

To say that Andrew Jackson was a little rough around the edges would be an understatement. By the time Jackson moved to Nashville, Tennessee, he had developed a reputation for being a "horse-racing, card-playing, mischievous fellow" and was known for his hot temper. He even once killed a man in a duel with pistols after the man called him "a worthless scoundrel". This behavior however, did not prevent Jackson from becoming a fine lawyer, a gentleman farmer, and a successful politician. On top of this, Jackson was an Army General, and his victory at the Battle of New Orleans turned him into a national hero. Jackson's popularity skyrocketed with the American people, especially the common folk. They began calling him "Old Hickory", because he was as hard as Hickory (a type of tree).



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"Old Hickory" on the \$20

Jackson ran for President in 1824, and though he lost the election to John Quincy Adams, he rallied enough support to form a new political party, the Democratic Party. This new party, they promised, would represent ordinary farmers, workers, and the poor, not the rich and upper class who controlled the Republican Party. When Jackson ran for President again in 1828, the result was a great victory. But it was also a victory for the idea that the common people should control their government. This idea eventually became known as **Jacksonian Democracy** (<http://www.history.com/topics/jacksonian-democracy>).

Nowadays, you'll find Andrew Jackson's face on a twenty dollar bill because of this important contribution to the development of American Democracy. However, this not without controversy. Many people think that Jackson is unworthy of being on the currency because of the impact of his policies toward Native Americans. During his Presidency, Andrew Jackson was responsible for helping pass the Indian Removal Act. This law led to the death of thousands of Native Americans, who were forced to walk the *Trail of Tears* after being kicked off their land.