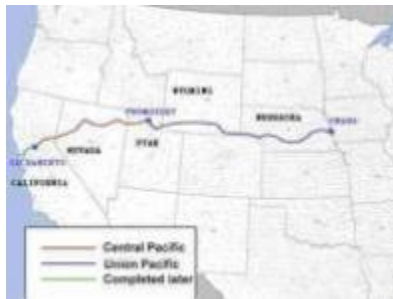




What was the main railroad line that connected the west coast to the east coast of the U.S. and when did it occur at what costs?

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The main line was the **First Transcontinental Railroad** (originally the Pacific Railroad), a 1,911-mile track connecting Council Bluffs, Iowa, to Oakland, California, completed on May 10, 1869. Built between 1863 and 1869, this massive project was constructed by the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads, joining at Promontory Summit, Utah. [1, 2]

Key Details

- **Timeframe:** Construction began in 1863, with the final spike driven on May 10, 1869.
- **The Route:** It linked the existing eastern U.S. rail network at Council Bluffs, Iowa, to the Pacific Coast, transforming a six-month trip into a two-week journey.
- **Construction Companies:**
 - **Central Pacific Railroad:** Built 690 miles eastward from Sacramento, California.
 - **Union Pacific Railroad:** Built 1,085 miles westward from Omaha, Nebraska.
- **Costs:**
 - **Financial Cost:** It cost roughly $\backslash(\backslash\$45,000\backslash)$ to $\backslash(\backslash\$60,000\backslash)$ per mile to build, with total costs often estimated around $\backslash(\backslash\$1.2\backslash)$ billion in modern dollars.
 - **Federal Subsidy:** The government funded the project with bonds of $\backslash(\backslash\$16,000\backslash)$ to $\backslash(\backslash\$48,000\backslash)$ per mile depending on terrain.
 - **Human Cost:** The project relied on thousands of Chinese immigrants (for the Central Pacific) and Irish laborers (for the Union Pacific), who worked under dangerous, often fatal conditions. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)]

This project was authorized by the [Pacific Railroad Act of 1862](#) to unify the country. [[1](#)]

AI Overview



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