The History of Voting

MASS Voting Club
The History of Voting
Dude, do you know how hard people have fought for the right to vote?

What's the big deal about voting? Why should I care?
1789
America’s first election.

Who can vote?
Rich white men.

1856
Voting rights are expanded.

Who can vote?
Rich *and* poor white men.

1870
The 15th amendment gives African-Americans the right to vote.

Who can vote?
Because of literacy tests and similar methods of discrimination, it’s still just white men.
The 19th amendment gives all women the right to vote.

Who can vote?
Realistically, white men and white women.

Native Americans are granted citizenship.

Who can vote?
Not Native Americans. Discrimination persists and it’s still just white people at the polls.

President Lyndon B. Johnson enacts The Voting Rights Act of 1965. This legislation outlawed racial discrimination in voting and required federal oversight of jurisdictions that had a history of voter suppression - aka “preclearance”.

Who can vote?
Legally, everyone over 21. (The voting age was lowered to 18 in 1971.) Practically speaking, however, there were still a lot of barriers to voting. Voter intimidation and accessibility being two examples.
1991
President George H. W. Bush signs into law the Americans with Disabilities Act. This Act guarantees all Americans with disabilities have equal access to voting.

Who can vote?
With most practical barriers cleared, all eligible Americans should be able to vote.
Shelby vs. Holder was a Supreme Court decision that invalidated “preclearance”. “Preclearance” was the provision of the Voting Rights Act that required federal oversight of elections in jurisdictions that had a history of voter suppression.

Who can vote?
Technically, everybody. Realistically, however, voter suppression of racial minorities has gone back up. States are back to using voter identification laws, closing polling stations, and kicking voters off the rolls for no reason and in a purposefully sneaky way.

No matter what the law says, the fight for fair and accessible voting continues.
“Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it.”

Susan B. Anthony
Susan B. Anthony was a suffragist, abolitionist, author and speaker who was the president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

via https://www.biography.com/activist/susan-b-anthony
Thank you for reading!
Enjoy voting!