

French Revolution

Key events timeline

1789

May 5th - A meeting of the Estates' general is convened

June 17 - The Third Estate (commoners) declares the National Assembly.

June 20 - Members of the Third Estate take the Tennis Court Oath demanding certain rights from the king.

July 14 - The French Revolution begins with the Storming of the Bastille.

August 26 - The National Assembly adopts the *Declaration of the Rights of man and of the Citizen*.

October 5 - A large group of women (and men) march from Paris to Versailles to demand lower bread prices. They force the king and queen to move back to Paris.

October 6 - The Jacobin Club is formed. Its members become some of the most radical leaders of the French Revolution.

1791

June 20-21 - The "Flight to Varennes" occurs when the royal family, including King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette, attempt to flee France. They are captured and returned to France.

September 14 - King Louis XVI formally signs the new constitution.

October 1 - The Legislative Assembly is formed.

1792

March 20 - The guillotine becomes the official method of execution.

April 20 - France declares war against Austria.

September - The September Massacres occur between September 2 - 7. Thousands of political prisoners are killed before they can be freed by royalist troops.

September 20 - The National Convention is established.

September 22 - The First French Republic is founded.

(turn over)

1793

January 21 - King Louis XVI is executed by guillotine.

March 7 - Civil war breaks out in the Vendee area of France between revolutionaries and royalists.

April 6 - The Committee of Public Safety is formed. It will rule France during the Reign of Terror.

July 13 - Radical journalist Jean-Paul Marat is assassinated by Charlotte Corday.

September 5 - The Reign of Terror begins as Robespierre, the leader of the Committee of Public Safety, declares that terror will be the "order of the day" for the revolutionary government.

September 17 - The Law of Suspects is decreed. Anyone suspected of opposing the revolutionary government is arrested. Thousands of people will be executed over the next year.

October 16 - Queen Marie Antoinette is executed by guillotine.

1794

July 27 - The Reign of Terror comes to an end as Robespierre is overthrown.

July 28 - Robespierre is executed by guillotine.

1795

July 14 - "La Marseillaise" is adopted as the national anthem of France.

November 2 - The Directory is formed and takes control of the government of France.

1799

November 9 - Napoleon overthrows the Directory and establishes the French Consulate with Napoleon as leader of France. This brings an end to the French Revolution.