

Asian Dynasties, Empires, and Ruling Houses

Version 3.0

*Dynasties are listed chronologically. **Bolded terms** appear frequently in tossups.*

"Place" refers to the kingdom or polity with which the dynasty or house is primarily associated.

"Period" refers to the approximate time during which the dynasty or house maintained active power.

"Founded" indicates the establishment of the dynasty or house as a ruling power, and not as a family.

For China, see Chinese Dynasties Cheat Sheet.

India and South Asia

Dynasty	Period	Details
<u>Mauryan</u> Empire	300s-100s BCE	founded by Chandragupta , considered the unifier of India, whose mentor, Chanakya, wrote the political treatise <i>Arthashastra</i> ; his grandson, Ashoka , converted to Buddhism after the Kalinga War, and issued the Rock Edicts ; capital at Pataliputra ; frequently used a four-lion motif, as in Ashoka's pillar at Sarnath
<u>Gupta</u> Empire	200s-500s	Indian Golden Age, during which Sanskrit literature flourished; rulers included Samudra and Chandragupta I and II, but not Chandragupta Maurya (see above)
<u>Mughal</u> Empire	1500s-1800s	Shah Jahan , who built the Taj Mahal ; founded by Babur , who defeated Ibrahim Lodi at the first Battle of Panipat; Akbar ("the great") abolished the jizya tax on non-Muslims, which was reinstated by Aurangzeb ; finally defeated after the Sepoy Mutiny , with the establishment of the British Raj; Afsharid ruler Nader Shah took the Koh-i-Noor diamond when he sacked the Mughal capital

West Asia

Dynasty	Place and Period	Details
<u>Achaemenid</u> Empire	Persia, 500s-300s BCE	also called the (First) Persian Empire ; Darius the Great (Darius I) was defeated at the Battle of Marathon; Herodotus wrote extensively about the conquests of Xerxes the Great (Xerxes I); founded by Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II); last ruler, Darius III , was defeated by Alexander the Great at the Battles of Issus and Gaugamela
<u>Safavid</u> dynasty	Iran, 1500s-1700s	led by Abbas the Great ; frequently fought the Ottomans, including under Ismail I ; established Shia Islam, particularly Twelver Shiism, in Persia/Iran
House of <u>Saud</u>	Saudi Arabia, 1700s-current	currently led by King Salman , whose father, Abdulaziz , founded the modern dynasty, and whose successor is Crown Prince Mohammed ; recognized by the UK in the 1927 Treaty of Jeddah ; rulers include King Faisal ; observes strict Wahhabism

East Asia

Dynasty	Place and Period	Details
<u>Joseon</u> dynasty	Korea, 1300s-1800s	the kingdom was expanded by Sejong the Great , who also created the still-used hangul writing system; under Yi Sun-shin, used turtle ships to repel an invasion by Toyotomi Hideyoshi of Japan; founded by Yi Seong-gye; final dynasty before Emperor Gojong created the Korean Empire
<u>Nguyễn</u> dynasty	Vietnam, 1800s	final dynasty of Vietnam, whose last ruler was Bảo Đại