

Dates and Periods in European History

Students often have difficulty keeping track of the parallel timelines of politics, culture, and economics. Give them a guide like this to help keep them from getting lost and also to remind them of important connections.

Later Middle Ages (c. 1300–1450) and the Renaissance (c. 1400–1550)

Political Dates and Periods
Later Middle Ages Hundred Years' War begins (1337) Black Death (1347) Fall of Constantinople (1453)
Art Dates
Late Gothic, Renaissance
Economic Dates
Commercial Revolution funds the Renaissance Decline of feudalism

First Half of the Early Modern Period (c. 1450–1648)

Political Dates and Periods
New Monarchies Hundred Years' War ends (1453) Marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella (1469) End of the War of the Roses (1485) The Reformation/Religious Wars/The Counter Reformation Martin Luther's 95 Theses (1517) Charles V becomes Holy Roman Emperor (1519) Diet of Worms (1521) Peasants' War (1524-26) Council of Trent (1545-63) Peace of Augsburg (1555) St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572) French Wars of Religion (1559-89) Edict of Nantes (1598) Hapsburg Hegemony and Golden Age of Spain (1550-1650) Christopher Columbus sails the ocean blue (1492) Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) Opening of Potosí mines (1545) Invincible Armada sinks (1588) Thirty Years' War (1618-48) End of the war between France and Spain (1656) Imperialism in the Western Hemisphere
Art Dates
Renaissance, mannerism
Economic Dates
Rise of the domestic system First enclosure movement in England Price Revolution Bullionism leads to mercantilism, rise of monopolies, imperialism Dutch and English trade via East India Companies (1601)

Second Half of the Early Modern Period (1648–1789)

Political Dates and Periods
Rise of Constitutionalism English Civil War (1642-49) Restoration (1660-68) Glorious Revolution (1688) English Bill of Rights (1689) Ancien Régime (1648-1789) Age of Absolutism (c. 1650–1750) and the Wars of Louis XIV (1660–1714), Louis XIV (1643–1715), Peter the Great (1682–1725), Frederick William the Great Elector (1640-88), and Frederick William I (1713-40)
Art Dates
Baroque, rococo
Economic Dates
Bank of England (1694) England and France experience “Bubbles” (1720) England pays debt from the War of Spanish Succession while France repudiates it

The Enlightenment (c. Eighteenth Century)

Political Dates and Periods
Enlightened Despotism Frederick the Great (1740-86) Recovery of the Hapsburgs (Joseph II, 1780-90) Catherine the Great (1762-96)
Economic Dates
Agricultural Revolution (“the Enlightenment comes to the farm”) Second enclosure movement in England More food Population explosion Adam Smith publishes <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> , the bible of capitalism (1776) Industrial Revolution (c. 1750–1850)

Beginning of the Modern Period (1789–1871)

Political Dates and Periods
French Revolution and Age of Napoleon (1789–1815) Age of Montesquieu: National Assembly (1789-91), Legislative Assembly (1791-92) Age of Rousseau: National Convention (1792-95), Directory (1795-99) Age of Voltaire Napoleonic era: Consulate (1799–1804) Empire (1804-15) Congress of Vienna (1814-15) Age of Metternich (1815-48) Nationalism Conservatism July Monarchy (1830) Second Republic (1848-52) Age of Realpolitik (1848-71) France has Second Empire (1852-70), Alexander II frees the serfs (1861), Italy becomes a unified kingdom (1870), Prussia becomes Germany after the Franco-Prussian War (1871)

Appendix

Art Dates
Neoclassicism, romanticism (a reaction to the Industrial Revolution in England and the French Revolution on the continent), realism in art (naturalism in literature)
Economic Dates
Rise of liberalism in England; Manchester School Utopian Socialism: Claude Saint-Simon, Robert Owen, Charles Fourier Scientific Socialism: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels publish <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> (1848)

Second Part of the Modern Period (1871–1991)

Political Dates and Periods
Second Industrial Revolution (steel, oil, electricity, chemicals) Age of Imperialism Berlin Congress of 1878, Berlin Conference of 1884-85 Mass Politics (1871–1914) Third Republic in France (1870–1940) World War I (1914-18) Russian Revolution (1917) Interwar Period (1918-39) Age of Anxiety Rise of Fascism and Nazism World War II (1939-45) Cold War (1945-91) Decolonization (1940s–1970s) European Union Marshall Plan (1948) Treaty of Rome (1957) Treaty of Maastricht (1991) Fall of the Soviet Union (1991)
Art Dates
Impressionism, neoimpressionism, pointillism, cubism, expressionism, futurism, art nouveau, La Belle Époque, fin de siècle, surrealism, realism, Dada, Bauhaus, expressionism, Socialist realism, abstract expressionism, miscellaneous modernisms, theater of the absurd
Economic Dates
Beginning of social legislation and entitlements Managed economies Beginning of the postindustrial age