

The Chronology of Japan's Foreign Policy: 1875-1941

1875	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japanese government annexed the Bonin Is., 500 mi. south of Tokyo Bay. Japan surrendered their claims to the large is. Of Sakhalin. Russia gave up its claims to the so, Kurile Is. 	
1879	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Okinawa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claimed by both Russia and China was annexed by Japan.
1894-95	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sino-Japanese War 	
1902-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Meiji government & Britain concluded the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both countries would remain neutral if the other had to defend its E. Asian interests in war & they agreed to come to each other's aid if a third nation attacked either of them.
1904-05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russo-Japanese War 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treaty of Portsmouth [arbitrated by Pres. Teddy Roosevelt → got the Nobel Peace Prize for his work].
1905	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California citizens demanded that Japanese immigration to the west coast of the US be reduced. 	
1907	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U. S. Immigration Act Meiji government established a protectorate over Korea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japanese immigrants from other countries other than Japan were excluded from the US.
1908-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Gentlemen's Agreement" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Japanese government itself agreed to restrict emigration of Japanese laborers to the US.
1910	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japan annexed Korea. 	
1912	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of the Meiji emperor. Ushered in the era of his son, Yoshihito 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAISHO ERA which lasted until 1925.
1914-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WORLD WAR I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japan sided with the Allied powers even though she had no serious grievances against the Germans. Japan quickly seized the weakly defended German colonies and bases in China and in the Pacific.
1915	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Twenty-One Demands" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese President Yuan Shikai was presented with a list of demands from Japan for special rights & privileges in China. If China agreed, it would have made the Republic of China a Japanese protectorate. An international protest, led by the US, forced the Japanese to greatly scale down their demands.
1917	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secret Treaties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japan was promised Br, Fr, It, & Russian support for its claims to the former German concessions in China and in the Pacific after the war.
1917-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russian Revolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Russian Czar is toppled from power and the Communist Bolsheviks come to power under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin.
1918	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hara Kei became Prime Minister of Japan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The beginning of Japanese Parliamentary government.
1918-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russian Civil War 	
1919	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mansei Revolt of the Koreans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Japanese delegation played a minor role.

	<p>against Japanese rule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paris Peace Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japan received the Mariana, Caroline, & Marshall Islands as League of Nation Mandates. She was disappointed [she wanted outright ownership!].
1921-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington Naval Conference 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4-Power Treaty [Br, Fr, J, US] → pledged to respect each others' island possessions in the Pacific. 9-Power Treaty [4 + Belg, Ch, It, the Neths., Port.] → an open door pact to respect the sovereignty & independence of China during peacetime & its neutrality during war. Shandong Treaty → Japan would return the German-held territory it had occupied in WW I to China. 5-Power Treaty [Br, US, J, Fr, It] → agreed to limit future construction of battleships and aircraft carriers to a ratio of 5:5:3:1:1 respectively.
1922	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communist Party of Japan was organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Party was smashed by police raids and arrests in 1929.
1924	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immigration Act of 1924 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The US Congress limited the amount of Asian immigrants to a few hundred each year. [For the Japanese, this was in violation of the 1908 "Gentleman's Agreement."]
1927	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tanaka memorandum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prime Minister Tanaka Girishi was alleged to have called a meeting of high-ranking government officials to discuss ways for Japan to gain control over China by using Manchuria as a base. The Chinese govt. published the document in 1929 and the Japanese claimed it was a forgery. [but, when Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, she seemed to be following the recommendations in the memo].
1929	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Great Depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event hit Japan hard because it was initially dependent upon its overseas trade, esp. to America.
1930	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London Naval Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prime Minister Yuko failed to demand naval parity {equality} with Britain and the US. He was assassinated on his return to Japan by hotheaded Japanese ultra-nationalists.
1931	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mukden Incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Japanese army created a phony military incident along the Manchurian-Korean border and attacked a Manchurian warlord and his militia. This was the pretext to invade Manchuria. The Japanese army officers took it upon themselves to determine their nation's foreign policy and showed their contempt for the imperial official in Tokyo.
1932	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several moderate veteran Japanese political leaders, high-ranking military officers, and leaders of industry were assassinated by nationalist fanatics. 	
1933	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lytton Commission Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> League of Nations report on the Manchurian problem held Japan guilty of aggression. Japan withdrew its membership in the League of Nations in protest.
1936	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japanese rebellion against militarism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discontented units of the Imperial Guard rebelled against the army and the government. They wanted to restore the authority of the emperor. They killed many close advisors to Emperor Hirohito and the rebellion was suppressed quickly by loyal troops.
1936	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-Comintern Pact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany, Italy, and Japan entered into this anti-communist

		agreement in which they agreed to cooperate with each other in checking the spread of international communism.
1937	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marco Polo Bridge Incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japanese soldiers clashed with Chinese soldiers on the Marco Polo Bridge near Beijing. This began the Japanese move southward into central and southern China. The Second Sino-Japanese War begins.
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1937	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rape of Nanjing 	
1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without the permission of the French Vichy government, the Japanese march into northern Indo-China. 	
1940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tripartite Pact [Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis] The US-Japan Commercial Treaty was allowed to expire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This agreement recognized the leadership of Germany and Italy in Europe and Japan in Asia. The three nations also promised to come to each other's aid if attacked by another nation. The US then stepped up the ban on the export of war materials to Japan, hoping that a shortage of vital supplies would force the Japanese to pull back from its occupation of China.
1941	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japan occupies all of French Indo-China. President Roosevelt freezes all Japanese assets in American banks and levees an embargo of all Japanese products into the US. General Hideki Tojo, War Minister and leader of the military extremists, becomes Japan's Prime Minister. Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere DECEMBER 7 → The Japanese Imperial forces attack the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on Sunday morning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Japanese plan to establish a new international political and military order in Asia. They tried to persuade the East Asian peoples, both conquered and free, that political and economic cooperation with Japan was in their best interests since Japan was the most advanced nation in the region. Japan would produce the manufactured goods and the other Asian countries [Japan's "satellite states"] would produce the agricultural goods and provide raw materials for Japan's factories as well as cheap labor. The United States declares war on the Empire of Japan → "A date which will live in infamy!" [President Roosevelt]