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Fact Checker

The truth behind the rhetoric.



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One president, three years, 16,241 wrong claims

President Trump completed three years in office on Jan. 20 — and The Fact Checker reached a three-year milestone of its own. We've now documented 16,241 false or misleading claims from Trump since he took office.

It's an astronomical number, averaging 15 per day. Our Trump database has nearly 7,000 more entries “than there are visible stars in the night sky,” as [Jimmy Kimmel pointed out](#) this week.

We started this project as part of our coverage of the president's first 100 days, recording 492 claims, an average of just under five a day. Readers demanded that we keep it going for the rest of Trump's presidency.

Little did we know what that would mean.

Trump's pace has accelerated at an explosive clip. He made more false and misleading claims in 2019 — 8,155 — than he did in 2017 (1,999) and 2018 (5,689) combined.

Put another way: He averaged six such claims a day in 2017, nearly 16 a day in 2018 and more than 22 a day in 2019.

In 2018, Trump barnstormed the country in an effort to thwart a Democratic takeover of the House. The two biggest false-claim days were before the election: Nov. 5 (139 claims) and Nov. 3 (128).

In 2019, the key reason for a Trumpian surge in October and November was the uproar over a phone call on July 25, in which the president urged Ukraine's leader to announce an investigation of former vice president Joe Biden — eventually leading to his impeachment in the House and an ongoing Senate trial. Almost 1,000 of the false and misleading claims made by the president deal with the Ukraine investigation, even though it only became a category four months ago.

For instance, nearly 70 times he has claimed that a whistleblower complaint about the call was inaccurate. The report accurately captured the content of Trump's call and many other details have been confirmed. Nearly 100 times, Trump has claimed his phone call with the Ukrainian president was "perfect," even though it so alarmed other White House officials that several immediately raised private objections.

About one in five of these claims are about the economy or jobs.

As Trump approaches a tough reelection campaign, his most repeated claim — 257 times — is that the U.S. economy today is the best in history. He began making this claim in June 2018, and it quickly became one of his favorites. The president can certainly brag about the state of the economy, but he runs into trouble when he repeatedly makes a play for the history books. By just about any important measure, the economy today is not doing as well as it did under Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon B. Johnson or Bill Clinton — or Ulysses S. Grant. Moreover, the economy is beginning to hit the head

winds caused by Trump's trade wars, with the manufacturing sector in an apparent recession.

The president's constant Twitter barrage also adds to his totals. Nearly 20 percent of the false and misleading statements stemmed from his itchy Twitter finger.

Trump's penchant for repeating false claims is demonstrated by the fact that the Fact Checker database has recorded more than 400 instances in which he has repeated a variation of the same claim at least three times.

Our award-winning [database](#) has an extremely fast search engine that will quickly locate suspect statements the president has made. We encourage readers to explore it in detail. We recently added a new feature that provides a URL for every claim that is fact-checked, allowing readers to post the link on social media.

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