

TIMELINE

The centuries BCE and CE are mirror images of each other. The years go backwards before the year 1 CE. So someone born in 2000 BCE who died in 1935 BCE would have lived to be 65 years old. On both sides of the “mirror,” the 200s can also be called the 3rd century, the 900s are called the 10th century, and so on—BCE as well as CE.

BCE

7000

Neolithic era; agriculture begins in the Indus Valley; craftspeople make stone beads and shell bangles in Mehrgarh

5500

Artisans make pottery and copper and bronze tools in Mehrgarh

4500

Potters make identification marks on pottery

3900

Stone beads and shell bangles used in Harappa

3500

Potters' wheels used at Mehrgarh



3300

Early writing at Harappa

2800–2600

Early Harappan period; first mud-brick city walls built



2600–1900

Indus Valley civilization develops; Harappan period; large, planned cities emerge throughout the Indus region

2600

Villagers of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro build drains and baked-brick houses

1900–1300

Indus cities decline

1700–1500

Rig Veda, the oldest part of the Vedas, compiled

1500–1200

Earliest use of iron and horses in South Asia

1500–800

Vedic communities spread from Indus to Ganga River valley; the later Vedas, a collection of hymns, mantras, and religious instructions, compiled

1000–600

Early Hindu epic poems *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are first composed



700–500

Brahmin influence, the foundation of later Hinduism, spreads throughout northern subcontinent

600–500

Buddhism and Jainism (nonviolence) emerge

558–529

Persians invade under Cyrus the Great

Between 420–350

Buddha dies and attains Nirvana

Between 400–300

Kautilya writes *Arthashastra*

327–325

Greeks invade under Alexander the Great

326

Alexander and Porus wage battle, ending in a truce and friendship



325

Alexander and most of his army leave the Indus Valley and return to Babylon

321–297

Chandragupta Maurya reigns

302

Megasthenes, ambassador of Selukos, visits court of Chandragupta Maurya

269–232

Ashoka reigns

261

Ashoka supports Buddhism

200 BCE–200 CE

Buddhist influence reaches its height



185

Mauryan dynasty ends

50 BCE–150 CE

Kushana invade and Kanishka rules; Gandhara art flourishes; Buddhism splits into several sects

CE

200–300

Laws of Manu are codified

250

Sanskrit literature develops

320–335

Chandra Gupta I reigns

320–540Gupta era; arts and sciences flourish and *Panchatantra* written**335–376**

Samudra Gupta reigns

**376–415**

Chandra Gupta II reigns

About 400

Kalidasa, Sanskrit poet and writer, active

405–411

Fa Hien visits India

415–455

Kumara Gupta reigns

454

White Huns first invade, destroy religious centers and major cities

455–467

Skanda Gupta reigns, defeats the first Hun invaders

476–550

Astronomer Aryabhata active

495

White Huns invade once again, establish small kingdoms in the north

580–632

Prophet Muhammad lives

595

Earliest use of zero

630–643

Xuanzang visits India

712

Arabs occupy Sindh; introduction of Islam to South Asia

