

**Q.** Which railroad was the first railroad to be built in the U.S.?

**A.** That depends on exactly how you define a railroad. Most people think of a railroad as a line of steel rails fastened to wooden crossties with spikes on which a locomotive runs pulling railroad cars after it. The earliest railroads had wooden rails and the cars were pulled by horses because the locomotive had not been invented yet. For an excellent article on the first railroads in the Americas, click on: [The Transfer of Pioneering British Railroad Technology to North America](#) by

[Frederick C. Gamst,](#)  
[University of Massachusetts,](#)

## **Boston**

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**For our definition of what is a railroad, click on:**  
**Definition of a Railroad**

■

**Given our definition of a railroad, the answer is the Granite Railroad built in 1826 in Quincy, Massachusetts which was built to haul**

**granite blocks from the quarry on Bunker Hill Ledge to a wharf near where Gulliver Creek empties into the Neponset River. Professor Gamst says it is really the twelfth railroad, but the earlier ones were not chartered or incorporated and were**

**very short term. The Granite Railroad was incorporated on March 14, 1826 by the Massachusetts State Legislature and lasted over 100 years.**

**Q. How many miles of railroad tracks were there back in the beginning?**

**A. The miles of track in 1830 was 75.41 miles. Another 987.08 miles were added by 1835 for a**

**total of 1,062.49  
miles. By 1840,  
2,377.98 miles  
were added for a  
total of 3,440.47.  
From 1841  
through 1845  
another 1,641.12  
had been added**

**to make a total of  
5,081.59 miles.**

**The next five  
years added**

**3,666.20 for a**

**grand total of**

**8,747.79 miles.**

**For full details,**

**click on:**

# Track Mileage by Year

