

Chinese Chronology and Key Events

Chinese Chronology

Neolithic	c 7th Millennium -1600 B.C.
Shang Dynasty	ca 1600 - c 1027 B.C.
Western Zhou Dynasty	c 1027 - 771 B.C.
Eastern Zhou Dynasty	771 - 256 B.C.
Spring and Autumn Annals period	722 - 256 B.C.
Warring states period	403 - 221 B.C.
Qin Dynasty	221 - 206 B.C.
Han Dynasty	206 B.C. - 220 A.D.
Western Han Dynasty	206 B.C. - 8 A.D.
Interregnum	8-23 A.D.
Eastern Han Dynasty	25 - 220 A.D.
Three Kingdoms and Western Jin	219-316
Eastern Jin and Five Principalities	317-419
Nanbeichao I	420 - 500
Nanbeichao II	501-580
Sui Dynasty	581-618
Tang Dynasty	618-907
Five Dynasties	907 - 960
Liao Dynasty (northeast China)	947 -1125
Song Dynasty	960 - 1279
Northern Song Dynasty	960 - 1126
Southern Song Dynasty	1127 - 1279
Jin Dynasty (north China)	1125 - 1234
Yuan Dynasty	1260 - 1368
Ming Dynasty	1368 - 1644
Qing	1644-1912
Republic	1912-1949
People's Republic	1949 -

Chronology - Neolithic Period to Tang Dynasty

- 6,000 BC: "Neolithic revolution" initiates the Bronze Age.
- 1,550-1,050 BC: Shang dynasty becomes first dynasty to leave historical records.
- 1,111 BC: Royal house of Chou wins decisive battle against last Shang king, initiating the Chou dynasty.
- 770-476 BC: Ch'un-ch'iu ("Spring and Autumn") period of the Chou dynasty. Chou royal line is broken, feudal system in decline.
- 221 BC: Ch'in ruling house survives Ch'un-ch'iu power struggle and initiates the first imperial dynasty, the Ch'in. Shih Huang-ti unifies China and becomes first Chinese emperor. Defensive walls in north of China are connected and strengthened into what will become the Great Wall of China.
- 202 BC: Han dynasty founded by Liu Pang, the first long lasting imperial dynasty.
- 220 AD: Single Han empire split into the Three Kingdoms when the last Han emperor cedes authority to Wei, the son of a warlord. Shortly after, two other military leaders declare themselves emperor, Shu-Han in the interior, and Wu, in the south. The Three Kingdoms period is marked by civil war.
- 263: Wei conquers Shu-Han.
- 265: A general of the Ssu-ma clan overthrows the Wei dynasty, founding the Hsi Chin (Western Chin) dynasty.
- 280: Hsi Chin armies conquer the Wu dynasty, reuniting China under a single rule and initiating a short period of peace.
- 304: Liu Yuan, a northern barbarian chieftain, conquers northern China. North China splits into a collection of barbarian states known as the Sixteen Kingdoms.
- 317: Six Dynasties period. Southern China is ruled by a succession of royal families. Considered one of the most culturally creative periods in Chinese history.
- 577: The Pei Chou (Northern Chou) unify Northern China.
- 581: The general Yang Chien usurps the northern throne and founds the Sui dynasty.
- 589: Yang Chien invades the south, and once again China is reunited, this time under a barbarian ruler.
- 617: Li Yuan, one of various rebel leaders, marches on the capital and deposes Yang-ti, the current Sui emperor. A Sui prince, Kung-ti, is put on the throne as a puppet emperor, while Yang-ti is demoted to "retired emperor". One year later, Yang-ti dies and Li Yuan takes the throne for himself, beginning the T'ang dynasty.
- 624: The T'ang defeat the other rebel leaders, who have been causing trouble contending for the throne. All of China is reunited and pacified.
- 874: A wave of peasant uprisings begin that eventually topple the T'ang dynasty.
- 907: Fall of the T'ang dynasty gives rise to the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period. Five short-lived dynasties subsequently control northern China, while ten stable regimes control sections of southern and western China.

Chinese Dynasties	Period
↳ Prehistoric Times	1.7 million years - the 21st century BC
↳ Xia Dynasty	21st - 16th century BC
↳ Shang Dynasty	16th - 11th century BC
↳ Zhou Dynasty	Western Zhou (11th century BC - 711 BC)
	Eastern Zhou
	---- Spring and Autumn Period (770 BC - 476 BC) ---- Warring States Period (476 BC - 221 BC)
↳ Qin Dynasty	221 BC - 206 BC
↳ Han Dynasty	Western Han (206 BC - 24 AD)
	Eastern Han (25 - 220)
↳ Three Kingdoms Period	220 - 280
↳ Jin Dynasty	Western Jin (265 - 316)
	Eastern Jin (317 - 420)
↳ Northern and Southern Dynasties	Northern Dynasties (386 - 581)
	Southern Dynasties (420 - 589)
↳ Sui Dynasty	581 - 618
↳ Tang Dynasty	618 - 907
↳ Five Dynasties and Ten States	Five Dynasties
	---- Later Liang (907 - 923) ---- Later Tang (923 - 936) ---- Later Jin (936 - 946) ---- Later Han (947 - 951) ---- Later Zhou (951 - 960)
	Ten States (902 - 979)
↳ Song Dynasty	Northern Song (960 - 1127)
	Southern Song (1127 - 1279)
↳ Liao Dynasty	916 --- 1125
↳ Jin Dynasty	1115 --- 1234
↳ Yuan Dynasty	1271 --- 1368
↳ Ming Dynasty	1368 --- 1644
↳ Qing Dynasty	1644 --- 1911