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| 1861 | 3 March | [*Emancipation reform of 1861*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emancipation_reform_of_1861): [Alexander](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_II_of_Russia) issued a manifesto emancipating the [serfs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serfdom); |
| 1881 |  | Constitution proposed, Alexander II agrees to it but doesn't get a chance to sign it |
| 10 March | [Alexander](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_II_of_Russia) was assassinated by [Ignacy Hryniewiecki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignacy_Hryniewiecki) of the [People's Will](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narodnaya_Volya_(organization)).  His son, [Alexander III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_III_of_Russia), becomes tsar. |
| 1894 | 1 November | [Alexander III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_III_of_Russia) dies. His son [Nicholas II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia) succeeds him as tsar. |
|  | 17 November | At the second congress of the [RSDLP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Social_Democratic_Labour_Party), the party split into two factions:  the [Bolsheviks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolshevik), led by [Vladimir Lenin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Lenin), and the less radical [Mensheviks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menshevik). |
|  | 9 January | [*Bloody Sunday (1905)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloody_Sunday_(1905)): Peaceful demonstrators arrived at the [Winter Palace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter_Palace)  in [Saint Petersburg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Petersburg) to present a petition to the tsar. The [Imperial Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Imperial_Guard) fired  on the crowd, killing around 200 and wounding 800. |
| 17 October | *Russian Revolution of 1905*: [Nicholas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia) signed the [October Manifesto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/October_Manifesto),  expanding civil liberties and establishing and  empowering the first [State Duma (Parliament) of the Russian Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire). |
| 1906 | March | [*Russian legislative election, 1906*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_legislative_election,_1906): The first free elections to the [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire)  gave majorities to liberal and socialist parties. |
| 23 April | The [Fundamental Laws](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Constitution_of_1906) were issued, reaffirming the autocratic  supremacy of the tsar. |
| The First [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) was called. |
| 21 July | The First [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) was dissolved. |
| 20 February | The Second [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) began. |
| 3 June | The Second [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) was dissolved. |
| [Nicholas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia) changed the electoral law and gave greater electoral  value to the votes of nobility and landowners. |
| 1 November | The Third [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) began. |
| 1912 | 4 April | [*Lena goldfields massacre*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lena_massacre): The Russian army fired on a crowd of  striking miners, killing 150. |
| 9 June | The Third [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) ended. |
| 15 November | The Fourth [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire) was called. |
| 1914 | 28 June | [*Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Archduke_Franz_Ferdinand): [Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archduke_Franz_Ferdinand_of_Austria)  was assassinated by [Gavrilo Princip](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gavrilo_Princip) of  the [Bosnian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bosnia_and_Herzegovina) separatist group [Young Bosnia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_Bosnia). |
| 28 July | *World War I*: [Austria-Hungary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austria-Hungary) declared war on [Serbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Serbia). |
| 30 July | *World War I*: Russia mobilized its army to defend [Serbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Serbia). |
| 1 August | *World War I*: [Germany](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Empire) declared war on Russia in defense of [Austria-Hungary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austria-Hungary). |
| 1915 | 2 May | [*Gorlice-Tarnów Offensive*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gorlice-Tarn%C3%B3w_Offensive): The [German](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Empire) army launched an offensive  across the length of the [Eastern Front](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Front_(World_War_I)). |
| 1917 | 22 February | [*February Revolution*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/February_Revolution): The workers at the [Putilov Plant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirov_Plant) in [Petrograd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Petersburg) went on strike. |
| 23 February | *February Revolution*: A series of demonstrations were held, demanding  the end of the Russian autocracy and the end of Russian participation in World War I. |
| 25 February | *February Revolution*: A battalion of soldiers was sent to [Petrograd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Petersburg) to  end the uprising. |
| 26 February | *February Revolution*: [Nicholas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia) ordered the dissolution of the  Fourth [Duma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Duma_of_the_Russian_Empire).  The Duma ignored his order and decreed the establishment of a  [Provisional Government](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Provisional_Government) with [Georgy L'vov](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgy_L%27vov) as [Prime Minister](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Russia). |
| 27 February | *February Revolution*: The soldiers sent to suppress the protestors  defected and joined them.  [Menshevik](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menshevik) leaders were freed from the [Peter and Paul Fortress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_and_Paul_Fortress) and  founded the [Petrograd Soviet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrograd_Soviet). |
| 2 March | *February Revolution*: Tsar [Nicholas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia) abdicated (Gave up throne) |

**Abdication of Nikolai II, March 15, 1917**

By the Grace of God, We, Nikolai II, Emperor of All the Russias, Tsar of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, and so forth, to all our faithful subjects be it known:

In the days of a great struggle against a foreign enemy who has been endeavouring for three years to enslave our country, it pleased God to send Russia a further painful trial.

Internal troubles threatened to have a fatal effect on the further progress of this obstinate war. The destinies of Russia, the honour of her heroic Army, the happiness of the people, and the whole future of our beloved country demand that the war should be conducted at all costs to a victorious end.

The cruel enemy is making his last efforts and the moment is near when our valiant Army, in concert with our glorious Allies, will finally overthrow the enemy.

In these decisive days in the life of Russia we have thought that we owed to our people the close union and organisation of all its forces for the realisation of a rapid victory; for which reason, in agreement with the Imperial Duma, we have recognized that it is for the good of the country that we should abdicate the Crown of the Russian State and lay down the Supreme Power.

Not wishing to separate ourselves from our beloved son, we bequeath our heritage to our brother, the Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich, with our blessing for the future of the Throne of the Russian State.

We bequeath it our brother to govern in full union with the national representatives sitting in the Legislative Institutions, and to take his inviolable oath to them in the name of our well-beloved country.

We call upon all faithful sons of our native land to fulfill their sacred and patriotic duty of obeying the Tsar at the painful moment of national trial and to aid them, together with the representatives of the nation, to conduct the Russian State in the way of prosperity and glory.

May God help Russia.

**Declaration from the Throne by Grand Duke Mikhail, March 16, 1917**

A heavy task has been entrusted to me by the will of my brother, who has given me the Imperial Throne at a time of unprecedented war and domestic strife.

Animated by the same feelings as the entire nation - namely, that the welfare of the country overshadows all other interests - I am firmly resolved to accept the Supreme Power only if this should be the desire of our great people, which must, by means of a plebiscite, through their representatives in the Constituent Assembly, establish the form of government and the new fundamental law of the Russian State.

Invoking God's blessing, I therefore request all citizens of Russia to obey the Provisional Government, set up on the initiative of the Duma and invested with plenary powers, until, within as short a time as possible, the Constituent Assembly, elected on a basis of universal, equal, and secret suffrage, shall express the will of the nation regarding the form of government to be adopted.

Source: *The Times*, 19 March 1917.

 