

Harvard University is the oldest college in the United States (1636). Eight U.S. presidents attended Harvard University and the name is known worldwide.

Reaching the start of this tour is easy. The best way to access the area is by mass transit. You can take the red line T to Harvard Square MBTA Station. Use this [Google map](#) for directions to Harvard Square.

Your tour starts outside the Harvard Square Subway Station. Notice the Out of Town Newsstand, which is a Cambridge landmark. Since it opened in 1955, the newsstand has been providing Harvard professors, students and Cambridge residents with newspapers and magazines from all over the world. The building is a national historic landmark.

From Out of Town News, walk up John F. Kennedy Street, which is to your right if you are facing Out of Town News. Follow John F. Kennedy St. to Mt. Auburn St. and take a left down Mt. Auburn St. to the Harvard Lampoon Building at 44 Bow St.

The Lampoon Building is also known as the Lampoon Castle. The best place to view this building is by standing on the island where Bow St. and Mt. Auburn St. meet.

This building houses Harvard's comedy magazine, The Lampoon, where students like Conan O'Brien and John Updike wrote while undergraduates at the university. John Updike also served as president of The Lampoon during his time there.

This is one of the most unique buildings on campus. Opened in 1909, the building is designed to look like a human face wearing a Prussian helmet. The front door looks like a bow tie turned sideways. Notice the bird statue, the Ibis, on top. This is made of copper weighs about 70 pounds. The ibis was stolen a few times by members of Harvard University's newspaper, The Crimson, as a prank. The bird is said to now have an electrified wire attached to it to prevent future thefts.

The building cost \$40,000 to construct in 1909. At the time, it was the most expensive headquarters for a student publication in the nation.

If you look to your right, you will see Lowell House, the structure with the white bell tower.

This undergraduate dorm is where Matt Damon stayed while a student at the university. Notice the bell tower of Lowell House. The tower houses 18 bells ranging in size -- from the smallest bell at 22 pounds to the mother earth bell at 27,000 pounds. After what is known as The Game, the annual Harvard vs. Yale football game, the Harvard team score is rung out on the Mother Earth Bell and the Yale score is chimed on what is known as the bells of Pestilence, Famine and Despair.

As you walk around the Lampoon Building you will notice two dates, 1909 and 1876. 1909 is when the building opened and 1876 is when the Harvard Lampoon Magazine was first published.

Continue walking up Mt. Auburn St past the Lampoon Building and take a left onto Plympton St. At 26 Plympton St. you will see the undergraduate dorm called Adams House.

Opened in 1900, the dorm is named in honor of the United States' second, President John Adams and his son, John Quincy Adams, who was our sixth President. Both men graduated from the university.

There is a suite inside Adam's House called the FDR suite where the 32nd president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) lived while a student at Harvard. It is restored to how it would have looked when he stayed there in 1904. This is the only memorial to Roosevelt on campus.

In addition to Franklin Roosevelt, John Adams and John Quincy Adams, Harvard University has had five other U.S. Presidents attended: Barack Obama, George W. Bush, John F. Kennedy, Theodore Roosevelt and

Rutherford B. Hayes ... for a total of 8 U.S. Presidents who attended the university.

Continue up Plympton St. to 14 Plympton St., home of the student newspaper The Harvard Crimson.

Founded in 1873, it was called The Magenta for its first two years. In 1875 the paper changed its name to The Crimson when the University changed its color to crimson.

The Harvard Crimson is the only daily newspaper in the City of Cambridge and is run entirely by the university's undergraduate students. It is also the only college newspaper in the United States that has its own printing press. Some of the famous folks who wrote for the Crimson include, U.S. Presidents Franklin Delano Roosevelt (who served as the newspaper president) and John F. Kennedy (a business editor). Look up to the second floor glass door and you may be able to see the big chair inside. This chair has small brass markers attached to it with the names of the former presidents of the newspaper.

Like the Ibis on top of the Lampoon Building, members of the Harvard Lampoon sometimes steal this chair as a prank, or revenge for the Crimson's members theft of their Ibis. The chair is now chained to the floor to help thwart future thefts.

Continue up Plympton St. and cross Massachusetts Ave. and enter Old Harvard Yard through Dexter Gate. Notice carved inscription above the entrance and the words "enter to grow in wisdom." On the exit of the gate you'll find the words "depart to serve better this country and thy kind."

After you enter Harvard Yard take a left and you will see the dorm Wigglesworth Hall. All freshmen who start at Harvard are required to stay in the Halls of Old Harvard Yard. Freshman dorms are called halls and the upperclassmen dorms are called houses.

Some of the famous students who lived inside Wigglesworth Hall include: Leonard Bernstein, Senator Edward Kennedy and Bill Gates.

Follow the path to the Henry Elkins Widener Memorial Library.

This is the largest college library in the United States and is the nation's third largest library. The library has 57 miles (92 km) of shelves, lining five miles of aisles across ten floors. Only the U.S. Library of Congress and the New York Public Library hold more volumes of books than the Henry Elkins Widener Memorial Library.

The Library is six stories high and has four floors below ground. It was built in honor of 1907 Harvard graduate Henry Elkins Widener who was killed in April 1912 at the age of 27 during the sinking of the Titanic. The library was built with funds donated by Widener's mother, Eleanor, to honor her son's memory.

Look directly across the Old Yard and you will see Memorial Church. This church was built in 1932. Inside, the names of 373 alumni who were killed during WWI are engraved, alongside a sculpture called "The Sacrifice."

Since then other memorials have been established inside the church for Harvard students and alumni who were killed in WWII, The Korean War, and Vietnam.

Walk around the Widener Library and follow the path to the Dragon Statue.

This statue was donated to the university in 1936 by Chinese alumni in honor of the university's 300th anniversary.

The statue is made of marble and weighs 27 tons. It was carved between 1796-1820 in Beijing and formerly resided in the Winter Palace before being donated and shipped to the university.

As you continue down the path look to your right and you will see Weld Hall, where President John F. Kennedy lived during his freshman year at Harvard.

Follow the path around University Hall and you will see the most famous site on campus, the John Harvard Statue.

This is also known as the statue of three lies. The first one is on the statue's base and states Harvard was formed in 1638. Wrong! As we know Harvard was formed in 1636. It also says that John Harvard was the founder of Harvard. Wrong, Harvard was founded by the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. John Harvard endowed Harvard with books and money in 1638. And the third and probably the biggest lie is that the man in the chair --- it's not John Harvard. When the statue was designed in 1884 by Daniel Chester French there was not any likeness of John Harvard available. French used a Harvard Student by the name Sherman Hoar as the inspiration for John Harvard's face. Sherman Hoar was a descendant of the brother of Harvard's fourth president, Leonard Hoar.

The statue is one of the most photographed statues in the United States, and you will notice the worn-out bronze of the statue's left foot where countless visitors have rubbed for good luck. There is a legend that if you touch the foot of the statue you will acquire some of the knowledge of Harvard.

Take the path leading away from the John Harvard Statue and toward the street. On the left you will see Massachusetts Hall.

Opened in 1720, Massachusetts Hall is the second oldest college dorm in the United States. Some of the legendary student-residents include John Hancock, Samuel Adams and United States' second president John Adams.

During the siege of Boston in 1775, 640 members of the Continental Army led by George Washington were housed here. Currently, Massachusetts Hall house the offices of Harvard's President, Treasurer, and Vice President. Their offices are on the first two floors and part of the third floor. The fourth floor is a freshman dorm.

Exit the Old Yard though Johnston Gate.

Opened in 1890, Johnston Gate was the first gate constructed around Old Harvard Yard. Johnston Gate cost \$10,000 to construct in 1889-90 and was a gift to the university by 1855 graduate Samuel Johnston.

For several hundred years, on Harvard's commencement day, sheriffs from Middlesex and Suffolk counties have entered Harvard Yard on horseback. The Middlesex Sheriff then calls the ceremony to order. It has become a tradition that they enter through Johnston Gate.

After the commencement ceremony, graduates exit Harvard Yard through Johnston Gate.

As you pass though Johnston Gate you can now consider yourself an honorary graduate of Harvard University.

After passing through Johnston Gate, cross Massachusetts Ave. to the island in the middle and you will be at the sculpture of Charles Sumner (1811-1874).

Charles Sumner was a lawyer, abolitionist, orator and U.S. Senator from Massachusetts. While a U.S. Senator, an incident took place on the Senate Floor when he was arguing against the Kansas/Nebraska Act, which was an 1854 legislative act that would allow expansion of slavery in the new states of Kansas and Nebraska.

On May 20th 1856, Sumner was arguing against the Act, and called U.S. Senator Andrew Butler from South Carolina a slave pimp. He continued to

criticize the senator and his state. During the tirade Sumner mocked Butler's way of speaking and physical mannerisms. Butler had previously suffered a stroke which left him physically impaired.

Two days later, U.S. Congressman Preston Brooks, a cousin of Senator Butler, approached Sumner on the Senate floor. As Sumner rose to meet the Representative, Preston beat Sumner nearly to death with a cane, until the cane finally broke. The beating rendered Sumner unconscious on the Senate floor. It took almost two years for Sumner to recover from the beating. The event showed how divided the United States was at that time over the issue slavery.

Continue across Massachusetts Ave. and take a right along Massachusetts Ave. You will soon be outside the Cambridge Burial Ground (1635).

This burial ground was the only burial ground in Cambridge for nearly 200 years and includes a cross section of Cambridge residents -- from paupers to Harvard Presidents. Like all the old burial grounds, there are many more bodies beneath than the 1,218 headstones above. Many of the old headstones did not survive the centuries, and some of the earliest burials were unmarked.

The oldest headstone in the burial ground is that of Anne Eriton which dates to 1653. The tomb of John Vassel is the most elaborate tomb in the burial ground and contains 25 caskets including the body of Andrew Craigie who was the first Apothecary General of the Continental Army. He was also a former owner of the Longfellow House on Tory Row. Craigie also developed much of what is known as East Cambridge and also organized the construction of the Canal Bridge which connected East Cambridge to Boston. The bridge was later rebuilt as the Charles River Dam but is also known as Craigie's Bridge.

The Cambridge Burial Ground contains the remains of eight Harvard Presidents, including Harvard's first president, Henry Dunster. The bodies of 19 Revolutionary War Soldiers are also here, including John Hicks,

William Macy and Moses Richardson who were buried here after the first Battles of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775 in Lexington and Concord. The burial ground also houses the tomb of the Dana Family. Richard Henry Dana, Jr. was an abolitionist who worked with Charles Sumner.

Continue up Massachusetts Ave. and once you cross Garden St. look down on the sidewalk and you will see a series of horseshoes embedded along the sidewalk of Massachusetts Ave.

These show the route that William Dawes, the second rider with Paul Revere on his midnight ride, took on his way up to Lexington, Massachusetts on the night of April 18, 1775.

The "Midnight Ride" made by Paul Revere, William Dawes and others, warned the towns along the way that the British Troops were on the move. It resulted in the start of the American Revolution in Lexington and Concord on the morning of April 19, 1775.

Cross the street at the crosswalk ahead and you are at the gates of Cambridge Common. Rather than walk through the gates, take the sidewalk to the left along Garden Street.

This 16 acre park was where George Washington and the Continental Army camped in 1775 while British Troops occupied Boston until March 1776.

The first site you will see when entering the Common is a memorial for the Irish Famine which was dedicated on July 23, 1997 by then Irish President Mary Robinson.

The sculpture was created by Maurice Harron a resident of Derry, Northern Ireland who has sculptures in Ireland, The UK and The United States.

Continue walking through the Common, keeping Garden Street on your left and you will come to a series of cannons.

These cannons were abandoned at Fort Independence (also known as Castle William) on March 17, 1776 when the British Troops evacuated Boston.

There is also a plaque to Henry Knox, who was a Boston bookseller before the American Revolution. He would become the first Secretary of War under President George Washington.

In January 1776, Henry Knox dragged cannons and other military supplies from the captured British Forts Ticonderoga and Crown Point in Upstate New York. He led the mission to carry the 60 tons of cannons and other arms on ox-drawn sleds 300 miles across snowy and frozen ground to Boston.

What was expected to take two weeks, took six weeks. The caravan of men faced storms and delays as the cannons broke through the ice, and got stuck in the mud and snow. In the end they were able to deliver the munitions to Boston. The cannons were in place on the Dorchester Heights, (the hills surrounding Boston) on the night of March 16, 1776. When the Occupying British Troops awoke the next morning on March 17th, they realized they were surrounded by artillery. They withdrew their ships to Halifax and retreated out of Boston.

The siege of Boston was over. March 17th is a holiday in Boston called Evacuation Day as a result of the efforts of Henry Knox and his men. Henry Knox went on to be in charge of improving the defenses in Rhode Island and New York during the American Revolution. While in New York he met Alexander Hamilton who was the commander of the local artillery. They would remain close friends until Hamilton's death in 1804.

Knox would later become the first Secretary of War under George Washington. Henry Knox died in 1806 at the age of 56 after swallowing a

chicken bone which caused an infection that killed him three days later on Oct. 25th.

Also located in the area of the cannons and marked with a plaque is the Washington Elm. Legend has it (although is disputed) that under this tree on July 3, 1775, General George Washington took control of the Continental Army. The army struck camp there and stayed until March 1776 when British Troops evacuated Boston.

The original tree lived about 210 years and finally fell in 1923. The tree was cut up into 100 pieces and sent to all the U.S. States and their legislatures. Other pieces were sent to fraternal organizations throughout the U.S. Root shoots were sent throughout the nation, and some still live today. The cross-section of the tree was sent to Mt. Vernon, George Washington's plantation in the state of Virginia.

Turn around and head back down the sidewalk, you'll see a white church to your right across the street.

This church was formed in 1759 by the members of King's Chapel in Boston who lived in Cambridge. This church provided Church of England services to students attending Harvard. It was designed by Peter Harrison who was also the architect of Boston's King's Chapel.

The church sits across the street from the Cambridge Common, where the Continental Army was camped at the start of the American Revolution. Soldiers camped there fired shots at the then-Loyalist Church. If you walk through the front doors of the church, and look above the inside door frame, a musket hole is still visible.

Later George and Martha Washington would attend a prayer service there. As the war continued on, the church was closed, and the organ pipes were melted down to make bullets for the Continental Army.

In April 1967, the church hosted Dr. Benjamin Spock and Martin Luther King, Jr., who were denied access to a building on Harvard's Campus. They planned to hold a press conference against the Vietnam War. They were welcomed by the Reverend Murray Kenney. Jesse Jackson also spoke at the church in 2004 celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Continue walking towards Massachusetts Ave. and back to the Cambridge Burial Ground. At the burial ground, take a right down Massachusetts Ave. and cross Church Street. Follow Massachusetts Ave. and you will come to the Harvard Coop.

The Harvard Coop was opened in 1882 to supply books and school supplies for the students at Harvard. In 1916, after MIT moved from Boston to Cambridge, MIT opened a branch of the Coop to serve their students and is still present on MIT's campus today.

This Coop is one of the largest college bookstores in the United States. The store is run by Barnes and Nobles today, and the public is welcome to shop for books and Harvard swag. However, membership to the Coop is limited to students, faculty, alumni and employees, as well as personnel of hospitals affiliated with Harvard Medical School. In 1882, membership cost \$1.00. That cost is the same today.

Cross Massachusetts Ave. and you will be where the tour started outside the Harvard Square Subway Station and Out-of-Town Newsstand. We hope you enjoyed your GPS Tour of Harvard.

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