Timeline of the French Revolution

**Estates General** (3 Orders: Clergy, 300 reps.; Nobility, 300 reps.; "Third Estate," 600 reps.)

May 5, 1789: After bad harvests and costly wars, King Louis XVI is forced to convene this ancient assembly to raise taxes.

**National Assembly (1789-1791)** (3rd Estate declares itself the "Assembly of the Nation," June 17, 1789)

**June 29, 1789**: Tennis Court Oath. Nat. Ass. resolves not to disband until it has written a constitution.   
**July 14, 1789:** Bastille stormed and taken by a Paris mob.   
July 19-Aug. 3, 1789: Great Fear. Peasants attack noble manors.   
Aug. 4, 1789: Nobles in National Assembly renounce feudal rights; Jacobin Club formed  
Aug. 27, 1789: Assembly issues Declaration of the Rights of Man.   
Oct. 5-6, 1789: King Louis brought from Versailles to Tuileries palace in Paris.   
July 12, 1790: Assembly issues Civil Constitution of the Clergy, requiring elections and oaths.   
June 20-21, 1791: King flees to Austria, is caught at Varennes.   
Aug. 27, 1791: Austria and Prussia call for support of French King ("Declaration of Pillnitz")

Sept. 1791: National Assembly issues Constitution; elections are held.

**Legislative Assembly (October 1791-August 1792)** (Constitutional Monarchy, government by elected officials)

Apr. 20, 1792: France declares war on Austria and Prussia  
**Aug. 10, 1792**: Paris mob storms royal palace; Commune seizes Assembly; Legislative Assembly falls. Minister of Justice Danton purges thousands of presumed traitors. Marie Antoinette doesn’t say “Let them eat cake.”   
Sept. 20, 1792: French army stops Prussians and Austrians at Valmy (Belgium).

**National Convention (Sept. 1792-1795)** (elected by universal male suffrage to rewrite constitution)

Sept. 21, 1792: Convention abolishes monarchy and declares France a republic  
Oct. 1792: Revolutionary calendar introduced; Sept. 22, 1792=day 1.   
Jan. 21, 1793: Convention condemns and executes the King  
Feb. 1793: Convention declares war on 1st Coalition of Austria, Prussia, Britain, Holland and Spain.   
Feb. 1793: Counter-revolutionary revolt in the Vendee begins.   
**March 1793**: "Reign of Terror" by Committee of Public Safety (Robespierre) begins.   
Aug. 23, 1793: Levy-in-Mass (military draft) instituted.   
Fall 1793: price controls, dechristianization, administrative reform   
Apr. 4, 1794: Danton executed.   
June 26, 1794: French victory over Austrians at Fleurus (Belgium).   
**July 28, 1794**: "Thermidorian Reaction:" Robespierre executed, end of terror  
Feb. 21, 1795: Churches reopened.

Feb- Jun 1795: The White Terror: period of violence led by an alleged Royalist group called “The Companions of Jehu”  
Aug. 22, 1795: New constitution is adopted, forming the Directory.

**Directory (1795-1799)** (New constitution has 2 houses: Council of Ancients and Council of 500)

Oct. 5, 1795: Napoleon's "Whiff of Grapeshot" save the Directory from a royalist mob.   
Sept. 4, 1797: Coup d'état removes royalists from Directory.   
Oct. 17, 1797: French defeat Austrians in northern Italy and make peace.

1798: French capture Switzerland, Rome and Naples; suffer bad defeat in Egypt (Aug. 1).   
Spring 1799: 2nd Coalition of Austria, Russia, Turkey and Great Britain drive French Army back.   
**Nov. 9, 1799:** Napoleon's coup d'état abolishes Directory and establishes Consulate.

**Consulate (1799-1804)** (Constitution of 1800 has executive of 3 consuls)

1801-2: Napoleon makes peace with Austria and Britain, Concordat with the pope.   
1803: Renewed war with Britain.   
1804: Napoleonic Code promulgated.

**Empire (1804-1815)** (Napoleon crowns himself emperor)

1805: 3rd Coalition (Austria, Britain and Russia) moves against France.   
1805-09: French victories; "republics" set up throughout Europe, Spain resists.   
1812: Napoleon suffers major defeat in Russia (40,000 of 611,000 survive).   
1814: Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia defeat France, Napoleon sent to Elba.   
Mar. 1815: Napoleon returns to France for "100 days."   
June 18, 1815: British and Prussians defeat Napoleon at Waterloo; Louis 18th restored.