A Chronology of Japanese History
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Portable Data Format by Remy Bordeleau
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Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto produce the islands of Japan.

Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto produce the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu no Ōkami.

Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto produce the Moon God, Tsuki-yumi no Mikoto.

Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto produce Susa no O no Mikoto. He lives on the islands while Amaterasu and Tsuki-yumi live in heaven.

Amaterasu and Susa no O produce five male deities and three female deities by crunching up various jewels and other personal possessions and blowing on them. Amaterasu declares, "As for the seed of the five male Deities born last, their birth was from things of mine; so undoubtedly they are my children. As for the seed of the three female Deities born first, their birth was from a thing of thine; so doubtless they are thy children."

The daughter of Takamimusubi is married to the son of Amaterasu. A son is born and he is named Ninigi no Mikoto.

Amaterasu, on the order of Takamimusubi, sends Ninigi no Mikoto, to Mt. Hiuga in what is now called Kyûshû to rule over Japan. She gives him the curved Yasaka jewel, the eight-hand Yata mirror, and the sword of Kusanagi. In addition, as attendants she sent Ame no Koyane no Mikoto (the first ancestor of the Nakatomi), Futodama no Mikoto (the first ancestor of the Imbe), Ame no Uzume no Mikoto (the first ancestor of the Sarume), Ishikoridome no Mikoto (the first ancestor of the mirror makers), and Tamaya no Mikoto (the first ancestor of the jewel makers).

Ninigi no Mikoto marries Toyo-tama-hime, the daughter of God of the Sea. She dies while delivering their child Hiko hoho demi no Mikoto.

Ninigi no Mikoto's great-grandson, Jimmu, is enthroned and his title is changed from Mikoto to Tennõ. At the age of forty-five, he undertakes a campaign to move to the east and settles in Yamato after defeating the local tribes.

From this point, the rest is factual history.
**Yamato Period (300 - 550) & Asuka Period (550 - 710)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>270 - 310 (–)</td>
<td>Reign of Ōjin, the fifteenth emperor by legendary accounts. However historians question the authenticity of all emperors before him and wonder if he is the first. Large groups of people (presumably led by Ōjin) migrate from Western Kyūshū (where the strongest, most advanced, and most well organized uji have lived until now) to the northeast and settle on the Yamato Plain. Other uji migrate north and settle in the Izumo area. (Is this the migration of Jimmū?) The &quot;imperial&quot; uji (the uji claiming to have descended from the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu) begins to solidify its power over the other uji using their military might and their claim to heavenly ancestors.</td>
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<td>313 - 399</td>
<td>Reign of the sixteenth Emperor; Nintoku</td>
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<td>391</td>
<td>Japanese forces cross to Korea, defeat Paekche and Silla armies and establish a small colony (called Mimana) on the southern tip of the peninsula. To thank the Japanese for helping save his territory from the Silla, the king of Paekche sends scholars to Japan. With them they bring the Chinese writing system. (I have been told, but haven't yet read on my own, that some recent archeological research does not support the theories of Japan ever establishing the colony of Mimana.)</td>
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<td>400 - 405</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Richû</td>
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<td>406 - 410</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Hanshô</td>
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<td>411 - 453</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Ingyô</td>
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<td>Reign of Emperor Ankô</td>
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<td>456 - 479</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Yûryaku</td>
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<td>480 - 484</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Seinei</td>
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<td>485 - 487</td>
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<td>488 - 498</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor NinKen</td>
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<td>498 - 506</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Buretsu</td>
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<td>507 - 531</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Keitei (the 26th Emperor of Japan)</td>
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<td>531 - 536</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Ankan</td>
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<td>532</td>
<td>Paekche and Silla forces retake half of Japan's sphere of influence (Mimana) in Korea.</td>
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<td>536 - 539</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Senkwa</td>
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<td>536</td>
<td>Soga Iname becomes Great Minister and advisor to the throne. (He begins the system of the nobility controlling the Imperial House by marrying Soga daughters to the Emperors and most of his possible heirs)</td>
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<td>540 - 571</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Kimmêi (Emperor Kimmêi has a daughter with a woman of the Soga clan. This daughter later marries Emperor Bidatsu and later still becomes Empress Suikô)</td>
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<td>552</td>
<td>The king of Paekche, in Korea, sends a bronze image of Buddha and Buddhist scriptures to the Emperor in hopes of obtaining Japanese help in defending his territory against the Silla. Thus, Buddhism is officially introduced to the Japanese court - although, unofficially, the many Chinese and Koreans already living in Japan had always been Buddhists. (Even though most books use this date, evidence exists that point to 538 being a more accurate date)</td>
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<td>562</td>
<td>Silla occupies and annexes Mimana. Japanese forces are driven out of Korea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>572 - 585</td>
<td>Reign of Emperor Bidatsu (The son of Soga Iname's daughter)</td>
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Yamato Period (300 - 550) & Asuka Period (550 - 710)

585 - 587 Reign of Emperor Yômei, the son of Soga Iname’s daughter. (Yômei is the first emperor to actually espouse Buddhism. He took up the faith when he became critically ill and had a large image of Yakushi made in the hopes that it would help his recovery. He died before it could be finished but when it was, it was housed in Hôryûji.)

587 Emperor Yômei dies and Sushun becomes emperor. In the violent succession struggle that follows, the Soga clan (supporters of Buddhism and the importation of Chinese culture) defeats the Mononobe and Nakatomi clans (opponents of both) in the Battle of Shigisen, thus assuring the official acceptance of Buddhism and making the Soga’s the leading house in Japan. Soga Umako succeeded his father, Iname, as Grand Minister and put Emperor Sujun on the throne.

As an aside: For comparison sake, there were three types of uji: the shimbetsu (those who claimed descent similar to the imperial family from the gods of Takamagahara and the descendants of the gods dating prior to Emperor Jimmu), the kobetsu (those of imperial descent after the time of Emperor Jimmu), and the bambetsu (powerful uji of non-imperial descent). The Mononobe were a strong military uji belonging to the shimbetsu. The Nakatomi were hereditary ritualists belonging to the shimbetsu as well. The Soga were managers of imperial estates and of the kobetsu.

592 Soga Umako arranges the assassination of the emperor (his nephew) and replaces him with his niece, Suiko (the sister of ex-emperor Yômei, the widowed ex-empress of Bidatsu, and the thirty-third sovereign.) She becomes the first female to take the Japanese imperial throne.

Suiko’s nephew (the second son of Yômei and later to be known as Shôtoku Taishi) is named Heir Apparent and Regent. He actively begins importing Chinese civilization and culture and the process of establishing Buddhism as a state religion.

Thus begins the process of separating imperial priestly duties (Suiko) and administrative duties (Shôtoku) between different people.

595 Shôtoku Taishi sends an unsuccessful military expedition to Korea to regain Mimana.

602 Shôtoku Taishi plans for another military expedition to Korea to regain Mimana but the expedition is canceled when the leader suddenly dies.

603 Shôtoku Taishi announces a new system of twelve court ranks.

604 Shôtoku Taishi issues the Constitution of Seventeen Articles (a code of moral and political principles in seventeen articles of government). This attempts to centralize the government and change the bureaucracy from being hereditary to one that is merit based. [Note that current scholars think this was written long after Shôtoku’s death.]

607 The first ‘official’ envoy (Ono-no-Imoko) is sent to China as a representative of a unified Japan. Hôryûji is founded near what will become Nara.

622 Shôtoku Taishi dies. Soga Umako dies shortly thereafter; Soga Yemishi becomes the new Grand Minister.

623 The first imperial edict is issued which attempts to regulate the ever growing Buddhist hierarchy. The Buddhist establishment becomes, in effect, a branch of the central government. (As a side note, reports from this time indicate that in Japan there are now 816 monks and 569 nuns)

628 Empress Suiko dies. Yamato descends into a state of political rivalry while a successor is being chosen.

629 Jomei (Bidatsu’s grandson) is appointed by Yemishi (Soga Umako’s son) as Emperor.

630 Japan establishes formal relations with Tang China.

641 Emperor Jomei dies. Königyo (Jomei’s consort, granddaughter of Bidatsu, and, therefore, a Soga) becomes Empress.

644 Taika Coup. Naka no Ōe (son of Empress Königyo and future Emperor Tenchi) arranges for the assassination of the Soga leaders and eliminates Soga influence.

645 Empress Königyo abdicates and Kôtoku (Empress Königyo’s brother) becomes emperor.
Yamato Period (300 - 550) & Asuka Period (550 - 710)

646  Taika Reforms reorganizing political and administrative order along Chinese lines are announced. Among the many changes, the establishment of a permanent imperial capital is called for and all land is declared to belong to the Sovereign, with families allotted parcels of land according to the number of people in the household. In addition, a national military is planned. All males between 20 and 60 years of age are required to serve if called on to do so by the state - with the option to buy your way out of service if you can afford it. (This plan ultimately proves unworkable and fails.)

646  The Imperial capital is set up in Naniwa. A new era name (Taika) is announced. (During this period, the capital is moved from Yamato to Naniwa, then to Kyûshû, then back to Yamato, and finally settled in Omi.)

649  Eight departments of a new central administration are created and an official bureaucracy is created to staff them.

652  The first, large-scale, land distribution is effected in the capital city area.

654  Kôtoku dies and ex-Empress Kôgyoku reascends the throne as Empress Saimei.

661  Empress Saimei dies in Kyûshû while leading an army to Korea to aid Paekche. Prince Naka no Ôe (Jomei’s son) is appointed Emperor Tenchi but is not officially enthroned until 668.

662  A large Japanese military force sent to Korea to help Paekche defend itself against the Chinese but this force was destroyed by the Chinese Navy.

668  Prince Naka no Ôe officially ascends the throne as Emperor Tenchi.

669  Great Minister Kamatari (Nakatomi Kamako) dies and is given the surname Fujiwara. (His son Fubito goes on to have four sons - each becoming the head of the four branches of the powerful Fujiwara clan. Fubito also begins the process of marrying Fujiwara daughters into the royal family, a process which continues for centuries.

671  Emperor Tenchi dies. A succession dispute between his son and his younger brother breaks out as civil war (Jinshin disturbance). His son temporarily succeeds him as Emperor Kôbun, but is later killed in battle.

672  Temmu (Tenchi’s younger brother) becomes emperor.

673  Temmu orders the compilation of the Kojiki and the Nihongi (Nihonshoki) to justify his accession to the throne. They are completed early in the next century.

673 - 674  It is most likely that the shrine at Ise is now first acknowledged as being dedicated to Amaterasu Ômikami.

682  An imperial edict is issued stating that in selecting men for political office, the considerations are to be first birth, then character, and lastly ability.

685  An imperial order is issued that all official houses in every province should contain a small Buddhist shrine with a Buddhist image and scriptures.

686  Emperor Temmu dies. Jitô (Temu’s consort/wife and daughter of Emperor Temmu) becomes Empress.

689  A new administrative code dealing with the functions of ministries and the duties of officials is distributed to government offices.

697  Empress Jitô retires and her grandson, Mommu, becomes Emperor. However, Jitô continues to hold all power from behind the scenes until her death in 702.

701  The possession of weapons by private persons is prohibited. Alarmed at the increasing power and popularity of wandering, unordained, and, therefore, unofficial Buddhist priests and nuns, the government issues an edict admonishing them to adhere to the Sõniryô (Regulations for Priests and Nuns).
Yamato Period (300 - 550) & Asuka Period (550 - 710)

702
The Taiho Codes (Taiyōryō), a revision and modification of the Taika Reform and based on the Chinese political system, are put into effect. This redefines the Japanese political system as the central government is divided into two parts, the Department of State (Dajōkan) and the Department of Worship (Jingikan). The country is divided into 66 provinces and these into 592 districts.

708
The construction of a new, and permanent, capital city in Nara (Heijōkyō) begins. Gemmyō becomes Empress.
Nara Period (710 - 794)

710  The capital city is moved to Nara (Heijokyo). The administration begins trying to enforce the land tax system as implemented in the Taika reforms (which eventually proves unsuccessful because of, in part, exemptions granted to monasteries and noble families).

712  The Kojiki is completed. It is divided into three scrolls: scroll 1 deals with heavenly myths, scroll 2 deals with earthly myths related to the first 15 (legendary) monarchs, and scroll three contains genealogical and anecdotal accounts of the Yamato monarchs from Nintoku through Suiko.

715  The daughter of Gemmyo becomes Empress.

717  Continued concern about the increasing power and popularity of wandering, unordained, and, therefore, unofficial Buddhist priests and nuns, the government issues another edict admonishing them to adhere to the Soniryo (Regulations for Priests and Nuns).

718  A review of the Taiho Code is completed. This adjusted the laws and legislation by taking into account conditions which were prevalent in Japan but not in China and adjusting the Code accordingly.

720  The Nihonshoki is completed. It is divided into thirty scrolls, the first two dealing with the heavenly myths and the remaining providing chronological accounts of the monarchs from Jimmu through Empress Jitõ.

720  An army is raised from nine provinces to subdue the Ainu in the North and East who are making it difficult to open new land. After much fighting a frontier post and garrison is set up in Taga (later called Sendai).

722  Because of the increasing number of largely autonomous Shõen and the subsequent loss of rice tax for the residents in the city, the central government issues an order calling for three million new acres of land to be reclaimed and converted to rice paddies. In return those who do the work are granted large concessions. The stronger families thus start to accumulate land and power.

725  Shõmu becomes Emperor. (In order to reduce the threat to the throne caused by factionalism among the more powerful court families, during his reign he begins the practice of degrading excess members of the imperial family and giving them surnames as "subjects" of the emperor: From this practice come the lineages Tachibana, Taira, and Minamoto, among others.)

729  Continued concern about the increasing power and popularity of wandering, unordained, and, therefore, unofficial Buddhist priests and nuns, the government issues another edict admonishing them to adhere to the Sõniryõ (Regulations for Priests and Nuns).

736  The Kegon sect of Buddhism is introduced from China. (This sect is systematically called on to read protective sutras for the state when problems arise.)

738  Tõdaiji is founded and serves as the family temple for the imperial family.

741  The national government provides funds to build one temple (kokubunji) and one nunnery (kokubun-niji) in each province throughout Japan in which protective sutras can be read in times of national emergency. Tõdaiji is the temple of the capital province and, hence, becomes the national temple. Hokkeji becomes the national nunnery.

743  Newly reclaimed land is exempted from the system whereby all land belongs to the imperial family. Reclaimed land is allowed to remain with the person who reclaims it in perpetuity. The granting of private estates (Shõen) begins to appear around this time.

749  The 53 foot seated bronze statue of Vairocana Buddha is completed and installed at Tõdaiji. Shõmu holds a ceremony where he humbles himself to the Buddha, thus in effect adopting Buddhism as the court, and therefore state, religion. (This doesn't imply that the Japanese had converted to Buddhism, just that they had converted it to fill state needs.)

Feb. 749  Shõmu becomes a monk.

May 749  Shõmu moves his residence to Yakushiji in Nara, but retains the title of Emperor and continues to rule from the monastery. He was probably forced by Confucianists to move his residence as they opposed his taking the tonsure.
Nara Period (710 - 794)

July 749  Shōmu abdicates the throne and his unmarried daughter becomes Empress Kōken. He was probably forced by Confucianists to abdicate, but he still conducted the affairs of state through his daughter from behind the scenes.

756  Shōmu dies leaving Empress Kōken in control of the state.

757  Yōrō Codes (Yōrō Ritsuryō) are enacted. These replace the Taihō Ritsuryō and are also based on Tang China laws.

758  Kōken abdicates in favor of Emperor Junnin.

760  The Manyōshū is completed. It is a compilation of 4000 poems from the earliest of times until the time it was completed.

762  Kōken takes the tonsure and becomes a nun at Hokkeji in Nara but continues to run state affairs from the monastery.

764  Continued concern about the increasing power and popularity of wandering, unordained, and, therefore, unofficial Buddhist priests and nuns, the government issues another edict admonishing them to adhere to the Sōniryō (Regulations for Priests and Nuns).

764  Kōken disposes and exiles Emperor Junnin (and later has him strangled). She resumes rule as Empress Shōtoku, all the while maintaining her status as a nun.

765  Shōtoku appoints Dōkyō, a monk, to the post of Grand Minister, the highest post in the bureaucracy. He is her most trusted advisor and is all powerful until her death.

766  Shōtoku creates the new, and special, bureaucratic post of Hōō (King of Dharma) for Dōkyō. In general, Shōtoku creates numerous laws during her reign that raise the power of the clergy and disrupt the ritsuryō system and the Confucian foundations of the state.

770  Shōtoku dies. Dōkyō makes an attempt to become the emperor; but this is resisted by court leaders and confucianists. He is exiled. Kōnin (grandson of Tenchi, but elderly at this point) is chosen by the Fujiwaras and becomes Emperor.

774  This is a year of natural calamities as famine and a pox epidemic spread throughout the country.

776  The garrison at Taga is destroyed during an Ainu uprising (which continued until 790).

776  The system of forced military labor is not working as planned and is slowly replaced with a system of regular armed forces trained in military matters. Thus starts the division between peasants and a warrior class.

781  Kōnin dies. On his death, the council of ministers refuses to allow a woman to take the throne (because of the power Dōkyō had been able to usurp when Shōtoku had been on the throne) thus starting the all male policy that still stands today - with two very short exceptions after 1600. Kōnin’s eldest son becomes Emperor Kammu. (The Taira family are descendants of Emperor Kammu’s grandson, Takamochi.)

782  Kammu decides to move the court and capital to a new location, in large part to escape the ever increasing power of the Buddhist monasteries in Nara.

784  The capital city moved to Nagaoka, about 30 miles from Nara in the province of Yamashiro.

791  Sakanouye Tamuramarō is appointed as deputy commander of forces in the northeast. He is charged with subduing the rebellious Ainu and pushing the frontier further to the north.

792  The system of universal military conscription is officially abolished. Each province is left to recruit their own armies within their province. These new forces are not chosen from the farming households, though, but from the noble land-holding families.

793  Due to a death, several major calamities, and the subsequent superstitious beliefs that these were caused by the choice of this location for the capital, work is halted in Nagaoka and it is decided to move the capital again. Construction of a new capital is now begun in Heiankyō (Kyōto), about 10 miles away.
Heian Period (794 - 1185)

794 Imperial court and capital city moved to Heiankyō (Kyōto).

794 In order to encourage people to study at the university, emperor Kammu adopts two measures:

1) He eliminates the hereditary privilege allowing sons of high ranking officials into government positions without taking an examination. The new measure stipulates that people taking and passing exams will be granted higher official positions.

2) In addition, he instituted the scholarship fields of Chinese Classics and History which provided sustenance for the students while they studied.

800 - 900 Numerous extra-legal offices and bureaus are established which weaken or circumvent the codes and offices established with the implementation of the Taihō Codes earlier.

803 Sakanouye Tamuramarō finally drives Ainu further to the North and is able to establish garrisons at Izawa and Shiba in Northern Mutsu province. For this accomplishment he is awarded the title Sei-i-Tai-Shōgun (Barbarian Subduing Generalissimo) - the first to hold this title.

805 In recognition that the tax burden on the common farmer for the military campaigns in the northeast and for building the new capital are proving unbearable, advisors to the throne discuss plans to cancel private debt and outstanding taxes.

805 The Tendai sect of Buddhism is founded by Saichō (Dengyō Daishi). This sect is acceptable to the government because it is willing to remain out of politics. A monastery (Enryakuji) is established on Mt. Hiei, north-east of Kyōto. (Incidentally, it was Saichō who first used the phrase Dai Nippon to refer to the country.)

806 The Shingon sect of Buddhism is founded by Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi).

806 Heizei (Kammu's son) becomes Emperor.

807 The government issues an edict forbidding sorcerers, diviners, and priests to seduce the common masses - even though they couldn't control the abuse, and even though the government, itself, called on their services regularly.

809 Heizei abdicates the throne due to illness and retires to Nara. His younger brother becomes Emperor Saga.

Fall 810 Ex-emperor Heizei (along with his his advisor Fujiwara Nakanari, his consort Kusuko, and her brother) conspires to retake the throne by returning the capital from Kyōto to Nara. The plot is thwarted after much bloodshed and Heizei is forced to become a monk. Others are forced to commit suicide.

811 The interest rate on rice loans to farmers is reduced.

812 The emperor issues an edict mandating that all imperial princes and sons of aristocratic clans aspiring to government appointment first receive a Confucian education at the State College.

813 The emperor pronounces that good government depends on literature and progress depends on learning.

816 Kūkai is given permission to establish a monastery on Mt. Kōya in Kii (now Wakayama) province.

820 The Kōnin-kyaku and Kōnin-shiki (both legal compilations) are released. (Kyaku are regulations issued ad-hoc to meet changing societal conditions and modifying or replacing codes (from the Taika Codes) no longer appropriate. Shiki are detailed rules supplementing the codes and necessary for their practical operation.)

822 Enryakuji is given authorization to establish an independent ordination platform, thus breaking the monopoly of the sects in Nara.

823 Saga abdicates in favor of his younger brother. Junna becomes Emperor.

823 Kūkai is entrusted with completing the construction of Tōji in Kyōto, and with it's management thereafter. It becomes a center for Esoteric Buddhism in Japan.
**Heian Period (794 - 1185)**

- 833: Nimmyō (Ninmei?) becomes Emperor.
- 850: Nimmyō (Ninmei?) dies. Montoku becomes Emperor.
- 858: Montoku dies. Seiwa becomes Emperor at the age of nine. Fujiwara Yoshifusa (Seiwa's maternal grandfather) becomes the first Fujiwara Regent (until 872). ([All Fujiwara Regents hold the office of Sesshō or Kampaku, or both.](#)) ([The Minamoto family known as Seiwa Ganji are descendants of Tsunemoto, a grandson of Emperor Seiwa.](#))
- 869: The Jōgan-kyaku are released (these supplemented the Kōnin-kyaku)
- 871: The Jōgan-shiki are released (these supplemented the Kōnin-shiki)
- 877: Seiwa abdicates the throne. Yōzei becomes titular Emperor at the age of nine. Fujiwara Mototsune becomes Regent - the first person to hold this title. ([According to at least one book, Yōzei was both insane and criminal.](#))
- 884: Yōzei is forced by the regent to abdicate at the age of seventeen. Kōkō becomes titular Emperor.
- 887: Kōkō dies. Uda becomes titular Emperor. His mother is not a Fujiwara and he hopes to reestablish direct rule by the Emperor.
- 889 - 897: Kampyō Era
- 894: The dispatch of envoys to China is officially suspended.
- 897: Uda abdicates in favor of his son. Daigo becomes titular Emperor.
- 901 - 922: Engi Era
- 902: An imperial edict is issued calling for the resumption of the system of allotting land according to the number of people in the household. The system had not been enforced due to its impossibility to administer effectively. The edict is generally ignored as farmers lease or sell their land (with local official connivance, of course) and go to work on large estates in order to escape the tax burden associated with land ownership.
- 909: The Engi-kyaku are released (these supplemented, but did not supersede, the Kōnin or Jōgan-kyaku)
- 930: Suzaku becomes titular Emperor. Fujiwara Tadahira becomes Regent (until 949).
- 940: As the power of the landed and wealthy families in the provinces continues to grow, and the central government continues to lose its power to govern outside of the capital, rebellions arise. As just one example, Taira Masakado established a 'kingdom' in the Kantō area and declared himself the new emperor. After five years of insurrection he was killed in Shimōsa province.
- 946: Murakami becomes titular Emperor.
- 967: Reizai becomes titular Emperor. Fujiwara Saneyori becomes Regent (until 970).
- 967: The Engi-shiki are released (these supplemented, but did not supersede, the Kōnin or Jōgan-shiki)
- 968: Minamoto Mitsunaka denounces his kinsman Takaaki for conspiring to revolt, thus foiling the Anna Plot. In return, the Fujiwara help the Minamoto to grow in power and popularity.
- 969: Reizai abdicates the throne. Enyû becomes titular Emperor.
- 970: Fujiwara Koretada becomes Regent (until 972).
- 972: Fujiwara Kanemichi becomes Regent (until 977).
- 977: Fujiwara Yoritada becomes Regent (until 986).
- 984: Kazan becomes titular Emperor.
- 986: Ichijō becomes titular Emperor. Fujiwara Kaneiye becomes Regent (until 990).
Heian Period (794 - 1185)

990  Fujiwara Michitaka becomes Regent (until 995).
995  Fujiwara Michikane becomes Regent (died after only seven days in office).
996  Fujiwara Michinaga becomes Regent (until 1017, although unofficial until 1016).
1011 Sanjō becomes titular Emperor.
1016 Sanjō abdicates. Go-Ichijō becomes Emperor. ("Go" as a prefix means "the second.")
1017 Fujiwara Yorimichi becomes Kampaku (until 1068). Minamoto Yorinobu founds shōen in Kawachi province thus starting Kawachi Genji line.
1019 Genji Monogatari (The Tales of Genji) completed.
1028 Taira Tadatsune leads a revolt in Eastern Japan (the provinces of Kazusa, Shimosa, and Awa) as he attempts to extend the territory under his control.
1031 After three years of insurrection, Taira Tadatsune surrenders before an attack planed by the Minamoto Troops and lead by Yorinobu (on central government orders).
1036 Go-Ichijō dies. Go-Suzaku becomes Emperor.
1045 Go-Suzaku dies. Go-Reizei becomes Emperor.
1050 Minamoto Yoriyoshi is appointed by the central government as both governor and commander-in-chief of Mutsu Province in the north. On his appointment he is told to subdue the Abe family who, under Abe Toritoki, were levying taxes and confiscating land at will. (This is the start of The Early Nine Years War.)
1062 The Abe family is finally subdued in Mutsu Province after Abe Sadato is defeated and killed.
1068 Go-Reizei dies. Go-Sanjō becomes Emperor. Fujiwara Norimichi becomes Regent (until 1075).
1072 Go-Sanjō abdicates. Shirakawa becomes Titular Emperor and Go-Sanjō becomes Cloistered Emperor; although he soon becomes ill and dies. Although the Fujiwara still held important positions, this begins the period where the retired emperor now controls the government, also known as the inzei system.
1075 Fujiwara Morozane becomes Regent (until 1094).
1083 Minamoto Yoshiie is appointed governor of Mutsu Province and, with the help of Fujiwara Kiyohira, leads troops to put down an insurrection of the Kiyowara family. (This takes three years and is called The Later Three Years War - even though the final victories don’t come until 1087.)
1086 Shirakawa abdicates in favor of his son, Horikawa becomes Titular Emperor. Shirakawa becomes Cloistered Emperor.
1091 Because of Minamoto Yoshiie’s military successes, his power and land holdings grow extraordinarily large. In response, an imperial edict is issued which forbade farmers throughout the country to commend their lands to him and declared that his retainers could not enter the capital city with him. But, Yoshiie and his comrades return to the capital anyhow after the Three Year war and he resumes his posts as Commander of the Palace Guards and the Sovereign’s Escort.
1094 Fujiwara Moromichi becomes Regent (until 1099).
1099 Fujiwara Moromichi dies after being cursed by rebellious monks who had been descending from their mountain temples and causing trouble in the city until he took action to stop them. (The rebellious monks are put down, in large part, with the help of Yoshiie and his warriors.)
1105 Fujiwara Tadazane becomes Regent (until 1121)
1107 Horikawa dies. His son, Toba, becomes Titular Emperor. Shirakawa remains as Cloistered Emperor.
Heian Period (794 - 1185)

1108 Minamoto Yoshichika (Yoshiie's eldest son) is banished to Sanuki for an offense against the court. He escapes and returns to Izumo where he leads an uprising. This uprising is put down by Taira Masamori who, after the uprising, returns to the capital, is given court rank and is commended by the Emperor.

1121 Fujiwara Tadamichi becomes Regent (until 1158).

1123 Toba abdicates in favor of his son. Sutoku becomes Titular Emperor: Shirakawa remains as Cloistered Emperor.

1129 Taira Tadamori (Masamori's son) puts down several revolts and piracy on the inland sea. (Like his father; he is given court rank in return. Not long before, it would have been unheard of for a military officer to receive court rank, thus indicating the decline in the power of the bureaucracy and the rise of the warrior class.)

1129 Shirakawa dies. Toba becomes Cloistered Emperor.

1141 Sutoku abdicates. Konoye becomes Titular Emperor: Toba remains as Cloistered Emperor.

1153 Taira Tadamori dies. Kyomori becomes head of the Taira clan.

1155 Konoye dies and a bitter succession dispute erupts with one side supporting Go-Shirakawa and the other Sutoku as Emperor: Go-Shirakawa becomes Titular Emperor: Toba remains as Cloistered Emperor.

1156 - 1158 Hōgen Era

1156 Fujiwara Yorinaga collects a few hundred warriors (led by Minamoto Tameyoshi, the leader of the Minamotos) and, with Sutoku, sets up defenses in a palace in the city. Fujiwara Tadamichi (Yorinaga's brother), with Go-Shirakawa, collects many more warriors from both the Minamoto and the Taira clans. In the battle that follows, Yorinaga is killed. (This episode is called the Hōgen no Ran/Hōgen Insurrection.)

Taira Kiyomori becomes an Imperial favorite and advisor while Minamoto Tameyoshi is sentenced to death. From this time starts the struggle for supremacy between the Minamoto and Taira clans and the downfall of the direct political power of the Imperial House.

1158 Go-Shirakawa abdicates. Nijō becomes Titular Emperor: Go-Shirakawa becomes Cloistered Emperor: Fujiwara Motozane becomes Regent (until 1166).

1160 Minamoto Yoshitomo (Tameyoshi's son) and Fujiwara Nobuyori conspire to overthrow the government when Kiyomori leaves the city on vacation. With about 500 well armed men, they kidnap both Nijō and Go-Shirakawa and kill many others. Nobuyori has himself appointed Chancellor: Kiyomori returns to the capital and raises an army, later helping the Emperor and ex-Emperor to escape the palace. After weeks of fighting the uprising is crushed (with the help of armed monks from Mt. Hiei). Yoshitomo is betrayed and killed by a retainer, and the only Minamoto males remaining from the main family are his sons Yoritomo, Noriyori, and Yoshitsune. (This episode is known as the Heiji no ran/Heiji Uprising)

1165 Nijō dies. Rokujo becomes Titular Emperor: Go-Shirakawa remains as Cloistered Emperor.

1166 Fujiwara Motofusa becomes Regent (until 1179).

1168 Rokujo abdicates (although in reality he was disposed by Go-Shirakawa). Takakura becomes Titular Emperor: Go-Shirakawa remains as Cloistered Emperor: Takakura's mother is Kiyomori's sister-in-law so the Taira's power and prestige begin to rise rapidly at this point.)

Summer 1168 Myōan Eisai (many researchers say the the kanji are pronounced Yōsai) spends the summer on pilgrimage in China studying Tendai and other exoteric Buddhist teachings.

1175 Hōnen Shōnin founds the Pure Land (Jōdo) sect of Buddhism.

1177 Several Fujiwara (although none of high standing) plot to assassinate Kiyomori. Kiyomori finds out about it and kills most of the plotters, including one monk. This is called the Shishigatani Affair.

1177 About one-third of the capital city is destroyed by fire. Thousands of people lose their lives.
**Heian Period (794 - 1185)**

1179  
In a passage in the Hyakirensô, is one of the first mentions of the growth of monetary transactions in Japan. ("There is a strange sickness going round the country nowadays. It is called the money disease.") The use of coins increased quickly and by the end of the 13th century Chinese copper cash is legal tender for the payment of taxes and for use in private transactions.

1179  
Fujiwara Motomochi becomes Regent (until 1183).

Dec. 1179  
Kiyomori marches into the capital with several thousand troops in retaliation for Go-Shirakawa's having confiscated some Taira property earlier in the year (the two men had always disliked each other, this was just the final straw). Go-Shirakawa is placed under house arrest and numerous high government officials are banished or reduced in rank.

1180 - 1185  
Gempei Wars (Gen from "Genji" or Minamoto, and Hei form "Heike" or Taira)

Jan. 1180  
Takakura abdicates (After seeing Kiyomori's treatment of Go-Shirakawa). Antoku (Kiyomori's grandson and only two years old) becomes Titular Emperor. Go-Shirakawa remains as Cloistered Emperor. Kiyomori becomes effective head of State.

May 1180  
Minamoto Yorimasa [until now a respected member of the government because he had refrained from taking sides with the Minamoto against Kiyomori and the Taira] plots to overthrow Antoku and Kiyomori and place Prince Mochihito, the son of Go-Shirakawa, on the throne. Mochihito publicly calls for the overthrow of the Taira. Kiyomori foils the plot and while trying to escape Mochihito is captured and killed while Yorimasa is wounded and commits seppuku.

June 1180  
Kiyomori forces the Emperors both Titular and Cloistered to move his residence to Fukuwara, his residence outside of Kyôto on the Inland Sea. Provisions are made to move certain government functions there at a later date. The plans fail and the entire Court returns to the capital six months later.

Aug. 1180  
Toidaiji and Kôfukuji of Nara are attacked and burned on orders from Kiyomori (partly in fear of the monastery's armies?).

Aug. 1180  
Minamoto Yoritomo [who had been in exile in Izu and living under the guard of Hôjô Tokimasa, appointed by Kiyomori, since 1180] raises a small group of supporters and attacks and defeats a Taira official in Izu. (He had earlier converted Hôjô Tokimasa to his side and married his daughter, Masako.)

Sept. 1180  
Yoritomo leads a small body of troops out of Izu and over the Hakone Pass. They claim they are responding to the Imperial call to chastise the Taira [remember Mochihito's call when he and Yorimasa revolted in May]. Taira forces defeat Yoritomo's troops at the Battle of Ishibashiyama. Yoritomo and his men scatter and find safety in the Hakone mountains.

Nov. 1180  
Yoritomo raise a large army from several of the eastern provinces and advances to the Fujikawa in Suruga province. Taira forces are sent again and meet him there. Taira forces are surprised by a rear attack at night from a supposed ally and retreat. Yoritomo does not follow but remains and strengthens his position.

1180  
Yoritomo establishes the Samurai-dokoro in Kamakura, an office which regulates the affairs of the military - its privileges, obligations, property, ranks, and treatment in general. (It should be noted that at the start of the feudal period, "Samurai" was not the term used for just any fighting man, but a reserved high rank for certain warriors.)

Feb. 1181  
Taira forces defeat troops led by Minamoto Yukie (Yoritomo's uncle) in Mino province.

March 1181  
Kiyomori dies and affairs of state are left in the hands of his son, Munemon (a man of no political talent).

March 1181  
Taira forces defeat troops led by Minamoto Yukie at the Battle of Sunomata River.

Aug. 1181  
Government issues order calling for the pacification of the northern provinces (the Hokurikudo) where the Minamoto were rising. However, the Taira troops sent to Echizen were defeated by Minamoto Yoshinaka, Yoritomo's cousin, in the autumn.
Heian Period (794 - 1185)

1182 A famine affects the Western provinces greatly and weakens morale in the capital as hunger and the plague affect many. Overall, the famine was so severe that it brought the Gempei war to a halt for the year.

1183 Fujiwara Moroiyae becomes Regent (until 1184).

March 1183 Yoritomo attacks Yoshinaka out of distrust of Yoshinaka's growing strength and success. They come to an agreement and the battle stops.

April & May 1183 Taira Koremori attacks and subdues Echizen province and takes several of Yoshinaka's strongholds.

May 1183 Yoshinaka succeeds in retaking the province of Echizen and defeats Koremori at the Battle of Tonamiyama in Etchû province (sometimes called the Battle of Kurikara Pass).

June 1183 Yoshinaka is advancing towards Kyôto from the north while Yukiie is threatening from the east.

Aug. 1183 Go-Shirakawa escapes Kyôto (where he was still under house arrest since Kiyomori ordered it in late 1179) and goes to Mt. Hiei. The Emperor and his consorts go to a monastery in the suburbs. (Having the two Emperors flee the Taira seems to add the color of legitimacy to the Minamoto as they close in on the capital)

Aug. 1183 The Taira abandon the capital and flee west with Emperor Antoku, his mother, and a few attendants (and the Imperial Regalia). Go-Shirakawa is escorted into the capital by Yoshinaka and gives him a mandate to destroy Munemori and the Taira army. (Yoshinaka prefers to attack Yoritomo, who he fears and hates, but Go-Shirakawa convinces him to concentrate on the Taira)

Sept. 1183 Taira forces reach Kyûshû and set up temporary Court at Dazaifu. Local revolts drive them out and they move to Yashima, Shikoku (now called Takamatsu) directly across from Kojima Bay in Bizen province.

Nov. 1183 Yoshinaka pursues the Taira, but is defeated by Taira troops at Mizushima on the border of Bitchû and Bizen provinces.

Nov. 1183 Yoshinaka conspires with the Taira and Fujiwara leaders to take over the capital, seize Go-Shirakawa, and set up a new government in the Northern provinces. Go-Shirakawa gets word of the plot to Yukiie who, in turn, passes word on to Yoritomo.

Dec. 1183 Yoshinaka seizes the capital and his troops ravage the city. Yukiie leaves the city with his men and attack the Taira in the province of Harima, where he is defeated. Go-Shirakawa sends word to Yoritomo asking him to come to Kyôto to subdue Yoshinaka. Yoritomo ignores the request thinking it more important to solidify his position in the eastern provinces. After repeated requests, though, Yoritomo calls on his brothers, Yoshitsune and Noriyori, to advance on the capital and destroy Yoshinaka.

Early 1184 Yoshinaka attacks Hôjôji and takes Go-Shirakawa captive. He also sends troops to Ishikawa in Kawachi province to attack troops of Yukiie who had set up a garrison there and was threatening the capital.

March 1184 With Yoshitsune and Noriyori converging on the capital, Yoshinaka flees the city with only a few men. He is pursued and killed in fighting with Noriyori's troops at Awazu in ômi province.

March 1184 Yoshitsune and Noriyori lead troops out of the capital towards Yashima to attack the Taira and regain the Emperor. Meanwhile, the Taira abandon Yashima (with the Emperor in tow) by sea. Taira troops land in Settsu and begin to build a defensive position while leaving the Emperor on a ship with guards near Wada Misaka.

March 1184 Before Taira defensive positions at Settsu are completed they are overcome and defeated by Yoshitsune and Noriyori. Yoshitsune and Noriyori split up and encircle the remaining Taira at Ichinotani. Taira forces are defeated badly, the leaders are killed or captured, and only a few thousand are able to retreat by ship to Yashima (with the Emperor and the Imperial Regalia).

Sept. 1184 Noriyori sets out from Kamakura to attack the Taira under Yoritomo's orders. Yoritomo remains in Kamakura (as he has till present) making the strategic decisions and dealing with the diplomatic problems of relations with and between the various warrior families and their leaders. Noriyori's troops are brought to a stalemate in the far western provinces due to a lack of food, supplies, and ships.
Heian Period (794 - 1185)

Nov. 1184  Yoritomo brings Ōe Hiromoto and Miyoshi Yoshinobu (two respected scholars and administrators) to Kamakura from Kyōto to set up the Kumonjo (Office of Administration) and the Monchûjo (Office of Inquiry) respectively. The Monchûjo serves as a court of appeals, enforces penal regulations, and kept judicial and cadastral records.

1184  Antoku deposed. Go-Toba (four years old) becomes Titular Emperor. Go-Shirakawa remains as Cloistered Emperor. Fujiwara Motomichi becomes Regent again (until 1186).

March 1185  Yoshitsune dispatched to the West to assist Noriyori. He crosses to Shikoku with only a few hundred men and attacks the palace in Yashima. The Taira, not knowing the size of the attacking force, flee by boat to Dannoura in the Straits of Shimonoseki with Antoku and the Imperial Regalia.

April 1185  With the help of officials and ships from Suō province and Miura Yoshizui, who was familiar with the currents in the Straits of Shimonoseki, Yoshitsune pursues the Taira. The Taira are totally defeated in a sea battle at Dannoura. Antoku dies (at the age of seven) and the Imperial sword (one of the three Imperial Regalia) is lost in the sea. This ends the reign and supremacy of the Taira family (almost - read about the Hōjō).

The Great Wave off Kanagawa (1832), an ukiyo-e from Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji by Hokusai.
Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

April 1185 After the defeat of the Taira at Dannoura, Yoritomo assumes control of the entire nation from his offices in Kamakura.

May 1185 Yoshitsune arrives in Kyoto with Munemori and other Taira captives. He is given rewards and court titles by Go-Shirakawa and this infuriates Yoritomo. Yoritomo declares that anyone accepting gifts or appointments from the Court are no longer considered loyal to the Minamoto and will be punished.

June 1185 Yoshitsune escorts the Taira prisoners to Kamakura but is stopped at Koshigue, a small village outside of Kamakura. The prisoners are taken and interrogated in Kamakura, but Yoshitsune is not allowed to enter the city. After interrogation the prisoners are sent back to Kyōto under Yoshitsune's guard, but Yoritomo changes his mind and sends troops to catch up with them and kill the prisoners. Yoshitsune continues to Kyōto.

Sept. 1185 Yoritomo orders attack on Yukiie. Yukiie calls on Yoshitsune for assistance. Word reaches Kamakura (falsely) that Yoshitsune is planning to use this opportunity to revolt against Yoritomo, in alliance with Yukiie. Yoritomo orders Yoshitsune to attack Yukiie, but oshtsune declines saying he can not for reasons of health.

Nov. 1185 Yoritomo sends a hundred men, led by a renegade monk (Tosabō Shōshun), to attack and kill Yoshitsune. The attackers are defeated and Tosabō is killed. Go-Shirakawa orders oshtsune and Yukiie to proceed to Kamakura and punish Yoritomo. Both leave Kyōto and head west to collect men and supplies. Yoritomo sends troops to Kyōto and forces Go-Shirakawa to cancel his previous order and issue an order for Yoritomo to punish Yoshitsune and Yukiie (both of which had now fled).

Dec. 1185 Establishment of the Jitō system. Kamakura appointed Stewards (Jitō) and Constables (Shugo) are appointed in all provinces and on all land (private and public) to collect a “commissariat tax” (hyōrõ-mai) ostensibly to be used to support the pursuit of rebels and threats to the nation - namely Yoshitsune and Yukiie - but in reality imposed to gain total control over the nation's land. (Since Japan has a land-based economy, he who controls the land controls the country.)

April 1186 After declining to accept the position several times, Fujiwara Kanezane becomes Regent at the insistence of Yoritomo. The levy of the commissariat rice tax is suspended.

June 1186 Yukiie is finally found, captured, and killed. Soon after, Shizuka, Yoshitsune's lover and companion, is captured and interrogated but she does not reveal Yoshitsune's whereabouts.

1187 Myōan Eisai returns to China in an attempt to make a pilgrimage through to India. He is refused travel permits so makes his way to Mt. Tien-t'ai and studies for four years under a Ch'an master.

June 1189 Yoritomo finds that Yoshitsune is hiding in northern Mutsu province in Hiraizumi. He orders the local Fujiwara rulers to attack and this order is obeyed after the third insistence. Yoshitsune kills his wife and children and then commits seppuku to avoid capture. His head is sent back to Kamakura for verification that it was in fact him.

Sept. & Oct. 1189 Yoritomo leads troops to conquer Mutsu and Dewa provinces in the north, the last non-Minamoto strongholds in the country and governed by the Fujiwara. The provinces easily fall to Kamakura control.

Dec. 1189 Yoritomo returns to Kamakura and spends the next twelve months strengthening his control over the military class and the country's administration.

1190 - 1199 Kenkyû Era

Dec. 1190 Yoritomo goes to Kyōto. He sets up his headquarters in Rokuhara, the headquarters of the Taira when Kiyomori ruled, and spends time discussing government and governmental appointments with Go-Shirakawa and others. He accepts several military titles, but no Court titles.

Early 1191 The Kumonjo (established in 1184) is converted into the Mandokoro with ōe Hiromoto remaining as its head. The Mandokoro, or Office of Administration, is organized with the Shikken (Regent) presiding over a Board of Councillors. This was the Bakufu's highest administrative organ.

1191 Eisai returns to Japan and introduces the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism (although his teachings still contained elements of Vinaya and both Tendai and Shingon Esoteric Buddhism).
**Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)**

**Spring 1192**  
Go-Shirakawa dies. Go-Toba remains as Emperor with no Cloistered Emperor.

**Aug. 1192**  
On Kanezane's insistence (which means Yoritomo's as well, of course) Go-Toba gives Yoritomo the title of Shōgun, which Go-Shirakawa had refused to give him while alive.

1193  
Yoritomo continues to distrust Noriyori and has him assassinated.

1194  
Yoritomo executes all the male members of the family of Yasuda Yoshisada (a very loyal Minamoto supporter) after accusations (false) from a third person.

1194  
Enryakuji supporters gain an imperial ban on the continued teaching of Zen Buddhism in Kyōto. Eisai begins the long process of defending both himself and Zen.

**March 1195**  
Yoritomo attends the re-dedication service of Tōdaiji in Nara and spends a few months in Kyōto.

**Nov. 1196**  
Minamoto Michichika leads revolt in Kyōto. Kanezane and his supporters are overthrown and Michichika's supporters are placed in power. His professed aim is to lead a return to Imperial rule and a diminution of Bakufu power but he real intent is just to remove all Fujiwara from offices and take them for himself and his supporters.

1198  
Go-Toba abdicates and becomes Cloistered Emperor. Tsuchimikado, Go-Toba's infant son, becomes Titular Emperor. He had been chosen as Heir Apparent earlier in the year by Michichika without seeking the input of Kamakura. Yoritomo does nothing about this demonstration of independence by Michichika, but lets it be known that he will visit Kyōto in the near future (although he dies before he makes the trip).

1199 - 1201  
Shōji Era

1199  
Yoritomo dies after being thrown from a horse. Minamoto Yorie, Yoritomo's eldest son and only seventeen years old, succeeds his father. However, Go-Toba doesn't give him the title of Shōgun until 1202 in order to stress the prerogative of the throne. (This didn't anger Kamakura because everyone there was already questioning Yorie's ability to govern.)

1199  
Eisai, after deciding that he is not strong enough to defeat the opposition of Enryakuji, abandons Kyōto and goes to Kamakura. Hōjō Masako (the widow of Yoritomo) appoints him as founder of Jufukuji, the first Zen center in the city.

1201 - 1204  
Kennin Era

1202  
Yorie appointed Shōgun in ceremonies performed in Kamakura by imperial envoys.

1203  
Yorie is forced to abdicate after becoming gravely ill and having attempted to have Tokimasa assassinated. Minamoto Sanetomo, Yorite's younger brother and eleven years old, becomes third Shōgun (and given the title). Hōjō Tokimasa becomes Shikken (Head of the Office of Administration) and hence regent over the Shōgun (a minor) and de facto head of the government. (It is interesting to note here that the Hōjō are of Taira lineage!)

1204 - 1206  
Genkyū Era

1204  
Taira family in Ise use the uncertain political climate in Kamakura as a chance to rise in revolt but the revolt is easily put down. Yorie is assassinated in Izu province, where he had been living in exile, by Tokimasa's men.

1204  
Saying the Nembutsu is prohibited on Mt. Hiei and followers of the Jōdo sect of Buddhism are banned from the mountain.

1205  
Tokimasa conspires to kill Sanetomo but the plot is discovered by Masako. Tokimasa is forced to resign and lives in exile in Izu under guard. Hiraga, the Deputy Shōgun in Kyōto, was also part of the plot and killed by troops sent from Kamakura. Tokimasa's son, Yoshitoki, becomes Shikken and Regent.

1205  
Construction of Kenninji in Kyōto is completed on lands earlier donated by Yorie. Eisai is appointed founder.

1206 - 1207  
Kenei Era

1206  
Konoe Ieznae becomes Imperial Regent (until 1228)
Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

1207 - 1211 Jōgen Era

1207 Hönen Shūnin is stripped of his clerical status and exiled from Kyōto for his teachings of the Jōdo sect. As a layman he assumes the name Fujii Motohiko but still continues to attract disciples. (Other major sects resented his teaching that the only requirement for salvation was saying the Nembutsu and that temples, monasteries, rituals and even the priesthood were all unnecessary. In addition he taught that all were equal in Buddhism - high, low, men, and women.)

1210 Juntoku becomes Titular Emperor. Go-Toba remains as Cloistered Emperor.

1211 - 1213 Kenryaku Era

1211 Hönen is released from exile.

1212 Hönen dies.

1213 - 1219 Kempō Era

1213 A large plot is uncovered to overthrow Sanetomo and replace him with a son of Yoriiie. The plot is overcome and many of the leaders are killed.

1215 Eisai dies

1219 - 1222 Jōkyū Era

1219 Sanetomo is assassinated, thus bringing to an end the rule of Minamoto Shōguns. Fujiwara Yoritsune, the infant son of Michiie, then Minister of the Left, and a Minamoto descendant from Yoritomo’s daughter, is brought from Kyōto, adopted into Masako’s house, and installed as Titular Shōgun (although he is not granted the title for several years).

1221 Kanenari (later known as Chūkyō) becomes Titular Emperor. Go-Toba remains as Cloistered Emperor: This only lasts for seventy days and then Chūkyō is deposed.

June 1221 Go-Toba raises an army from Imperial shoen and certain monasteries and leads a rebellion against the Kamakura Shōgunate (known as the Jōkyū no Hen, Jōkyū Disturbance). The rebellion is put down within a month. Both Go-Toba and Juntoku are banished and Tsuchimikado and Emperor Kanenari are sent to distant provinces, but not put under arrest.

(As an aside, Go-Toba’s main supporters were Tendai monks from Mt. Hiei, Shingon monks from Mt. Kōya, and Hossō monks from Kōfukuji in Nara. This was one of the main questions that seemed to bother Nichiren later - with all of the prayers and incantations offered by all of these monks, how was it that the imperial forces lost to the Shōganate? He decided, according to Kitagawa, that Go-Toba and Juntoku lost and died in excile because of their bad karma.)

July 1221 The position of Deputy Shōgun (Tandai) is established in Kyōto with offices maintained in Rokuhara. These offices were almost a duplicate of Bakufu offices in Kamakura and held complete control over Kyōto and all provinces west of, and including, Mikawa. The Tandai’s power was so complete that the Bakufu issued orders in these areas only through the his offices and in his name. The Bakufu now held absolute power over the entire nation. Tradition soon developed that the Regent in Kamakura was always someone who had held the post of Tandai in Kyōto.

Late 1221 Go-Takakura chosen by the Bakufu and becomes Cloistered Emperor [until 1223]. Go-Horikawa [son of Go-Takakura] becomes Titular Emperor. The Bakufu also made it clear that they must approve before an Imperial Regent is chosen.

1222 - 1224 Jōō Era

1222 - 1223 Bakufu carries out a complete land survey of all land in all provinces.

1223 Dōgen departs to China for a five year period of study of Sōtō Zen (Ts’ao-tung, in Chinese).
### Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1224 - 1225</td>
<td>Gennin Era</td>
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<tr>
<td>1224</td>
<td>Shinran (a student of Hônen's) founds the True Pure Land sect (Jôdo Shinshû) of Buddhism. (Actually, according to Kitagawa, Shinran never intended to establish a sect of his own. He refused to call anyone a disciple, but rather called them fellow believers. It was those that considered themselves his disciples that actually formed the sect by forming local fellowships.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1224</td>
<td>Yoshioki dies. Hôjô Yasutoki, his son, and Tokifusa, his brother, become co-Shikken (co-Regents). (In practice, though, Tokifusa preferred to let Yasutoki make the decisions).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1225 - 1227</td>
<td>Karoku Era</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1225</td>
<td>Hôjô Masako dies. Of all the people who had helped Yoritomo shape the bakufu in its early days, none were more influential than Masako and ōe Hirimoto (who had died in July). Now that they were gone, Yasutoki could institute reforms in the system so that it matched the conditions and needs found in the country after the Jôkyô revolt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1226</td>
<td>Yasutoki forms a Council of State (Hyôjôshû), and eleven member deliberative assemble which stood behind the Regent and advised the Shôgun on all matters of state. The Regent was bound by its decisions. (It soon replaced the Mandokoro and the Monchûjo)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1226</td>
<td>Fujiwara Mitora assumes the title of Shôgun, and the name Yoritsune, at the age of eight (although he is a complete puppet of the Hôjô Regent).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1226 - 1231</td>
<td>Japan is rocked by six years of drought, famine, smallpox and other diseases, storms, floods, and earthquakes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1227 - 1229</td>
<td>Antei Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1227</td>
<td>Dôgen Zenji returns to Japan and founds the Sôtô sect of Zen Buddhism. He stays at Kenninji in Kyôto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1228</td>
<td>Kujô Michie becomes Imperial Regent. (until 1231)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1229 - 1232</td>
<td>Kanki Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230</td>
<td>Yoritsune is married to a daughter of Minamoto Yoriie to give the impression of continuing Minamoto leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230</td>
<td>Angered by Dôgen's criticism, and rejection, of Tendai practices, Enryakuji forces him to leave Kyôto. He goes to Fukakusa, to the south of the city, and founds the Kôshôji monastery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1230</td>
<td>Yasutoki announces an Act of Grace, a moratorium on payments of debt and similar obligations. Soon after, an Imperial order is issued fixing the price of rice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1231</td>
<td>An Imperial order is issued restricting expenditures and ordering the distribution of tax rice to the poor. The Bakufu issues orders to Jitô and Shugo to remit taxes in their provinces and undertake other measures of relief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1232</td>
<td>Go-Horikawa abdicates. His two year old son, Shijô becomes Titular Emperor. Go-Horikawa becomes Cloistered Emperor (until 1234). Kujô Yorimichi becomes Imperial Regent (until 1235)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1232 - 1233</td>
<td>Jôei Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1232</td>
<td>The Jôei Code (Jôei Shikimoku. Also called the Goseibai Shikimoku?) is issued by the Council of State. This is the first codification of feudal law in Japan and was a simple digest of fifty-one administrative principles and regulations to be used in the guidance of the samurai serving under the shôgunate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 1232-33</td>
<td>Because of severe hardships caused by several years of famine, a law is passed allowing the sales of human beings (not just slaves) in order to allow families to raise needed money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1233 - 1234</td>
<td>Tempuku Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1234 - 1235</td>
<td>Bunryaku Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1235 - 1238</td>
<td>Katei Era</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

1235  Kujō Michie becomes Imperial Regent again (until 1237).

1236  Monks from Mt. Hiei and Kōfukuji cause problems all year over issues of land rights. Many people are killed and much damage is done. The Bakufu does not succeed in subduing them until near the end of the year.

1237  Konoé Kanetsune becomes Imperial Regent (until 1242).

1238 - 1239  Ryakunin Era

April 1238  The Shōgun visits Kyōto. He receives numerous titles and stays for almost nine months.

1239 - 1240  Enō Era

1239  The law allowing the sales of human beings is rescinded and the release of persons already sold is ordered.

1240 - 1243  Ninji Era

Feb. 1242  Shōji dies suddenly and a succession dispute breaks out over a son of Tsuchimikado and a son of Tsuchimikado’s younger brother, Juntoku. The Bakufu’s opinion is requested.

April 1242  The son of Tsuchimikado is chosen by the Bakufu and becomes Emperor Go-Saga. [Remember that Juntoku was exiled by Yasutoki’s father and still disliked Kamakura] There is no Cloistered Emperor.

1242  Yasutoki dies and his grandson, Hōjō Tsunetoki, becomes Shikken and Regent.

1243 - 1247  Kangen Era

1243  Dōgen and his supporters leave Kōshōji as they are increasingly opposed by other Buddhists in Kyōto (mainly, but not exclusively, Tendai). They move to the mountains of Echizen province where he eventually builds the Eiheiji monastery.

June 1244  Yoritsune is forced [under Imperial order, which is forced by Hōjō demands] to abdicate. He is replaces as Shōgun by his infant son, Yoritsugu. Yoritsugu is promptly married to a sister of Tsunetoki.

April 1246  Tsunetoki dies suddenly and his younger brother, Tokiyori, becomes Shikken and Regent. Several outbreaks develop between supporters of the disposed Shōgun Yoritsune and supporters of the new Regent Tokiyori.

Sept. 1246  Yoritsune is sent, under guard to live in Kyōto and is established in Rokuhara.

1246  Go-Saga abdicates. Go-Fukakusa, his three year old son, becomes Titular Emperor and Go-Saga becomes Cloistered Emperor.

1247 - 1249  Hōjī Era

1247  Miura Yasumura conspires against the Hōjō regency. After trying to settle it peacefully and seeing that the Miura were arming themselves, Tokiyori attacks and Yasumura’s entire family is killed. From this time, the Hōjō had no rivals in the east.

1247  Dōgen travels to Kamakura at the invitation of Tokiyori. He is offered the abbacy of a new monastery being built there, but refuses and returns to Echizen.

1249 - 1256  Kenchō Era

1249  Tokiyori establishes a standing committee [the Hikitsuke-shū] which investigates all suits and appeals brought to the Council of State. It consisted of five members of the Mandokoro under a rotating chairmanship of one of three members of the full Council.

Late 1251  A plot against the Bakufu is discovered and [correctly or not isn’t known] attributed to the ex-Shōgun Yoritsune. Tokiyori uses this as an excuse to remove Yoritsugu from the Shōgunate.

April 1252  Go-Saga’s son [and Emperor Fukakusa’s elder brother] Prince Munetaka, is chosen to replace Yoritsugu and is installed as Shōgun.
**Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)**

1252  
The Fujiwara house splits into five houses from which the post of Regent is filled in rotation.

1253  
Nichiren founds the Lotus (Hokke) sect of Buddhism. (Almost always called the Nichiren Sect)

1256 - 1257  
Kōgen Era

1256  
Dōgen dies. (no connection here, i think)

1256 - 1257  
Kōgen Era

1256  
Tokiyori retires on grounds of ill health and retires to a monastery (but he continues to rule until his death in 1263). His son Tokimune becomes Shikken. But, Tokimune is a minor (5 years old) so Hōjō Nagatoki, a member of the Council of State, is appointed as his guardian and Regent (until 1264).

1257 - 1259  
Shōka Era

1257 - 1259  
Severe natural disasters plague the Eastern provinces for two years. The Bakufu must shift its focus to problems of relief instead of government.

1259  
Go-Saga forces Go-Fukakusa to abdicate so that another of his sons can be made emperor: Kameyama (age 10) becomes Titular Emperor. Go-Saga remains Cloistered Emperor (until his death in 1272).

1259 - 1260  
Shōgen Era

1259 - 1260  
Bunō

1260  
The Shōgun, Munetaka, is married to a daughter of Konoe Kanetsune, a court noble and previous Imperial Regent.

1261 - 1264  
Kōchō Era

1261 - 1264  
Nichiren is banished to a remote section of the Izu peninsula for his continued verbal attacks on the leaders of the bakufu and the other Buddhist sects. He is released in 1263.

1262  
Shinran dies

1263  
Hōjō Tokiyori dies. Nichiren returns to Kamakura and continues with his preachings against the bakufu and other Buddhist sects.

1264 - 1274  
Bunei Era

1264 - 1274  
Hōjō Masamura replaces Nagatoki as guardian of Tokimune and Regent.

July 1266  
The Shōgun, Munetaka, is suspected of plotting against the Regent and he is stripped of his office by the Council of State and sent to Kyōto. He is placed under house arrest in Rokuhara and Go-Saga is told to disown him, which he does. (However, several months later he was released, offered valuable estates, and Go-Saga was asked to accept him back in the family, which he did.)

Aug. 1266  
Imperial Prince Koreyasu (Munetaka’s son) is sent to Kamakura and appointed Shōgun.

1268  
Kubilai Khan sends envoys to Japan demanding that the Japanese become vassals of the Mongol state. The demand is refused and the envoys are sent back to China.

1268  
Hōjō Tokimune becomes Shikken and Regent.

1271  
Because of his repeated attacks on the leaders of the bakufu and on other religious institutions, Nichiren is exiled again, this time to Sado Island. He is released in 1274.

1272  
Go-Saga dies. In his will he leaves the majority of his property and fortunes to Kameyama instead of Go-Fukakusa (his eldest son) as custom dictated. A vicious power struggle between supporters of Go-Fukakusa and Kameyama ensues. The Imperial line is divided into two branches each competing for the throne: the senior (Jimyōin) branch, represented by Go-Fukakusa, and the Junior (Daikakuji) branch, represented by Kameyama.

1274  
Kameyama abdicates. His son (and therefore also of the Junior line), Go-Uda, becomes Titular Emperor. Kameyama becomes Cloistered Emperor even though Go Fukakusa is the senior retired emperor.
Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

1274  Nichiren is released from exile on Sado Island and returns to Kamakura, where he continues his teachings as before. When it becomes clear that the bakufu is not going to take him seriously he leaves Kamakura and goes to Mt. Minobu were he lives the rest of his life in self-imposed exile.

Nov. 1274  First invasion by Mongol, Chinese, and Koryo armies (Bunei War). They conquer Tsushima and Ikishima islands, and then land on Kyushu near Hakata but are met by Japanese forces assembled by the Shogunate. A fortuitous storm (hence, kamikaze) destroys the fleet and those that can flee back to Korea.

1275 - 1278  Kenji Era

1275  Muso Kokushi is born to a father from a Genji family and a mother from a Heike family.

May 1275  Khubilai Khan sends further envoys to Japan to demand its submission. The envoys are executed in October and defense preparations in Kyushu continue for an expected second invasion.

1278 - 1288  Kōan Era

June/Aug. 1281  Second invasion by Mongol, Chinese, and Koryo armies (Koan War). Again they land on Kyushu near Hakata and again are met by stiff Japanese resistance who had prepared well by building a protective wall along the coast. After a month of fighting, another fortuitous storm destroyed the Mongol fleet and the remainder of the attacking army fled to Korea.

1282  Nichiren dies

1284  Tokimune dies. His son, Höjō Sadatoki, (fourteen years old) becomes Shikken and Regent. One of his first tasks is to attempt to fulfill samurai demands for compensation for their expenses, and rewards for their successes, during the Mongol invasions. But, since all of the bakufu's resources had been expended in Japan's defense, there was virtually nothing to distribute. This breeds serious unhappiness with the bakufu.

1286  Claimants against the bakufu and the court for compensation or reward stemming from the Mongol invasions are forbidden from appealing directly to Kamakura or Rokuhara.

Oct. 1287  Go-Uda abdicates. Go-Fukakusa becomes Cloistered Emperor. Fushimi, son of Go-Fukakusa and of the Senior Line, becomes Titular Emperor. (His isn't formally installed, though, until March 1288.)

1288 - 1293  Shōō Era

Aug. 1289  Hisa-akira, a son of Go-Fukakusa, is named Shōgun and moved to Kamakura.

Feb. 1290  Go-Fukakusa takes the tonsure and Fushimi becomes Cloistered Emperor as well as Titular Emperor.

1290  Retired Emperor Kameyama is implicated in an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Fushimi, although he denied involvement. The Höjō impose a compromise on the two competing lines of the Imperial family. The Senior and Junior lines now alternate succession to the throne.

1293 - 1299  Einin Era

1294  The bakufu decrees that no further claims for reward or compensation stemming from the 1274 and the 1281 Mongol invasions will be granted.

1294  Khublai Khan dies and Japan finally is allowed to relax its defenses.

1297  In recognition of its continually mounting financial difficulties, the bakufu decrees another Act of Grace (Tokusei) which, among the many sever provisions, sets a maximum rate of interest and demands a partial cancellation of debts. Money lenders and merchants are hurt but eventually find ways to work around the laws. Eventually the Act proved unworkable and was amended within a year. (Thus leaving the warrior class indebted, impoverished, and even more unhappy.)

July 1298  Fushimi abdicates and becomes Cloistered Emperor. Go-Fushimi, his son and again of the Senior line, becomes Titular Emperor.
# Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1299 - 1302</td>
<td>Shōan</td>
<td>Sadatoki resigns office and enters the religious life. His cousin, Hōjō Morotoki, becomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1300 - 1301</td>
<td></td>
<td>Titular Regent. Sadatoki's son, Takatoki, is too young to take office. (Sadatoki still rules</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>from behind the scenes until his death in 1311.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1301</td>
<td></td>
<td>Go-Fushimi retires and Go-Nijō (of the Junior line and son of Go-Uda) becomes Titular Emperor: Go-Uda replaces Fushimi as Cloistered Emperor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1302 - 1303</td>
<td>Kengen</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1303 - 1306</td>
<td>Kagen</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1306 - 1308</td>
<td>Tokujì</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1308</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hanazono (of the Senior line and another son of Fushimi) becomes Titular Emperor when Go-Nijō dies. Fushimi once again becomes Cloistered Emperor. Prince Morikuni becomes Shōgun, the last as it turns out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1308 - 1311</td>
<td>Enkyō</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1311 - 1312</td>
<td>Ōchō</td>
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<tr>
<td>1312 - 1317</td>
<td>Shōwa</td>
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<tr>
<td>1316</td>
<td></td>
<td>Takatoki is installed as Shikken and Regent. (But by this time it is obvious to all that the power of the Hōjō family has passed. In fact, in later years, Takatoki's sanity is questioned. Numerous people all around the country look for an excuse to overthrow the Hōjō.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1317 - 1319</td>
<td>Bumpõ</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1317</td>
<td></td>
<td>The bakufu imposes a compromise settlement on the imperial family (the Bunpō Wadan) stating that when Go-Daigo (who was now Crown Prince) succeeds Hanazono, the next Crown Prince must be named from the Senior line, thus forcing the emperor to come from altering lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1318</td>
<td></td>
<td>Go-Daigo (of the Junior line and son of Go-Uda) becomes Titular Emperor. Hanazono becomes Cloistered Emperor. Go-Daigo makes it clear that he intends to rule as long as he is able and does not intend to abdicate and make way for an infant of the Senior line. He indicates that he intends to make reforms and stop the alternation between junior and senior lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1319 - 1321</td>
<td>Genō</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1321</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Office of Ex-Emperors is abolished and many Imperial land holdings are taken over and given to the public treasury. Go-Daigo's father, Go-Uda-In, resigns from the office of Cloistered Emperor to demonstrate his approval of the policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1321 - 1324</td>
<td>Genkō</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1324</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bakufu agents in Rokuhara uncover a plot against the Shōgunate. The plot is broken up and people are arrested, but no severe punishments are handed down. Go-Daigo pleads that he knew nothing of the plot and this is accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1324 - 1326</td>
<td>Shōchū</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1325</td>
<td></td>
<td>On the advice of Musō Soseki, an official envoy is sent to China, the first in nearly five centuries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1326</td>
<td></td>
<td>Go-Daigo names his son (of the Junior line) as heir-apparent. This was contrary to the bakufu's demand that he name a son of Go-Fushimi (of the Senior line). Go-Daigo and his supporters recognize that the system of alternating Emperors had to stop and the decision of legitimacy had to be settled. To do this, they realized that the Hōjō regency had to be overthrown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1326 - 1329</td>
<td>Karyaku</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1329 - 1331</td>
<td>Gentoku</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

May 1331  Kamakura sends thousands of troops to Kyoto after a confidant of Go-Daigo informs the Bakufu that he is privy to many conspiracies against the Hõjõ. These troops are led by Nikaido.

Sept. 1331  Emperor Go-Daigo revolts against the Bakufu. He flees the capital (with the Imperial Regalia) and takes refuge first at Tõdaiji and then in a monastery on Mount Kasagi.

Sept. 1331  Kamakura orders the installation of Prince Kazuhito, son of Go-Fushimi and of the Senior line, as Emperor Kõgon. (The accession ceremony takes place, but the enthronement is postponed for a year in the hopes that the official Imperial Regalia can be recovered.)

Oct. 1331  Go-Daigo is captured by bakufu troops and sent back to Kyoto. He is forced to relinquish the Imperial Regalia to Kõgon.

Nov. 1331  Bakufu forces defeat Kusunoki Masashige of Kawachi Province, the only warrior willing to openly support Go-Daigo's revolt. Kusunoki escapes to build another force of supporters. Prince Morinaga, Go-Daigo's son, also escapes and goes to Yoshino.

1331 - 1334  Genkõ Era

1332  As Hõjõ domination was about to fall, as an indication of how their power had grown, in 1199 when Yoritomo had died, the Hõjõ house had direct control over 2 of the 36 shugo appointments (5.6%). In 1286 they controlled 26 out of 52 (50%), and in 1332, just before their fall, they controlled 30 out of 57 (52.6%).

April 1332  After refusing to abdicate and enter a monastery, Go-Daigo is exiled to Oki Island off the east coast of Japan. Kõgon, of the senior line, is enthroned as Emperor. All Imperial lands are taken over by the government. (Later, even the kuge, the court aristocracy, lost their lands and lived a meager life at the mercy of shõgunate handouts.)

Summer/Fall 1332  Kusunoki continues with military raids on bakufu forces. Morinaga continues with a political call to arms to all warrior clans to resist and overthrow the Hõjõ. This forces bakufu to send the majority of their troops to stop these efforts. However, by employing more troops against Kusunoki and Morinaga, other warrior families find they have the opportunity to revolt when bakufu troops are pulled out of their provinces. Defeat of bakufu forces, and, therefore, signs of the vulnerability of the Hõjõ, brings more and more people to the Imperial cause.

March 1333  Bakufu forces make a major attempt to regain control of the country. While regaining some territory, they fail to capture Kusunoki or Morinaga. These failures further encourage the loyalists and bring even more supporters to the cause.

Spring 1333  Go-Daigo escapes exile and resumes his revolt, this time at the head of a large uprising which included many powerful military leaders unhappy with Hõjõ rule. He sets up a temporary court in Hõki Province.

June 1333  Ashikaga Takauji sent by Kamakura to defeat Go-Daigo and his supporters in Kyoto and Hõki Province.

June/July 1333  Takauji deserts to Go-Daigo's side and captures Kyoto. Nitta Yoshisada leads an army of dissatisfied warrior families and defeats the Hõjõ in Kamakura.

July 1333  Go-Daigo returns to Kyoto and reestablishes himself in the palace. Kõgon is deposed but treated generously. Go-Daigo reaffirms his intention of implementing reforms.

Sept. 1333  Go-Daigo awards provinces and governorships to the most senior warriors who supported his cause. He delays and, in general, blunders the task of rewarding the lesser warriors and this seriously dampens their loyalty to him.

Late 1333  On Go-Daigo’s orders, Kitabatake Akiyé escorts Prince Norinaga (Go-Daigo's six year old son) to the north and installs him as Governor-General of the entire northern region, comprising Dewa and Mutsu Provinces. Kitabatake serves as Deputy.

1334 - 1336  Kemmu Restoration and Kemmu Era. Go-Daigo attempts to reestablish direct imperial rule under an imperial government in Kyoto.
Early 1334 Without imperial order, Ashikaga Tadayoshi (Takauji’s brother) escorts Prince Narinaga (Go-Daigo’s eleven year old son) to Kamakura and installs him as Governor of the province of Kōtsuke, with Tadayoshi as Deputy.

1334 Go-Daigo appoints many courtiers as provincial governors and announces intention to grant title of Shōgun to his son, Prince Morinaga.

Sept. 1334 Takauji has Morinaga and several of his followers arrested and taken to Kamakura for a plot to attack him.

March 1335 Remnants of the Hōjō revolt in Kamakura. While they are put down, Takauji puts his troops on alert in Kyōto.

Aug. 1335 Hōjō Tokiyuki, the son of the late Regent Takatoki, attacks and takes Kamakura, driving out Prince Narinaga and Tadayoshi. As he flees Tadayoshi has Prince Morinaga killed.

Aug. 1335 Takauji asks Go-Daigo to grant him the titles of Shōgun and Constable-General so that he can surpress the rebels. This is denied but, claiming familial duty he leaves Kyōto anyhow and goes to his brother’s aid.

Sept. 1335 Takauji defeats [and kills] Tokiyuki in Kamakura and puts down the Hōjō rebellion. Go-Daigo congratulates him on his success and summons him back to Kyōto for planned celebrations. Takauji refuses, saying he feels threatened in the capital, and begins to set up a palace in Kamakura.

Nov. 17, 1335 Tadayoshi, in the name of Takauji, calls on all warriors to come to their assistance to destroy Niita Yoshisada. Go-Daigo appoints his son, Takanaga, as Shōgun and sends him with Nitta Yoshisada towards Kamakura to put down Takuaki and Tadayoshi.

Dec. 1335 Imperial loyalists are defeated by forces supporting Takuaki. Fighting continues as Takuaki, Tadayoshi, and their supporters drive towards Kyōto.

Feb. 22, 1336 Anticipating defeat, Go-Daigo flees to Enryakuji.

Feb. 23, 1336 Takauji’s forces defeat the Imperial supporters and take Kyōto. Thus ends Go-Daigo’s attempt to restore Imperial rule.

Feb./March 1336 Loyalist troops defeat Takuaki supporters and, again, retake Kyōto.

March 16, 1336 Go-Daigo returns to Kyōto as Takuaki flees to Kyūshū.

Late March, 1336 A deal is arranged between Takuaki and ex-Emperor Kōgon (of the Senior, Jimyōin, line) so that Takuaki can now say that he is fighting to support Kōmyō’s claim to the throne. Kōmyō gives him a commission to “chastise the rebel Nitta Yoshisada.”

1336 - 1340 Engen Era

May 15, 1336 Takuaki and his troops start the return trip towards Kyōto in order to retake the capital

July 5, 1336 In the famous battle of Minatogawa, Takuaki forces defeat the loyalist army.

July 6, 1336 Nitta retreats to Kyōto and convinces Go-Daigo to flee, again, to Hieizan with the imperial regalia.

July 13, 1336 Takuaki retakes Kyōto.

Aug. - Oct. 1336 Continual fighting in and around the capital between loyalist troops and supporters of Takuaki

Sept. 20, 1336 Kōmyō-In accends to the throne and is declared the Emperor. Thus begins the conflict between the two Courts. [But, Kōmyō isn’t enthroned until the end of 1337]
Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333)

Oct. 5, 1336  Takauji defeats Nitta and tells Go-Daigo that to this point he had only been fighting to surpress Nitta and his clan. He invites Go-Daigo to return to Kyōto to resume control of the country.

Nov. 13, 1336  Go-Daigo returns to Kyōto and moves into Kazan-In palace. He is immediately arrested and forced to turn the regalia over to Kōmyō-In.

Nov. 17, 1336  Go-Daigo’s son Narinaga is named as the Crown Prince by Takauji, thus naming a member of the Junior line as the next in line to be Emperor.
Muromachi Period (1338 - 1573)
(Nambokuchô Period: 1331 - 1392)

Late 1336  Ashikaga Takauji assumes title of Go-Dainagon (Acting Grand Counsellor) and begins as ruler of the country.

Jan. 1337  Go-Daigo escapes confinement ad he and his court followers flee to Yoshino. He becomes the Southern Dynasty while Kömyô remains in Kyôto as the Northern Dynasty. Late 1336
Ashikaga Takauji assumes title of Go-Dainagon (Acting Grand Counsellor) and begins as ruler of the country. His bakufu releases the Kemmu Shikimoku but it has little substance and makes no changes to the older Jôei Shikimoku of 1232.

Jan. 1337  Go-Daigo escapes confinement and flees to Yoshino with his court followers. He (of the Junior line) becomes the Southern Dynasty while Kômyô (of the Senior line) remains in Kyôto as the Northern Dynasty.

1337 - 1338  Continuous fighting around the country between forces loyal to Go-Daigo and those loyal to Takauji, with the Imperial loyalists often winning major victories.

1338  Takauji assumes the title of Shôgun. He shares administrative duties with his younger brother, Tadayoshi. Takauji held supreme military power and issued certificates of reward and appointed the shugo. Tadayoshi made the day-to-day civil, judicial, and economic decisions such as confirming land rights, making judicial rulings, issuing customs-barrier permits, and issuing regulatory codes for monasteries.

Aug. 1338  Nitta Yoshisada is killed in battle.

Oct. 1338  Prince Norinaga is named Crown Prince (of the Junior line).

1339 - 1340  Continued fighting throughout the country between Loyalist troops and those supporting the Ashikaga Bakufu. Bakufu supporters finally defeat the loyalists in the northern provinces. Fighting shifts to the south.

Sept. 19, 1339  Go-Daigo dies at the age of fifty-two. Norinaga is enthroned as Emperor Go-Murakami of the Southern Court at twelve years of age.

1340 - 1346  Kôkoku Era

1341 - 1348  Continued fighting throughout the country, but mainly in Kyûshû.

1342  To earn money abroad for the completion of Tenryûji, Takauji reopens trade with China. While Takauji is given credit, Tadayoshi was probably the driving force behind the construction of Tenryûji and all other religious matters. (Trade will later be temporarily suspended again by Yoshimochi, but then revived by Yoshinori and then sporadically continue until the mid-sixteenth century)

1346 - 1370  Shôhei Era

1349 - 1350  With serious loyalist victories on Kyûshû, fighting begins to heat up in the Home Provinces around the capital. By this time, as a result of victories and defeats on both sides, the Southern and Northern courts are now essentially equal and people begin again to talk of uniting them through negotiations.

Early 1350  After serious infighting between himself and the Kô brothers (Moronao and Moroyasu), Tadayoshi is relieved of all duties and replaced by Takauji's son, Yoshiakira. Tadayoshi becomes a monk and enters a monastery.

Nov. 1350  Tadayoshi leaves the monastery and goes to Yamato. Kô Moronao calls on Takauji to dispose of him, but he is not pursued.

Jan. 1351  Emperor Sukô (of the Senior line) is enthroned as the emperor of the Northern Court. Tadayoshi swears allegiance to the Southern Court, calls for the destruction of the Kô brothers, and calls for the recapture of Kyôto.

March 1351  Kô Moronao and Moroyasu taken prisoner and killed in fighting around the capital. Tadayoshi returns to Kyôto and reassumes his administrative positions with Yoshiakira as his superior. However, he and Takauji continue to quarrel.

April - June 1351  Tadayoshi continues to try and reconcile the Northern Courts, but nothing can be worked out.
Aug. 1351  Tadayoshi, fearing for his life, and distrusting Takauji and Yoshiakira, flees to Etchû Province. Some battles take place between supporters of the two sides, but nothing serious.

Oct. 1351  Takauji and Tadayoshi come to terms but fighting continues between some of their respective supporters. Tadayoshi goes to Kamakura where he takes up administrative affairs.

Nov. 1351  Takauji and Yoshiakira submit themselves to the Southern Court in an attempt to reunite the two courts. Emperor Sukô and his Crown Prince are 'retired.' By the end of the year the Imperial Regalia are handed over to the Junior Line. Takauji commissioned to punish Tadayoshi.

Jan. 1352  Tadayoshi takes troops northeast to confront Tadayoshi. Tadayoshi is captured and taken to Kamakura.

March 1352  Tadayoshi is poisoned and dies while in confinement in Kamakura.

April 1352  The Southern Court now sees an opportunity to retake control of the country. They attack and drive Takauji from Kamakura and retake the offensive in the north. They also drive Yoshiakira from Kyôto (to Enryakuji), retake the capital, and send the Northern Emperor, retired Emperors, and Crown Prince to Anau as captives.

June 1352  Yoshiakira and supporters retake the capital and drive Go-Murakami and his supporters back to Yamato. Fighting continues throughout the country with supporters of the Southern Court now in control of the majority of Western Japan.

Sept. 25, 1352  Iyahita, a fourteen-year old younger brother of Crown Prince Tadahito, is named as successor to Sukô and enthroned as Go-Kôgon, the Northern Court Emperor. But, since the regalia were in the position of the Junior line, many considered this enthronement invalid.

July 1353  Supporters of the Southern Court retake Kyôto and drive Yoshiakira out of the city.

July 1353  For safety reasons, Yoshiakira escourts Go-Kôgon from Enryakuji to Tarui in Mino Province and establishes the Northern Court there.

Aug. 24, 1353  Ahikaga forces once again retake Kyôto and drive the loyalists out.

Oct. 11, 1353  Takauji goes to Tarui, from Kamakura, to pay respect to Go-Kôgon. Yoshiakira joins them a few days later.

Oct. 18, 1353  Takauji and Yoshiakira escort Go-Kôgon back into Kyôto.

March 1354  Loyalist forces subdued in Kyûshû by Shimizu clan.

Jan. 1355  Loyalists are once again defeating the bakufu forces. Yoshiakira is on the run in the central provinces and Takauji, with Go-Kôgon on tow, flees to ômi Province as the loyalists retake the capital.

March 1355  Takauji, Yoshiakira, and their supporters begin battles to retake the capital.

April 1355  Bakufu retakes Kyôto and Go-Kôgon is escorted back into the city. For whatever reason, this defeat crushes the loyalist troop’s morale and the opposition of the Southern Court comes to an end - although localized fighting continues around the country. Takauji begins the process of consolidating the bakufu administration in Kyôto.

1355  Of interest regarding Kyôto at this time, this is from George Sansom’s History of Japan:

"...nearly all the royal palaces, the mansions of the nobility, and the offices of the ministers of state were destroyed by fire, only two or three buildings in ten having escaped. In some parts of the city there were wide areas in which no houses were left standing, only the barracks of the soldiery. On the outskirts of the city grass had grown over the ruins and all that could be seen was the bleached bones of the victims."

June 8, 1358  Takauji dies in Kyôto at the age of fifty-four from a malignant tumor.

[Can we say that his counterpart, as visonary and leader, on the Southern Court side was Kitabatake Chikafusa?]?

Late 1358  Yoshiakira named as second Ashikaga Shôgun.

Early 1362  Loyalist forces advance on Kyôto once again. Yoshiakira abandons the city with Go-Kôgon in hand. Loyalist forces take the city without a fight. However, twenty days later, Yoshiakira retakes the city, again without a fight.

Muromachi Period (1338 - 1573)
(Nambokuchô Period: 1331 - 1392)
Muromachi Period (1338 - 1573)
(Nambokuchô Period: 1331 - 1392)

Jan. 1368  Yoshiakira dies and is succeeded by his nine-year old son, Yoshimitsu, as the third shôgun. The bakufu is managed by Hosokawa Yoriyuki until 1379 and, for the first time since the Hôjô, law is enforced and maintained by a central government.

1368  Go-Murakami dies in Settsu Province. His son, Chôkei, succeeds him as Emperor of the Southern Court and Junior Line.

1369  The Ming government in China sends its first of several diplomatic missions to Japan, but they are turned back at the port in Kyûshû.

1370 - 1372  Kentoku Era

1371  Go-Enyû becomes Emperor of the Northern Court.

Aug. 1371  Bakufu forces begin campaign against Kyûshû, the last stronghold of loyalist forces.

1372 - 1375  Bunchû Era

1375 - 1381  Tenju Era

1378  Yoshimitsu builds a residence called Hana no Gosho (the Palace of Flowers) in the Muromachi district of Kyôto.

1379  Yoriyuki resigns from post as Kanrei (Deputy Shôgun) after being severely criticized by several leading warriors.

1381 - 1384  Kôwa Era

1383  Go-Kameyama is enthroned as Emperor of the Southern Court.

1383  Go-Enyû abdicates. His six year old son is enthroned as Go-Komatsu of the Northern Court. By this year, loyalist forces have been all but defeated and any hope of success on their part now looks hopeless.

1384 - 1390  Genchû Era

1386  After several years of uneasy relations, China refuses to receive a Japanese diplomatic envoy because of continued Japanese pirate activities. Relations come to a halt.

1390 - 1394  Meitoku Era

1391  Yoriyuki returns to Kyôto and resumes duties as Kanrei.

Early 1392  Bakufu approaches Southern Court with proposal to end fighting and reunite the two Courts.

Dec. 1392  Agreement is reached and the Northern and Southern Dynasties are reunited (actually, you could say that the Southern Court simply ceases to exist). The Imperial Regalia is returned to the Northern Court, Go-Kameyama gives up any claim to the throne and Go-Komatsu becomes the sole emperor. However, the agreement stipulates that future successions will alternate between the Junior and Senior lines.

1394 - 1428  Gsei Era

Late 1394  Yoshimitsu, at the height of his career and powers, retires and enters the religious life (although he holds on to power). His nine year old son, Yoshimochi, assume the title of Shôgun.

1398  Yoshimitsu builds his retirement retreat at Kinkakuji.

1401  Yoshimitsu sends a diplomatic mission to China pledging to stop pirate traders.

Aug. 1402  A Chinese diplomatic mission comes to Japan and is met and entertained by Yoshimitsu himself. Yoshimitsu is given a crown and robes of state and invested as the “King of Japan” and a subject of the Ming Empire. Diplomatic relations between the two countries recontinues.

1404  Authorized ships begin official tally trade with China, but pirating continues.

Summer 1408  Yoshimitsu dies. He is succeeded by his son, Yoshimochi, as the fourth shôgun.
## Muromachi Period (1338 - 1573)
(Nambokuchō Period: 1331 - 1392)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late 1408</td>
<td>Chinese Emperor sends a diplomatic envoy to Japan to perform special rites for Yoshimitsu and then to name Yoshimochi as the new King of Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1411</td>
<td>Yoshimochi refuses a Chinese envoy and breaks off official relations with the Chinese. Official relations were non-existant until 1434 although the Shimazu in Kyûshû probably continued privately trading. Yoshimochi refuses to agree to renewed relations although the Chinese year after year send requests and threats to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1412</td>
<td>Go-Komatsu abdicates in favor of his son. This goes against the earlier pledges to Go-Kameyama that future successions would alternate between the Junior and Senior lines. Shôkô (of the Senior line) becomes emperor (but the coronation ceremony isn't until 1414).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1418</td>
<td>Yoshimochi has his brother, Yoshitsugu, assassinated - probably because Yoshitsugu had been his fathers absolute favorite and Yoshimochi had been, therefore, ignored as a youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1423</td>
<td>Yoshimochi enters the religious life and his fifteen year old son, Yoshikazu, becomes the fifth shôgun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1425</td>
<td>Yoshikazu slowly, but continuously, drinks himself to death. Yoshimochi is forced to resume duties as Shôgun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1428 - 1429</td>
<td>Shôchô Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1428</td>
<td>Yoshimochi dies at the age of forty-two. Just before his death he tells the bakufu to choose his successor by drawing lots from among four sons of Yoshimitsu. They do and Yoshinori, the thirty-five year old, sixth son of Yoshimitsu, is selected as the sixth shôgun. He was at that time the Chief Abbot of the Tendai sect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1429</td>
<td>Go-Hanazono becomes emperor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1429 - 1441</td>
<td>Eikyô Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1432</td>
<td>The new Ming Emperor sends a message to Yoshinori inviting him to send an envoy to China and to restart official relations. Yoshinori sends an official diplomatic mission and it is treated royally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1434</td>
<td>An official Chinese envoy visits Japan and official trade between the two countries resumes. (Japanese export volume rose yearly until 1453, when it began to decline. By this time the Chinese were complaining about Japanese insistence on bringing goods for sale every time they came to China. Trading problems even back then?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441 - 1444</td>
<td>Kakitsu Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1441</td>
<td>Yoshinori is assassinated by Akamatsu Mitsusjke, one of his chief retainers. The bakufu punishes Akamatsu by killing him and most of his kinsmen and taking their land. Yoshinori is replaced as Shôgun by his first son, Yoshikatsu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1443</td>
<td>Yoshikatsu dies at the age of ten, and only a few months after the court officially appoints him as Shôgun. Yoshikatsu's younger brother [eight years old] is chosen to replace him and given the name Yoshishige.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1444 - 1449</td>
<td>Bunnan Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1449 - 1452</td>
<td>Hôtoku Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1449</td>
<td>Yoshishige is officially appointed by the court as the eighth shôgun and is renamed Yoshimasa. He has no interest in affairs of state and this, along with his wasteful extravagane, invites the disasters that come to the Shôgunate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1452 - 1455</td>
<td>Kyôtoku Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1455 - 1457</td>
<td>Kôshô Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1457 - 1460</td>
<td>Chôroku Era</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460 - 1466</td>
<td>Kanshô Era</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Yoshimasa announces that he wants to resign from office. Hosokawa Katsumoto, as Kanrei, favors Yoshimasa's younger brother, Yoshimi, an abbot in a Jōdo monastery. Although Yoshimi didn't want the job and didn't want to leave the religious life, he is persuaded to join Yoshimasa and assist him until he succeeds the shōgunate.

Go-Tsuchimikado becomes emperor; although the coronation ceremony isn't until the next year.

Yoshimasa's wife, Tomiko, gives birth to a son, Yoshihisa. A succession dispute now breaks out with Yoshimasa, supported by Yoshimi and Hosokawa, on one side and Tomiko, supported by Yamana, on the other.

Yamana finally finds the reason he has been looking for (since long before the succession dispute) to challenge Hosokawa and the two sides raise armies.

Yamana complains to Yoshimasa that Hosokawa is interfering in a succession dispute in the Hatakeyama family and asks permission to punish him. This is denied. The two antagonists face off in Kyōto but hold a very tense peace.

With both sides fighting the other outside the capital on a monthly basis, Hosokawa finally attacks Yamana troops in the capital at the end of the month. Fighting breaks out throughout the city.

Sengoku Jidai (Period of Warring States)
From the outbreak of the Ōnin War to the time Oda Nobunaga takes control of Kyōto. The imperial family and the Shōgun lose power, but retain their titles & positions, and a new Daimyō class rises to power in the provinces. The shōen system collapses and the domains are divided into fiefs controlled by the daimyō.

With a political and military standoff now in place in the capital, Yoshimi ends up becoming one of Yamana's leading generals. Yoshimasa names Yoshihisa (now four years old) as his heir. The war that started between Hosokawa and Yamana now becomes one between Yoshimasa and his brother, Yoshimi.

Both Yamana and Hosokawa die and the two opposing armies begin talking of finding a solution and end to the fighting. But the talking takes years as Yoshimasa and Yoshimi are still at odds.

Yoshimasa retires to lead a quiet life as a lay priest, devoting his time to the arts and a cultural life. Yoshihisa becomes the ninth shōgun, but his power doesn't extend outside of his home province of Yamashiro.

The last of the warriors finally disperse and leave Kyōto for their home provinces. Fighting continues, though, throughout the provinces between various families.

A provincial uprising in Yamashiro drives out the shugo armies, leaving the province under the control of the government. The uprising is lead by peasants and petty warriors.

Chōkyō Era

An Ikkō sect uprising drives the Shugo and his army out of Kaga Province, thus becoming the de facto rulers of the entire province. (They aren't driven out themselves until 1576)

Yoshimasa begins construction of Ginkakuji. (It is completed in 1493, three years after his death)
Muromachi Period (1338 - 1573)
(Nambokuchô Period: 1331 - 1392)

1490 Yoshimasa dies. Yoshihisa dies during a campaign against the Rokkaku house in Omi province. Yoshitane, Yoshimi's son, becomes the tenth shôgun but is a Hosokawa puppet.

1492 - 1501 Meïô Era

1493 Yoshitane is removed from office and exiled by Hosokawa Masamoto. Ashikaga Yoshizumi, a nephew of Yoshimasa, becomes the eleventh shôgun although he is 14 years old and a Hosokawa puppet.

circa 1500 The important picture here is not just the fighting for, against, and around the Shôgun, but the ongoing process of decentralization and redistribution of power throughout the country. By the year 1500 there were around 300 warrior families of prominence throughout the country. By the year 1600 there were about 100 daimyô with a revenue of 50,000 koku per year, and in 1614 there were about 200 daimyô each with a revenue of 10,000 koku or more (Sansom). In addition, as the daimyô took control of the country, they forced their vassals to live in towns around the castle, thus starting the growth of castle towns, the urbanization of the warrior class, and the growth of the merchant class.

1500 Go-Kashiwabara becomes Emperor (but the enthronement ceremony is not held until 1521 due to a lack of funds).

1501 - 1504 Bunki Era

1504 - 1521 Eishô Era

1508 Hosokawa is assasinated in Kyôtô and Yoshizumi flees. Yoshitane is restored to office with the help of the ôuchi of Yamaguchi, but now battles take place among the Hosokawa for the title and position of Kanrei.

1521 - 1528 Daiei Era

1521 Yoshitane flees the capital and goes into exile. Ashikaga Yoshiharu becomes the twelfth shôgun at the age of ten. He serves as Hosokawa Takakuni's puppet.

1526 Go-Nara becomes Emperor (although the enthronement ceremony is not held until 1536 due to a lack of funds).

1528 - 1532 Kyôroku Era

1532 - 1555 Temmon Era

1532 The Ikkô Buddhist sect (as the Jodô Shinshû/True Pure Land sect was then known) establishes Ishiyama as their headquarters.

1542 Three Portuguese land at Tanegashima, a small island off the coast of Kyûshû, when their ship is blown off course. When they return to China (from where they had come) they tell other Portuguese about Japan and traders and missionaries begin to arrive a year or two later. Firearms are introduced to Japan when they see those carried by the original Portuguese who had landed on Tanegashima.

1546 Ashikaga Yoshiharu flees Kyôtô. His son Yoshiteru becomes the thirteenth shôgun and serves under Hosokawa control.

1549 Francis Xavier, a Jesuit missionary, arrives in Kagoshima, Kyûshû.

1551 Tally trade with China breaks down. An unrestrained number of Japanese ships now sail between Japan and China.

1552 Francis Xavier leaves Japan and returns to Goa. Six other missionaries come to Japan to continue his work.

1555 - 1558 Kôji Era

1557 âgimachi becomes Emperor.

1558 - 1570 Eiroku Era
Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600)

1560 One of the Jesuit missionaries meets with Yoshiteru in Kyôto. Yoshiteru issues orders that the missionaries are to be well treated and not taxed, and are authorized to work in Kyôto. By this time there are about 12 missionaries in Japan, most living and working on Kyûshû.

1560 Imagawa, the daimyô of Suruga Province, leads an army into Owari Province on his way to Kyôto. His hope is to take the capital and rule the country. He is defeated and killed in the battle of Okehazama by an army led by Oda Nobunaga.

1561 Tokugawa Ieyasu (then called Matsudaira Motoyasu), who had been a thirteen year hostage of Imagawa, and had marched with him the previous year, makes a pact with Oda and agrees to support him. He takes the name Ieyasu.

1564 Oda makes an alliance with Asai Nagamasa, the daimyô of Ōmi Province, by sending his sister to be Asai’s wife.

1565 Ashikaga Yoshiteru, along with his wife and mother, is assassinated by Matsunaga, an agent of the Miyoshi house (vassals of the Hosokawa). Yoshihide becomes the fourteenth shôgun and Yoshiaki escapes to Echizen.

1566 The emperor, under pressure from the Buddhists, issues an order expelling Christian missionaries from Kyôto. They flee to Kyûshû and Sakai. The court gives Ieyasu the right to use the name Tokugawa.

1567 Portuguese traders arrive in Nagasaki. Ieyasu has, by this time, subdued the last of the Imagawa and become the ruler of all of Mikawa Province.

Early 1567 Yoshiaki (the younger brother of Yoshiteru), from his exile at Asakura’s estate in Echizen, asks Oda to help him restore the Ashikaga Bakufu.

Late 1567 Oda subdues the Saitô clan and takes control of Mino Province. His wins are due, in part, to the skills and judgement of one of his junior commanders, Hideyoshi.

Mid 1568 Oda defeats the Rokkaku in Ōmi and, as this was his last obstacle, his road to the capital was clear.

Nov. 1568 Oda Nobunaga occupies Kyôto and installs Yoshiaki as the fifteenth, and last, Ashikaga Shôgun.
Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600)

1568
Oda Nobunaga occupies Kyōto and installs Ashikaga Yoshiaki as the fifteenth, and last, Ashikaga Shōgun

1569
In Kyōto, Nobunaga issues regulations governing currency, exchange, and barter regulations in an attempt to improve civil administration.

Spring 1569
After a meeting with Nobunaga and Yoshiaki in Kyōto, Jesuit missionaries are allowed back in the capital to preach. (By 1582, the estimated number of Christian converts in Japan was about 150,000, with about 200 churches.)

Late 1569
Nobunaga defeats and subjugates Ise Province.

1570 - 1573
Genki Era.

May 1570
Nobunaga leaves Kyōto to fight Asakura in Echizen. Asai (even though married to Nobunaga's younger sister) betrays Nobunaga and sides with Asakura. Nobunaga and his men escape and successfully retreat to the capital.

July 1570
Nobunaga, with the help of reinforcements and an army led by Tokugawa Ieyasu from the East, defeats forces led by Asai (of Ōmi) and Asakura (of Echizen) in the north of Ōmi Province.

Nov. 1570
Nobunaga troops attack Ishiyama Honganji in Ōsaka but are completely defeated by troops led, for the most part, by the Ikkō sect.

Oct. 1571
Nobunaga destroys the Enryakuji monastery complex on Mt. Hiei, burning down 3,000 buildings and killing over 1,600 monks.

Late 1571
Nobunaga completes construction of a new Imperial Palace. He also begins the first cadastral survey in selected provinces. Nobunaga forces attack Ikkō believers in Owari Province but are defeated.

Nov. 1572
Takeda Shingen of Kai Province begins a march towards Kyōto to attack Nobunaga.

Jan. 1573
Nobunaga and Tokugawa battle Takeda forces in Tōtōmi Province. Tokugawa Ieyasu barely escapes alive and Nobunaga arranges a diplomatic solution and truce. Yoshiaki sides with Takeda against Nobunaga.

1573 - 1592
Tensho Era

1573
Nobunaga forces attack Ikkō believers in Owari Province but are defeated again.

March 1573
Nobunaga ousts Yoshiaki from the Shōgunate. He flees to exile on Shikoku and then unsuccessfully wanders the country looking for support until his death in 1597. This is the end of the Ashikaga Shōgunate and no one holds the title again until 1603.

Aug. 1573
Nobunaga troops fight one last battle with Asakura in Echizen and Asai in Ōmi. Asai and Asakura lose and commit suicide. Nobunaga gives Asai's lands to Hideyoshi (who builds a castle at Nagahama, Ōmi Province) and the remainder of the land to others.

1574
Nobunaga issues orders and regulations regarding the construction and repair of roads in all of the provinces he controls. He also abolishes the barriers on roads in these provinces.

Early 1573
Nobunaga forces attack Ikkō believers in Owari Province but are defeated again.

Summer 1574
Nobunaga defeats Ikkō sect followers and their supporters in a protracted siege of their strongholds at Nagashima. He accomplishes this by by offering peace and then massacring 40,000 believers when they accept.

1575
Nobunaga's inner circle is now restricted to 10 generals: Hideyoshi, Takigawa Kazumasu, Akechi Mitsuhide, Niwa Nagahide, Shibata Katsuie, Sassa Narimasa, Maeda Toshiie, Sakuma Nobumori, Ikeda Tsuneoki, and Mōri Nagayoshi.

June 1575
Nobunaga and Ieyasu defeat Takeda forces at Nagashino in Mikawa Province.

June 1575
Nobunaga defeats the Ikkō sect in Echizen and Kaga Provinces and massacres another 40,000 believers.
Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600)

Aug. 1575  Mōri ships resupply Ishiyama Honganji in Ōsaka via the inland sea. Nobunaga ships (he has a navy of about 300 ships) try to block it but are defeated in a short battle.

Fall 1575  Hideyoshi and Akechi Mitsuhide commence driving to the west and north to subdue the Mōri family (Hideyoshi along the Sanyōdō and Akechi along the Sanindō). They meet very stiff resistance and this isn’t accomplished in Nobunaga’s lifetime.

Early 1576  Nobunaga commences building a castle on Azuchiyama on eastern bank of Lake Biwa in Ōmi Province (completed in 1579). He also commences the process of disarming peasants in selected territories.

June 1576  Nobunaga attacks Ishiyama Honganji in Ōsaka with a small number of troops but is completely defeated and withdraws after being slightly wounded.

1577  Nobunaga receives the title of Minister of the Right (Udaijin) from the emperor.

March 1577  Nobunaga troops attack and defeat Ikkō troops and supporters in Kii Province, thus cutting off supply routes to Ishiyama Honganji.

1578  Nobunaga supporters start expanding to lands West of Kyōto. Nobunaga resigns all court offices and titles and transfers them to his heirs.

1579  Nobunaga moves to Azuchi castle.

April 1580  With no supplies, no relief in sight, and having received a letter from the emperor advising them to do so, Ishiyama Honganji surrenders to Nobunaga. This ends the power of the Ikkō sect. but many believers flee to Saginomori in Kii Province.

1582  Nobunaga forces make a last attempt to eliminate the Ikkō believers in Saginomori, but the campaign is never completed because of Nobunaga’s death.

April 1582  Nobunaga, Ieyasu, and Hōjō attack Takeda Katsuyori in the east [in Kai Province]. Takeda is killed and the family comes to an end. Hideyoshi attempts to take Takamatsu castle in the west [in Bitchû Province]. As the castle defenses weaken, the Mōri family sends reinforcements from the west. Hideyoshi sends word to Nobunaga asking for help.

Late June 1582  Nobunaga sends his armies west to reinforce Hideyoshi at Takamatsu. Nobunaga is assassinated by Akechi Mitsuhide at Honnōji while heading to Takamatsu himself (he was 49 years old). Nobutada, Nobunaga’s eldest son and heir is also assassinated at Nijō palace in Kyōto. (By this time, Nobunaga controlled land in 20 of Japan’s 66 provinces)

Late June 1582  Hideyoshi negotiates a compromise settlement with the Mōri at Takamatsu and then returns to Kyōto to defeat, and kill, Akechi.

July 1582  At Hideyoshi’s insistence, Sambōshi, Nobunaga’s three-year old grandson (later called Oda Hidenobu) is appointed heir under the guardianship of four generals. Joint authority over Kyōto is given to Hideyoshi, Niwa Nagahide, Ikeda Tsuneoki, and Shibata Katsuie but Hideyoshi, alone, actually governed.

Late 1582  Hideyoshi receives a minor court title from the emperor. He also orders the beginning of land surveys in provinces throughout the country. These continue through the year 1598.

May 1583  Hideyoshi defeats Shibata Katsuie (who had now turned against him) at the battle of Shizugatake in Echizen.

Fall 1583  Hideyoshi begins reconstruction of Ōsaka Castle [site of the fallen Ishiyama Honganji fortress] for use as his headquarters. He also announces a policy of destroying all castles and fortresses in the country except those of the major daimyō who support him. In addition, he stations his generals in areas outside of their home provinces and where they have no traditional authority.
Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600)

1584  Hideyoshi takes the provinces of Kaga, Noto, and Etchû. He also fights two battles with Tokugawa leyasu in Owari. Nobutaka (Nobunaga's third son) is confined to a monastery in Owari Province after supporting Hideyoshi opponents and he commits suicide while there. (Hideyoshi now controls 30 provinces)

1584  A Spanish trading ship, blown off course in a storm, enters Hirado. Because he is jealous of Nagasaki's monopoly with Portuguese traders and he dislikes the Jesuits, Matsuura, the daimyô there, welcomes it and agrees to receive other Spanish traders and non-Jesuit missionaries in Hirado if they wish to come.

Early 1585  Hideyoshi comes to terms with leyasu and fighting between them stops. leyasu retires to Mikawa Province in the east. This makes Hideyoshi the overall power in the country and the leader of most of the country.

1585  Hideyoshi commences unification of the Shikoku daimyô and defeats the Chôsôkabe house. He also subdues Kii and Izumi Provinces. Emperor Ôgimachi resigns and Go-Yozei becomes the new (and 107th) emperor.

1585  Hideyoshi assumes title of Kampaku (used to designate the regent of an adult emperor) and is given the surname of Toyotomi. Copper, silver, and gold coins begin to be officially minted.

1585  Hideyoshi subjugates the priests and sects at Negoro, on Shikoku, as well as at Kurnano, Mt. Köya, and Tônomine. According to Sansom, "His method was simple and effective, for by the mere threat of force, by confiscating weapons in his Sword Hunt and by impounding Köyasen revenues in the course of his land survey, he frightened the monks into submission and then gained their esteem by returning their estates."

1586  Hideyoshi assumes the title of Chancellor.

Feb. 1587  Hideyoshi calls on supporters around the country and commences unification of the Kyûshû daimyô. His main concern is the defeat of the Shimazu of Satsuma.

July 1587  Satsuma surrenders to Hiyeoshi and pledges to support him. In return, Hideyoshi allows them to keep their lands (in contrast to Nobunaga who would have killed them all and taken their lands). Hideyoshi now controls all of Kyûshû.

After returning from Kyûshû, Hideyoshi issues an order officially banning Christianity and expelling Jesuit missionaries from the country (although the order was not energetically enforced until 1597). Hideyoshi moves from Osaka to Jûrakudai, his newly completed palace in Kyôtô.

1588  Swords are confiscated from all non-samurai.

Early 1590  leyasu (from his base in Mikawa) attempts to talk the Hôjô into submitting to Hideyoshi but is unsuccessful.

April 1590  Hideyoshi begins a siege of the Hôjô in Odawara. His troops begin to defeat and take the minor castles in land controlled by the Hôjô.

Aug. 1590  Odawara unconditionally surrenders to Hideyoshi. With the exception of the far north (Matsu and Dewa Provinces) unification of Japan is now virtually complete. Tokugawa leyasu becomes the lord of the Kantô region, based in Edo. The social structure is frozen into the classes of samurai, peasant, & merchant. Class mobility and change of status are prohibited.

1590  Statistical Interlude: Population: According to Ikegami Eiko in The Taming Of The Samurai, "Miyamoto Matarô estimates that the population of Japan may have started from 12 million in 1600..." In addition, "Prior to the close of the Warring States period, ... Kyôtô was the only large city in Japan with a population in excess of 100,000 at one point; 100 major castle cities were not yet in existence before the late-sixteenth century." In particular, the city of Edo "... claimed a population of only a few thousand citizens in 1590 when Tokugawa leyasu first became the lord of the region."
**Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late 1590</td>
<td>Hideyoshi orders the a national census to be taken. After they begin to appear in the census figures, Hideyoshi orders the expulsion of all rōnin from towns and villages in which they did no farm work or military service. He even orders that all people who entered a village from another village or province after the fall of Odawara were to be expelled from the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1591</td>
<td>Hideyoshi orders that all military personnel, of whatever rank, who entered a village from another village or province after the fall of Odawara were also to be expelled from that village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1591</td>
<td>Hideyoshi appoints his eldest nephew (Hidetsugu) as heir, establishes him at Jūrakudai, gives him the title of Kampaku (although Hideyoshi continues to rule), and then takes the title of Taikō for himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1591</td>
<td>Hideyoshi briefly exiles Sen no Rikyu to Sakai. He is soon called back to Kyōto and ordered to commit suicide. Hideyoshi sends a letter to the governor of the Philippines telling them to submit and pay tribute or he would attack when he finished attacking Korea and China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1592 - 1596</td>
<td>Bunroku Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late April 1592</td>
<td>200,000 Japanese troops invade Korea with plans to continue on to China. Hideyoshi directs the invasion from a headquarters he sets up in Hizen Province on Kyūshū. Seoul is occupied by mid June.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1592</td>
<td>Japanese troops take P'yongyang but stop and wait for orders to enter China. However, Korean resistance is getting much stronger and the Korean navy is defeating the Japanese navy on numerous occasions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1593</td>
<td>Japanese troops are driven out of P'yongyang and back to Seoul by Chinese and Korean forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1593</td>
<td>Franciscan missionaries enter Japan and begin to build churches and proselytize in Kyōto and Ōsaka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1593</td>
<td>Hideyori (Hideyoshi's second and last son) is born to his mistress Yodogimi in Ōsaka. Hideyoshi has not been satisfied with Hidetsugu as he was brutal by nature and had been leading a disreputable life in Kyōto while Hideyoshi was in Kyūshū.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1593</td>
<td>A truce is negotiated and most of the Japanese troops return home. However, fortifications are left in four southeast Korean provinces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1595</td>
<td>Hidetsugu is ordered into exile on Kōyasan and then ordered to commit suicide. Shortly thereafter, Hidetsugu's entire family is executed and Jūrakudai is destroyed. Hideyori is named as Hideyoshi's heir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596 - 1615</td>
<td>Keicho Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>Tokugawa, Maeda, Mōri, and other generals are called to Kyōto and made to swear allegiance to Hideyori. Hideyori, at the age of three, is installed as Kampaku (Regent).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1596</td>
<td>When ambassadors from China arrive to invest Hideyoshi with the title King of Japan and to give him royal robes and a crown (all part of the signed truce in Korea), Hideyoshi gets angry at the tone of the letter from the Chinese Emperor and threatens to attack China. (Many say that this irrational threat shows Hideyoshi's mental unstability in his last years.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1597</td>
<td>Franciscan missionaries and numerous followers are tortured and crucified. The Jesuits seem to have recovered some of their status with Hideyoshi at the same time, although technically associating with christians was still banned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1597</td>
<td>Korean campaign resumes with another attack by Japanese troops, although they never accomplish more than fighting defensive battles in the southern part of the country. In Japan, the first Christians and Japanese converts are crucified and/or executed. (Total lands throughout Japan now assessed at 16.5 million koku)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1597</td>
<td>Hideyoshi issues an order to expell all christians from the country. (He allows a few to remain to serve the small Portuguese community in Nagasaki.) The vast majority of missionaries go into hiding and never leave. There are an estimated 300,000 converts in the country by this time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>The first extant work printed by Japanese from movable type. It is a copy of the Confucian Analects printed on the orders of Emperor Go-Yōzei.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1598</td>
<td>Seeing that he was dying, Hideyoshi calls the five greatest daimyō (Tokugawa, Maeda, Mōri, Uesugi, and Ukita) together and make them sign an oath to support Hideyori (then 6 years old). Ieyasu is appointed as Hideyori's guardian until he comes of age and can rule on his own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1598</td>
<td>Hideyoshi dies at the age of sixty-three. Hideyori is now 5 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1598</td>
<td>A truce is reached between the Chinese/Koreans and the Japanese and Japanese troops withdraw from Korea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1599</td>
<td>Charges are brought against Ieyasu that he is arranging marriages for political ends, contrary to his pledge to support Hideyori. War is averted when the charges are retracted. An unsuccessful assassination attempt, prompted by Ishida Mitsunari, is made on Ieyasu as he goes to Ōsaka castle with Hideyori.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1599</td>
<td>Another unsuccessful assassination attempt is made against Ieyasu by Ishida Mitsunari. Misunari is sent back to his home province of Sawayama (Hikone) but escapes further punishment. Ieyasu moves to Ōsaka castle and appoints his son Hideyoshi as warden of Fushimi castle. He also appoints his other son, Toshinaga, to the Council of Regency to replace Maeda Toshiie, who had just died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1600</td>
<td>Uesugi Kagekatsu begins preparations to attack Ieyasu from his fief in Aizu, to which he had recently retired. Learning of this, Ieyasu begins planning an attack himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late July 1600</td>
<td>Ieyasu leaves Ōsaka with an army to attack Uesugi. He leisurely marches his troops to Edo, arriving in mid-August.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Sept. 1600</td>
<td>Ishida Mitsunari, seeing that Ieyasu has left the Ōsaka area, brings an army and takes Fushimi palace. He then begins a march towards Edo with the intention of confronting Ieyasu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Sept. 1600</td>
<td>Convinced that other allies were controlling the Uesugi army in Aizu, Ieyasu orders his troops and other allies to head west in order to meet Ishida Mitsunari and his supporters in Mino Province.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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One of Japan’s Red seal ships (1634), which were used for trade throughout Asia.
Late Oct. 1600 Ieyasu defeats his opponents at the battle of Sekigahara. He now controls virtually all of Japan, but publicly swears loyalty to Hideyori, who remains in Osaka Castle.

Early Nov. 1600 Mōri Terumoto surrenders Osaka castle to Ieyasu, who now becomes the de facto ruler of the country. Ieyasu decides that he will reside in his castle in Edo.

Early 1600 The Dutch trading ship Liefde wrecks on the shores of Bungo and the English Pilot-Major, William Adams, is introduced to Ieyasu.

1601 Ieyasu begins confiscating land from those who didn’t support him at Sekigahara and rewarding those that did. Among those that lost land, the Mōri went from lands worth 1,205,000 koku to only 369,000 koku. Remember this when we get to the mid 1800’s. Ieyasu increases his wealth to vast proportions by placing Edo, Osaka, Kyōto, Nagasaki, Yamada, and Nara under direct Tokugawa control. (Tokugawa and fudai daimyō controlled land is now estimated worth about 17 million koku, of a national total of about 26 million koku.)

Early 1602 Ieyasu negotiates a settlement with Shimazu of Satsuma and Shimazu Tadatsune submits to Ieyasu in ceremonies at Fushimi palace. After seeing that Shimazu was well treated, other, northern, daimyō also submit peacefully.

1603 Ieyasu assumes the title of Shōgun but still makes a show of deferring to Hideyori. He installs his eldest son, Hidetada, in Edo castle and moves to Sumpu in Suruga Province (now Shizuoka and where he had been raised as a child - as a hostage). He continues the political process of consolidating his power while living in Sumpu.

1604 A bakufu edict establishes a bakufu monopoly on the sale of silk imported from China, thus beginning the bakufu’s policy of governmental control of foreign trade.

1605 Ieyasu hands over the title of Shōgun to his son Hidetada but continues the process of consolidating his political power from his residence in Sumpu. As he continues to reassign the daimyō to various fiefs, he is careful to ensure that all tozama daimyō are surrounded, and watched over, by fudai daimyō.

1609 A Dutch trading post is established at Hirado.

1611 Ieyasu begins to put pressure on Hideyori to relinquish official power. He also exacts an oath of allegiance from daimyō in central and western Japan.

1611 Go-Mizunoo becomes emperor.

1612 Full persecution of the Christian faith recommences. Ieyasu exacts an oath of allegiance from the daimyō in northern Japan.

1613 An agent of the English East India Company establishes an English trading post at Hirado.

Jan. 1614 Ieyasu issues an order which suppresses Christianity throughout the country. Churches were destroyed and many missionaries were imprisoned.

Dec. 1614 Ieyasu begins a siege of Osaka castle by sending 70,000 troops under the command of Hidetada to surround the castle. The castle is supported by thousands of rōnin who come from fiefs around the country.

1615 - 1624 Genwa Era.

Jan. 1615 A peace proposal is signed between Ieyasu and Hideyori but Ieyasu breaks the agreement and Hidetada begins the process of filling in the moats and tearing down the outer walls of Osaka castle.

May 1615 The siege of Osaka castle recommences.

Early June 1615 Ieyasu troops enter the inner defense areas of Osaka Castle. Days later the castle falls and is defeated. Hideyori commits suicide and his mother is killed by a retainer to prevent her capture. Ieyasu is now in total control of Japan.
**Edo Period (1603 - 1868)**

Aug. 1615  Ieyasu imposes 17 clause code of conduct on the military class (the Buke Shohatto). Among the prohibitions, each daimyō is restricted to the possession of one military castle or garrison headquarters. In addition, repairs or enlargements could only be made with prior approval from the bakufu and all marriages had to be approved by the shōgun. In addition, the power of the throne and of Buddhist clerics are severely limited.

June 1, 1616  Ieyasu dies and Hidetada assumes all Shōgunal powers.

1616  The ban on Christianity is reaffirmed. All foreign trade, except Chinese, is restricted to Nagasaki and Hirado.

1619  Widespread famine hits Japan. (During the Tokugawa Period, there were 154 famines, of which 21 were widespread and serious.)

1620  The bakufu arranges a marriage between Emperor Go-Mizunoo and the daughter (Kazuko) of Hidetada.

1622  Hidetada orders the execution of 55 Christian missionaries and converts in Nagasaki.

1623  Hidetada retires and his son, Iemitsu, becomes third Shōgun. However, as is usual, Hidetada retained all authority until his death. The English abandon their trading post at Hirado and abandon the idea of trading with Japan.

1624 - 1644  Kanei Era.

1624  Spaniards (priests and laymen) are banned from the country and further contact with them is prohibited.

1627  The bakufu further limits the emperor's powers by stripping him of the right to select and nominate senior priests. The bakufu's deputy in Kyōto cancels several already made appointments and Emperor Go-Mizunoo threatens to abdicate, but the bakufu refuses to change the ruling.

1628  Hidetada orders the execution of more Christians in Nagasaki.

1629  Go-Mizunoo is forced to abdicate the throne.

1630  Princess Oki-ko, Go-Mizunoo's daughter with Kazuko, succeeds to the throne as Empress Myōshō (Meisei?). (This means that a granddaughter of the shōgun now occupies the throne.)

1630  The bakufu issues a prohibition against books intended to propagate Christianity and singled out books that had been translated by Jesuit missionaries into Chinese - and were thus readable by more Japanese than other books published in European languages.

1632  Hidetada dies and Iemitsu assumes full Shōgunal powers.

1633  Ban on overseas sailing of ships other than Hosho-sen.

1634  Iemitsu leads an army of over 300,000 men to Kyōto as a show of force and a reminder to the court and the tozama daimyō that he is in control.

1634  The bakufu structure is strengthened with the creation of the posts of Rōjū (Elders), Wakadoshiyori (Junior Elders), Bugyō (Commissioners), and Hyōjōshū (Judicial Council).

1635  Buke Shohatto is revised. This revision includes a formalization of the Sankin-Kotai system. All religious matters brought under control of the Jisha Bugyō (Commissioner of Temples & Shrines).

1636  Ban on Japanese travel abroad. Portuguese traders confined to Deshima Island off Nagasaki.

1637 - 1638  A peasant uprising (the Shimabara Uprising), in which Christians take a leading role, takes place on the Shimabara Peninsula of Kyūshū. It is estimated that of the 37,000 people who took part, only about 100 escaped alive.

1638  Portuguese priest and traders are ousted and Portuguese trading ships are banned from the country. Travel abroad by Japanese is further restricted as the death penalty is imposed on anyone who attempts to leave the country or who, having already left, tries to return. In addition, the building of ships with a capacity of more than 2,500 bushels is forbidden.
**Edo Period (1603 - 1868)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1639</td>
<td>Policy of total exclusion implemented (Sakoku Rei).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1640</td>
<td>All members of a Portuguese diplomatic mission from Macao are executed when they arrive in Japan to request a reopening of trade. All Japanese ordered to register at temple of their choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1641</td>
<td>Dutch traders moved from Hirado and restricted to Dejima. Chinese restricted to Nagasaki.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1642</td>
<td>Widespread famine hits Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1643</td>
<td>Go-Kōmyō becomes emperor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644 - 1648</td>
<td>Shoho Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644 - 1694</td>
<td>Matsuo Basho. First and best(?) writer of serious haiku. Born a samurai but became a wandering poet/recluse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1648 - 1652</td>
<td>Keian Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1651</td>
<td>Ietsuna, Iemitsu's son, becomes the fourth Shōgun at the age of eleven. (He suffers from poor health during his entire 29 year reign.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1652 - 1655</td>
<td>Jōō Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1653 - 1724</td>
<td>Chikamatsu Monzaemon. The most well known Kabuki and Bunraku writer - and an ex-rōnin. (The best?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1654</td>
<td>Go-Sai becomes emperor; although the formal coronation ceremony isn't until 1656.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1655 - 1658</td>
<td>Ingen, a Chinese priest, founds the ōbaku sect of Zen Buddhism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1655 - 1658</td>
<td>Meireki Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1657</td>
<td>Great Edo fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1658 - 1661</td>
<td>Manji Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1661 - 1673</td>
<td>Kanbun Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1663</td>
<td>Reigen becomes emperor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1663 - 1681</td>
<td>Empo Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1665</td>
<td>Widespread famine hits Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680</td>
<td>Ietsuna dies without a son and is succeeded by his younger brother: Tsunayoshi, of Tatebayashi, becomes the fifth Shōgun at the age of 34. Whereas the first four Tokugawa Shōguns had emphasized that samurai were to devote half of their time to martial arts and the other half to learning, by the time Tsunayoshi took office learning was almost completely predominant. In addition, relations with the imperial court had relaxed in severity and Tozama daimyō were given much more leeway in running their own lives and provincial affairs - including in matters of marriages and succession..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680 - 1684</td>
<td>Tenwa Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1684 - 1688</td>
<td>Joko Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1685</td>
<td>The ban against books intending to propagate christianity is renewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1687</td>
<td>Higashiyama becomes emperor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1688 - 1704</td>
<td>Genroku Era. First major cultural expansion of this time period. Centered in Kyōto and Ōsaka Total lands now assessed at 25.8 million koku.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Edo Period (1603 - 1868)

1700 George Sansom writes of Japanese society as it entered the 18th century: “The fixed pattern of feudal administration was liberal enough to allow a measure of freedom in spheres remote from politics, so that during the eighteenth century Japan developed a society based on law and privilege, governed by harsh principle, but nevertheless achieving in practice great urbanity and style. It was closed to outside influences and therefore could not be refreshed by the winds of new doctrine then blowing about the Western world; but probably no contemporary European community was more civilized and polished.”

1701 - 1703 Incident of the 47 Ronin (made famous in the Kabuki play Chushingura). After 47 ronin kill a daimyō in his Edo headquarters in revenge of their former daimyō's death, they are ordered to commit seppuku. This was an important precedent as it showed that the government now held civil law over the acceptance of military honor.

1703 An earthquake in the Kantō area kills an estimated 150,000 people in Edo.

1704 - 1711 Hoei Era.

1707 - 1708 Mt. Fuji erupts on numerous occasions, destroying hundreds of square miles of surrounding farmland.

Jan. 1709 Tsunayoshi dies and his nephew, Ienobu, of Kōfu, becomes the sixth Shōgun.

1709 Nakamikado becomes emperor.

1711 - 1716 Shotoku Era.

Late 1712 Ienobu dies after an illness of several months. Ietsugu, his three and a half year old son, becomes the seventh Shōgun.

1713 - 1714 Russians visit Kuril Islands in an attempt to find Japan.

1716 Ietsugu dies, thus ending the Hidetada and Iemitsu line of shōguns. Yoshimune, the Daimyō of Kii, becomes the eighth Shōgun.

Thinking that the samurai class had tilted too far towards learning and leisure, and away from the martial arts and discipline, he frequently issues edicts demanding frugality and self discipline. These are, in large part, ignored.

Under Yoshimune’s leadership, the legal and judicial system undergoes considerable expansion. Although the Tokugawa bureaucracy is staffed only by samurai, a non-militaristic and more rational approach is brought to conflict resolution. Yoshimune also reforms the currency and tries to revive the agricultural underpinnings of the country in order to take back some power form the now strong merchant class. However, the next two successors were incompetent and power eventually fell to dishonest and greedy counsellors.

1716 - 1736 Kyoho Era.

1720 Ban lifted on the importation of foreign books and Chinese translations (with the exception of books directly concerned with Christianity).

1720 Statistical Interlude: Population: The population of Japan reaches more than 31 million by 1720, and remained stable at that level thereafter. In addition, the population of Edo approaches 1 million by 1700 as it develops into the national political center. By the eighteenth century more than 15% of the population lived in major cities and towns of some kind.

1721 Five year census begun.

1730 Because bakufu policy closed the country to food imports and actively discouraged crop diversification, farmers had to increase the amount of land under cultivation in order to feed the growing population - with the amount being doubled between the beginning of the Tokugawa Period and about 1730. After 1730, lesser and lesser amounts of land were converted to cultivation and, therefore, the population was unable to increase.

1732 Widespread famine hits Japan, affecting about 1,600,000 people and killing at least 17,000.
### Edo Period (1603 - 1868)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1735</td>
<td>Sakuramachi becomes emperor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736 - 1741</td>
<td>Gembun Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1739</td>
<td>A Russian ship, captained by a Dane, visits several points along the east coast of Japan - including a reported sighting off the coast of Shimoda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741 - 1744</td>
<td>Kanpo Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1742</td>
<td>Codification of Bakufu laws begun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744 - 1748</td>
<td>Enko Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1745</td>
<td>Yoshimune retires and names Ieshige as the ninth Shōgun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1747</td>
<td>Momozono becomes emperor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748 - 1751</td>
<td>Kanen Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751 - 1764</td>
<td>Horeki Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751</td>
<td>Yoshimune dies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1753 - 1806</td>
<td>Kitagawa Utamaro. Ukiyoe artist famous for his pictures of the &quot;ideal&quot; woman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>Ieharu becomes tenth Shōgun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760 - 1849</td>
<td>Katsushika Hokusai. Ukiyoe artist famous for his landscape pictures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>Go-Sakuramachi becomes emperor; although the formal coronation ceremony isn't until the next year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764 - 1772</td>
<td>Meiwa Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>A proposal to relax the ban on building ships capable of ocean travel is proposed, but defeated by conservatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Go-Momozono becomes emperor; although the coronation ceremony isn't until the next year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Japanese dissect a criminal's body while following diagrams and plates in a translation of a Dutch book on anatomy. Japanese interest in 'Dutch' learning is increasing and spreading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772 - 1781</td>
<td>Anei Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777 - 1779</td>
<td>Russian's again visit the Kuril islands. Meeting Japanese form Matsumae, they inquire about trade but are told that all trade is restricted to Nagasaki.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>Kōkaku becomes emperor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781 - 1789</td>
<td>Temmei Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Mount Asama, located on the western border of the province of Kozuke, erupts. A large number of towns and villages are destroyed and ashes buried the province and its farm lands to a depth of several feet, as well as areas in other, nearby, provinces. Famine soon follows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783 - 1787</td>
<td>The Famine of Temmei reduces the population of Japan by an estimated one million people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>Ieharu dies and Ienari becomes eleventh Shōgun. Matsudaira Sadanobu becomes regent until 1793 while Ienari is a minor. Ienari was notorious for his inefficiency, extravagance, and vanity. According to Kitagawa, his chief accomplishment while in office was to have maintained 40 mistresses and sired 55 children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789 - 1801</td>
<td>Kansel Era.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1792 The governor of Siberia sends an expedition to Japan. They make it through Hokkaido but are escorted under heavy guard to Matsumae where they are told to leave as no interactions with foreigners are allowed by law. It is reiterated that any trade that might be approved must go through the port of Nagasaki.

1797 - 1858 Ando Hiroshige. Ukiyoie artist famous for his "53 Stages of Tokaido Highway" and other landscape pictures.

1792 Russian ship enters Nemuro harbor asking to open trade relations for Russia. Request is denied but they are given permit to enter Nagasaki instead.

1798 Shōgunate begins colonizing Hokkaido.

1801 - 1804 Kowa Era.


1804 - 1818 Bunka Era.

1804 Russian ship enters Nagasaki harbor asking for trade concessions. Japan refuses and ship leaves after six unfruitful months.

1808 British frigate enters Nagasaki harbor under Dutch flag looking for Dutch Ships. Leaves without finding and without bombarding the harbor as threatened.

1811 Japanese outpost captures Russian naval officer. They hold him but treat him well.

1811 Department of official translators of Western books set up within the bakufu.

1813 Russians capture bakufu monopoly merchant and exchange him for Japanese-held Russian naval officer.

1817 Ninkō becomes emperor.

1818 - 1830 Bunsei Era.

1819 British ship enters Uraga Bay. Armed struggle with Japanese ensues before they leave.

1824 British ship lands on island off Satsuma coast. Armed fighting ensues before they leave.

1825 Bakufu issues orders for all authorities to drive away all foreign vessels "without second thought."

1830 - 1844 Tempo Era

1832 Total land now assessed at 30.4 million koku.

1834 Another famine reduces the population to less than it was in the 1730's.

1836 - 1837 Widespread famine hits Japan.

1837 Oshio Heihachiro, until recently a minor official in the Osaka city magistrate, leads an attack on Osaka Castle to gain control of the city and relieve the famine starved city dwellers. The rebellion is quickly put down.

1837 Ienari resigns. Ieyoshi becomes twelfth Shōgun (although Ienari retains political control).

1837 An American merchant ship (the Morrison) enters Edo Bay but is driven off by gun batteries at Uraga. It goes to Kagoshima and is driven off there as well.

1839 - 1842 The "Opium War" takes place between China and Great Britain. As the Japanese hear of this from both Chinese and Dutch contacts, Japanese 'Dutch Learning' (rangaku) shifts from just medicine, economics, and botany, to include military science as well. Rangaku is slowly replaced with Yōgaku (Western Learning).
### Edo Period (1603 - 1868)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>Ex-Shōgun Ienari dies. Ieyoshi begins purge of government officials and implementation of Tempo reforms. Under leadership of Mizuno Tadakuni, bakufu tries to reestablish control over daimyō affairs, but this ultimately proves unsuccessful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Order to drive off all foreign ships relaxed, allowing ships that are &quot;storm-damaged or shipwrecked, come seeking food, fuel, or water&quot; to enter port.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844 - 1848</td>
<td>Koka Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>A Dutch warship enters Nagasaki harbor with an envoy carrying a letter to the Shōgun from the King of Holland. The letter tries to explain to the bakufu that Western advances in science and the growth in international trade would make the opening of Japan inevitable. The bakufu politely, but negatively, replies the country must stay closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Mizuno Tadakuni removed from office (for the second and final time) in disgrace. Other associates are jailed and/or imprisoned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Commodore James Biddle is sent to Japan by the US with two warships in order to open trade between the two countries. The Japanese refused and Biddle simply left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Kōmei becomes emperor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848 - 1854</td>
<td>Kaei Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Dutch warn bakufu that Perry will come and what he will seek.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>Iesada becomes thirteenth Shōgun. Over the next years, it becomes apparent that he is not 100% mentally competent and the nation is administered in his name by the senior minister, Abe Masahiro. In addition, he never marries and produces no heirs, forcing the bakufu to choose one at a later date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 8, 1853</td>
<td>Commodore Perry arrives at Uraga with letter for the Shōgun demanding an opening of trade relations with the US. He leaves the letter and tells the bakufu that he will return for answer early in 1854. He then departs to Okinawa for the winter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1853/</td>
<td>Bakufu asks opinion of emperor and all daimyō on the issue of what to do about Perry's demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1854</td>
<td>Bakufu asks opinion of emperor and all daimyō on the issue of what to do about Perry's demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854 - 1860</td>
<td>Ansei Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1854</td>
<td>Perry returns to Edo to begin negotiations on the opening of trade relations between Japan and the US.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1854</td>
<td>Yoshida Torajiro and another man attempt to board one of Perry's ships in an attempt to get to the West, but they are sent back to shore and later arrested by the Japanese for attempting to leave the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31, 1854</td>
<td>The Treaty of Kanagawa is signed between Japan and the US opening Hakodate and Shimoda to US vessels for provisioning, promising fair treatment of shipwrecked sailors and extraterritoriality, allowing US trade agents to live in open ports, and approving a future US Consul to live in Shimoda. (In fact, the Japanese bureaucracy obfuscated, stalled, and did anything to prevent any trade from taking place.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1854</td>
<td>A treaty similar to that signed with the US is signed between Japan and Great Britain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>Bakufu lifts ban on building large ships and Satsuma (the most progressive of the han) begins building large western-style sailing ships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1855</td>
<td>The emperor gives his approval to the treaty that had been concluded with the US - although he had been misled as to what it really contained. A treaty similar to that signed with the US is signed between Japan and Russia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1855</td>
<td>A treaty similar to that signed with the US is signed between Japan and Holland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1856</td>
<td>Townsend Harris arrives in Shimoda as the first US Consulate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Edo Period (1603 - 1868)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 1857</td>
<td>Harris warns the bakufu that the US will not tolerate Japanese stalling in trade agreements for much longer. This is taken to heart and the bureaucracy is told to cooperate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1857</td>
<td>The bakufu agrees to ammendments to the Treaty of Kanagawa as proposed by Harris. The ammendments include opening the port of Nagasaki to American ships and affirming extraterritoriality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7, 1857</td>
<td>The Shōgun takes the unprecedented step of meeting in person with Harris.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1858</td>
<td>Ii Naosuke (Daimyō of Hikone, the largest of the han) is appointed regent to the Shōgun. He supports temporarily opening the country to the westerners in order to learn enough to fight them and begins negotiations with Harris. He is bitterly opposed by Tokugawa Nariaki, the Daimyō of Mito, who opposes the opening of the country and vows to fight at any cost. Those throughout the country who oppose the opening of the country despise Ii for his policies and his high-handed treatment of people who oppose him and start working to overthrow the bakufu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 29, 1858</td>
<td>The Treaty of Amity &amp; Commerce is signed with the US giving free trade at 6 ports, allowing permanent foreign residents in Edo and Ōsaka, and normal trade tariffs. Ii Naosuke, as bakufu regent, approves the treaty unilaterally and against the wishes of a good many of the other daimyō. The Daimyōs of Mito, Owari, and Fukui are punished for expressing their disapproval of the signing. Mito and his heir; Hitotsubashi Keiki, are placed under house arrest and the others are forced to retire. This infuriates many and the loyalist movement begins to grow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1858</td>
<td>Within a week of signing the commercial treaty with the US, Ii Naosuke appoints Iemochi, the son of the daimyō of Kii, as the successor to the shōgun. His selection comes about after a bitter dispute within the bakufu. Traditionally, the next shōgun was chosen from the houses of Kii, Mito, or Owari when the current shōgun didn’t produce an heir. Although Iemochi was qualified to succeed, he was only twelve years old and not experienced enough to lead the country. On the other hand, Yoshinobu (Hitotsubashi Keiki), the son of the daimyō of Mito and therefore also qualified to succeed, was proposed as the successor. He was older and thus more experienced but to this time Mito had always been excluded from the list of successors to the Shōgunate. The argument between the two candidates thus came down to a fight between the traditionalists and the pragmatists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1858</td>
<td>Iesada dies and Iemochi is appointed the fourteenth Shōgun. Treaties similar to those signed a month ago with the US are signed with Great Britain, Russia, Holland, and France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1858</td>
<td>The emperor orders Ii Naosuke to come to Kyōto to explain his conduct in approving the foreign treaties and his treatment of other daimyō. He refuses to go and sends Manabe as his representative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1859</td>
<td>Manabe convinces the emperor that the bakufu is, at heart, opposed to opening the country and gets the emperor to consent to the current treaties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Chaplains from several countries and from several denominations begin arriving to minister to foreigners in Japan. Of course they also hope to server as missionaries to the Japanese, but that is still forbidden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860 - 1861</td>
<td>Manen Era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 1860</td>
<td>80 bakufu officials are sent to Washington D.C to ratify the Treaty of Amity &amp; Commerce. They sail in a Japanese made ship with an all-Japanese crew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1860</td>
<td>Ii Naosuke is assassinated in Edo by samurai opposing his signing of the commercial treaty, his opening of the country, his appointment of Iemochi as Shōgun, and his harsh treatment of those who oppose him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Preoccupied at home with its own civil war, the U.S. relinquishes its leading role in Japanese affairs to Great Britain, which, by 1864, controlled nearly 90% of Japan’s trade with Western nations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jan. 1862 Ando Nobumasa, an advisor to the shōgun, escapes an assassination attempt in Edo. While he survives, he is hurt badly enough to be forced to retire. He is despised for his plans to marry the shōgun to Chikako, the emperor’s younger sister, (which eventually did take place) and for the rumors that he plans to replace Emperor Komei with someone more loyal to the bakufu. Loyalist opponents understood that, had the marriage plan been allowed to go through, it would have been impossible for them to attack the bakufu without also indirectly attacking the imperial family.

June 1862 Chōshû and Satsuma station troops in Kyōto in an attempt to influence the Emperor into supporting their positions. (Note that their positions were not the same. Chōshû-han, like Tosa-han, was now controlled by men who supported the complete overthrow of the bakufu and restoration of power to the emperor. Satsuma-han, under the control of Shimazu Hisamitsu supported the policy of uniting the imperial court and the bakufu - much like Ando had proposed with his plans to intermarry the two families.)

June 1862 Having become the most powerful of the daimyō in Kyōto, and therefore wielding the most influence with the imperial court, Shimazu Hisamitsu arranged to have himself appointed by the emperor to escort an imperial messenger who was to go to Edo to demand that the Shōgun come to Kyōto for consultations.

Aug. 1862 Tosa troops, escorting Yamanouchi Yodo, the Daimyō of Tosa, to Edo, arrive in Kyōto under the leadership of Takechi Hanpeita. Takechi, through imperial cohorts and colleagues, had arranged for an imperial decree demanding that yamanouchi stop in Kyōto on his way to Edo. After arriving, Takechi arranges for another imperial decree that demands that the daimyō remain in Kyōto, thus making it impossible for him to continue to Edo and fulfill his responsibilities under Sankin Kōtai.

Aug. 1862 The Shōgun succumbs to the military might shown by Shimazu Hisamitsu and agrees to go to Kyōto as summoned by the Emperor! On Shimazu’s return to Kyōto, four British cross paths with his entourage in the town of Namamugi, a small town outside of Yokohama. Not getting out of the way of the entourage one of them (C.L. Richardson) is killed by a Shimazu retainer: Others are injured, but escape. Upon his return to Kyōto, Shimazu finds that he has lost his influence with the imperial court to the more radical Chōshû.

Oct. 1862 The sankin kōtai system is rescinded - almost assuredly dooming the bakufu to future collapse.

1863 Fukuzawa Yūkichi founds a college based on western principles and subjects. The college will, at a later date, become Keio University.

March, 1863 Iemochi goes to Kyōto - the first shōgun to do so in two centuries. He agrees to court demands that all foreigners be expelled from the country and all ports would be closed on July 24. When bakufu representatives passed this on to foreign representatives in Edo, the representatives were given oral assurances that the bakufu would not enforce it.

April 1863 Britain demands compensation for the murder of C.L. Richardson the previous summer and told that Japan will be attacked by warships if they don’t pay. Britain demands: a) a public apology, b) 100,000 pounds payable by the bakufu to London, c) 25,000 pounds payable by Satsuma to the family of Richardson and the same to each of the other three British attacked at the same time, and d) the arrest and execution of the assassins.

June 1863 The bakufu pays the 100,000 pounds demanded by the British for Satsuma’s killing of C.L. Richardson. Satsuma, however, refuses to pay, saying that it was Edo’s fault for not warning the British that the entourage would be passing that day. (To prevent these problems, normal procedure was for Edo to inform foreign legations when a daimyō entourage was scheduled to travel the Tokaidō. Foreigners would then plan to stay away on those days. For some reason, the British, and hence Richardson, had not been informed of Hisamitsu’s travels and that is why they happened to cross paths.)

July 24, 1863 American warship bombards and destroys 2 Chōshû warships and coastal batteries after being attacked in the Shimonoseki Straights between Honshū and Kyūshū. This being the day that the emperor had said all foreigners would be driven from the country, Chōshû loyalists took it upon themselves to begin the process.
**Edo Period (1603 - 1868)**

**July 1863**  
Chōshū loyalists attack (but fail to damage and sink) British, French, and Dutch ships passing through the Shimonoseki Straights. The French retaliate, even landing and destroying the coastal batteries and one of the villages around them. However, Chōshū manages to keep the Straits closed for more than a year.

**July 1863**  
British warships go to Kagoshima to demand that Satsuma pay the required compensation for the assassination of C.L. Richardson outside of Edo in 1862. When Satsuma officials refuse, the British seize several steamers that Satsuma had recently purchased from traders in Nagasaki. Satsuma retaliates and the British attack and destroy Kagoshima. (After later negotiations in Edo, Satsuma agrees to pay the indemnities and the two sides become allies.)

**Summer 1863**  
British legation in Edo attacked and burned down by Chōshū loyalists.

**Aug. 1863**  
Chōshū loyalists are driven out of the imperial court in Kyōto by supporters of the bakufu - including Tokugawa, Aizu, Tosa, and Satsuma troops. Chōshū and Tosa loyalists return to their respective han, and Chōshū is branded as an Enemy of the Throne.

**Sept. 1863**  
Thinking they have regained the upper hand with the loyalists, the bakufu tries to reimpose the sankin kotai system but the order is ignored by all daimyōs.

**1864 - 1865**  
Genji Era.

**Early 1864**  
The shōgun returns to Kyōto, conceding even more to the emperor. Included this time is agreement that henceforth daimyōs succeeding to power in their han will receive investiture from the emperor and not the shōgun. He also agreed to accept the daimyō of Satsuma, Tosa, Echizen, and Aizu as ‘advisors.’

**July 1864**  
Tokugawa and bakufu supporters attack and defeat Chōshū loyalists as they attempt to retake power in Kyōto. Bakufu forces win, but not easily.

**Sept. 1864**  
British, French, Dutch, and US ships attack and destroy Chōshū batteries along the coast of the Shimonoseki Straits for their continued firing on western ships. This opens the Straits for the first time in over a year: (The foreigners had secret bakufu support - the bakufu loaned maps of the area to the French).

**Nov. 1864**  
The bakufu masses over 100,000 troops (financed by the French and led by Saigo Takamori of Satsuma) along the borders of Chōshū in preparation for a final attack and defeat. Saigo convinces Chōshū conservative leaders to accept bakufu demands and when they capitulate the conflict is avoided. However, Chōshū loyalists, angered at the capitulation, attack Chōshū government offices in Shimonoseki.

**1865 - 1868**  
Keio Era.

**1865**  
A Catholic Church is reestablished in Nagasaki. In time about 20,000 Japanese who had been "hidden" Christians come out and admit that they had secretly kept the faith.

**Jan./Feb. 1865**  
Chōshū loyalists (led by Takasugi Shinsaku and Katsura Kogoro) retake control of Chōshū han.

**May 1865**  
The shōgun goes to Kyōto to organize another military expedition against Chōshū Han.

**Summer 1865**  
Satsuma leaders secretly assist Chōshū to buy weapons from foreign arms traders in Nagasaki as Chōshū prepares for the upcoming invasion by Tokugawa lead forces.

**Sept. 1865**  
Nine foreign warships (5 British, 3 French, 1 Dutch) steam into Ōsaka harbor and demand that the bakufu pay (by the end of 1866) compensation for Chōshū attacks on their warships in Shimonoseki Straits. The bakufu is told that the amount demanded will be reduced if the ports of Osaka and Kobe are opened to foreign traders and if the bakufu obtains Imperial sanction of all previously signed commercial treaties.

**Oct. 1865**  
Imperial ratification is granted for all treaties with foreign powers and for opening the country to foreign trading, in particular the ports of Kobe and Ōsaka. (While the emperor ratifies the agreement in public to appease foreign demands, he privately tells the bakufu not to actually open the ports close to Kyōto.)
Edo Period (1603 - 1868)

Jan. 1866 Chōshû and Satsuma enter into a secret agreement of mutual support - with Satsuma promising not to participate in the attack on Chōshû that the bakufu was in the process of planning. Satsuma also agrees to assist Chōshû in buying weapons through foreign traders in Nagasaki. (The agreement is negotiated by Okubo Toshimichi and Saigo Takamori on the Satsuma side and Kido Koin on the Chōshû side)

Jan. 1866 The bakufu convinces the emperor to issue and edict calling for the Daimyō of Chōshû to retire, for lands to be surrendered to the bakufu, and for a reduction in income to the daimyō. Chōshû blatantly ignores the edict.

June 1866 A second bakufu military expedition is launched against Chōshû. But, with Satsuma not involved, and the modern arms Chōshû had purchased from abroad, this time the Tokugawa forces are beaten easily.

Aug. 17, 1866 Iemochi dies in Osaka. Yoshinobu is urged by the bakufu to become the next Shōgun. He changes his name from Hitsubashi Keiki to Tokugawa and accepts the title of Head of the House of Tokugawa, but refuses to accept the position of Shōgun.

1867 The government once again cracks down on the growing Christian movement and arrests many of its leading members.

Jan. 1867 Yoshinobu succumbs to pressure and becomes the 15th, and last, Shōgun. He accepts the post reluctantly, but once in office attempts to reform the bakufu under French guidance. (Note that the British are supporting Chōshû and Satsuma).

Feb. 3, 1867 Death of Emperor Kōmei. Enthronement of Matsuhiito (Meiji) at age fifteen.

(May 1867 With continued demands from foreigners, the bakufu convinces the emperor to sanction the opening of the port of Kobe. In the meantime, Satsuma and Chōshû begin the process of convincing the emperor to issue two decrees: one pardoning Chōshû and withdrawing an earlier decree branding them as enemies of the throne, and another calling for an army led by Satsuma and Chōshû to overthrow the bakufu.

June 1867 Yoshinobu goes to Nijo palace in Kyōto to meet with the daimyōs of Satsuma (Shimazu), Tosa (Yamanouchi), Echizen (Shungaku), and Uwajima (Date) to discuss the current political situation. The meeting immediately falls apart when Tosa leaves upon suspecting that Satsuma and Chōshû are imminently close to declaring war on the bakufu and attacking. (While Tosa is rapidly being pulled into the loyalist camp and is very near to officially and openly joining the Satsuma-Chōshû alliance against the bakufu, the daimyō of Tosa still officially supports the bakufu because leyasu had made his ancestors the daimyō in Tosa.)

July 1867 Two British sailors are killed in Nagasaki and Tosa samurai are suspected. Although tempers on all sides flare, a lengthy investigation later proves that it was a samurai from Fukuoka. (This could have been important because it could have given the British a reason to attack Tosa, and this would have weakened them in the now looming battle with the bakufu.)

Sept. 1867 Satsuma begins amassing troops in and around Kyōto while Chōshû, and other supporting hans, begin the same in their own territories.

Oct. 1867 Tosa representatives present a petition to the bakufu. Under the political compromise (known as the Tosa Memorial), the shōgun’s political authority will be returned to the emperor while the head of the Tokugawa house (Yoshinobu) retains Tokugawa lands and continues to serve as Prime Minister.

Nov. 8, 1867 Realizing that he has no alternative [Satsuma and Chōshû have now obtained an imperial decree pardoning Chōshû and calling for the ouster of the Tokugawa bakufu], Yoshinobu, from his offices in Nijō palace in Kyōto, resigns as Shōgun.
Edo Period (1603 - 1868)

Jan. 3, 1868 Forces from Satsuma, Echizen, Owari, Tosa, & Aki do not accept the Tosa Memorial and seize the Nijo palace. The emperor is induced to abolish the Shōgunate and Tokugawa is reduced to the level of daimyō. Administration of the country is returned to the emperor with a provisional government formed by representatives of Satsuma, Tosa, Aki, Owari, and Echizen - but no Tokugawa. (The Meiji Restoration)

The provisional government consists of a Supreme Controller and Junior and Senior Councils of State.

Jan. 25, 1868 Yoshinobu accepts the Meiji Restoration and withdraws his troops to Ōsaka. Late in the month, however, other Tokugawa forces attempt to retake Kyōto but are defeated by Satsuma, Chōshū, & Tosa forces - the battle of Toba-Fushimi. (Northern Tokugawa forces hold out longer, and the Tokugawa navy holds out in Hokkaidō until 1869, but this battle effectively ends Tokugawa rule)
Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)

1868

Resumption of government with Emperor as Head of State.

April 6, 1868

The five-article Charter Oath is announced and taken by the Emperor. This could be called modern Japan’s first constitution as it lays out the new Meiji government’s basic (and very vague) policies. The Junior and Senior Councils of State are modified.

April 1868

The emperor receives foreign representatives in audience.

June 1868

The Councils of State are completely revamped. The supreme governing body is now a single Council of State, consisting of an Upper and Lower House for deliberations, an Office of the President of the Council, and five Departments of State (Shintō Religion, War, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Justice). The system is not modeled on any western system, but rather on the administrative system established in Japan in 701, with most of the same offices and titles. However, the entire system undergoes several modifications until 1871, and then a final modification in 1889.

Sept. 1868

Edo is renamed Tōkyō (Eastern Capital) and established as the capital city.

1868 - 1870

The Meiji government arrests over 3000 christians in Kyūshū in their attempt to stamp out Christianity and exalt Shintō.

March 1869

The emperor is moved to Tōkyō and the city is made the seat of government.

The daimyō of Satsuma, Chōshū, Tosa, and Hizen return their domains to the Emperor. Most of the other daimyō do likewise by the end of the year. To encourage this surrender, the government grants the daimyō one-half of their revenue.

July 1869

Daimyō who have returned their domains to the emperor are appointed as governors of the domains they once ruled.

1869

Yokoi Shonan is assassinated.

1869

The status of the Department of Shintō is elevated so that it supersedes the status of the Council of State. All Buddhist priest who had been associated with Shintō shrines are either returned to secular life or reinstalled as Shintō priests.

1869

A shrine (Tōkyō Shōkonsha) is built in Tōkyō for the repose of those who had died for the royalist cause during the Meiji Restoration.

Feb. 3, 1870

The government issues the Proclamation of the Great Doctrine which restores the ‘way of the kami’ (kannagara) as the guiding principle of the nation. Every Japanese is now required to register at the shrine of the local kami of his residence.

1870

A conscription law is introduced in order to build a national army. (But it didn’t take effect for a few more years with the first army taking shape in 1873)

1870

Japan borrows about one million pounds sterling from Great Britian in order to build her first railway.

1871

The Council of State is abolished and divided into the Central Board (policy making), Left Board (advisory board), and Right Board (administration).

1871

A Ministry of Education is established which encourages Western learning and begins the process of building a national system of education.

1871

A new currency system is adopted with the Yen established as the main monetary unit. It’s value for the next few decades varies between a half and one U.S. dollar.

1871

The Department of Shintō is replaced with the Shintō Ministry. All Buddhist ceremonies that had been performed in the imperial household are abolished. All Buddhist temple lands are confiscated by the state and a great many temples nationwide are simply destroyed.
Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)

Aug. 29, 1871  The government (finally feeling strong enough to enforce it) suddenly announces that it is abolishing all domains and converting them into three urban and seventy-two rural prefectures. New governors are appointed for each prefecture and all former Daimyō are ordered to leave their estates and move to the capital with their families. In return they receive pensions of one-tenth of the han’s income and the government takes over some of their debt.

1871  The government removes old class distinctions and divides people into new classes. Equal opportunity is declared for all, but while all had an equal opportunity to rise, all are not treated equally under the law.

Nov. 1871  In an attempt to improve governmental finances, a mission, headed by Iwakura (a former court noble) and including Okubo (of Satsuma), Kido (of Chōshū), and Itó (also of Chōshū), is sent to the U.S. and then Europe asking for a revision of the unequal trade treaties. It was unsuccessful.

1872  Statistical Interlude:
Population - 34,806,000; Avg. Life Expectancy - 42.8 (m), 44.3(f); Real GNP - ??

1872  The government revokes all ranks and privileges previously bestowed on the Buddhist hierarchy. All Shintō functionaries (and some Buddhist priests) are made ‘government priests’ and divided into fourteen ranks. The cultic aspects of Shintō are assigned to the government Board of Ceremonies. The religious aspects are assigned to the Department of Religion and Education.

1872  Japan asserts administrative control over the Ryūkyū Islands.

1872  The government authorizes the establishment of national banks.

1872  The government issues the Education Act calling for universal, state controlled, education (compulsory at the primary school level) and no illiteracy. The education provided in this system was to be organized along western lines.

1872  Baseball is introduced to Japan.

1872  The first Japanese Protestant Church is established in Yokohama.

1872  The first railway is constructed in Japan. It connects Tōkyō and Yokohama and is 18 miles long.

Jan. 1, 1873  The western calendar system is adopted with the 3rd day of the 12th month of 1872 set as January 1, 1873.

Jan. 1873  The government declares universal conscription (as per an 1871 law) and raises the first national army from men of former Satsuma, Chōshū, and Tosa, thus ending the samurai’s lock on military power.

July 1873  The Land Tax is shifted from a percentage of yield to a fixed money tax allowing the national government to predict its revenue for budgeting purposes. At the same time, ownership of the land is shifted to the person who had been paying the land tax. This effectively took ownership of the land away from the ex-Daimyō and gave it to the farmers themselves.

1873  Japan places the Bonin Islands under the control of the Navy.

1873  The ban on Christianity is officially lifted although many Buddhists, Shintōists and Confucianists allied in an all-out anti-Christian campaign.

1873  Compulsory registration at the local Shintō shrine is terminated after vigorous criticism from many.

1873  A second loan (and the last foreign loan for 25 years) is raised from Great Britain in order to release funds to pay the pensions due to ex-Daimyō and retainers.

Sept. 1873  When the Iwakura Mission returns to Japan, they find that Saigo Takamori, Itagaki Taisuke (of Tosa), Goto, and others are making plans to invade Korea and Formosa. The plan to invade Korea is overruled by Iwakura, Kido, and Okubo. Saigo and Itagaki leave the government in protest (along with Goto, Eto, and others). The plan to invade Formosa is not overruled and Kido resigns in protest for that.
Late 1873  Itagaki forms the first political association in Japan. Headquartered in Tōkyō, the Aikoku-kōtō (Public Society of Patriots) was not a political party, but it was the first organized political group and opposed the government. At the same time he establishes a political academy/training school back in Tosa called the Risshisha (Society of Independent Men or Society of Freethinkers). Membership was limited to former samurai.

Jan. 1874  An unsuccessful assassination attempt is made against Iwakura for his role in reducing the status and income of the samurai.

Jan. 1874  Itagaki, Goto, Eto, and others present a memorial to the government demanding the early establishment of a representative assembly. They also launch a public campaign. While it doesn't come about, a compromise is attempted and Itagaki rejoins the government - only to leave again after a short while.

1874  Itagaki returns to Tosa and founds the “Freedom and People's Rights” movement (Jiyu Minken Undo) and the Aikok Koto (Public Party of Patriots).

1874  All local police departments brought under control of central Ministry of Home Affairs.

May 1874  Government troops put down uprising in Saga (Saga Rebellion).

May 1874  An expeditionary force is sent to Formosa [now Taiwan] in retaliation for Japanese fishermen from the Ryūkyū Islands [now Okinawa] that had been killed. In fact, many in Japan had been looking for a reason to justify an invasion. To forestall problems with China, Okubo himself goes to Peking for talks with the Chinese government. China agrees to pay an indemnity and the Japanese forces are withdrawn from the island.

1875  In an attempt to, in part, appease Itagaki, the government is reorganized. The Council of State is retained and the Senate and a Supreme Court are added. In fact, though, all power continues to reside solely in the Council of State.

1875  A Press Law is enacted which implements censorship and severely restricts political criticism of the government. Japan trades Sakhalin Island to the Russians for the Kuril Islands [still a hotly contested political issue today].

1875  Japan uses Perry-style gunboat diplomacy to try and open trade with Korea. A naval ship is sent to the waters off Hanghwa Island, on the west side of Korea, knowing that the Koreans would fire on it [the Unyō Incident]. When they did, Japan protested an attack on a peaceful mission.

1875  In an attempt to discourage the traditional practice of married women dying their teeth black, the empress gives up the custom.

1876  Government cancels ex-daimyo stipends. The daimyo paid off with government bonds (which, of course, would have no value if the central government fails).

1876  Samurai are denied the right to wear swords.

Feb. 1876  Japan sends more warships and troops to Kanghwa Island in Korea in order to force the Koreans into trade agreements. The two countries sign the Treaty of Kanghwa, ostensibly to protect Japanese fishing boats in Korean waters, but in reality it was to weaken China's power and control over the country. It had many provisions typical of an unequal treaty, and gave Japanese much leeway in Korea. A revision a few months later granted even more economic privileges to Japanese merchants now in Korea.

Late 1876  Itagaki leaves the government again as it is clear that neither the Senate nor the Assembly of Provincial Officials will ever be given any power. The Council of State has no intention of relinquishing any decision making.

1877  The Home Ministry is assigned to administer religious affairs.

1877  Japan's second railway line is completed, connecting Osaka and Kyoto.

Jan. 1877  Close to 80,000 samurai in Satsuma, led by Saigo Takamori, begin a rebellion uprising (Seinan Rebellion, Seinan no eki). The government puts it down after almost nine months of fighting and Saigo commits seppuku. The important point coming from the government victory is that a national army consisting of non-samurai could defeat the elite samurai from Satsuma. The government no longer need fear an armed samurai uprising.
**Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)**

June, 1877 The Rishihisha sends a memorial to the emperor asking for the creation of an elective assembly, accusing the government of usurping the emperor’s authority, and interfering with the emperor’s announced plan of granting political rights to the people. The memorial is rejected and several members of the Rishihisha are arrested.

1877 Kido dies

May 1878 Okubo is assassinated in revenge for Saigo’s death.

1879 Tōkyō Shōkonsha is renamed to Yasukuni Jinja.

1879 Prefectural Assemblies are instituted and replace the previous (and discredited) Assembly of Provincial Officials. While they still hold no real power, they do teach local authorities needed administrative skills. Okinawa is incorporated into the state and becomes Okinawa Prefecture.

1879 Military General Staff is created. It reports to the emperor (and hence the genro) and not to the civilian government.

1879 In response to a decade of growing dissatisfaction with a centralized, state controlled, educational system, the Education Act is revised. The new ordinance lays out education principles in general terms but leaves it to local prefectures to apply the them according to local rules and decisions.

1880 The first translation of the New Testament into Japanese is completed.

1880 Village, Town, and City Ward Assemblies are instituted.

1881 Ōkuma calls for a full and immediate implementation of the British Parliamentary system. Others in government favor a more gradual approach and reject the proposal.

1881 Ōkuma is expelled from the government after his criticism of government plan to sell off holdings in Hokkaido Colonization Commission. At the same time, the government publicly announces a plan to draft a constitution and to form a national assembly by 1890 in order to quell public outrage. (Now free from government duties, Ōkuma founds a college that at a later time becomes Waseda University)

1881 Government opponents begin forming national political parties in anticipation of the establishment of a national assembly. The Liberal Party (Jiyūtō) is established with Itagaki as president. The Constitutional Progressive Party (Rikken Kaishintō) is formed with Ōkuma as president.

1881 A national political party called the Constitutional Imperial Party (Rikken Teiseitō) is formed by pro-government supporters. However, it never became successful due to lack of government support.

1881 As Korea begins to open to the west, they begin to reform their military and bring a Japanese military officer over to train them.

1882 The Law of Public Meetings is enacted restricting political gatherings and assemblies.

1882 The Bank of Japan (modeled on the Belgian Central Bank) is created as the nation’s central bank.

1882 The government divides Shintō into ‘State Shintō,’ which is allowed to use the title jinja for it’s shrines, and ‘Sect Shintō,’ which must use the title kyōkai (church) or kyōha (sect). In addition, the former received state privileges and financial subsidies while the later didn’t. Also, Sect Shintō establishments were forbidden from using torii.

April 1882 In preparation for writing a draft constitution, Ōtō, with a large staff, goes overseas to tour several constitutional systems of government - spending most of his time in Germany studying the system of Bismark.

July 1882 During a military uprising in Korea, the Japanese training officer to the Korean military is murdered and the Japanese legation building is burnt to the ground, although the Japanese Minister escapes.

Aug. 1882 The Japanese Minister to Korea returns to Seoul with warships and troops. While his intention was to demand reparations for the attack on the Japanese legation and the death of the Japanese training officer, these efforts were stymied when he found that Chinese troops had also arrived, but with superior numbers. In the end, a new treaty was signed, which gave Japan the right to station troops in Seoul to guard the Japanese legation.
Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)

1883 Iwakura dies, thus ending rule by the original group of Meiji leaders. Government now passes to the younger generation.

Early 1884 Itō returns to Japan. A special bureau is formed to draw up the constitution. It is housed under the Ministry of the Imperial Household instead of the Home Ministry to emphasize that the new constitution will be a present from the emperor himself.

1884 Itagaki dissolves the Liberal Party to quell the rising radicalism of its members. Ōkuma and his followers leave the Reform Party but the party survives for a while without them. With the loss of these opposition voices, conservative forces in the government have their way. They also begin the process of building the emperor up as the absolute, supreme ruler of the state, "by whom all rights were granted and to whom all duties were owed." (Sansom)

1884 A Peerage is created of ex-Daimyo, court aristocracy, and government leaders to counter popular assembly.

Late 1884 During a coup d'état in Korea, the Japanese Minister reneges on a promise of military support he had made to support the plotters. Chinese troops put down the coup within three days. Most of the Japanese legation escaped to Japan (with some of the plotters), while others stayed, burned the legation, and fought the Chinese.

April 1885 Itō Hirobumi goes to China to discuss a compromise settlement in Korea. In the Convention of Tientsin, Japan and China come to an agreement where both sides agree to remove their troops from Korea within four months. This eases some of the tension between the two countries, but opens the way for right-wing nationalists in Japan to begin pushing for expansion throughout Asia. At the same time, China intensifies its interventions in Korea by appointing a regent in Seoul to ensure that Chinese interests are strengthened.

Dec. 1885 The Council of State is abolished in a major government reorganization. A modern cabinet system is adopted (but never written into the constitution) to be presided over by a Prime Minister. The public continues to be told that the emperor is supreme and rules with the advice of the Prime Minister. This effectively quells almost all public criticism of the government as it would be construed as criticism of the emperor.

Dec. 1885 A Civil Service system is established with entrance into the system decided by examination. Like the new cabinet system, it is based on a German model.

Dec. 1885 Itō Hirobumi becomes the first Prime Minister.

1886 The Education Act is revised yet again, this time bringing the education system back under state control. The new (1885) Minister of Education, Mori Arinori, declares that education is not for the sake of the pupils, but for the sake of the country.

Mid-1887 The public finds out that the Foreign Minister is preparing to sign new treaty agreements with foreign representatives in Tokyo that, while going a ways toward abolishing the extraterritorial rights granted foreigners in the unequal treaties, still allowed foreign judges to sit on trials where foreign nationals were involved. The public raises such a loud outcry that the Foreign Minister is forced to resign and all negotiations are canceled.

Dec. 25, 1887 Anti-foreign sentiment is becoming extreme and secret societies are being formed. There is a lot of violence against officials. In response, the government imposes the Peace Preservation Ordinance (Hoan Jōrei) which basically puts Tokyo under martial law. Ōkuma is brought back to the cabinet as Foreign Minister to attempt new negotiations with foreigners, but his suggestions are violently rejected and this ends all negotiations.

1888 Final prefectural reorganization. The country is divided into 43 Ken, 3 Fu, and 1 Tō.

1888 City Assemblies are instituted.

April 1888 Kuroda Kyotaka becomes Prime Minister. (Itō resigned to devote time to continue drafting the constitution).

1889 Statistical Interlude:
Population - 40,000,000
**Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)**

**Feb. 11, 1889** The constitution is promulgated. It is influenced more by the German constitution than the American, French, or English examples and, therefore, stresses national rights over popular rights. A House of Representatives is created. A House of Peers is created from the previously created Peerage. On paper, the emperor is given broad political powers with the Prime Minister responsible to Emperor, not the Diet. (But, the Genro still controlled the emperor; so still controlled the government).

**Feb. 1889** On the day the constitution is promulgated, the Minister of Education is assassinated for his alleged unpatriotic political views.

**Dec. 1889** Yamagata Aritomo becomes Prime Minister.

**1890's** From the book Korea Old and New: A History: "...by the early to mid-1890s Japanese economic activity had reached astonishing levels. Japanese commercial establishments could be found in overwhelming numbers in each of the open ports... in 1896, 210 of 258 such businesses were Japanese run. Japan also dominated the carrying trade in Korean waters ... Thus, 72% of the vessels and over 78% of the gross tonnage came in under the Japanese flag. Japan's proportion of Korea's foreign trade volume loomed correspondingly large — over 90% of exports went to Japan while more than 50% of imports came from Japan."

**July 1890** The first Diet is elected (July) and convened (November). Virtually all of the new Diet members opposed the government and ended up organized as: 60 members in Goto's Daidō (General Agreement Group) and 50 members in each of the two major parties: the Liberal Party (Jiyûtō - Itagaki supporters) and the Reform Party (Kaishintō - ōkuma supporters). The remaining 140 members are all independents with nothing in common.

**1890** The Imperial Rescript on Education is issued reinserting Shintō and Confucian morality into the education system - but saying virtually nothing about education.

**1890** ōkuma (the Minister of Foreign Affairs at this time) is severely injured in a bomb explosion

**1891** A commercial legal code, with strong German elements, goes into effect.

**May 6, 1891** Matsukata Masayoshi becomes Prime Minister.

**Oct. 28, 1891** An earthquake rocks Gifu Prefecture killing or injuring over 25,000 people.

**Dec. 1891** The first Diet is dissolved after the government is unable to get the budget passed, but the administration remains in power (although disliked throughout the country for its strong arm tactics).

**Feb. 1892** Following the dissolution of the Diet, new elections are held and a new Diet is formed. The government, however, still fails to get a majority.

**Aug. 8, 1892** Unable to work with the Diet, the cabinet resigns. Itō Hirobumi becomes Prime Minister again in an attempt to restore order.

**Nov. 1892** A new Diet session opens but the battle between it and the government continues.

**Feb. 1893** The Lower House submits an address to the emperor accusing the cabinet of misconduct. The cabinet, gets the emperor to issue a message which tells both sides to work together, but is, in effect, a rebuke of the Diet

**Dec. 1893** After another Diet appeal to the emperor, and another negative imperial reply issued on behalf of the cabinet, the Diet is dissolved.

**1893** A civil legal code, with strong French elements, goes into effect. While it did recognize some individual rights, the code still makes the household the legal unit. All Japanese are registered as either the head of a household or the subordinate to a head.

**March 1894** General elections are held

**March 1894** A religious group in Korea rebels against the Korean monarchy. Both Japan and China send troops to help put the rebellion down.
May 1894 A new Diet is assembled. It immediately begins proceedings to impeach the government, but an imperial order, in turn, immediately dissolves the Diet - all within three weeks of its sitting.

June 1894 With the rebellion over in Korea, China calls for all foreign troops to leave the country. Itô refuses and sends China a list of proposals for reforms (to be jointly supervised) in Korea instead. China rejects the list of proposals and begins preparing for a possible war.

July 16, 1894 A new treaty is signed with Great Britain. In this treaty, it is agreed that all extraterritoriality rights in Japan will be eradicated by 1899.

July 23, 1894 Japanese forces in Seoul seize the Korean king and in his place install a pro-Japanese puppet cabinet. This cabinet then demands the withdrawal of all Chinese forces from the country.

Aug. 1, 1894 War begins between China and Japan in Korea. To the surprise of all, Japan trounces the Chinese army and navy.

Oct. 1894 Chinese forces have now been completely driven out of Korean Territory.

March 1895 The Chinese send out peace overtures to the Japanese.

April 17, 1895 The Treaty of Shimonoseki (also called the Treaty of Tientsin?) ends the Sino-Japanese War. China pays Japan an indemnity and cedes Formosa (now Taiwan), the Pescadores Islands, and the Liaotung Peninsula to Japan. They also recognize the independence of Korea and give Japan the same "unequal" treaty rights in China as given other Western powers. Japan begins to reform the Korean government to increase their power there.

April 23, 1895 Russia, France, and Germany demand that Japan return the Liaotung Peninsula to Chinese control. Japan does so (rather unhappily) in exchange for an additional 4.9 pounds of indemnity. (But it is worth noting that just 3 years later these same countries that demanded Japan give back the Liaotung Peninsula, themselves seized pieces of Chinese territory - with Russia taking the Liaotung Peninsula!)

Oct. 1895 Because the Korean Queen was aligning herself with the Russians in an attempt to drive the Japanese out of Korea, the Japanese Minister in Korea has the queen assassinated. He is brought back to Japan and tried, but found not guilty due to insufficient evidence. Armed groups form throughout Korea to fight Japanese troops and pro-Japan officials.

Feb. 1896 Pro-Russian and pro-American government officials in Korea smuggle the King and Crown Prince out of the palace and, thus, out from under control of Japanese officials. Pro-Japan ministers are murdered and Japanese advisors are dismissed. A pro-Russian government is formed. This brings a temporary end to Japan's ability to control events in Korea.

1896 The Reform Party (Kaishintô) and other minor parties merge to form the Progressive Party (Shimpotô).

Sept. 1896 Matsukata Masayoshi becomes Prime Minister again.

Dec. 28, 1897 Matsukata Masayoshi resigns the prime ministership after dissolving the Diet when they passed a motion of non-confidence in him and his cabinet.

Jan. 12, 1898 Itô Hirobumi becomes Prime Minister for a third time.

Early 1898 Realizing that it was becoming impossible for the genro to rule without Diet support, Itô suggests to Yamagata and Matsukata that he form his own parliamentary party. Yamagata and Matsukata, with the support of the Emperor, refuse.

1898 A government order forbids teachers and priests of Sect Shintô establishments from teaching within the compounds of State Shintô shrines.

1898 The Liberal Party (Jiyutô) and Progressive Party (Shimpotô) merge to form the Constitutional Party (Kenseitô). (Now, instead of two parties, there was one party in two factions).

June 1898 Ōkuma Shigenobu becomes Prime Minister, with Itagaki selected as Home Minister. (This is Japan's first experiment in party governments.)
Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)

Nov. 8, 1898 Yamagata Aritomo becomes Prime Minister again after it becomes clear that the parties of Ōkuma and Itagaki could not work together. In addition, both the army and navy decided that they could not work with these two. The new government is openly anti-party and determined to restore the semblance of imperial rule.

1899 The Western powers give up their extraterritoriality privileges in return for granting foreigners the right to purchase property outside the old treaty settlements. The Western powers also started giving up control of tariffs and Japan was able to start increasing its import tariffs.

1899 Yamagata makes a trade with the opposition. He gets: a law that all bureaucrats up through level of vice-minister must be professional bureaucrats who entered the system by taking an entrance exam, a raise in the land tax, and large electoral districts with multiple candidates per district so that candidates from the same party must run against each other. He gives: an increased number of Diet seats, the secret ballot, and a lowering of the tax qualification to be eligible to vote.

1900 A Bureau of Shrines and a Bureau of Religion are established inside the Home Ministry.

1900 An Imperial ordinance is issued stipulating that only active military officers can hold the posts of Naval Minister and War Minister; thus giving the military a voice in political issues and the ability to veto cabinets.

June 1900 The Boxers, a Chinese secret society, begin an uprising against foreigners and Chinese Christians. The Russians take advantage of the situation by sending troops into Manchuria.

Summer 1900 Japan sends troops to support an international force that goes to China to put down the Boxer Rebellion.

Sept. 26, 1900 Increasingly worried about Japan's growing rivalry with Russia over control of Korea, the Japanese foreign minister seeks, and obtains, a pledge of neutrality from Germany in the case Japan and Russia would go to war. He then petitions the emperor for permission to declare war on Russia immediately. Having done all of this without informing Yamagata, Yamagata resigns the prime ministership in disgust when he finds out about it.

Oct. 1900 Itō Hirobumi forms the Seiyukai political party (by merging his followers with those of Itagaki) and becomes its party president. Leaders of Kenseitō dissolve their party. Some members join the Seiyukai while other members form the Kenseihontō (True Kensei Party).

Oct. 19, 1900 Itō Hirobumi becomes Prime Minister.

April 29, 1901 (Future Emperor) Hirohito is born. (He is the first emperor since 1758 not born of an Imperial concubine)

May 1901 Itō resigns the prime ministership for his last time - thus ending the Genro domination of the cabinet and control of the nation. Itō retains, however the presidency of the Seiyukai.

June 1901 (General) Katsura Taro, a Yamagata protégé, becomes Prime Minister.

1901 The first Social Democratic Party is formed. Five of the six founders are Christians.

Jan. 1902 Japan and Britain sign the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. In it, Britain acknowledges Japan's interest in Korea in return for Japan's acknowledgement of Britain's interests in China. In addition, it guarantees that Britain will remain neutral unless Japan is attacked by more than one country.

Early 1903 Japan demands that Russia remove its troops from Manchuria. Russia pledges to do so, but never does.

July 1903 Russian troops move south of the Yalu River and into northern Korea. When there, they buy land, set up permanent housing, and open a trading port. The Japanese and Russian governments begin negotiations to lower the growing tensions between the countries.

1903 Itō resigns the presidency of the Seiyukai.

1903 The Bureau of Religion in the Home Ministry is transferred to the Department of Education.

1904 A government order forbids teachers and ministers of Sect Shintō establishments from participating in celebrations of State Shintō rituals.
## Meiji Period (1868 - 1912)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 5, 1904</td>
<td>As the rivalry between Japan and Russia grows over Korea, Russia refuses demands to withdraw its troops form Manchuria along Korea's northern border. In response, Japan severs diplomatic relations with Russia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 8, 1904</td>
<td>Japan carries out a successful surprise attack on Russia's Far Eastern Fleet based at Port Arthur. At the same time, Japan sends troops to Seoul and forces the Korean government to sign an agreement giving Japan numerous concessions in the country, including the stationing of troops at strategic places throughout the country.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 10, 1904</td>
<td>Japan declares war on Russia over the issue of control of Korea and control of the Liaotung peninsula in China.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1904</td>
<td>Japan forces the Korean government to sign further agreements that installs Japanese officials in numerous Korean ministries, including finance and foreign affairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 27-28, 1905</td>
<td>Japan defeats the Russian navy in the Battle of Tsushima.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31, 1905</td>
<td>Japan asks President Roosevelt to act as mediator in ending the war with Russia.</td>
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<td>July 1905</td>
<td>The US and Japan sign a secret agreement (the Taft-Katsura Agreement), in which Japan agrees to acknowledge the US's control of the Philippines in return for US recognition of Japan's control over Korea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1905</td>
<td>Britain and Japan renegotiate the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and Britain acknowledges Japan's control of Korea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 5, 1905</td>
<td>Japan and Russia sign a peace treaty in the US city of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Japan wins control of the Liaotung Peninsula, control of Korea, and control over the southern half of Sakhalin Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1905</td>
<td>Japan sends Itō Hirobumi to Korea to begin the process of making Korea a protectorate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 17, 1905</td>
<td>When the Korean Prime Minister refuses to sign a protectorate treaty, Japanese troops go to the foreign ministry, find the official stamp, and then stamp the treaty themselves. This gives Japanese vast control of all aspects of Korean government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1906</td>
<td>Saionji Kimmochi (an Itō protégé) becomes Prime Minister after Katsura resigns due to the unpopularity of the terms of the peace treaty with Russia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1, 1907</td>
<td>Japan forces Korea to sign an amended agreement which gives them complete control. Japanese are installed in all government ministries. Japan then dissolves the entire Korean military, leaving them completely defenseless.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1908</td>
<td>Katsura Taro becomes Prime Minister again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>The Kenseihontō merges with several smaller parties to form the Constitutional Nationalist Party (Rikken Kokumintō).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Itō is assassinated by a Korean while in Manchuria for his role in making Korea a protectorate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 22, 1910</td>
<td>Japan annexes Korea and imposes military rule.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Tariffs imposed by the &quot;unequal treaties&quot; are abolished.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1911</td>
<td>Saionji Kimmochi becomes Prime Minister again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12, 1912</td>
<td>Emperor Meiji dies of cancer at the age of fifty-nine. Enthronement of Yoshihito (Taishō).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taishō Period (1912 - 1926)

Dec. 1912 The army, unhappy with the current military budget, withdraws its minister from the cabinet forcing Saionji to resign as prime minister.

Katsura Taro becomes prime minister and forms a new political party called the Constitutional Association of Friends (Rikken Doshikai).

Feb. 1913 Katsura resigns as Prime Minister just before a vote of no-confidence in the Diet over defense spending. (Admiral) Yamamoto Gonnohoe becomes Prime Minister.

April 1914 Ōkuma Shigenobu becomes Prime Minister after the Yamamoto cabinet falls due to a scandal concerning navy finances.

1914 World War I breaks out and Japan enters on the side of the allies in accordance with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, although they play a very minor role. They do, however, seize Germany's holdings in China and the North Pacific.

1915 Inoue dies.

Jan. 18, 1915 Japan presents a list of 21 demands to China, in effect demanding China's acceptance of Japan's takeover of German rights in China and the acceptance of Japan's expanding economic position in China.

March 1915 Ōkuma dissolves the Diet over their opposition to his policies of expanding the military. During the following elections, Ōkuma becomes the first Prime Minister to actively campaign in elections. Doshikai, therefore, wins the majority of seats and Seiyūkai is weakened.

May 1916 China signs the list of Japanese demands, but refuses to sign the most controversial section on hiring Japanese advisors, buying arms from Japan, etc. In the end, Japan gains little other than animosity from these concessions.

Oct. 1916 Ōkuma resigns the prime ministership due to ill health and soon dies. (General) Terauchi Masatake becomes Prime Minister.

July 1918 Japan and the US send troops to Siberia to assist Czech troops trying to get to the Western front. While US troops only grow to 7,000 men, Japan eventually sent 72,000.

Aug. 1918 Riots break out throughout the country in protest of high rice prices. (Inflation became major problem as economy grew rapidly during WW1)

Sept. 1918 Hara Takashi becomes Prime Minister. As head of Seiyukai and not member of genro, his cabinet becomes first "party" government in Japan.

Jan. 1919 Japan participates in negotiations at Versailles at end of WW1. Japan wins concession of German territories in China and the Pacific but not statement of racial equality with West.

1919 According to Ernest Best, during and after WWI, the top 2% of Japanese society received 10% of her total income, while 78% of the population (the farmers and working class) lived on one-half of the national income.

1920 Depression hits and prices for many products drop 50% or more.

Dec. 1920 Socialist League Formed.

1921 Statistical Interlude:
Population - 56,666,000;
Avg. Life Expectancy - 42.1 (m), ??(f); Real GNP - ??

June 1921 Socialist League disbanded by the government.

Aug. 1921 Japan joins the US, Britain, France and other countries in Washington, D.C. to negotiate naval treaties and other issues. In Four Power Pacific Treaty, Japan agrees to limits on capital ships for US, Britain, and Japan in the ratio of 5:5:3 respectively. In Nine Power Treaty, all parties agree to continue Open Door policy in China.
## Taishō Period (1912 - 1926)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 4, 1921</td>
<td>Prime Minister Hara is assassinated by an ultra-rightist. Takahashi Korekiyo becomes the new Prime Minister. Hirohito (the future Emperor Shōwa) becomes regent for the ailing Emperor Taishō and becomes Emperor in all but title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 1922</td>
<td>Yamagata Aritomo dies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1922</td>
<td>(Admiral) Kato Tomosaburo becomes Prime Minister.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Under considerable foreign pressure, Japan removes troops from Siberia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1922</td>
<td>The Japanese Communist Party (Nihon Kyōsantō) secretly established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1923</td>
<td>Prime Minister Kato dies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1, 1923</td>
<td>A severe earthquake strikes Tōkyō, Yokohama, and much of the surrounding area.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 106,000 people die or are missing. Over 500,000 are injured and 694,000 houses are destroyed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2, 1923</td>
<td>(Admiral) Yamamoto Gonnohyoe becomes Prime Minister again.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government arrests Socialist and Communist Party leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7, 1923</td>
<td>An anarchist makes an assassination attempt on Hirohito. He survives, but the gunman is put to death. To accept responsibility, Yamamoto resigns the prime ministership the next day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1924</td>
<td>Kiyoura Keigo becomes Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>The U.S. Congress passes a bill excluding further immigration of Japanese, on no grounds other than their race. To his credit, the U.S. ambassador to Japan resigns in protest. Using this as one of their issues, Japanese nationalists began to gain prestige nationwide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 26, 1924</td>
<td>Hirohito marries Nagako-san.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1924</td>
<td>Kato Komei becomes Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>The Japanese Communist Party dissolved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1925</td>
<td>Japan and Russia establish diplomatic relations. Japan removes troops from Sakhalin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1925</td>
<td>Government implements Peace Preservation Law making it illegal to advocate either change in the national polity or the abolition of private property. Universal manhood suffrage enacted giving all men over 25 (with a few qualifications) the right to vote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1926</td>
<td>Wakatsuki Reijiro becomes Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>The Japan Communist Party reorganized underground. By the end of Taishō Period there were many parties, including: Labor-Farmer Party (Rodo Nomintō), Social Mass Party (Shakai Minshutō), Japan Labor-Farmer Party (Nihon Ronotō), and Japan Farmer Party (Nihon Nomintō)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 18, 1926</td>
<td>Death of Taishō and enthronement of Hirohito (Shōwa).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)

1927 A severe depression hits Japan. Many Japanese commercial banks collapse and it soon becomes a world depression.

April 1927 As the Kuomintang gradually consolidates its control over China, Japan begins to lose market share for its products. A combination of the zaibatsu, the bureaucrats, and the Seiyūkai forces an end to the Wakatsuki cabinet. Tanaka Giichi (an army general and president of the Seiyūkai) becomes Prime Minister. Japanese foreign policy formally switches from noninterference to intervention.

Japan sends troops to the Tientsin International Concession at Shantung to "protect" Japanese residents.

June 1927 Seiyuhonto and Kenseikai merge to form the Minseito Party (Minseito is financially supported by the Mitsubishi zaibatsu while the Seiyukai is supported by the Mitsui zaibatsu)

Dec. 1927 A Manchurian-based Japanese Kwangtung Army staff officer and activist dynamites a bridge on a Manchurian railway line. The damage is attributed to "bandits." This is repeated several more times over the next few months.

April 1928 Japanese troops from the Tientsin International Concession (sent to protect Japanese civilians) clash with Nationalist Chinese troops (under Chiang kai-shek) in Tsinan. (Japanese commanders claim more than 300 Japanese were massacred but, in fact, only 13 had died.)

May 8, 1928 Japan sends troop reinforcements to Tsinan and launches a major assault, killing at least a thousand Chinese soldiers and civilians.

March 1928 The government begins the long process of crushing Japan's communist party by arresting, torturing (and allowing to die) communist party members and sympathizers.

June 1, 1928 Japanese Kwangtung Army members assassinate Chang Tso-lin, the warlord of Manchuria, in an attempt to create a reason for Japanese troops to enter into his territory. The effort fails as the warlord's son assumes control, keeps peace, and sides with Chaing Kai-shek.

Nov. 14, 1930 Prime Minister Hamaguchi is shot and seriously injured by a rightwing nationalist for his part in ratifying the Naval Treaty. Shidehara acts as Prime Minister while Hamaguchi recovers. (Hamaguchi does return to office, but dies nine months later. The man who shot him spent three months out on bail, was sentenced to death, and then released three months later. He lived the rest of his life on a pension provided by nationalists.)

March 1931 A plot is hatched among key army staff officers and members of the Cherry Blossom Society to overthrow the government with a military coup and reinstall a government led by the emperor and run by the military. The coup is never carried out.
April 1931 Wakatsuki Reijiro of the Minseito becomes Prime Minister

Sept. 18, 1931 The Japanese Kwantung Army in China blows up a section of the South Manchurian Railroad in Mukden (The Mukden Incident) and claims that the Chinese had done it and then attacked the Japanese. This is then used to justify the subsequent Japanese takeover of Mukden and move into southern Manchuria.

Sept. 30, 1931 Japanese emmisaries go to Tientsin and tell Henri Pu'yi, the ex-emperor of China, that if he would go to Manchuria they were prepared to restore the Manchu dynasty there.

Oct. 1931 Another military coup is plotted, intending to overthrow the diet and to murder the entire cabinet. This time Prince Chichibu (Hirohito's brother) is implicated. Once again, the plot is never carried out and, even though it was discovered and a few people were arrested, it is hushed up by all.

Oct. 1931 The League of Nations calls for Japan to withdraw from Mukden and Manchuria but the Kwangtung Army ignores the demand and expands further.

Dec. 1931 Inukai Tsuyoshi of the Seiyukai becomes Prime Minister.

Jan. 1932 Japan sends troops to Shanghai to “protect” Japanese residents. The Japanese navy bombs the city. (The Shanghai Incident)

Feb. 7, 1932 The Finance Minister is assassinated by a member of the Ketsumeidan (Blood Brotherhood League). Thus begins a plan to assassinate political and business leaders in order to overthrow political order in Japan and return the country to an agrarian society led by the emperor.

March 5, 1932 Dan Takuma, a banker, is assassinated by a member of the Ketsumeidan outside his offices in Tòkyô.

March 1932 The Kwangtung Army establishes the independent state of Manchukuo in Manchuria. Former Chinese Emperor Pu Yi is made the head of state but in reality it is controlled by Japanese army and civilian officials.

May 15, 1932 Prime Minister Inukai is assassinated for attempting to curb army actions in Manchuria. This effectively ends party government and ends the chances of anyone trying to oppose the military. (All of the conspirators, including the gunmen, were out of jail by 1940, most were out by 1935. (Admiral) Saito Makoto becomes Prime Minister

Aug. 1932 The police discover and stop a plot to assassinate the Prime Minister.

Sept. 1932 The Japanese government recognizes the legitimacy of Manchukuo. (Germany and Italy are the only other two countries that recognize it in the future)

Sept. 1932 The police discover and stop a plot to assassinate late prime minister Wakasuki.

Nov. 1932 The police discover and stop a plot to assassinate Count Makino.

Early 1933 According to Joseph Grew, then US ambassador to Japan, by early 1933, maps of the Far East in Japanese primary schools showed (now) South Vietnam, Thailand, the Straits Settlements, the Philippines, and (now) Indonesia all under the Japanese flag.

Feb. 1933 The Kwangtung Army moves into Inner Mongolia and then towards the south. They obtain a treaty from China recognizing it's presence in, and control of, this territory.

March 1933 The Leaguer of Nations releases the Lytton Report stating that Manchukuo is not a legitimate state and call for the withdrawal of Japanese troops. It recommends the creation of an autonomous regime in Manchuria under Chinese sovereignty. Japan (on the army's insistence) withdraws from the League in protest.

July 1933 Police discover and stop a planned military coup similar to the planned March 1931 coup.

Dec. 1933 Empress Nagako finally gives birth to a male heir to the throne - Crown Prince Akihito. (This after three previous daughters and serious talk in Japan of once again using an Imperial concubine if necessary)
**Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)**

1934  
Japan releases the Amau Statement stating that it will take full responsibility for peace in East Asia and will exert a protectorate over China's relations with the Western powers. (Sometimes called the Asiatic Monroe Doctrine)

July 1934  
(Admiral) Okada Keisuke becomes Prime Minister

Sept. 1934  
A reorganization of local administration in Manchuria puts Manchukuo under the overall supervision of the Japanese military police.

Dec. 1934  
Japan abrogates the Washington and London Naval Treaties when the US and Great Britain refuse to accept parity with Japan.

March 1935  
Russia sells Chinese Eastern Railway in northern Manchuria to Japan, thus easing tensions and improving relations between the two countries.

Aug. 1935  
Kōdō-ha (Imperial Way Faction) army officer assassinates General Nagata (Tosei-ha member and head of the Military Affairs Bureau) for his role in removing General Mazaki as Director of Military Education and removing General Araki and other of his supporters from power.

Feb. 20, 1936  
In Diet elections, the more liberal Minseito wins 205 seats (out of 296 candidates) and the more right leaning Seiyukai wins only 174 seats (out of 336 candidates).

Feb. 26, 1936  
The army First Division, in order to overthrow the government and effect the Showa Restoration, mutiny and take over the Police Headquarters, the War Ministry, the General Staff Headquarters, and the Diet Building. (The Ni·Niroku Jiken.) Several top politicians, government, and military leaders are killed. The rebellion is put down after three days and this time the participants are punished. Some now realize that radical troops are getting out of control.

March 1936  
Hirota Koki becomes Prime Minister. (He would later be sentenced to death and hanged as a Class A war criminal after WWII)

Aug. 1936  
The government releases The Fundamental Principles of National Polity stating, as national objectives, the consolidation of Japan's empire in East Asia and a Japanese advancement into the South Pacific.

Feb. 1937  
(General) Hayashi Senjuro becomes Prime Minister

March 1937  
Ministry of Education releases the Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan (Kokutai no Hongi) which describes the unique characteristics of Japan and sets out the only acceptable ideology of Japan.

June 1937  
Konoe Fumimaro becomes Prime Minister

July 5, 1937  
The Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists sign a pact agreeing to set their differences aside and declaring that the Japanese are their common enemy.

July 7, 1937  
A minor skirmish takes place between Japanese and Chinese troops near Peiking [The Marco Polo Bridge Incident]. The Japanese government tells military commanders to settle the issue locally but mobilizes troops in Manchuria and Korea just in case the problem expands.

Aug. 1937  
As fighting continues to spread in China, Japan sends troops to Shanghai. Fighting commences between Japanese and Chinese troops, and the Chinese government orders full mobilization of its military.

Sept. 1937  
Japan mobilizes military and entire country. Begins major military expansion throughout northern and central China.

Dec. 1937  
Japan takes control of the Chinese capital of Nanking, killing over 200,000 civilians and POWs, raping tens of thousands of women, and looting the entire town.

Jan. 1938  
Japanese government announces an end to all talks with Chinese Nationalist government and continues military expansion in both northern and central China.

Feb. 1938  
Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)


Jan. 1939  Hiranuma Kiichiro becomes Prime Minister

May 1939  Japanese and Russian troops clash along the border between Manchuria and Outer Mongolia. The incident expands into a major Russian mobilization and conflict between the Russian and Japanese armies.

June 1939  The Russian army defeats the Japanese. The Kwantung Army asks Tōkyō for reinforcements but these are denied.

Aug. 1939  Hiranuma resigns for "giving the Emperor bad advice." Abe Nobuyuki becomes Prime Minister. Germany signs a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union.

Sept. 1939  Hitler attacks Poland. Japan and the Soviet Union agree to a cease-fire.

1940  Statistical Interlude:
Population - 71,933,000;
Avg. Life Expectancy - 50 (m, estimated), 53 (f, estimated);
Real GNP - ¥20,800,000,000

Jan. 1940  Major shortages of foods and other goods in Japan. Prices already rising. (Admiral) Yonai Mitsumasa becomes Prime Minister

March 1940  A puppet Japanese government is established in Nanking under Wang Ching-wei.

June 1940  Japan sends military advisors to French Indochina to stop war materiel from flowing to China.

July 1940  Konoe Fumimaro becomes Prime Minister:

The cabinet approves Major Principles of Basic National Policy which sets out Japan's intention to build a new (Japan dominated) order in East Asia. The decision is made at this time to expand to the south even if this means war with Great Britain and the U.S.

Sept. 27, 1940  Japan signs a military alliance with the Axis powers. Japan completes its occupation of northern French Indochina. In retaliation, the U.S. embargoes iron and steel scraps and British reopens Burma Road.

Oct. 1940  All political parties are dissolved and the Imperial Rule Assistance Association is established with Konoe as "party" head.

March 1941  Japan and the U.S. begin negotiations in Washington, D.C. to settle disputes between them.

April 1941  Japan and the Soviet Union sign a neutrality pact providing for neutrality if either party is attacked by another country.

June 22, 1941  Germany invades the Soviet Union.

July 26, 1941  In order to remove Matsuoka from his position as Foreign Minister, Konoe resigns with his entire cabinet and then retakes office on the 28th with the exact same cabinet - but with a new foreign minister: [Matsuoka had become a virtual puppet of Hitler and Konoe couldn't agree with or accept that. By this time Konoe wasn't at all sure that war with the U.S. was winable.]

July 29, 1941  Japan moves troops into southern French Indochina. In retaliation, the U.S. freezes Japanese assets in the U.S. and imposes a total embargo on exports to Japan (including oil, but excluding cotton and food). Great Britain and the Dutch East Indies also freeze Japanese assets in their countries. [This severs Japan from all major sources of oil imports with only a two year reserve on hand for the Navy]

Aug. 1941  Roosevelt and Churchill meet and agree to issue a warning to Japan that any further encroachment to the south would force the U.S. and Great Britain to take countermeasure even if these would inevitably lead to war:
**Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)**

**Oct. 16, 1941**
Prime Minister Konoe resigns. He is unable to support the drive towards war with the U.S. and the Army is unwilling to make the concessions required by the U.S. in order to secure a diplomatic solution.

(General) Tōjō Hideki becomes Prime Minister - while still retaining the War and Home Ministry portfolios.

**Nov. 1941**
Imperial conferences finalize plans to go to war in early December. Negotiations with the U.S. continue in Washington, but both sides know that this is a ruse and a stall for time. In preparation for the attack on Pearl Harbor, a naval task force is brought together off Etorofu Island (one of the Kuril Islands).

**Dec. 1, 1941**
A final imperial conference (gozen kaigi) is held and Hirohito approves all military preparations and plans and December 7th as the date to start hostilities.

**Dec. 7, 1941**
(December 8th in Japan) The Japanese navy attacks Pearl Harbor Naval Base in Hawaii as well as Guam, Wake Island, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Malaya. War with the West has begun.

**April 18, 1942**
The first of many air raids are carried out by the US on Tōkyō, Yokohama, Nagoya, and Kōbe.

**Early 1942**
US cryptanalysts break Japan's naval code, giving the US access to Japan's strategic planning.

**June, 1942**
Japan loses the Battle of Midway, and a lot of her Navy.

**April 18, 1943**
The plane carrying Admiral Yamamoto, the head of Japan's Navy and the leader of the attack on Pearl Harbor, is shot down. Yamamoto is killed.

**May 1943**
The U.S. and Great Britain formulate a three-offensive plan to defeat Japan: 1) Army's recapture of Aleutian Islands near Alaska, 2) MacArthur led army drive northward through South and Southwest Pacific Islands, and 3) Nimitz led naval drive through Central Pacific Islands.

**Dec. 1943**
Cairo Declaration proclaims that Japan will be stripped of all land seized or occupied since the beginning of WW1 in 1914.

**July 13, 1944**
Tōjō resigns as Army Chief of Staff, although he keeps his hats a Army Minister and Prime Minister. He is also forced to fire Shimada Shigetaro who had been serving as Navy Chief of Staff and Navy Minister.

**July 18, 1944**
Tōjō resigns as Prime Minister and is soon forced to resign as Army Minister. Koiso Kuniaki becomes Prime Minister.

**Nov. 1, 1944**
Allied air raids begin over Tōkyō on a major scale.

**Feb. 1945**
Stalin secretly pledges to Churchill and Roosevelt at Yalta that he will enter the war against Japan when Germany is defeated.

**March 9, 1945**
Air raids over Tōkyō kill over 100,000 people and burn down most of the city.

**April 2, 1945**
Koiso is forced to resign as Prime Minister when Hirohito learns that he had been negotiating with China to end hostilities there in order to bring those troops back to Japan. (Retired Admiral) Suzuki Kantaro becomes Prime Minister.

**April 1945**
American troops land on Okinawa Island. The Soviet Union informs Japan that it will not renew the Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact when it expires. Suzuki Kantaro becomes Prime Minister Harry Truman becomes President of the U.S.

**May 7, 1945**
Germany surrenders to the allies.

**June 20, 1945**
Okinawa falls to the Allies. In addition to the military casualties, some 120,000 civilians also died.

**Late June 1945**
Japan approaches the Soviet Union offering concessions in return for a non-aggression pact. The offer is politely refused.

**Mid July 1945**
Japan asks the Soviet Union to mediate an end to the war in any way short of an unconditional surrender. Due to a secret promise made by Stalin to the Allies at Yalta, this is refused, but only after stalling for weeks.
**Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)**

**July 26, 1945**  
The U.S., Great Britain, and China issue the Potsdam Declaration calling for Japan to immediately and unconditionally surrender or to suffer prompt and utter destruction. Churchill loses to Attlee in Great Britain general elections.

**July 27, 1945**  
Japan's Supreme War Guidance Council meets to discuss the Potsdam Declaration. They decide to do nothing as they had still not heard from the Soviet Union about their request for mediation. On government orders, the Asahi Newspaper calls the declaration "a thing of no great value."

**Aug. 6, 1945**  
The US drops an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Shock freezes the Japanese government into complete inaction.

**Aug. 8, 1945**  
The Soviet Union declares war on Japan and its troops enter Manchuria. They also take over the Kuril Islands, four small islands just north of Hokkaido.

**Aug. 9, 1945**  
The US drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki. Japan's Supreme War Guidance council meets and splits 3 in favor of immediate acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration and three against. The War Minister and the Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff argue that all is not yet lost and that they should hold out in attempts to get more favorable conditions from the allies. In a gozen kaigi later that night, the emperor decides that it is time to surrender: After a meeting of the cabinet, telegrams are sent to the Allies signaling their acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration.

**Aug. 14, 1945**  
Hirohito records his surrender speech late at night. Later still, one last attempt to halt the surrender was made with a coup by Junior army officers. It is finally put down early the next morning.

**Aug. 15, 1945**  
The Emperor's surrender speech is broadcast by radio message, telling the people for the first time that Japan will end the war for humanitarian reasons. (He never actually admits that Japan is surrendering.)

**Aug. 16, 1945**  
Higashikuni Narihiko becomes Prime Minister.

**1945**  
Japan Communist Party holds its first legal Congress after the war.

**Sept. 1945**  
Prewar women's movement leaders petition the government to grant woman suffrage.

**Sept. 2, 1945**  
Japan formally surrenders aboard the USS Missouri. Occupation under Douglas MacArthur as SCAP begins. (SCAP offices open in Tokyo on October 18th)

**Sept. 8, 1945**  
General MacArthur arrives in Tokyō.

**Sept. 27, 1945**  
MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito meet for the first time in MacArthur's personal residence. (They meet 10 times over the years)

**Oct. 4, 1945**  
MacArthur orders the government to remove all restrictions on political, civil, and religious liberties.

**Oct. 5, 1945**  
When SCAP tells Higashikuni to dismiss his Interior Ministry because he had been (was) a militarist, Higashikuni refuses and resigns from office. Shigemitsu Mamoru becomes Prime Minister.

**Oct. 1945**  
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry proposes land reform plan. Diet passes Trade Union Law which guaranteed right to organize, bargain collectively, and to strike.

**Nov. 1945**  
Japan Socialist Party is formed. First nationwide woman's organization is established.

**Nov. 13, 1945**  
Emperor Hirohito reports the 'end of the war' to the Grand Shrine of Ise, to Emperor Jimmu's mausoleum in Unebi, Nara Prefecture, and to Emperor Meiji's mausoleum in Momoyama, Kyōto Prefecture.

**Nov./Dec. 1945**  
The Japan Liberal Party, the Japan Progressive Party, and the Japan Cooperative Party formed

**Dec. 15, 1945**  
Disestablishment of State Shinto.

**Dec. 1945**  
First Land Reform Act passed by Diet at the end of the month (although it proved defective).

**1946**  
Adoption of popular elections to elect provincial governors instead of appointment by the central government. Abolition of the Ministry of Interior.
**Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1, 1946</td>
<td>The Rescript to Promote the National Destiny, a message from the emperor to the people, is printed in newspapers nationwide. In it, the emperor affirms the ideals of the 1868 Charter Oath and denounces his divinity (kind of, sort of, depending on how you read it).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1946</td>
<td>Many prewar conservative politicians are purged from government and barred from holding political office. This includes Hatoyama Ichirō, founder and first president of the Liberal Party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19, 1946</td>
<td>Emperor Hirohito makes his first, of many, trips out to mingle with the people. On this trip he tours a factory and black market in Yokohama.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6, 1946</td>
<td>A draft of a new constitution, rewritten and based on Anglo-American legal traditions, is presented to the public. Both Japanese government and non-government groups had been preparing drafts since October but the final government version was deemed by SCAP to contain nothing but superficial changes to the original Meiji Constitution. SCAP, therefore, wrote their own version and presented it to the public as having been written by the Japanese government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 3, 1946</td>
<td>The Far Eastern Commission exempts Emperor Hirohito as a war criminal</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10, 1946</td>
<td>The first Diet elections in which women are empowered to vote takes place. 79 women entered as candidates; 39 were elected. Four communist party members also won Diet seats. In total, voters had to choose between 2,770 candidates (95% of which had never held public office) representing 363 different political parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3, 1946</td>
<td>IMFTE War Crimes trials begin in Tokyo. Neither Hirohito nor anyone associated with Unit 731 (the biological and chemical weapons unit) are indicted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 22, 1946</td>
<td>Yoshida Shigeru (of the Liberal Party) becomes Prime Minister.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18, 1946</td>
<td>Prosecuters at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East publicly announce their exemption of Emperor Hirohito as a war criminal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 21, 1946</td>
<td>The emperor formally submits the new constitution to the Diet for consideration. It is submitted by the emperor as an ‘amendment’ to the Meiji constitution - even though the emperor had no involvement in the drafting of it and even though it was not an amendment, but a complete rewriting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1946</td>
<td>Two labor federations are established: the Sōdōmei (All Japan General Federation of Trade Unions), an anti-communist, socialist-led organization, and the Sanbetsu (National Congress of Industrial Unions), a communist-led organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 20, 1946</td>
<td>Diet passes the Labor Relations Adjustment Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 21, 1946</td>
<td>Revised land reform enacted with passage of the second Land Reform Act by the Diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 3, 1946</td>
<td>The emperor announces the promulgation of the new constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, 1947</td>
<td>An ongoing campaign for a strike by all government workers forces the end of the Yoshida cabinet [although SCAP intervened and forbid the strike before it actually occurred].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1947</td>
<td>The US announces the Truman Doctrine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31, 1947</td>
<td>The Diet passes the Fundamental Law of Education, which liberalized the curriculum and promoted coeducational egalitarianism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1947</td>
<td>General elections are held.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3, 1947</td>
<td>The new constitution takes effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1947</td>
<td>Katayama Tetsu (of the Socialist Party) becomes Prime Minister. (Coalition cabinet with socialist prime minister)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1947</td>
<td>The Ministry of Labor is established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1947</td>
<td>The Diet passes the Law for Elimination of Excessive Concentration of Economic Power; thus giving the Holding Company Liquidation Commission (HCLC) the power to dissolve the Zaibatsu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1948</td>
<td>Decentralization Review Board (DRB) set up to review HCLC orders and corporate reorganization plan. (This in effect started the end of the decentralization and corporate dissolution plans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1948</td>
<td>HCLC designates 325 companies as chargeable under the new liquidation law and order their dissolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 10, 1948</td>
<td>Cabinet falls when head of the budget committee in the Diet rejects Supplementary Budget. Katayama resigns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1948</td>
<td>Ashida Hitoshi (of the Socialist Party) becomes Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1948</td>
<td>Diet votes to annul the Imperial Rescript on Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1, 1948</td>
<td>After much political maneuvering and back room negotiations, HCLC amends previous list and reduces the number of companies to be dissolved to 100 and excludes all banks from the list entirely. (Thus begins the &quot;reverse course&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1948</td>
<td>Ashida is implicated in a major government-wide (and SCAP) corruption scandal involving a fertilizer company (The Shōwa Denkō Scandal). He resigns and is arrested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 12, 1948</td>
<td>The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal announces its verdict. While the final verdict was unanimous, several justices submitted individual dissenting opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1948</td>
<td>All but nine companies are removed by the DRB from the HCLC list of companies subject to deconcentration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 19, 1948</td>
<td>The US National Security Council issues the Nine-Point Program. These are nine principles of economic stabilization that were to be imposed on Japan and its economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>In general elections, the Communist Party increases the number of seats they hold from 4 to 35.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1, 1949</td>
<td>Joseph Dodge (a Detroit banker) is appointed by Washington and sent to Japan to implement the Nine-Point Program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23, 1949</td>
<td>Dodge unilaterally announces a single fixed exchange rate of 360 yen/dollar (and then leaves the country in a week).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1949</td>
<td>The Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Board of Trade are merged to create the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Statistical Interlude:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population - 83,200,000;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avg. Life Expectancy - 59.6 (m), 63.0 (f);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real GNP - ¥1,611,500,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Alarmed at the growth of Communist power, SCAP purges leaders of the Communist Party and ban the publication of their party paper, Akahata (Red Flag).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 25, 1950</td>
<td>Outbreak of the Korean War as North Korea attacks the South.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 8, 1950</td>
<td>MacArthur orders the Japanese government to create a 75,000-man Police Reserve Corps (most countries called it an army) and to add 8,000 men to the already existing Maritime Safety Corps. (Washington was secretly asking Japan to build an army of between 300,000-350,000 but Yoshida refused)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11, 1951</td>
<td>MacArthur is dismissed by President Truman. General Matthew Ridgway is appointed as his relacement as Supreme Commander Allied Powers (SCAP).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15, 1951</td>
<td>MacArthur leaves Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1951</td>
<td>Political purges end and prewar conservatives flood back into government. These newly returned politicians, led by Hatoyama, find it hard to work with the Yoshida led faction. Eventually they break off and form the Democratic Party with Hatoyama as its president.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 8, 1951</td>
<td>International Peace Treaty, signed by forty-eight nations in San Francisco, brings Japan back into the international family. WWII officially ends for Japan, and Japan regains its status as an independent country. Necessity for Japan to pay any further reparations is abolished. At the same time, the U.S. and Japan sign a mutual Security Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1951</td>
<td>Socialist Party splits into Left and Right Socialist Parties. (Left party opposed both the Peace Treaty and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty while the Right party approved the Peace Treaty but opposed the Security Treaty.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28, 1952</td>
<td>U.S. occupation of Japan officially ends. Security Treaty (with attached administrative agreements) goes into effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2, 1952</td>
<td>Emperor Hirohito travels to the Grand Shrine at Ise to report the signing of the peace treaty and Japan’s sovereignty to Amaterasu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1952</td>
<td>Diet passes the Prevention of Subversive Activities Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28, 1953</td>
<td>Ceasefire agreement signed in Panmunjom, Korea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1, 1954</td>
<td>Mitsubishi completes process of rebuilding Mitsubishi Shoji from companies that had been part of the Mitsubishi Zaibatsu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1955</td>
<td>Conservatives (the Liberal and the Democratic parties), now faced with a united Socialist party and under pressure from the corporate world, merge to form the Liberal Democratic Party (Jiminto). Thus, for the first time in the postwar period, Japan has a two party political system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1956</td>
<td>Mitsui Bussan completes process of reassembling into one all of the companies that had originally been part of the Mitsui Zaibatsu (a process started in February 1949).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1957</td>
<td>Ishibashi resigns due to bad health. Kishi Nobusuke becomes Prime Minister. It is interesting to note that after WWII Kishi had been imprisoned as a Class A war criminal, but never went to trial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Statistical Interlude:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population - 93,419,000;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avg. Life Expectancy - 65.3 (m), 70.2 (f);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real GNP - ¥65,145,400,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 23, 1960</td>
<td>Treaty of Mutual Security and Cooperation goes into effect after US Senate ratification. Eisenhower trip to Japan canceled due to the large number of violent student demonstrations in Tōkyō against the treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1960</td>
<td>Ikeda Hayato becomes Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1960</td>
<td>Announcement of Ikeda’s income doubling plan for the decade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1964</td>
<td>Japan joins the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1964</td>
<td>Summer Olympic Games held in Tōkyō.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1964</td>
<td>Soka Gakkai (lay Nichiren Buddhist organization) forms Clean Government Party (Komeito).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1964</td>
<td>Ikeda diagnosed with cancer and resigns from office. Sato Eisaku becomes Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)


1970 Statistical Interlude:
    Population - 103,720,000.
    Avg. Life Expectancy - 69.3 (m), 74.7 (f).
    Real GNP - ¥171,292,600,000,000

July 1971 Japan suffers the first "Nixon Shock" as Nixon announces that he will make a state visit to China.

Aug. 1971 Japan suffers the second "Nixon Shock" as he announces that the dollar is no longer convertible into gold and imposes a 10% surcharge on all imports into the U.S.

Dec. 1971 Exchange rate of Yen changed to 308 yen/dollar in Smithsonian Agreement

Feb. 1972 Winter Olympic Games held in Sapporo on the island of Hokkaido.

May 1972 The United States returns control of Okinawa to Japan. Okinawa becomes the 47th prefecture.

July 1972 Tanaka Kakuei becomes Prime Minister (after bribing all possible LDP Diet members so that they would elect him as party president)

Oct. 1973-Jan. 1974 Japan suffers the first "oil shock" as the price of oil increases four-fold over four months.

Nov. 26, 1974 Tanaka resigns as Prime Minister after months of public charges of corrupt politics. While he resigns as prime minister, LDP party president, and LDP party member; he refuses to give up his seat in the Diet. He continues to control the party and succeeding prime ministers from behind the scenes until just before his death.


June 1976 Kono Yohei and other LDP members leave the party to form the New Liberal Club (NLC) in response to Tanaka's continually scandal ridden government.

July 27, 1976 Tanaka Kakuei is arrested for accepting bribes from the Lockheed Corporation. He spends 92 days in the Tokyo Detention House before being released on bail.

Dec. 1976 Miki suffers from an internal LDP coup and is ousted from the Prime Ministership because many LDP members felt he should have done more to protect Tanaka. Fukuda Takeo becomes Prime Minister.

Jan. 1977 Trial opens for former Prime Minister Tanaka - charged with accepting bribes from the Lockheed Corporation.

1978 A group of right-wing socialists leave the Japan Socialist Party (Shakaito) to form the United Social Democratic Party (USDP)

Oct. 1978 Japan suffers from second "oil shock" as price of oil increase dramatically overnight.

Dec. 1978 Ōhira Masayoshi becomes Prime Minister

Jan. 1979 Institution of the first uniform national university entrance exams.

May 1979 Ōhira suffers defeat in a no confidence vote presented in the lower house by the Socialist Party. He dissolves the lower house and a campaign begins for new elections. Ōhira dies during the campaign.

1980 Statistical Interlude:
    Population - 117,060,000.
    Avg. Life Expectancy - 73.4 (m), 78.8 (f).
    Real GNP - ¥266,633,500,000,000

July 1980 Suzuki Zenko becomes Prime Minister

Nov. 1982 Nakasone Yasuhiro becomes Prime Minister (his cabinet is frequently referred to as the 'Tanakasone Cabinet'.)
Shōwa Period (1926 - 1989)

Oct. 12, 1983  Former Prime Minister Tanaka found guilty of accepting bribes in his long running court case. He is given a sentence of 4 years in prison and a 500 million yen fine, but he immediately appeals the sentence and is released on bail. He again refuses to give up his seat in the diet.

Nov. 1983  Since opposition Diet members couldn’t force Tanaka to resign his Diet seat, and the LDP was unwilling to pressure him into doing so, national elections are called for to make the voters decide what to do with Tanaka.

Dec. 1983  The LDP loses its majority in the lower house in elections. However, Tanaka is reelected by a record landslide vote in Niigata Prefecture and the overall power of Tanaka’s gundan in the Diet increased. LDP and Nakasone form coalition with New Liberal Club (NLC) and adds one NLC member to the cabinet.

Jan. 1985  Takeshita Noboru, Kanemaru Shin, & Ozawa Ichiro (of the Tanaka faction of the LDP) announce their intentions of breaking away from Tanaka by establishing the Future Creative Society (Sōsei-kai).

Feb. 26, 1985  Tanaka suffers a stroke. This debilitates him enough that he loses all power to the Takeshita, Kanemaru, Ozawa team. The Tanaka faction in the Diet effectively becomes the Takeshita faction - with Kanemaru, Takeshita, and Ozawa as the behind the scene power brokers and controlling the Diet until 1993.

1986  New Liberal Club disbanded and members rejoin the LDP

Nov. 1987  Takeshita Noboru becomes Prime Minister

1988  A 3% consumption tax is instituted.

Jan. 7, 1989  Death of Hirohito (Shōwa) and enthronement of Akihito (Heisei).
Heisei Period (1989 - Present)

January 7, 1989  Death of Hirohito (Shōwa) and the beginning of the Heisei Period.

April 25, 1989  Takeshita resigns as Prime Minister after it is proven that he (and dozens of other politicians and bureaucrats) had received bribes from the Recruit Company.

June 1989  Uno Sosuke becomes Prime Minister

July 1989  The LDP loses its majority for the first time in the Upper House of the Diet. It captures only 36 of the 126 seats up for reelection.

Aug. 1989  Kaifu Toshiki becomes Prime Minister

1990  Statistical Interlude: Population - 123,611,000; Avg. Life Expectancy - 75.9 (m), 81.9 (f); Real GNP - ¥401,812,300,000,000

Aug. 2, 1990  Iraq invades Kuwait, thus beginning the Persian Gulf crisis and war. Japan has a very difficult time deciding how to participate in the war given the constraints of the “Peace Constitution.”

Nov. 1991  Miyazawa Kiichi becomes Prime Minister

May 1992  Hosokawa Morihiro forms the Japan New Party. He was formerly of the LDP but had resigned and spent the past eight years as the governor of Kumamoto Prefecture on Kyūshū.

Oct. 1992  Kanemaru Shin is forced to resign his Diet seat after it is proven that he (and dozens of other politicians and bureaucrats) had received bribes from the Sagawa Kyubin Company.

Dec. 1992  Ozawa Ichiro and 42 supporters leave the Takeshita faction and start their own within the LDP.

June 18, 1993  The Miyazawa cabinet looses a no-confidence vote in the lower house, thus forcing a dissolution of the government and new lower house elections.

June 1993  Ozawa Ichiro, Hata Tsutomu, and 43 others leave the LDP and form the Japan Renewal Party (Shinseitō). Takemura Masayoshi and 9 others leave the LDP and form the New Harbinger Party (Shintō Sakegaki).

July 1993  The LDP loses its majority in the lower house for the first time since 1955. (Although they remain the largest single party). Eight opposition parties (with little in common) form a coalition government with Ozawa Ichiro, who had led the opposition away from the LDP, brokering power and making the decisions from behind the scenes.

Aug. 6, 1993  Hosokawa Morihiro [leader of Japan New Party and member of opposition coalition] is chosen by Ozawa to become the Prime Minister, thus ending LDP rule for the first time since 1955.

Dec. 1993  Tanaka Kakue dies

April 8, 1994  Hosokawa is forced out of office after it is proven that he had received bribes from the Sagawa Kyubin Company. Ozawa chooses Hata Tsutomu [of the opposition coalition] as the next Prime Minister.

New Party Sakigake (Shintō Sakigake) is formed.

April 1994  Murayama Tomiichi, as head of the party, takes the Socialist Party out of the ruling coalition in protest of the way Ozawa is marginalizing it.

June 1994  The opposition coalition disintegrates. The LDP and the Socialist Party form a coalition allowing the LDP to retake power in the lower house of the Diet. Takeshita chooses Murayama (of the Socialist Party) as the Prime Minister. (This is the first socialist PM since 1948, and the Socialist Party had to abandon almost every plank they ever stood for in order to work with the LDP)

June 27, 1994  The Aum Shinrikyo religious cult under the leadership of Asahara Shoko (Chizuo Matsumoto) releases deadly sarin gas in the town of Matsumoto (Naganoken) killing seven people and injuring hundreds more.
Heisei Period (1989 - Present)

Dec. 1994 The New Frontier Party (Shinshintō) is formed from a merger of Japan Renewal Party (Shinseito), the Democratic Socialist Party (Minshu Shakaito), the Japan New Party, Clean Government Party (Komeito) and five other parties and splinter groups (excluding the Japanese Communist Party). It is led by Ozawa.

Jan. 17, 1995 An earthquake of magnitude 7.2 strikes the Kobe area (Hyogoken/Nambu) causing $100 Billion in property losses and killing over 5,000 people.

March 20, 1995 The Aum Shinrikyo religious cult under the leadership of Asahara Shoko (Chizuo Matsumoto) releases deadly sarin gas in the Tokyo subway system killing a dozen people and injuring thousands more.

Aug. 15, 1995 On the anniversary of the end of WWII, Murayama defies LDP tradition and makes the first official apology to other asian countries for Japan's wartime atrocities.

Dec. 1995 The Citizens Action League (five lower house members) is formed by members of the former Japan New Party and Social Democratic Party.

The Liberal League is founded (related to the LDP)

Jan. 1996 Murayama resigns and Hashimoto Ryutaro (of the Takeshita faction of the LDP) becomes Prime Minister after a parliamentary vote. He defeats Ozawa (as leader of the opposition party) in a reasonably close vote - possibly the first time the winner of a vote for Prime Minister wasn't known before the vote was cast.

The New Socialist Party (Shin-Shakaitō) is formed by former Social Democratic Party members.

Sept. 1996 The Democratic Party (Minshutō) is formed by Hosokawa and Kan Naoto. (Many Minshutō members are liberal ex-members of the Social Democratic Party, Sakigake and the parliamentary group Citizens Action League)

Dec. 1996 Hata Tsutomu and 12 Diet members resign from the New Frontier Party (Shinshintō) and form the Taiyo Party (Taiyotō).

April 1, 1997 The Consumption tax is raised from 3% to 5% over loud public outcry.

Dec. 1997 The Shinshintō is disbanded with the formation of several new parties, among them the Liberal Party (Jiyutō), the New Fraternity Party (Shintō Yuai), the Voice of the People Party (Kokumin no Koe), and the New Peace Party (Shintō Heiwa).


Jan. 8, 1998 Six parties: the Democratic Party (Minshutō), the New Fraternity Party (Shintō Yuai), Voice of the People (Kokumin-no-koe), the Taiyo Party (Taiyō-tō), From Five, and the Democratic Reform Party (Minshu-Kaikaku-Rengo) merge to form Minyuren (Minshu-Yuai-Taiyo-Kokumin-Rengo)

Feb. 1998 The Winter Olympic games are held in, and around, Nagano.

March 12, 1998 The Good Governance Party (Minseitō), New Fraternity Party (Shintō-Yuai), and the Democratic Reform Party agree to merge with the Democratic Party (Minshutō), forming a new, bigger Minshutō.

June 1998 Hashimoto resigns as Prime Minister after disappointing results for the LDP in Upper House elections.

July 1998 Obuchi Keizo (of the LDP) becomes new Prime Minister.

Oct. 1999 Sumitomo Bank and Sakura Bank announce plans to merge

Nov. 1998 The LDP (led by Obuchi) and the Liberal Party (led by Ozawa Ichiro) form a coalition.

April - May 1999 I walk the Shikoku Pilgrimage around the island of Shikoku, taking 54 days to visit all 88 main temples and the 20 associated bangai temples.
A nuclear accident occurs at a uranium processing facility in Tokaimura, Ibaraki Prefecture (140 km northeast of Tokyo). It is rated as a 4 (on an international scale of 0 to 7), exposes at least 70 people to various levels of radiation, and ends up taking the lives of two.

The Liberal Democratic Party (Jimintō), Liberal Party (Jiyutō), and Clean Government Party (Komeitō) form a coalition government.

Ozawa Ichiro announces that the Liberal Party is leaving the government coalition. Most party members follow him, but some remain.

Prime Minister Obuchi suffers a stroke and falls into a coma. LDP Chief Cabinet Secretary Aoki Mikio temporarily takes governmental control while the LDP elects a new party president.

Mori Yoshiro is elected LDP party president and therefore replaces Obuchi as Prime Minister.

Obuchi Keizo dies in his Juntendo, Tōkyō hospital.

Opposition parties file a motion of no confidence against the Mori government in the Lower House of the Diet. In response, Mori dissolves the lower house in preparation for elections scheduled for June 25th, thus avoiding a vote on the motion.

Empress Dowager Nagako dies at the Imperial medical facility in Tōkyō. The first daughter of Kuni Kunihiko, a descendant of a 13th century emperor, she was chosen as Hirohito's wife when she was 14 years old.

Former Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru dies of respiratory failure in a Tōkyō hospital.

The LDP and its partners Komeitō and the Conservative party (Hoshutō) win 271 seats of 480 total in lower house elections (down 65 seats from pre-election totals), thus giving them a majority and keeping the LDP in power. Mori is reconfirmed as Prime Minister.

A new 2000 Yen bill is released into circulation by the bank of Japan. This is the first release of a new banknote since 1958.

Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank, Fuji Bank, and The Industrial Bank of Japan (IBJ) agree to merge and set up a joint stock holding company. The new bank will be called The Mizuho Financial Group.

Prime Minister Mori survives a no confidence motion (Fushinninan) submitted to the Lower House by the opposition parties. He survives solely because the Kato faction of the LDP decides at the last minute to abstain from voting instead of voting for the motion as they had been threatening.

The U.S.S. Greeneville, a US nuclear submarine, collides with the Ehime Maru, a Japanese fishing trawler and training ship for high school students, in waters near Honolulu, Hawaii. Nine people on the Ehime Maru die as the trawler sinks within minutes and the bodies have not been recovered.

Prime Minister Mori survives another no confidence motion (Fushinninan) submitted to the Lower House by the opposition parties. However, reports are now surfacing that he will announce his resignation before the start of the LDP party convention on the 13th.

Mori announces that the LDP will hold emergency party presidential elections in April, well before they are due in September, indicating his intention to step down then.

The LDP announces that even though emergency party presidential elections will be held in April to replace Mori, normal elections will be held again in September. I.E., whoever replaces Mori in April is only temporary.

Opposition parties submit a non-binding censure motion against Mori in the upper house.

Mori survives as the censure motion against him in the upper house is voted down. It seems a bit bizarre that the coalition parties have now voted down two no confidence motions and a censure motion - yet as soon as they vote in favor of Mori they turn around and tell him that he needs to resign.
**Heisei Period (1989 - Present)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 26, 2001</td>
<td>Prime Minister Mori and Russian President Putin sign an accord which says that both countries recognize the validity of a previously signed 1956 joint document agreeing to the return of two northern islands to Japan. It appears that Russia is agreeing to return Shikotan and Hakomai to Japan, but saying that they have no intention of returning Etorofu and Kunashiri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5, 2001</td>
<td>Mori formally announces his resignation. Elections for a new President of the LDP, and hence new Prime Minister, are scheduled for April 24th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24, 2001</td>
<td>Koizumi Junichiro wins the post of LDP Party President (on his 3rd attempt) by a landslide and will become the new Prime Minister in a Diet Session on the 26th. At his first news conference he comments that he wants to amend Article 9 of the constitution and make it clear that the SDF is Japan’s armed forces and that Japan has the right to defend itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26, 2001</td>
<td>Koizumi is elected the 87th Prime Minister in the Diet and then appointed by the Emperor. Expectations of him are enormous!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 24, 2001</td>
<td>The LDP wins the majority of seats in Tokyo Metropolitan elections, increasing the number of seats they hold by 5 to 53. This seems to augur well for House of Councillors elections coming up in July.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2001</td>
<td>This has been another bad month for the Japanese economy. Now in their 11th year of slumps, recessions, and overall bad performance, the stock market dropped to a 16 year low and the unemployment rate is at an all time high of 4.9%. On the political front, the month hasn't been that much better. Over the course of the past several months there have been three major scandals in the Foreign Ministry involving the misuse (theft) of public funds. Then, Koizumi has vowed that he will visit Yasukuni Shrine on August 15th to commemorate those that gave their lives to end WWII (and ignoring the fact that Class A war criminals have been enshrined there as well). And finally, Koizumi seems to have approved (through his refusal to criticize or condemn it) the printing and release of a new history textbook that seems to whitewash many of the more atrocious acts that Japan was involved in during WWII. The government simply says there is nothing they can do when China and South Korea complain about the omissions and whitewash. It is now up to the local school districts to decide if they will use the new text, but South Korea has already cancelled several planned political and military meetings with Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 29, 2001</td>
<td>In Upper House elections, the LDP, Komeito, and Conservative parties maintain their majority, and hence control. The LDP picks up 3 extra seats, Komeito breaks even, and the Conservative party loses 2 seats. Both the Democratic party and the Freedom party gain seats at the expense of the Communist and Social Democratic parties. Koizumi vows to carry on with the reforms he has promised, even if it splits up the LDP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1, 2001</td>
<td>In the ever worsening political situation between Japan and South Korea, South Korea has begun fishing off the coast of the four islands north of Hokkaido claimed by both Japan and Russia. Japan says this is an infringement of their territorial rights but South Korea claims that they have the right under agreements with the Russian government. In retaliation, Japan will forbid them from fishing in other Japanese waters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1, 2001</td>
<td>Not to be outdone by the national government’s seeming tilt towards mild nationalism, the Wakayama Prefectural government has decided that it can no longer tolerate the presence of ‘non-Japanese’ monkeys in the prefecture’s forests. A plan will now be drawn up on how to go about catching and eliminating the approximately 200 such foreigners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 10, 2001</td>
<td>Koizumi wins reelection as LDP party president (he runs unopposed), assuring his continued role as Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 11, 2001</td>
<td>New population figures show that Japan’s population is now up to 126,284,805, an increase of 0.17% from the previous year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 13, 2001</td>
<td>In an attempt to find a compromise with both Japanese and foreign critics of his planned visit to Yasukuni Shrine on the 15th, Koizumi makes a surprise visit today instead. As expected, this seems to have satisfied nobody, but it looks as if China and South Korea are not imposing any sanctions in return.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Heisei Period (1989 - Present)

Aug. 17, 2001 The Nikkei sinks to yet another 16 year low. Days after the Bank of Japan eased its money policies to inject more cash into the economy, people have decided that that isn't going to help.

Aug. 23, 2001 New unemployment figures show that 4.7% of women and 5.2% of men are now out of work. This is a new record high.

Aug. 27, 2001 As another display of its anger with Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine and the government's approval of the new right-wing history textbook for middle schools, South Korea has refused Koizumi's request to go to Seoul to discuss the issues.

Aug. 27, 2001 Toshiba and Hitachi announce that they will each lay off about 20,000 employees.

Aug. 28 - 30, 2001 For three consecutive days, the Nikkei Stock Market closes at new 17 year lows.


Sept. 11, 2001 Terrorists hijack and crash commercial airplanes into both towers of the World Trade Center in New York City causing them to collapse. Thousands of people are killed, including 24 Japanese.

Sept. 12, 2001 The Nikkei Stock Market closes at yet another new 17 year low, due this time, in large part, to the forced closure of Wall Street and the uncertainty of what the terrorist attack will do to the U.S. economy.

Sept. 19, 2001 Japan announces that it will assist a U.S. retaliation against terrorists (and attack against Afghanistan) by deploying SDF forces and ships to the region around Afghanistan to support logistics in the areas of medicine, transportation, and supply.

Oct. 8, 2001 Prime Minister Koizumi travels to China and meets Chinese leaders in Beijing in an attempt to smooth relations between the two countries.

Oct. 15, 2001 Prime Minister Koizumi visits Seoul, South Korea, in an attempt to smooth relations between the two countries.

Nov. 8, 2001 Japan dispatches two destroyers and a supply ship to the Indian Ocean to support US forces fighting in Afghanistan. This is the first time for Japan to send military ships outside of her own waters since the end of WWII.

Dec. 6, 2001 Economic data released for the second quarter of the fiscal year shows that Japan is once again officially in recession.

June 2002 Japan and Korea co-host the 2002 FIFA World Cup games with matches taking place throughout Japan.

Sept. 2002 Prime Minister Koizumi visits North Korea. While there Kim Jung Il admits that North Koreans had previously kidnapped Japanese nationals in Japan. They were brought to North Korea as wives for Japanese radicals living in North Korea and to teach Japanese language and customs to North Korean spys who would operate in Japan.

Oct. 2002 North Korea allows 5 Japanese who had been kidnapped 20 years ago to return to Japan. Their children were not allowed to accompany them and they were supposed to go back to North Korea, but the Japanese government convinced them that they couldn't.

Sept. 2003 The Liberal Party (led by Ichiro Ozawa) merges with the Democratic Party of Japan (led by Yukio Hatoyama and Naoto Kan).

March 2004 Japan dispatches Army Self Defense Forces to Samawah, in southern Iraq. This is the first time troops have been deployed to an active war zone since WWII. Their work will focus on humanitarian efforts such as building and water, and even though they will carry weapons, they will not take part in combat operations and will be protected by soldiers from other countries, mainly Britain.

May 2004 Prime Minister Koizumi travels to North Korea to discuss the families of kidnapped Japanese still in North Korea. When he returns to Japan, the children of two of the couples that returned from North Korea in October 2002 come back to Japan with him.
Heisei Period (1989 - Present)

July 2005  Prime Minister Koizumi dissolves the Diet and calls snap elections after the upper house votes down his plan to privatize the Postal System.

Sept 11, 2005  The LDP wins in a landslide in the elections, returning Koizumi to office with even more power. He vows to resubmit the Postal Privatization bills in the Diet and to punish diet members who voted against it the last time.

Oct. 14, 2005  Bills finally pass both houses of the Diet allowing Koizumi to privatize the Postal System.

July 25, 2006  Japanese military troops are withdrawn from Iraq and return to Japan, thus ending a two and a half year mission in Southern Iraq. The mission was non-combat, and the troops focused on humanitarian work, but it had been the first time since WWII that Japanese troops had been deployed to a war zone.

Sept. 6, 2006  The Crown Prince’s younger brother, Akishino, and his wife have a baby boy, the first male heir to the imperial throne born since the mid 1960’s. He is named Hisahito and is now the third in line of succession to the throne.

Sept. 26, 2006  Shinzo Abe is elected Prime Minister in LDP elections and replaces Junichiro Koizumi. He is the youngest Prime Minister to date and the first born after the end of WWII. At the start of his term, he supports continued strong ties with the US, a stronger, more assertive, Japanese military, a revision of Article 9 of the constitution, and continued economic reforms. He also says he will work to improve the strained relations Japan has with both China and South Korea, yet has not promised to avoid visiting Yasukuni Shrine.

July 29, 2007  The LDP takes a beating in Upper House elections and loses control of the Upper House for the first time since the end of World War II. The Democratic Party, led by Ichiro Ozawa, takes control of the house and vows to end Japan’s involvement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Shinzo Abe refuses to resign as Prime Minister to atone for the lose, which surprises many.

Sept. 12, 2007  Shinzo Abe resigns as Prime Minister and checks himself into the hospital citing ill health from too much stress. The race begins to find a replacement.

Sept. 25, 2007  Yasuo Fukuda is elected Prime Minister: The Lower House voted to elect Fukuda, while the Upper House, controlled by the opposition Democratic Pary, elected Ichiro Ozawa. Japanese law says that the Lower House takes precedent if the two houses can not agree so Fukuda was given the post.

Nov. 1, 2007  Japan announces the expiration of the law that authorizes Japan to have ships in the Indian Ocean that refuel warships of other countries supporting fighting in Afghanistan. The DPJ, which controls the Upper House of the Diet, would not agree to an extension of the law, thus forcing the Japanese government to halt the operations and call their ships back to Japan.

Nov. 4, 2007  Since taking office in September, Yasuo Fukuda has been unable to get one bill passed in the Diet due to the opposition of the DPJ, which controls the Upper House. Fukuda calls on the DPJ to form a coalition and Ichiro Ozawa, the DPJ leader, considers it, but other DPJ members force him to reject the idea. Ozawa resigns as DPJ party president.

Nov. 6, 2007  Ichiro Ozawa, the DPJ leader, retracts his resignation as DPJ party president and agrees to stay on after fierce lobbying from other party members. It seems they were all worried that if he left others would follow and he would establish another party.
Regions and Prefectures of Japan