



## Roman History Timeline

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This list begins with the founding of the village of Rome around 753 BCE and continues to the fall of Constantinople in 1453 CE. It is particularly detailed for the period from 58 BCE to 31 BCE (Julius Caesar to Caesar Augustus) and for 376 CE to 480 CE (the "fall" of the Western Roman Empire).

### **ROMAN MONARCHY**

- 1200 BCE Etruscans reached northern Italy
- 800-500 BCE Greeks established colonies throughout southern Italy
- 800 BCE Phoenicians established Carthage on the north coast of Africa
- about 753 BCE village of Rome founded
- 600 BCE Rome was a province of Etruria
- 509 BCE Romans revolted against the Etruscan kings and created the system of government by the Senate and the Assembly

### **THE CONQUEST OF ITALY**

- 494 BCE first disputes between patricians (wealthy landowners who controlled the Senate) and plebeians (ordinary citizens)
- 450 BCE "Law of the 12 Tables" provides written Roman law
- 390 BCE Gaulic invasion sacked Rome
- 282-272 BCE War with Pyrrhus
- 265 BCE Rome completed the occupation of the Italian peninsula

### **THE CONQUEST OF THE MEDITERRANEAN**

- 264-241 BCE First war with Carthage (First Punic War)
- 238 BCE Conquest of Sardinia
- 229-228 BCE First Illyrian War (Balkans)
- 219 BCE Second Illyrian War
- 218-201 BCE Second Punic War (Hannibal crossed the Alps)
- 215-205 BCE First Macedonian War
- 200-197 BCE Second Macedonian War
- 200-191 BCE Gaul invasion of northern Italy
- 192-189 BCE Syrian War
- 171-168 Third Macedonian War
- 149-148 BCE Fourth (and final) Macedonian War
- 149-146 BCE Third Punic War and final defeat of Carthage

### **THE END OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC**

- 135-132 BCE First Servile War (slave revolt)
- 133 BCE Tiberius, the first senator to advocate land reform, was assassinated in 133 BCE by land-owners.
- 91-88 BCE The "Social War" (revolt by Roman allies in Italy)
- 88-84 BCE First Mithridatic War (Black Sea region)
- 88 BCE Sulla became the first Roman general to seize power
- 88-82 BCE Civil war in Rome
- 83-81 BCE Second Mithridatic War
- 79 BCE Sulla returned power to the Senate
- 74-64 BCE [Third Mithridatic War](#)
- 64 BCE Pompey captured Jerusalem
- 58 BCE Julius Caesar appointed governor of Gaul
- 58-51 BCE Julius Caesar's army conquered Gaul
- 58-49 BCE To forestall another military revolt, the Senate yielded power to the First Triumvirate composed of Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Caesar
- 54 BCE Invasion of Britain
- 49-48 BCE Julius Caesar and Cleopatra (descendant of Ptolemy in Egypt) conceived a child
- 46-44 BCE Cleopatra lived at Julius Caesar's estate in Rome
- 45 BCE Julius Caesar defeated Pompey and became the first dictator of Rome
- 44 BCE Julius Caesar assassinated on orders of the Senate
- 44-31 BCE The Second Triumvirate of Marc Antony, Lepidus, and Octavian (later known as Caesar Augustus) ruled Rome. Note that Octavian was the nephew of Julius Caesar, and brother-in-law of Marc Antony
- 42-30 BCE Cleopatra and Marc Antony had a relationship that lasted until their deaths
- 31 BCE Caesar Octavian defeated the combined forces of Cleopatra and Marc Antony in the naval battle of Actium (near Greece)
- 30 BCE First Roman governor of Egypt
- 31 BCE-14 CE Octavian became Caesar Augustus, the first emperor

### THE ROMAN EMPIRE

- 14-37 CE Tiberius, stepson of Caesar Augustus, became emperor
- about 33 CE Crucifixion of Jesus; origin of Christianity
- 61 CE Druid revolts in Britain
- 64 CE Fire destroyed much of Rome during Nero's rule
- 66-70 CE Jewish revolts in Judea (Palestine)
- 69 CE General Vespasian expelled Nero, the last of Caesar Augustus' descendants, and started a new imperial family
- 70 CE Expulsion of Jews from Palestine
- 77-84 CE Conquest of Britain
- 79 CE Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius preserved the city of Pompeii
- 83 CE Roman army crossed the Rhine River to attack the Germans
- 96-180 CE The period of the "Five Good Emperors" (Pax Romana)

- 90 CE First Christian bishop of Rome
- 113-117 CE Parthian War (Persia)
- 120 CE Some Roman businessmen were Christian
- 132-135 CE Jewish rebellion sparked when Romans placed a colony and temple in Jerusalem
- 180 CE Commodus succeeded his father Marcus Aurelius and imperial power began to decline
- 193 CE Following civil war, another general, Septimius Severus, became emperor
- 211-285 CE Numerous emperors killed by revolts and assassinations
- 259-270 CE German invasions force Romans to yield territory
- 285 CE Emperor Diocletian divided the empire and moved his capital to Byzantium (in Anatolia, later Constantinople)

### **THE CHRISTIAN ROMAN EMPIRE**

- 305 CE Constantine became the first Christian emperor
- 315 CE Constantine legalized Christianity in the Roman world
- 324-337 CE Constantine reunited the empire
- 325 CE Council of Niceae solidifies Christian doctrine
- 330 CE Constantine inaugurated the new capital of Constantinople

### **THE FALL OF THE WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE**

- 337-351 CE Constantine's three sons fought to control the empire until Constantius won.
- 361-363 CE The Romans failed to defeat the Persians, and in the process, the Eastern Emperor Julianus was killed
- 363-367 CE Roman generals selected the Eastern Emperors
- 376 CE At the battle of Adrianople in the Balkans, the Visigoths defeated the Romans
- 379-395 CE During the reign of Emperor Theodosius, barbarians were permitted to settle on Roman territory in the Balkans
- 382 CE Roman emperors gave up the title of "Pontus Maximus" (leader of the Church) to the Bishops of Rome
- 383-387 CE British legionnaires supported Magnus Maximus, a rival to Emperor Theodosius's choice for the Western Emperor (Valentinian II), but Theodosius' forces captured and killed him.
- 394 CE Frankish leaders killed the Western Emperor Valentinian II, and were in turn defeated by Theodosius' forces at the Battle of Frigid River, reuniting the Roman Empire again
- 395 CE After his death, heirs to Theodosius divided the Roman Empire for the last time
- 395-423 CE Honorius became the Western Emperor, but was strongly influenced by the Vandal general Stilicho, his son-in-law and commander-of-the-troops
- 396-402 CE Stilicho defeated several attacks by the Visigoths led by Alaric
- 406 CE Several barbarian groups included the Vandals, Alans, Suevi and Burgundians overran Gaul
- 407 CE Roman forces withdrew from Britain, led by Constantine, the troops' choice for emperor
- 408-450 CE A new Eastern Emperor, Theodosius II, took office at age 7.
- 408 CE Honorius ordered the assassination of Stilicho

- 409 CE Alaric's Visigoths invaded northern Italy and set up their own government for the region in defiance of Honorius and the Eastern Emperor
- 410 CE The Visigoths, led by Alaric, sacked Rome
- 423 CE After Honorius' death, Johannes usurped the position of Western Emperor
- 425 CE Forces sent by Theodosius II from the east killed Johannes the usurper and installed Valentinian III as the Western Emperor
- 429-431 CE The Vandals established an independent kingdom in Roman Africa
- 435 CE The Eastern Roman Emperor recognized the independence of the Vandal kingdom in Africa
- 439 CE The Vandals conquered the city of Carthage
- 450 CE Marcian, a general and brother-in-law of Theodosius II, became the new Eastern Emperor
- 450 CE Attila led the Huns, another barbarian group, into Gaul
- 455 CE The Vandals, led by Gaiseric, sacked Rome
- 476 CE For the first time, a barbarian, Romulus Augustus, was named Western Emperor by barbarian generals
- 493 CE Italy incorporated into the barbarian Kingdom of the Ostrogoths

### **THE AFTERMATH**

- 527-565 CE Justinian (Eastern Roman Emperor) reconquered Italy
- 632 CE Foundation of Islam by Mohammed in Mecca
- 1453 CE Constantinople conquered by Ottoman Muslims

**NOTE: Events in the Byzantine Empire are covered later in the course**

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