	14/105	16/144	11.1
ME	12	7	3 (1 ind)	11/35	22	15 (1 ind)	38/151	49/186	26.3
MD	8	6	1	7/47	36	11	47/141	54/188	28.7
MA*	16	6	2	8/40	27	13	40/160	48/200	24.0
MI	22	2	1	3/38	17	13	30/110	33/148	22.3
MN	13	11	8	19/67	19	13	32/134	51/201	25.4
MS	45	3	0	3/52	14	3	17/122	20/174	11.49
MO	28	0	3	3/34	18	18	36/163	39/197	19.8
MT*	16	7	2	9/50	11	16	27/100	36/150	24.0
NE	14	NONPARTISAN		12/49	UNICAMERAL		12/49		24.5
NV	2	2	3	5/21	9	8	17/42	22/63	34.9
NH	7	3	3	6/24	45	75	120/400	126/424	29.7
NJ*	38	1	0	1/40	7	10	17/80	18/120	15.0
NM	26	6	2	8/42	9	6	15/70	23/112	20.5
NY	33	8	1	9/61	21	8	29/150	38/211	18.01
NC	36	3	3	6/50	7	15	22/120	28/170	16.5
ND	41	4	4	8/49	4	9	13/98	21/147	14.3
OH	19	3	5	8/33	9	13 (1 ind)	23/99	31/132	23.5
OK	48	5	2	7/48	6	3	9/101	16/149	10.7
OR	4	4	3	7/30	12	8	20/60	27/90	30.0
PA	46	2	1	3/50	12	14	26/203	29/253	11.46
RI*	16	8	2	10/50	20	6	26/100	36/150	24.0
SC	43	2	1	3/46	8	11	19/124	22/170	12.9
SD	31	4	2	6/35	4	10	14/70	20/105	19.0
TN	42	2	1	3/33	11	4	15/99	18/132	13.6
TX	32	2	2	4/31	18	11	29/150	33/181	18.2
UT	40	1	0	1/29	4	10	14/75	15/104	14.4
VT*	4	5	6	11/30	29	14	43/150	54/180	30.0
VA*	38	6	1	7/40	10	4	14/100	21/140	15.0
WA	1	14	6	20/49	20	18	38/98	58/147	39.5
WV	37	3	2	5/34	11	5	16/100	21/134	15.7
WI	15	3	6	9/33	14	9	23/99	32/132	24.2
WY	24	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1/30</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>18/60</u>	<u>19/90</u>	<u>21.1</u>
TOTALS		192	138	344/1,984	657	540	1,201/5,440	1,545/7,424	20.8
		(12 nonpartisans)			(4 independents)				
		(2 independent)							

* States with the exact same percentage (AZ, OR & VT=4; MA, MT & RI=17; NJ & VA=37) are given the same rank; since there is a tie, no states are ranked 5th, 6th, 18th, 19th or 38th. States which round out to the same figure (IA & NY), but are not exactly the same, are ranked differently.