
Chronology of Main Events

Date	Event
October 1, 1949	Mao Zedong and the Communist Party of China announce the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC); Zhou Enlai becomes first premier.
December 1949	Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang (KMT) flee to Taiwan.
1950s	
October 1950	China enters the Korean War.
December 24, 1952	China undertakes its first Five-Year Plan (1953–57) focused on economic development.
January 1958	Mao Zedong launches the Great Leap Forward, which is abandoned in 1961.
March 15, 1959	China suppresses a massive uprising in Tibet.
1960s	
June 1960	Sino-Soviet split.
October 11, 1962	China attacks India over border dispute.
October 1964	China successfully tests its first nuclear bomb.
August 13, 1966	Mao Zedong launches the Cultural Revolution, which lasts until 1976.
1970s	
April 1970	China puts its first satellite into orbit.

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Date	Event
July 1971	Henry Kissinger secretly visits China.
October 1971	The Republic of China (ROC) is expelled from the United Nations and the Chinese seat in the General Assembly and Security Council is given to the PRC.
February 21, 1972	President Richard Nixon visits China and signs the Shanghai Communiqué, normalizing relations with the PRC.
April 5, 1975	Chiang Kai-shek dies and is replaced by Chiang Ching-kuo as president of Taiwan.
January 8, 1976	Premier Zhou Enlai dies.
September 9, 1976	Mao Zedong dies and is succeeded initially by Hua Guofeng, who subsequently is outmaneuvered by Deng Xiaoping.
1978	Deng Xiaoping becomes de facto ruler; officially launches the Four Modernizations (agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense), formally marking the beginning of the reform era.
March 1979	China introduces one-child family policy. Deng Xiaoping sets forth the Four Cardinal Principles—to keep to the socialist road, to uphold the people’s democratic dictatorship, leadership by the Communist Party, and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. These four principles define the parameters of permissible dissent in the PRC. Opposition to any one of these principles meets with swift and strong suppression.
January 1979	Deng Xiaoping visits the United States and the Jimmy Carter administration officially recognizes the PRC.
April 1979	The US Congress passes the Taiwan Relations Act.
July 1979	Law of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Joint Ventures comes into force.

Date	Event
1980s	
April 1980	PRC becomes a member of the International Monetary Fund.
May 1980	PRC becomes a member of the World Bank.
August 1980	China's National People's Congress creates four special economic zones in Zhuhai, Xiamen, Shenzhen, and Shantou.
September 1980	Zhao Ziyang is appointed premier.
November 1987	Li Peng becomes premier.
January 13, 1988	Chiang Ching-kuo dies. Lee Teng-hui becomes Taiwan's first native-born president.
March 1989	Protest breaks out in Tibet.
April 15, 1989	Reformist leader Hu Yaobang dies, sparking protests in Tiananmen Square in his memory.
May 15, 1989	Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev visits China.
June 4, 1989	The People's Liberation Army (PLA) opens fire on protestors in Tiananmen Square. The West imposes an arms embargo on China.
1990s	
December 1990	Stock markets open in Shanghai and Shenzhen.
July–October 1991	US Congress links most favored nation (MFN) status to human rights conditions.
1992	China reestablishes friendly relations with Russia.
March 1993	Jiang Zemin becomes president.
May 1993	President Bill Clinton renews MFN but issues executive order requiring China to improve human rights record.
September 1993	President Clinton introduces “constructive engagement” policy for dealing with China.
January 1, 1994	The official renminbi exchange rate and the foreign exchange swap market rate are unified at the latter rate, starting a market-based, managed floating rate system.

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Date	Event
May 1994	President Clinton delinks human rights and MFN.
June–August 1995	Lee Teng-hui visits the United States, prompting Chinese military exercises.
March 1996	China conducts missile tests off the coast of Taiwan and two US aircraft carriers are dispatched. Lee wins Taiwan’s first direct presidential election.
February 19, 1997	Deng Xiaoping dies.
July 1, 1997	Hong Kong is returned to Chinese sovereignty.
September 1997	Deng Xiaoping’s Theory is established as the Party’s guiding ideology alongside Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.
October 1997	President Jiang Zemin visits the United States.
March 1998	Zhu Rongji succeeds Li Peng as premier and announces reforms in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.
July 22, 1998	Jiang Zemin calls on the Chinese military to withdraw from business.
May 8, 1999	Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia accidentally bombed by NATO forces.
November 15, 1999	China and the United States reach a bilateral agreement on China’s accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).
2000s	
March 18, 2000	DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian is elected president in Taiwan’s first change of power between political parties.
October 10, 2000	The United States grants China permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) status, paving the way for WTO accession.
April 1, 2001	2001 collision between a US EP-3 surveillance aircraft and a PLA fighter sours US-China relations.

Date	Event
April 24, 2001	President George W. Bush approves the largest package of arms sales to Taiwan in nearly a decade.
June 15, 2001	Shanghai Cooperation Organization is created from original Shanghai Five members (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) plus Uzbekistan.
July 13, 2001	Beijing is awarded the 2008 Summer Olympics.
August 13, 2001	Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi makes first of several visits to Yasukuni Shrine.
December 11, 2001	PRC joins the WTO.
January 1, 2002	Taiwan joins the WTO.
February 21, 2002	President Bush visits China on the 30th anniversary of President Nixon's visit to China.
September 2002	Chinese officials and representatives of the Dalai Lama meet for the first time since 1991.
November 2002	The Three Represents Theory credited to Jiang Zemin becomes the Party's guiding ideology.
March 2003	Fourth generation of leadership installed: Hu Jintao is president and Wen Jiabao is premier.
March–April 2003	China and Hong Kong are hit by the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus. Strict quarantine measures are enforced to stop the disease from spreading.
August 27–29, 2003	Beijing hosts first round of Six Party Talks between China, the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, and Russia.
October 15, 2003	China launches first manned spacecraft.
November 2003	Zheng Bijian, head of the Central Party School and senior adviser to President Hu Jintao, coins the term "peaceful rise" at the Boao Forum for Asia.
December 2003	Premier Wen Jiabao visits the United States.
March 20, 2004	Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian is reelected.

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Date	Event
November 2004	China reaches open-market agreement with 10 southeast Asian nations that covers 25 percent of the world's population.
March 14, 2005	China's National People's Congress passes an Anti-Secession Law.
April 2005	Widespread anti-Japanese riots throughout China over a Japanese textbook's description of World War II.
July 21, 2005	China's central bank announces that the renminbi will appreciate against the dollar by 2 percent and says that it will peg the renminbi to a basket of currencies and allow it to fluctuate within a narrow 0.3 percent range.
August 1–2, 2005	Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick visits Beijing for the first round of senior dialogues.
August 2, 2005	China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) withdraws its \$18.5 billion bid to buy Unocal Corp., citing "unprecedented political opposition" in the United States.
September 21, 2005	Zoellick delivers a speech that calls for China to be a "responsible stakeholder."
November 13, 2005	Explosion at a chemical plant poisons the Songhua River, cutting off water supplies to millions of people.
November 19, 2005	President Bush visits China.
December 7–8, 2005	The United States and China conduct the second round of senior dialogues.
December 14–15, 2005	First US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) in Beijing. Presidents Bush and Hu establish this Cabinet-level forum to develop strategies to reach shared long-term objectives while managing short-term challenges in the US-China economic relationship.
April 18–21, 2006	Hu Jintao visits the United States, his first state visit.
May 2006	China completes work on the Three Gorges Dam.

Date	Event
July 2006	The China-Tibet railway, the world's highest train route, begins operation.
January 2007	The Chinese military successfully conducts a missile test in space, shooting down an old satellite.
April 2007	Wen Jiabao becomes the first Chinese premier to address Japan's parliament.
May 22–23, 2007	Second US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue in Washington. Leaders from both countries agree to increase market access, open the financial sector, foster energy security, protect the environment, and strengthen the rule of law.
October 2007	The Scientific Development Concept credited to Hu Jintao becomes the Party's guiding socioeconomic ideology.
December 12–13, 2007	Third US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue in Beijing. Both countries agree to conduct extensive cooperation over a 10-year period to address environmental sustainability, climate change and energy security.
January 2008	Snowstorms affect 100 million Chinese and cause severe economic disruption.
March 2008	Anti-China protests erupt in Tibet. KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou is elected president of Taiwan.
May 2008	A severe earthquake in Sichuan kills an estimated 70,000 people.
June 17–18, 2008	Fourth US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue in Annapolis, Maryland. Both countries sign a Ten-Year Energy and Environment Cooperation Framework that sets goals and lays out concrete next steps to address environmental sustainability, climate change, and energy security.
