

## Timeline of Islamic Dynasties

661	Ali is murdered, presumably by a Kharijite extremist. His son Hassan loses a battle for succession to Mu'awiyah and retires to Medina. Mu'awiyah establishes the <a href="#">Umayyad dynasty</a> and transfers the <a href="#">imperial capital</a> to Damascus.
680	Caliph Mu'awiyah dies. His son Yazid succeeds him as Caliph. A <a href="#">struggle</a> with Ali's other son, Hussein, results in the death and mutilation of the latter in a battle at Karbala (in the south of present-day <a href="#">Iraq</a> ). This martyrdom of Hussein becomes a pivotal event for the Shi'a sect of Islam, and is <a href="#">commemorated annually</a> by Shi'a Muslims all over the world as a day of mourning called Ashura . For the Shi'a, Hussein's rebellion was the action of a brave man defying injustice and
681	Uqba Ibn Nafi leads an army into the Maghreb, and arriving at the Atlantic Ocean. The invasion is partially reversed by a Amazigh (Berber) chieftan Kahena.
685	Following the brief reign of Marwan I, the Caliphate of Abd al-Malik restores Umayyad rule and sees the start of the construction of the <a href="#">Dome of the Rock</a> , which will be completed in 691. <a href="#">Arabic emerges</a> as the language of administration, as reflected in the minting of new <a href="#">coinage</a> .
711	Muslim armies <a href="#">conquer most of Spain</a> , under the command of <a href="#">Tariq Ibn Ziyad</a> .
716	Muslim armies reach Constantinople but are unsuccessful at conquering it, despite repeated attempts.
732	The Muslim invaders are defeated by <a href="#">Charles Martel</a> and his knights at the <a href="#">Battle of Tours</a> (Poitiers), in present-day southern France, and retreat back across the Pyrenees. This marks the furthest extent of the Muslim conquest in Western Europe.
724-743	Caliphate of Hisham, which saw the growth of Arabic prose writing. Power shifted from Damascus to Baghdad as Sassanian (Iranian) ideas of absolute monarchy and a highly centralized bureaucracy were adopted.
743	The Caliphate of Walid II begins.
750	A popular uprising beginning in <a href="#">Khurasan</a> (Eastern Iran) and spreading west brings the death of the Umayyad ruling family at the hand of the Caliph Abu al-Abbas al-Saffah, the first Abbasid ruler. The Abbasid dynasty's reign marks the beginning of the <a href="#">golden age of Arabic literature</a> , as the tradition continues an earlier flow of influence from Hellenic and Near Eastern cultures. Although initially powerful, the caliphate of the Abbasid dynasty slowly dissipates until Baghdad is sacked by the Mongols in 1258.
751	Arab forces in Central Asia defeat a Chinese Army at the Battle of Atlakh on the Talas. Of particular importance is that the Arabs learn about paper from the Chinese prisoners. Samarkand initially plays the role of the site of paper production in the Arab world.
755	Accession of the Caliph al-Mansur, Abu Muslim having been assassinated.
756	Spain secedes from the Abbasid Caliphate and a new dynasty is established there under Umayyad leadership.
762	The newly founded city of <a href="#">Baghdad</a> becomes the Abbasid capital.
767	Abu Hanifa al-Numan ibn Thabit, founder of the <a href="#">Hanafi School</a> of Islamic law, dies. Known also as Hanafiyyah, Hanafi law is the first of <a href="#">four orthodox Sunni schools of law</a> .
785-786	Brief Caliphate of al-Hadi, and erection of the Great Mosque at Cordoba.
765	Death of Jafar al-Sadiq, great great grandson of Ali. Shi'i Muslims are divided over which of his sons will continue the Imamate. A minority believe that the elder son, Ismail, is the heir, while the majority believe the line continues with the younger, Musa al-Kazim. They become known as Ismailis and Itha Ashari's (or Twelvers), respectively.

786	The Caliphate of Harun al-Rashid begins. His rule will last until 809, and marks the period of greatest cultural and intellectual achievement under the Abbasid dynasty. It is during his reign that the first anthologies of Hadith (reported sayings of the Prophet) appear, compiled by <a href="#">al-Bukhari</a> and Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj. He will later appear as a central character in many of the tales in the <a href="#">Thousand and One Nights</a> .
795	Malik ibn Anas al-Asbahi, founder of the Maliki school of Islamic law, dies.
800	Harun al-Rashid sends a diplomatic mission to the court of Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor.  - The Abbasid hold on North African territories slips, as Ibrahim ibn al-Aghlab, governor in Ifriqiya (present-day <a href="#">Tunisia</a> ), founds the Aghlabid dynasty there. This dynasty's power will spread beyond Tunisia to a large part of present-day Algeria, Sicily and Italy.  - Islamic merchants reach the Canton area of China.  - Paper factory is established in Baghdad.
813	Al-Ma'mun, son of Harun al-Rashid, defeats his brother after a four-year struggle for power, and becomes Caliph. Al-Ma'mun is a partisan of the Mu'tazilite school of rationalist, speculative Islamic theology that flourished from the eighth to the tenth century.  - Death of Abu Nouwas, by far the most influential of the Abbasid poets and one of the most influential figures in the history of Arabic literature. His poetry, most often addressed to handsome young men, was rich in humor and praised wine and drunkenness.
809	Death of al-Rashid and accession of al-Amin, sparking a crisis of succession.
814	Death of Charlemagne, Emperor of Europe.
820	Death of al-Shafi'i, founder of one of the four Sunni madhhabs .
826-827	Arab invaders conquer Crete and plunder the Greek Isles. They embark on the conquest of Sicily and Sardinia.
829-830	Revolts of the Coptic Christian community, in Egypt.
844	Invasion of Spain and occupation of Seville by the Normans.
c. 847	Death of the mathematician and geographer al-Khwarazmi. The word 'algorithm' comes from his name.
855	Death of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, founder of the Hanbali school of <a href="#">Islamic law</a> .
846	Aghlabid forces rout the Venetian navy and sack Rome and the Vatican, forcing the Pope to flee.
868	Death of <a href="#">al-Jahiz</a> , writer, philosopher, and satirist, and author of such notable works as Kitab al-Hayawan (The Book of Animals) and Kitab al-Bukhala (The Book of Misers).
870	Death of al-Kindi, the first major Arab philosopher. He was influenced by Aristotelian Neo-Platonism, and made significant contributions to such diverse fields as astrology, medicine, and <a href="#">mathematics</a> . Due to European political and social instability since the collapse of the Roman Empire, it was philosophers in Arab centers of learning who preserved and developed Greek philosophy throughout the Middle Ages.
874	The imam accepted by a majority of Shi'i, Muhammad al-Muntazar, disappears. This imam, a child, is the twelfth in the line of imams, and many Shi'i believe he will one day return as the Mahdi, or messiah. Hence this group of Shi'i are known as the Ithna Asharis, or Twelvers.
893	A Zaydi Shi'i state is founded in Yemen, which continues to exist until 1962. Zaydis form a relatively moderate branch of Shi'ism and they believe that any descendant of Ali may be the Imam.
900	Alfonso III of Castile initiates the Christian <i>Reconquista</i> of the Iberian Peninsula.

909	The Shi'ite Fatimid dynasty is established in Kairouan, in present-day <a href="#">Tunisia</a> , bringing an end to the reign of the Aghlabids. Named for Fatima, the wife of Ali, the fourth Caliph, the dynasty is founded under the leadership of Ubayd Allah, an <a href="#">Isma'ili</a> scholar from Syria who claimed descent from Fatima and 'Ali. The Fatimids spread both east (to Egypt) and west across North Africa (to Fez, Tangier, and Ceuta).
912	Caliph Abd al-Rahman III, a strong authoritarian ruler, takes power in al-Andalus (the present-day Andalusia in the south of Spain) and establishes a competing Caliphate in Cordoba. He is a great patron of scholarship and science, and under his rule Cordoba will become one of the <a href="#">great intellectual centers</a> of the medieval world. He struggles with the Fatimids for control of the Maghreb.
929	The Hamdanids, who were Shi'is, come to power in Aleppo and Mosul, though they date back to 905. They will rule there until 1004, and are generous patrons of scholars, historians, poets and philosophers.
935	Death of <a href="#">Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari</a> , a philosopher and theologian noted for having integrated the rationalist methodology of the speculative theologians into the framework of orthodox Islam.  - The city of Algiers is founded.
950	Philosopher al-Farabi dies in Damascus. Of Turkish origin, al-Farabi was regarded as the preeminent scholar of Aristotelian thought in the medieval world, and was in large part responsible for the integration of Aristotle's ideas into Islamic philosophy.
961	The Byzantine Empire regains control of Crete from the Arabs.
965	Death of <a href="#">al-Mutanabbi</a> , regarded by many as the greatest Arab poet in history. He is best known for panegyric poems in ornate language.
969	The Fatimids conquer Egypt and establish Cairo as the center of a new rival imperial Caliphate. The <a href="#">al-Azhar</a> mosque-university is established to train Shi'a missionaries. <a href="#">Al-Azhar</a> is still a major institution of higher learning, but it ceased to promote Isma'ili Shi'ism with the fall of the Fatimids.
1000-1008	Although Muslim forces had reached Sind (northwest India) by 711, the invasions intensified in this later period, culminating in the military genius Mahmud of Ghaznah's victory at Peshawar in 1008 over the army assembled by several Hindu rulers.
973-1048	Life of <a href="#">Al-Biruni</a> , a scientist, mathematician, ethnographer, and overall polyhistor.
1021	Death of al-Hakim, the Fatimid Caliph in Egypt. A group of Ismaili Shi'i are devoted to him, and believe he will return as the messiah. This group becomes known as the Druze.
1000	Viking explorer Leif Eriksson lands in North America.
1031	The Cordoban Caliphate is abolished as Hashim III, the last of the Umayyad caliphs, is expelled. The next fifty years see the gradual fragmentation of rule in Spain into areas led by factional kings
1037	Death of Ibn Sina in Hamadan. Ibn Sina, known in the West as Avicenna, was a Persian physician and one of the most famous and influential Muslim philosopher-scientists. Particularly significant were his contributions to Aristotelian philosophy and to <a href="#">medicine</a> .
1052	Pisa takes Sardinia back from the Arabs.
1062	The Almoravids ( al-Murabitun ), a confederation of Amazigh (Berber) tribes in control of most of <a href="#">Morocco</a> and <a href="#">Algeria</a> , establish the city of <a href="#">Marrakesh</a> under the leadership of Usuf ibn Tashfin. They go on to seize Fez (in Morocco) in 1069, and Algiers (in Algeria) in 1082.
1054	The Great Schism: the Christian church splits into the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox
1064	Death in Spain of Ibn Hazm, a Muslim litterateur, historian, jurist, and theologian.
1064	The Seljuks, a Central Asian dynasty of Turkish descent that converted to Islam in the 990s, conquer Armenia.
1065	The Seljuks build the Nizamiyyah madrasa (school) in Baghdad.

1075	The Seljuks take Syria and Palestine.
1085	In Spain, the Christian king Alfonso VI of Castile seizes Toledo.
1086	The Almoravids reassert Muslim rule in al-Andalus after defeating Alfonso VI.
c. 1091	The <a href="#">Isma'ilis</a> , a Shi'ite sect, foment a revolt against Seljuk and Sunni hegemony and help to set the domestic and international policy of the Fatimids. The <a href="#">Qarmatians</a> meantime controlled East Arabia and remained independent of the growing Fatimid caliphate.
1094	<i>El Cid</i> , a Spanish knight (and later, the hero of an eponymous epic poem), takes Valencia from the Muslims.
1092	Nizam al-Mulk, vizier to the <a href="#">Saljuq Turks</a> , assassinated by an Isma'ili da'i .
1095	At the Council of Clermont, in France, Pope Urban II <a href="#">calls for the First Crusade</a> to take the Holy Land from Muslim rule.
1099	Jerusalem falls to the Christian Crusaders, who indulge in a wholesale slaughter of the city's inhabitants.
1104	The Crusaders seize Acre, a Levantine port city.
1106	Ali ibn Yusuf becomes sultan of the Almoravid dynasty; he will eventually solidify the dynasty's control over most of northwest Africa and Spain.
1111	Death of the theologian, logician, and mystic <a href="#">al-Ghazali</a> in Baghdad.
1130	The Almohads ( al-Muwahhidun ), a strict Sunni dynasty from the area that is now southern <a href="#">Morocco</a> and northern Mauritania, seize control of North Africa and Spain, defeating the Almoravids. Their reign will last until 1269, although from 1225 on their sphere of influence in Europe will be limited to Granada.
1144	The Seljuks take Edessa in Syria, a Christian Crusader principality established during the First
1145	Pope Eugene III, on receiving word of the Muslim capture of Edessa, proclaims the Second Crusade.
1148	The Second Crusade ends in humiliating failure when the demoralized Christian armies are forced to break off their siege of Damascus after only four days.
1171	<a href="#">Saladin</a> ( Salah al-Din ibn Ayyub ) founds the <a href="#">Ayyubid dynasty</a> in Egypt and unifies <a href="#">Syria</a> and <a href="#">Egypt</a> , thus ending the Fatimid dynasty and restoring <a href="#">Sunni control</a> of Egypt. He then directs all his energies towards fighting the Crusaders.
1180-1220	Height of the Khmer Empire in Cambodia.
1185	Death in Marrakesh of Ibn Tufayl, a Moorish physician who served as court physician and general adviser to the Almohad ruler Abu Ya'qub Yusuf from 1163 to 1184.
1187	Saladin <a href="#">recaptures Jerusalem</a> during the Third Crusade. Magnanimous in victory, he gives generous terms to the defeated Christian armies.
1198	Death of the philosopher Ibn Rushd in Marrakesh. Known in the West as Averroës, he was the author of a <a href="#">series of summaries and commentaries</a> on Aristotle and Plato that proved extremely influential in Europe and in the Islamic World for hundreds of years. They were produced by commission of the Almohad caliph Abu Ya'qub Yusuf.
1204	Death of Maimonides, a great Jewish philosopher, jurist and physician. He lived most of his life in Islamic Spain and wrote in both Arabic and Hebrew. His writing marks the zenith of the Judeo-Arabic tradition.
1227	Genghis Khan dies.
1240	Death of <a href="#">Ibn al-'Arabi</a> (known as al-Sheikh al-Akbar ), a Sufi philosopher who was read from Spain to Sumatra, as far south as the Swahili coast and as far afield as modern-day Tatarstan.

1250	The Mamluk Turks, former slaves in the Ayyubid army, establish their dynasty in Egypt.
1249	Oxford University founded in England.
1258	Mongol invaders sack Baghdad and kill its 'Abbasid caliph, dealing a devastating blow to the cultural capital of the Arab world. The Mongols establish the vast Ilkhanid empire that incorporates the eastern part of the Arab world together with Iran. This empire is often in conflict with the Mamluks
1273	Death of <a href="#">Jalal al-Din Rumi</a> (known also as Mawlana ), the Persian Sufi and gifted poet famous for his passionate ecstasies. Rumi founded the Mevlevi tariqah movement of Sufism, characterized by highly formalized whirling dances.
c. 1300	Osman establishes the Ottoman dynasty in Anatolia (in present-day Turkey). Over the course of the next century, Ottoman chieftains will unite the small principalities of Anatolia and go on to conquer large portions of the Balkans at the expense of the fading Byzantine Empire.
1328	Death in Damascus of Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah, one of Islam's most important theologians.
1307	Height of the Mali Empire in west Africa.
1325	Famed traveler Abu 'Abdallah Ibn Battuta begins his epic 33-year journey in Morocco. He eventually visits Mali, Somalia, Arabia, India, the Maldives, and China, among other places. He writes a book about his journeys, which provides valuable insight into contemporary life for modern scholars.
1334	Beginning of the construction of the Alhambra, a fortress and walled city, in Granada.
1347	The Black Death arrives in Alexandria, Constantinople, and Egypt, brought in along trade routes from the East. The disease, believed by many to be a strain of bubonic plague, will kill between a quarter and a third of the population of Europe and the Islamic world over the next handful of
1389	Invading Ottoman armies defeat the Serbs at the battle of Kosovo Polje (the Field of Blackbirds), initiating five hundred years of Ottoman rule over the Balkans.
1402	Timur Lang ( <a href="#">Tamerlane</a> ), a Türkmen Mongol, defeats an Ottoman army at Ankara, dealing a temporary setback to the Ottoman expansion.
1406	Death of <a href="#">Ibn Khaldun</a> , a famous Arab historian best-known for his work al-Muqaddima .
1453	The Ottoman ruler Mehmet II conquers Constantinople and establishes it as the capital of the Ottoman Empire, which at this point extends from the Euphrates to the Danube. An enlightened ruler, Mehmet will transform the conquered Byzantine city -- renamed Istanbul -- into one of the cultural capitals of Islam.
1440	Johannes Gutenberg begins use of the printing press.