

1758 Halley's Comet returns, as calculated by Edmond Halley in 1705
1759 British conquer Quebec from the French; death of Montcalm and Wolfe
1760 Britain: accession of George III, the first British Hanoverian monarch
1761 Transit of Venus on 6 June helps understanding of the movement of planets
1762 Russia: assassination of Tsar Peter III; accession of Catherine the Great
1763 Peace of Paris ends Seven Years' War; British control in Canada and India
1764 Stanislaus Poniatowski elected King of Poland
1765 British Parliament passes Stamp Act, to tax American colonies
1766 Repeal of Stamp Act in face of American opposition
1767 Expulsion of the Jesuits from all Spanish dominions
1768 France purchases Corsica from Genoa; conquest of island
1769 Britain imposes Tea Duties on American colonies
1770 The "Boston Massacre": casualty list 4 dead, 7 wounded
1771 Dispute between Britain and Spain over Falkland Islands
1772 First Partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria
1773 "Boston Tea Party" staged as protest against Tea Duty
1774 Continental Congress in Philadelphia draws together the American colonies
1775 American victories over British forces at battles of Lexington and Concord
1776 American Declaration of Independence, 4 July
1777 Publication of *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World* by James Cook
1778 Death of Voltaire, 30 May
1779 Spanish and French forces begin siege of Gibraltar
1780 Gordon Riots in London; "No Popery!"
1781 Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown; decisive defeat for British in America
1782 Admiral Rodney's victory over the French at the Saints; British naval recovery
1783 Treaty of Versailles: Britain recognises American independence
1784 Pitt the Younger becomes British prime minister at age 24
1785 Flight of Blanchard and Jeffries by balloon from Dover to Calais
1786 Death of Frederick the Great, the creator of the new Kingdom of Prussia
1787 France: Louis XVI convenes Assembly of Notables; dissolved without result
1788 Russo-Turkish war: Potemkin besieges Ochakov
1789 Revolution in France; storming of the Bastille, 14 July
1790 Death of Benjamin Franklin, statesman and polymath
1791 France: Feast of the National Confederation to acclaim the Revolution
1792 Battle of Valmy, 20 September; victory of French revolutionary army
1793 Execution of Louis XVI of France
1794 Erasmus Darwin publishes *Zoonomia*, foreshadowing the idea of evolution
1795 Third and final partition of Poland; Poland disappears from the map
1796 Napoleon's victory at Lodi marks his emergence as a dominant figure
1797 First bank-notes issued in Britain; paper currency replaces specie
1798 Napoleon's expedition to Egypt results in conquest and scientific exploration
1799 Pitt introduces income tax in Britain
1800 Act of Union between Britain and Ireland passed; takes effect, 1 January 1801
1801 Thomas Jefferson becomes president of the USA
1802 Peace of Amiens brings war between Britain and France to temporary end
1803 Louisiana Purchase: USA buys Louisiana territories from France
1804 Napoleon crowns himself Emperor of the French
1805 Battle of Trafalgar establishes British naval dominance for a century
1806 Humphry Davy presents paper on electro-chemistry to Royal Society
1807 Abolition of slave trade in British Empire
1808 Napoleon imposes Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain; Spanish revolt
1809 Napoleon defeats Austrians at Wagram, and imposes severe peace terms
1810 Venezuela revolts against Spain; rebellion spreads to other colonies
1811 Birth of a son to Napoleon and Marie Louise, thereby starting a dynasty
1812 Napoleon captures Moscow, but is forced into disastrous winter retreat
1813 Napoleon decisively defeated at Leipzig in the Battle of the Nations
1814 Napoleon abdicates and is exiled to Elba
1815 Napoleon returns for the "Hundred Days", is defeated at Waterloo and exiled to St Helena
1816 Declaration of Argentinian Independence at Buenos Aires
1817 Discontent and disorder in Britain; Habeas Corpus suspended
1818 France: abolition of slave trade in all French territories
1819 Britain: parliamentary reform rally in Manchester ends in "Peterloo" massacre
1820 Spain ratifies treaty for purchase of Florida by USA
1821 Mexican independence declared, under Iturbide as generalissimo

1822 Declaration of Greek independence; Turkish massacre of Greeks at Chios
1823 Monroe Doctrine: American continent declared closed to European colonisation
1824 Death of Byron at Missolonghi marks the creation of a Romantic legend
1825 Russia: Decembrist rising crushed in St Petersburg
1826 Opening of Telford's suspension bridge across Menai Straits, the first of its kind
1827 Battle of Navarino: Turkish defeat assists Greek struggle for independence
1828 Frontier treaty between Brazil and Argentina; establishment of Uruguay
1829 Catholic Emancipation in Britain; extension of franchise to Catholics
1830 French expedition captures Algiers; beginning of French Algeria
1831 Five-power treaty on Belgian independence declares it to be perpetually neutral
1832 Great Reform Act in Britain provides limited but significant extension of franchise
1833 General Santanna elected President of Mexico; Texas declares independence
1834 Introduction of new Poor Law in Britain creates Poor Law Boards and houses
1835 Prussia establishes Zollverein, bringing all German states into a customs union
1836 Civil war in Spain involves intervention by British warships and volunteers
1837 Accession of Queen Victoria to British throne
1838 Insurrection in Canada; Lord Durham's enquiry into its causes
1839 Chartist movement in Britain; National Petition and People's Charter
1840 British expedition to Canton to force Chinese government to accept opium trade
1841 Union of the two Canadas (Upper and Lower) comes into effect
1842 Destruction of British army in Afghanistan
1843 South Africa: Britain annexes Natal
1844 New Zealand: Maori War
1845 USA: annexation of Texas approved by Congress
1846 Ireland: failure of potato crop; resulting famine leads to large-scale emigration
1847 Vatican: first year of Pius IX's papacy shows him to be a liberal pope
1848 Year of Revolutions in Europe; Marx and Engels issue *Communist Manifesto*
1849 Mazzini proclaims Roman Republic; crushed by French army
1850 USA: California admitted as a state of the Union
1851 Britain: Jews allowed to sit in Parliament
1852 France: Louis Napoleon is proclaimed Emperor Napoleon III
1853 Japan: US expedition under Commodore Perry forcibly opens Japan to US trade
1854 Crimean War begins: British and French troops lay siege to Sevastopol
1855 Henry Bessemer takes out patents, which transform steel production
1856 Treaty of Paris ends Crimean War
1857 Indian Mutiny: widespread uprising against British rule in India
1858 British Crown takes over government of India from East India Company
1859 War in Italy: Sardinia and France against Austria; Battle of Magenta
1860 Election of Lincoln, an opponent of the extension of slavery, as US president
1861 American Civil War begins after secession of Confederate States
1862 Lincoln signs Emancipation Proclamation, which frees slaves in Confederate territory
1863 Battles of Vicksburg and Gettysburg mark turning-points in Civil War
1864 Prussia and Austria defeat Denmark over Schleswig-Holstein
1865 Defeat of Confederacy marks end of American Civil War; assassination of Lincoln
1866 Prussian victory over Austria at Sadowa; Prussian predominance in Germany
1867 Dual Monarchy established in Austria-Hungary
1868 British expedition to Abyssinia; capture of Magdala, and withdrawal
1869 Opening of Suez Canal, a channel for world commerce
1870 Franco-Prussian War: crushing French defeat at Sedan leads to fall of Napoleon III
1871 Darwin's *The Descent of Man* published, amid sharp debate
1872 Britain: Ballot Act introduces voting in elections by secret ballot
1873 Russian advance into Central Asia; occupation of Khiva
1874 Britain: defeat of Gladstone; Disraeli forms Conservative government
1875 Disraeli purchases Khedive's shares in Suez Canal Company for Britain
1876 Bulgarian revolt suppressed by Turks; Gladstone denounces Bulgarian massacres
1877 Invention of "talking phonograph", a recording machine, by Thomas Edison
1878 Congress of Berlin: independence of Balkan states from Turkey
1879 Zulu War: defeat of British army at Isandlwana; defence of Rorke's Drift
1880 Ireland: ostracism of Captain Boycott by the Land League creates new word
1881 International Medical Congress: Pasteur's account of vaccination experiments
1882 Egypt: British bombard Alexandria and occupy Egypt
1883 French occupation of Madagascar and expedition to Tonkin (Indo-China)
1884 Congo Conference in Berlin on partition of Africa
1885 Death of General Gordon at Khartoum

1886 Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill for Ireland; Liberal split and defeat
1887 Indian National Congress meets at Calcutta; demands representative institutions
1888 Accession of William II as Emperor of Germany
1889 Austria-Hungary: death of Crown Prince Rudolph at Mayerling
1890 USA: McKinley Tariff to protect US industry
1891 First rail of Trans-Siberian Railway laid by the future Tsar Nicholas II
1892 Britain: Gladstone forms his fourth administration after Liberals win election
1893 Arctic exploration: Nansen sails in *Fram*; Peary sets out for North Pole
1894 France: Captain Dreyfus convicted of treason; start of Dreyfus Affair
1895 Treaty of Shimonosiki ends First Sino-Japanese War; Japan annexes Formosa
1896 Ethiopia: Battle of Adowa; defeat of Italian army by Ethiopians
1897 German Navy Bill initiates naval expansion and maritime rivalry with Britain
1898 Spanish-American War; US annexation of Hawaii, Puerto Rico and Philippines
1899 Boer War begins between Britain and Boer Republics
1900 Australian Commonwealth Act: Commonwealth of Australia established
1901 Marconi sends first trans-Atlantic wireless communication
1902 Treaty of Vereeniging ends Boer War
1903 Independence of Panama from Colombia; USA begins Panama Canal
1904 Signing of Entente Cordiale between Britain and France
1905 Russo-Japanese War: Russian fleet destroyed at Tsushima
1906 Huge earthquake destroys San Francisco
1907 Finland becomes first European country to grant female suffrage
1908 Orville Wright makes flight of 1 hour and 10 minutes
1909 Britain: House of Lords rejects Finance Bill, leading to constitutional crisis
1910 China asserts suzerainty in Tibet: expedition to Lhasa, flight of Dalai Lama
1911 Moroccan crisis: French expedition to Fez, German gunboat to Agadir
1912 *Titanic* sunk by collision with iceberg, 15-16 April
1913 Niels Bohr introduces new quantum theory of atomic structure
1914 Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand leads to outbreak of World War I
1915 Dardanelles campaign; ANZAC troops in action
1916 Battles of Verdun and the Somme epitomise attritional war on Western Front
1917 USA enters war; Bolshevik Revolution in Russia
1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March; armistice in France, 11 November
1919 Paris Peace Conference and Treaty of Versailles redraw world map. Einstein's new theory of the principle of relativity changes views of the universe
1920 Britain accepts mandate for Palestine, to establish a "National Home" for the Jews
1921 Washington Conference on naval disarmament and the Pacific
1922 Mussolini assumes dictatorial power in Italy; creation of fascist regime
1923 French occupation of the Ruhr; hyper-inflation in Germany
1924 Death of Lenin; struggle for succession begins
1925 Treaties of Locarno normalise relations between Germany and former Allied Powers
1926 Britain: General Strike brings country almost to a standstill
1927 Lindbergh's journey from New York to Le Bourget marks first trans-Atlantic flight
1928 China denounces all unequal treaties imposed by outside powers
1929 The Wall Street Crash: symbol of the Great Depression
1930 India: Gandhi's salt march, to protest against tax on salt manufacture
1931 Mukden Incident: Japanese occupation of Manchuria
1932 Election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president of the USA
1933 Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany, 30 January, with conservative support
1934 Discovery of induced radio-activity by the Joliot-Curies, Paris
1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia; enactment of Nuremberg Laws in Germany
1936 Civil War in Spain: Franco attacks Madrid; arrival of International Brigades
1937 USA: Neutrality Act forbids export of arms to belligerent states
1938 Munich Conference marks high point of appeasement of Nazi Germany
1939 German attack on Poland initiates World War II
1940 Fall of France and creation of Vichy government; German defeat in Battle of Britain
1941: German invasion of Soviet Union; Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour
1942 Decisive defeat of German army at Stalingrad and of Japanese navy at Midway
1943 Teheran Conference cements British-US-Soviet alliance; overthrow of Mussolini
1944 Normandy Landings lead to liberation of France
1945 Surrender of Germany and discovery of Nazi death camps; surrender of Japan after atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
1946 First Session of General Assembly of United Nations, involving 51 member states
1947 End of British rule in India; partition between India and Pakistan

1948 Palestine: establishment of Israel; conflict with Arab states
1949 Communist victory in Chinese civil war leads to establishment of Mao's regime
1950 Communist North Korea invades South; intervention by US-led UN forces
1951 Soviet Union detonates its first atomic bomb
1952 Britain: death of George VI and accession of Queen Elizabeth II
1953 Death of Stalin
1954 Defeat of French garrison at Dien Bien Phu marks end of French rule in Indo-China
1955 Asian-African Conference at Bandung (Indonesia); emergence of "Third World"
1956 Suez Crisis: Nasser nationalises Canal, prompting British-French-Israeli attack
1957 Treaties of Rome, founding the European Economic Community. Launch of Sputnik, the first man-made earth satellite, by Soviet Union
1958 France: end of 4th Republic; de Gaulle becomes president of new 5th Republic
1959 China: disastrous consequences of "Great Leap Forward", begun in 1958
1960 CERN cyclotron in Geneva produces crucial results in particle acceleration
1961 Soviet Union puts first man into space; Yuri Gagarin orbits the earth
1962 Cuban Missile Crisis brings USA and Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear war
1963 USA: assassination of President Kennedy, 22 November
1964 South Africa: Nelson Mandela is sentenced to life imprisonment
1965 Britain: death and state funeral of Winston Churchill
1966 China: Cultural Revolution, led by Red Guards
1967 Six-Day War: Israel attacks and defeats Egypt, Syria and Jordan
1968 France: establishment shaken by student revolt. Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia
1969 USA lands first men on the moon
1970 Introduction of Boeing 747 airliner marks start of mass air travel
1971 War between India and Pakistan; independence of Bangladesh
1972 Germany: success of Brandt's Ostpolitik; treaty between West and East Germany
1973 Ceasefire agreement in Vietnam War; Arab attack on Israel starts Yom Kippur war
1974 "Oil shock" ends many years of economic growth
1975 North Vietnam conquers South. Death of General Franco in Spain
1976 China: deaths of Chou En-lai and Mao Tse-tung lead to power struggle
1977 Czechoslovakia: publication of Charter 77, against violations of human rights
1978 Election of Karol Wojtyla as Pope John Paul II, a Polish pope
1979 Islamic revolution in Iran overthrows the Shah; Ayatollah Khomeini takes power
1980 Soviet army struggles to subdue guerrillas in Afghanistan
1981 Poland: conflict between government and Solidarity trade union; martial law imposed
1982 Falklands War: Falkland Islands invaded by Argentina and recovered by Britain
1983 Missile crisis in Europe; deployment of US Pershing and Soviet SS-20 missiles
1984 India: storming of Sikh Golden Temple; Indira Gandhi assassinated by Sikhs
1985 Mikhail Gorbachev becomes Soviet leader and embarks on reform programme
1986 Explosion at Chernobyl nuclear reactor: fallout affects much of Europe
1987 Reagan-Gorbachev summit: abolition of medium and short range missiles
1988 Geneva agreement on phased withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan
1989 Fall of Berlin Wall, symbolising collapse of communism in Eastern Europe
1990 Russia declares sovereignty, heralding the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991
1991 USA and allied powers defeat Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in 1990
1992 Former Yugoslavia: civil war in Bosnia; Croatia declares independence
1993 South Africa: new, non-racial constitution adopted
1994 Rwanda: massacre of Tutsis by Hutu militants leaves up to 500,000 dead
1995 World Health Organisation estimates number of AIDS sufferers at over one million
1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty adopted by UN General Assembly
1997 Cloning of Dolly the sheep by researchers in Edinburgh
1998 Nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan
1999 Russia: resignation of Boris Yeltsin; Vladimir Putin becomes acting president
2000 Completion of mapping of the human genome, the human genetic blueprint
2001 Terrorist attacks on 11 September against World Trade Centre and Pentagon
2002 European Union: introduction of single currency (the euro) by 11 member states
2003 War by USA and allies against Iraq leads to overthrow of Saddam Hussein
2004 Indian Ocean earthquake unleashes tsunami, which kills several hundred thousand
2005 Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change comes into effect
2006 Afghanistan: new government takes office, but Taliban opposition grows
2007 USA implements troop "surge" in attempt to achieve success in Iraq conflict
2008