Chronology of Selected World Events Outside the United States, 1900–1909

1900

- Marie Curie discovers that an atom can spontaneously break apart, releasing energy, in what becomes known as radiation.
- Sigmund Freud publishes *Die Traumdeutung*, later translated as *The Interpretation of Dreams*.
- José Enrique Rodó publishes *Ariel*, a work that heightens anti-U.S. sentiment among South American intellectuals.
- At the Paris Exposition, the elevator is unveiled to the public.
- On January 1, Britain declares northern Nigeria a protectorate, meaning that Britain governed northern Nigeria but did not allow its people to govern themselves.
- On February 27, a group of liberals found the British Labour Representation Labour Committee, which would become the Labour Party.
- On February 28, British forces under the command of Redvers Buller relieve the Boer siege of Ladysmith in South Africa.
- On April 7, the ministers of Germany, France, Britain, and the United States issue an ultimatum to the Chinese government, giving it two months to suppress the Boxer uprising.
- On April 14, the president of France opens the Paris International Exhibition, which covers 547 acres.
- On April 22, the French defeat Rabah Zubayr, conqueror of the Sudan, in the Battle of Kusseri, in present-day Chad.
- On April 26, fire destroys the Canadian cities of Ottawa and Hull. Fire ravages five square miles of buildings, causes $15 million in damage, and leaves twelve thousand people homeless.

- In May, the Police Regulations ban collective bargaining and the right to strike in Japan.
- In May, the Russians occupy Manchuria, and their forces massacre forty-five thousand Chinese inhabitants.
- On May 17, British forces break the siege of Mafeking, South Africa, after 217 days.
- On May 20, the second Olympic Games of the modern era open in Paris. More than one thousand athletes from twenty-two nations compete.
- On May 24, Great Britain annexes the Orange Free State in South Africa.
- On June 12, the German Reichstag announces its intent to expand its naval fleet by thirty-eight battleships over twenty years.
- On June 13, the Boxer Rebellion in China expands into an attack against foreigners within China.
- On July 2, a Zeppelin airship lifts off on its maiden voyage.
- On July 9, Britain establishes the Commonwealth of Australia, effective January 1, 1901.
- On July 29, Umberto of Italy, king since 1878, is assassinated and is succeeded by his son, Victor Emmanuel III, who will remain titular ruler of Italy until 1946, though the fascists will erode his power in the 1920s.
- On August 31, British troops occupy Johannesburg in southern Africa.
- On October 18, Bernhard von Bülow becomes chancellor of Germany, succeeding Chlodwig Karl Hohenlohe, who resigned two days earlier.
- On December 14, German physicist Max Planck announces the quantum theory: energy is not a continuum but instead comes in discrete units called quanta.
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**1901**
- The Trans-Siberian railway links Moscow with the Pacific at Port Arthur in Manchuria, stimulating trade east and west.
- Britain annexes Baluchistan, parts of present-day Pakistan and Iran.
- In June, the June, the Russian Congress adopts a new constitution under the Platt Amendment, which grants the United States a naval base and trade rights.
- In September, Vladimir Lenin founds the Socialist Revolutionary Party of Russia.
- On September 7, the Boxer Rebellion in China ends with the signing of the Peace of Peking between China and Britain, France, Russia and the U.S.
- On November 18, the U.S. and Britain negotiate the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, authorizing construction of the Panama Canal by the United States and ending British treaty rights in the region.
- In December, the Royal Academy of Sweden awards the first Nobel Prizes, which engineer Alfred Nobel had established with a bequest, in physics (Emil von Behring), chemistry (Jacobus Hendricus van’t Hoff), and physiology or medicine (Emil von Behring).
- On December 10, French poet and writer Sully Prudhomme receives the first Nobel Prize in literature.
- On December 10, Jean-Henri Dunant, Swiss founder of the International Red Cross, and Frédéric Passy, French founder of the International League of Peace, share the first Nobel Peace Prize.

**1902**
- French composer Claude Debussy composes Pelléas et Mélisande.
- In 1902 Dutch physician Eugene Dubois withdraws Java Man from scientific scrutiny, stung by criticism from Henry Fairfield Osborn at the American Museum of Natural History that Java Man is the ancestor of the gibbon rather than of humans.
- Polish-born novelist Joseph Conrad publishes “Heart of Darkness…” a novella that exposes the savagery of European colonialism.
- The Times Literary Supplement of London is founded.
- In separate experiments, English physicist Oliver Heaviside and British American electrical engineer Arthur Kennelly discover the existence of an electrified layer of the earth’s atmosphere.
- In April, Russia agrees to remove its forces from Manchuria under the terms of the Russo-Japanese Convention.
- On April 15, troops loyal to Czar Nicholas II crush a peasant uprising in Russia.
- On April 20, at an exhibition of La Société Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris, the Art Nouveau style, whose influence will pervade everything from painting to interior design to the subway entrances of the Paris Métro, is on display.
- In May, British physicists Ernest Rutherford and Frederick Soddy publish an article that describes radioactivity as the release of energy from the nucleus of an atom.
- On May 7, a volcanic eruption on the island of Saint Vincent, in the Windward Islands, kills two thousand inhabitants.
- On May 8, the eruption of Mount Pelée, on the island of Martinique in the Windward Islands, sends a cloud of ash, steam, and gas onto the city of Saint Pierre, killing thirty thousand people.
- On May 20, voters elect Tomás Estrada Palma first president of the independent Republic of Cuba, marking the end of U.S. occupation following the Spanish-American War.
- On May 31, the Peace of Vereeniging ends the Boer War in South Africa.
- In December, British engineers complete the Aswan Dam in Egypt.
- On December 7, Great Britain and Germany demand reparations from Venezuela following a violent takeover of the government in 1899.
- On December 10, German historian Theodor Mommsen, a scholar of ancient Rome, receives the Nobel Prize in literature.
- On December 13, Germany and Britain blockade Venezuela and begin bombing its forts as punishment for Venezuela’s failure to make payments on its international debt.
- On December 18, the Education Act extends primary education to all children in England and Wales.

### 1903
- Willem Einthoven, a Dutch physiologist, develops the string galvanometer, a forerunner of his electrocardiogram (EKG).
- On January 1, Canada and the United States settle their border dispute over Alaska.
- On January 19, the first radio message is transmitted from the United States to England.
- On March 20, French painter Henri Matisse exhibits his paintings at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris.
- In April, Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov reports his experiments in behavior and “conditioned reflexes.”
- In April, Russian anti-Semites kill forty-five Russian Jews and destroy fifteen hundred Jewish homes in a three-day pogrom in Kishinev, Bessarabia.
- In May, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen begins the first successful voyage through the Northwest Passage, the narrow sea connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
- In July, Leo XIII, elected Pope in 1878, dies. In August, the College of the Cardinals elect Pius X his successor.
- On July 30, the Russian Social Democratic Party splits into two wings, the Mensheviks and the more radical Bolsheviks, during a meeting in London. Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin jockey for power among the Bolsheviks.
- In August, Marcel Garin of France wins the first Tour de France, the world’s most prestigious bicycle race.
- In October, British feminist Emmeline Pankhurst founds the Women’s Social and Political Union.
## Chronology of Selected World Events Outside the United States, 1900–1909

### 1904
- On November 3, the U.S. warship *Nashville* arrives off the coast of Colón, Colombia. Colombia refuses President Theodore Roosevelt permission to construct the Panama Canal.
- On November 6, Panama declares its independence from Colombia as a U.S. protectorate.
- On November 18, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty between Panama and the United States cedes control of the Panama Canal Zone to the United States.
- On December 10, Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson wins the Nobel Prize in literature.
- On December 17, the Wright brothers fly successfully at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.
- Joseph Conrad publishes *Nostromo*.
- The Rolls-Royce automobile company begins manufacturing cars in Britain.
- The Abbey Theatre opens in Dublin, Ireland.
- Russian playwright Anton Chekhov writes *The Cherry Orchard*.
- Chemist Francis S. Kipping develops the polymer silicone.
- In January, British scientist John A. Fleming invents the diode vacuum tube, a crucial step in the development of radio.
- From February 8 to February 9, the Russo-Japanese War begins when the Japanese attack the Russian fleet. Japan declares war on 10 February.
- On April 8, France and Britain sign the Entente Cordiale after resolving territorial disagreements over Egypt, Newfoundland, Morocco, and Siam.
- On May 17, France and the Vatican quarrel over who controls the Catholic Church in France.
- In July, French sculptor Auguste Rodin creates one of his best-known works, *The Thinker*.
- From July 1 to November 23, Saint Louis, Missouri, hosts the Summer Olympic Games.
- On July 4, U.S. military and civil engineers begin to dig the Panama Canal.
- On July 7, France prohibits religious orders from teaching in schools and universities.
- In August, Italian Giacomo Puccini composes his opera *Madame Butterfly*.
- On September 7, Britain forces the Dalai Lama, the ruler of Tibet, to sign a treaty granting Britain trading rights in three cities.
- On October 3, the Hottentots and Herero, the indigenous peoples of southwest Africa, rebel against German colonial rule.
- On October 18, France establishes Dakar as the capital of French West Africa.
- On October 21, the Russian navy fires on British fishing vessels in the North Sea, mistaking them for Japanese ships.
- On December 10, French writer Frédéric Mistral and Spanish writer José Echegaray y Eizaguirre share the Nobel Prize in literature.
- On December 12, Ivan Pavlov receives the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for describing the physiology of digestion.

### 1905
- French composer Claude Debussy composes *La Mer*.
- The Fauves (wild beasts), a group of painters led by Henri Matisse and André Derain, stages an exhibition at the Salon d’Automne in Paris.
- On January 1, the Japanese capture the Russian city of Port Arthur.
- On January 22, troops loyal to Czar Nicholas II fire on demonstrators in Saint Petersburg, Russia, in the "Bloody Sunday" massacre, sparking the Russian Revolution of 1905.
- On February 17, Grand Duke Serge, the governor of Moscow, is assassinated in the Kremlin.
- On March 3, Czar Nicholas II of Russia promises religious reforms.
- On May 27, Japan destroys the Russian navy in the Battle of Tsushima.
- On June 7, Norway’s parliament dissolves the union of Norway and Sweden under Oscar II, king of Sweden.
- From June 27 to June 28, the crew of the Russian ship *Potemkin* mutiny in the harbor at Odessa.
- On June 30, Albert Einstein publishes a paper announcing his special theory of relativity.
- In July, Muslims (Maji-Maji) in German East Africa revolt against German control.
- On July 3, both houses of the French legislature endorse a law separating church and state.
- In August, engineers complete the Trans-Siberian Railroad between Moscow and Vladivostok on the Pacific coast.
- On August 20, Chinese nationalist leader Sun Yat-Sen issues his Three People’s Principles—nationalism, democracy, and livelihood for the people—in his first public statement of his philosophy after a decade of secret activities.
- On September 1, Britain establishes Alberta and Saskatchewan as provinces of Canada.
- On September 5, the Treaty of Portsmouth, brokered by U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, gives Japan control of Korea and rights to Port Arthur and Sakhalin Island in recognition of Japan’s victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War.
- On September 27, Norway gains independence from Sweden.
- On September 27, Albert Einstein publishes a paper announcing that mass and energy can transpose one into the other according to the equation: energy equals mass times the speed of light squared ($E = mc^2$).
- In October, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky establishes the first Russian soviet, a council of workers, in Saint Petersburg.
Chronology of Selected World Events Outside the United States, 1900–1909

On March 7, Finland allows everyone older than twenty-four to vote, becoming the first nation to grant women the vote.

On November 28, Irish nationalists establish the Sinn Féin (Ourselves Alone) Party, which aims to end British rule in Ireland.

In December, Albert Einstein publishes two papers, one on the photoelectric effect and the other on Brownian motion.

On December 4, Arthur Balfour, Britain’s Conservative prime minister, resigns after his party splits between protectionists and advocates of free trade.

From December 4 to December 5, a congress meeting in Vilnius declares Lithuania independent from Russia.

On December 5, police loyal to Czar Nicholas II arrest all 230 members of the Saint Petersburg Soviet in an attempt to silence opposition to the czar.

On December 9, the law in France separating church and state takes effect.

On December 10, Polish writer Henryk Sienkiewicz receives the Nobel Prize in literature.

On December 12, German physician Robert Koch receives the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for discovering that a microbe causes tuberculosis.

On December 15, Russian troops crush a citizen uprising in Moscow.

1906

Explorer Roald Amundsen determines the position of the magnetic North Pole.

Spanish architect Antonio Gaudi begins constructing Casa Milá in Barcelona.

The Simplon Tunnel, running 12.3 miles between Brig, Switzerland, and Isella, Italy, opens as the world’s longest railway tunnel.

Tears of Blood by Yi Injik, generally recognized as the first modern novel in Korean, is published in serialized form in a Korean newspaper.

Le Mans, France, hosts that country’s first Grand Prix auto race.

On January 12, the Liberal Party wins in a landslide in Britain, and, led by Prime Minister Henry Campbell-Bannerman, inaugurates a period of social reforms.

On February 10, Britain launches the HMS Dreadnought, prototype of the battleship.

In February, German physicist Walther Hermann Nernst develops the third law of thermodynamics, which states that the entropy (the amount of disorder) of a crystal is zero at zero degrees Kelvin.

In February, Pope Pius X, in the encyclical Vehementer Nos, condemns the separation of church and state in France.

On February 10, Britain launches the HMS Dreadnought, prototype of the battleship.

In March, Britain agrees to pay Dutch residents of South Africa compensation for damages from the Boer War.

On March 7, Finland allows everyone older than twenty-four to vote, becoming the first nation to grant women the vote.

On March 10, a coal-mine explosion in Courières, France, kills more than one thousand miners.

On April 6, Mount Vesuvius erupts, destroying several towns near Naples, Italy.

On April 7, France and Spain agree at the Algeciras Conference, which had begun on January 16, to split Morocco between them.

On May 6, Czar Nicholas II issues the Fundamental Laws, which restore most of the imperial powers he had surrendered in the October Manifesto.

On May 10, the Duma, the Russian parliament, first meets.

On May 19, King Carlos I of Portugal names Jôao Franco, a monarchist, prime minister.

In June, anti-Semites attack Jews throughout Russia.

In July, a peace treaty ends war between Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras in Central America.

On July 4, Britain, France, and Italy agree to guarantee the independence of Ethiopia.

On July 9, troops loyal to Czar Nicholas II prevent the Russian Duma from meeting. Nicholas declares martial law.

On July 12, France’s Supreme Court of Appeals acquits French officer Alfred Dreyfus of treason.

On July 22, Nicholas II dissolves the Duma and begins a crackdown on dissenters.

On August 16, an earthquake in Valparaiso and Santiago, Chile, kills twenty thousand people and causes $300 million in property damage.

In September, the Chinese Imperial Court agrees to the gradual adoption of a constitution.

On September 29, U.S. troops occupy Cuba and repress a liberal uprising against the government of Tomás Estrada Palma.

In October, German bacteriologist August von Wassermann and dermatologist Albert Neisser develop a test for diagnosing syphilis.

In October, the U.S. installs in Cuba a provisional government led by Charles Magoon.

On October 1, Great Britain, Egypt, and Turkey settle their boundary dispute over the Sinai Peninsula, most of which remains under Turkish control.

On October 18, Georges Clemenceau becomes premier of France for the first time.

In November, British physicist Joseph John Thomson discovers gamma rays, a type of light invisible to humans.

In November, Czar Nicholas II exiles Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the 1905 Russian Revolution, to Siberia.

In December, Aga Khan forms the All-India Muslim League, demanding representative government and separate electorates for Muslims in India.

In December, Giuseppe Carducci of Italy receives the Nobel Prize in literature.

On December 21, the Trade Disputes Act limits the liability of trade unions for damages resulting from strikes and makes picketing legal in Britain.

On December 30, the shah of Persia (Iran), Muzaffer-ed-Din, grants the country its first constitution.
1907

- Austrian Gustav Mahler composes his Eighth Symphony, the “Symphony of a Thousand.”
- Spaniard Pablo Picasso paints Les Demoiselles d’Avignon, an early work of the Cubist movement led by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque.
- A secret Russo-Japanese agreement divides Manchuria between Russia and Japan and acknowledges Japanese control of Korea.
- On January 1, Austria grants universal suffrage.
- On January 14, an earthquake in Kingston, Jamaica, kills fourteen hundred people.
- On January 26, the premiere of Irish playwright John Millington Synge’s The Playboy of the Western World at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin provokes public outrage.
- On February 26, Louis Botha, a Dutch settler, is elected prime minister of the Transvaal in southern Africa.
- On March 22, Morocco revolts against French rule.
- In June, Britain launches the Mauritania, the fastest ocean liner of the era, with a top speed of twenty-five knots, ushering in the age of elegant cruise ships.
- On June 14, Norway grants women the vote.
- In July, Britain grants the Orange Free State, settled by the Dutch, autonomy in South Africa.
- On August 10, the world’s most grueling automobile race to date ends when Italy’s Prince Borghese arrives in Paris, having driven eight thousand miles in sixty-two days from Peking (Beijing), China.
- On August 31, Russia and Britain agree to divide central Asia and Persia (Iran) into separate “spheres of influence”.
- In September, Maria Montessori, who had earlier pioneered the education of children with low capabilities, opens in Rome her first school for average children.
- On September 6, Pope Pius X in the encyclical Pascendi Gregis condemns modernism.
- On September 26, Britain elevates New Zealand from colony to dominion.
- On October 12, the Cape Colony and Natal meet with the former Boer states of the Transvaal and Orange Free State to form the Union of South Africa.
- On October 18, Leopold II gives the Belgian parliament supervision.
- On November 30, Japan and the United States sign the Root-Takahira Agreement. Both nations pledge not to establish colonies in China and to respect each other’s Pacific possessions.
- On December 28, French Impressionist painter Henri Matisse publishes “Notes d’un peintre” in La Grande Revue, setting forth his principles of art.

1908

- Hungarian composer Béla Bartók composes his First String Quartet.
- Ecce Homo, the autobiography of German philosopher and poet Friedrich Nietzsche, is published posthumously.
- Charles Pathé shows the first newsreel in a Paris theater.
- German chemist Fritz Haber synthesizes ammonia.
- On January 24, Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell forms the Boy Scouts.
- On February 20, Emilio Marineti publishes the Futurist Manifesto, galvanizing a school of Italian artists fascinated with movement and action and scornful of past artistic achievements.
- On April 8, Herbert Asquith, chancellor of the exchequer, becomes prime minister of Britain following the resignation of Henry Campbell-Bannerman.
- From April 27 to October 31, London, England, hosts the fourth Summer Olympic Games of the modern era.
- On May 26, geologists discover oil in Persia (Iran), igniting an oil boom in western Asia and leading to the discovery of other oil deposits.
- On June 7, an earthquake kills eighty-three thousand Italians in Calabria and Sicily.
- On July 24, the “Young Turks” force Abdülhamid II, sultan of the Ottoman Empire, to restore the constitution of 1876.
- On July 25, Louis Blériot achieves the first crossing of the English Channel in a heavier-than-air machine.
- In August, Cuba holds the first general elections under U.S. supervision.
- In September, a cholera epidemic claims more than seventy-one hundred lives in Russia, with nearly two thousand deaths in Saint Petersburg alone.
- On October 5, Bulgaria declares independence from the Ottoman Empire.
- On October 6, Austria annexes the former Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where tensions will precipitate the First World War in 1914.
- On October 12, the Cape Colony and Natal meet with the former Boer states of the Transvaal and Orange Free State to form the Union of South Africa.
- On October 18, Leopold II gives the Belgian parliament control over the Belgian Congo (in Africa), which he had held as a personal possession.
- On November 14, the Chinese government announces the deaths of Kuang Hsi, the Chinese emperor since 1875, and his empress, Tzu Hsi. Hsüan-T’ung, the emperor’s infant nephew, becomes the last emperor of the Manchu dynasty.
- On November 30, Japan and the United States sign the Root-Takahira Agreement. Both nations pledge not to establish colonies in China and to respect each other’s Pacific possessions.
- On December 11, German bacteriologist Paul Ehrlich shares the Nobel Prize in medicine with immunologist Elie Metchnikoff.
- On December 28, French Impressionist painter Henri Matisse publishes “Notes d’un peintre” in La Grande Revue, setting forth his principles of art.

1909

- Rafael Reyes Prieto is ousted as president of Colombia, following his recognition of the independence of Panama in a treaty with the United States.
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- On January 1, astronomers in London report the possibility of a planet in the solar system beyond Neptune.
- On January 9, British explorer Ernest Henry Shackleton misses reaching the South Pole by one hundred miles.
- On January 18, brewers in New Zealand decide to abolish barmaids and to ban women from purchasing alcohol in bars.
- On February 9, a British court forbids a wife from divorcing her husband, even if he leaves her.
- On March 27, German writer Rudolf C. Eucken delivers his Nobel lecture. He won the 1908 Nobel Prize for literature but did not receive the award until 1909.
- On April 6, Robert Peary reaches the North Pole, though his achievement will remain in dispute for decades.
- On April 13, Armenians rebel against Ottoman rule following a massacre by the sultan’s troops at Adana in southern Turkey.
- On April 18, Pope Pius X beatifies Joan of Arc in Rome.
- On May 18, Sergey Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes perform for the first time in Paris.
- On May 25, a Russian court jails the publisher of Leo Tolstoy’s “Thou Shalt Not Kill” but does not prosecute Tolstoy, whose eminence as a novelist makes him unassailable.
- On June 11, an earthquake in Provence, in southern France, kills sixty people.
- On June 26, the shah of Persia (Iran) annuls a new election law and postpones adoption of a constitution.
- In August Dutch zoologist Wilhelm Johannsen defines gene, genotype, and phenotype.
- In August, troops crush an uprising in Barcelona, Spain.
- On August 28, American Glenn Curtiss wins the first airplane race for the Gordon Bennett Cup in Rheims, France, with an average speed of 47 mph.
- On October 10, the execution of Spanish anarchist Francisco Ferrer ignites protests across Europe.
- On November 28, the French national assembly endorses a law granting pregnant women an eight-week leave from their jobs.
- On December 10, Selma Lagerlöf of Sweden receives the Nobel Prize in literature.