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[Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo) was the 124th [Emperor of Japan](/wiki/Emperor_of_Japan) according to the [traditional order of succession](/wiki/List_of_Emperors_of_Japan), reigning from December 25, 1926, until his death on January 7, 1989. He was succeeded by his eldest son, [Akihito](/wiki/Akihito), upon his death. Although better known outside Japan by his personal name [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo), in Japan, he is now referred to primarily by his [posthumous name](/wiki/Posthumous_name) Emperor Shōwa. The word [*Shōwa*](/wiki/Shōwa_period) is the [name of the era](/wiki/Japanese_era_name) that corresponded with the Emperor's reign, and was made the Emperor's own name upon his death. The name Hirohito (裕仁) means "abundant benevolence".

At the start of his reign, Japan was already one of the [great powers](/wiki/Great_power) — [the ninth-largest economy in the world](/wiki/List_of_regions_by_past_GDP_(PPP)), [the third-largest naval power](/wiki/Washington_Naval_Treaty), and one of the four permanent members of the council of the [League of Nations](/wiki/League_of_Nations).[[1]](#cite_note-1) He was the [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state) under the limitation of the [Constitution of the Empire of Japan](/wiki/Meiji_Constitution) during Japan's imperial expansion, militarization, and involvement in [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II). After the war, he was not prosecuted for [war crimes](/wiki/Japanese_war_crimes) as many other leading government figures were, and his degree of involvement in wartime decisions remains controversial among historians.<ref name=matsuno2729>Y. Yoshimi and S. Matsuno, *Dokugasusen Kankei Shiryô II, Kaisetsu, Jugonen Sensô Gokuhi Shiryoshu*, 1997, pp. 27–29.</ref> During the [postwar period](/wiki/Postwar_Japan), he became the symbol of the new state and Japan's recovery, and by the end of his reign, Japan had emerged as the world's [second largest economy](/wiki/List_of_regions_by_past_GDP_(PPP)).

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## Early life[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[thumb|left|upright|Hirohito in 1902 as a baby](/wiki/File:Michi-no-miya_Hirohito_1902.jpg) [upright|left|thumb|](/wiki/File:Emperor_Taisho's_sons_1921.jpg)[Emperor Taishō's](/wiki/Emperor_Taishō) four sons in 1921: Hirohito, [Takahito](/wiki/Prince_Mikasa), [Nobuhito](/wiki/Prince_Takamatsu) and [Yasuhito](/wiki/Prince_Chichibu) Born in Tokyo's Aoyama Palace (during the reign of his grandfather, [Emperor Meiji](/wiki/Emperor_Meiji)) (now contained within the [Akasaka Palace](/wiki/Akasaka_Palace)), Hirohito was the first son of [Crown Prince](/wiki/Crown_Prince) Yoshihito (the future [Emperor Taishō](/wiki/Emperor_Taishō)) and Crown Princess Sadako (the future [Empress Teimei](/wiki/Empress_Teimei)).[[2]](#cite_note-2) He was the grandson of [Emperor Meiji](/wiki/Emperor_Meiji) and [Yanagihara Naruko](/wiki/Yanagihara_Naruko). His childhood title was [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo). On the 70th day after his birth, Hirohito was removed from the court and placed in the care of the family of Count [Kawamura Sumiyoshi](/wiki/Kawamura_Sumiyoshi), a former vice-admiral, who was to rear him as if he were his own grandchild. At the age of 3, Hirohito and his brother Chichibu were returned to court when Kawamura died – first to the imperial mansion in [Numazu, Shizuoka](/wiki/Numazu,_Shizuoka), then back to the Aoyama Palace.[[3]](#cite_note-3) In 1908, he began elementary studies at the [Gakushūin](/wiki/Gakushūin) (Peers School).

[thumb|Prince Hirohito and British Prime Minister](/wiki/File:Crown_Prince_Hirohito_and_Lloyd_George_1921.jpg) [Lloyd George](/wiki/Lloyd_George), 1921 When his grandfather, [Emperor Meiji](/wiki/Emperor_Meiji), died on July 30, 1912, Hirohito's father, Yoshihito, assumed the throne and Hirohito became the heir apparent. At the same time, he was formally commissioned in both the army and navy as a second lieutenant and ensign, respectively, and was also decorated with the Grand Cordon of the [Order of the Chrysanthemum](/wiki/Order_of_the_Chrysanthemum). In 1914, he was promoted to the ranks of lieutenant in the army and sub-lieutenant in the navy, then to captain and lieutenant in 1916. He was formally proclaimed Crown Prince and [heir apparent](/wiki/Heir_apparent) on November 2, 1916; but an investiture ceremony was not strictly necessary to confirm this status as heir to the throne.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Hirohito attended [Gakushūin](/wiki/Gakushūin) Peers' School from 1908 to 1914 and then a special institute for the crown prince (Tōgū-gogakumonsho) from 1914 to 1921. In 1920, Hirohito was promoted to the rank of Major in the army and Lieutenant Commander in the navy. In 1921, Hirohito took a six-month tour of [Europe](/wiki/Europe), including the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom), [France](/wiki/France), Italy, the [Netherlands](/wiki/Netherlands), and [Belgium](/wiki/Belgium). After his return to Japan, he became [Regent](/wiki/Regent) of Japan ([Sesshō](/wiki/Sesshō_and_Kampaku)) on November 29, 1921, in place of his ailing father who was affected by a mental illness. In 1923, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the army and Commander in the navy, and to army Colonel and Navy Captain in 1925.

During Hirohito's regency, a number of important events occurred:

In the [Four-Power Treaty](/wiki/Four-Power_Treaty) on Insular Possessions signed on December 13, 1921, Japan, the United States, Britain, and France agreed to recognize the status quo in the Pacific, and Japan and Britain agreed to terminate formally the [Anglo-Japanese Alliance](/wiki/Anglo-Japanese_Alliance). The [Washington Naval Treaty](/wiki/Washington_Naval_Treaty) was signed on February 6, 1922. Japan withdrew troops from the [Siberian Intervention](/wiki/Siberian_Intervention) on August 28, 1922. The [Great Kantō earthquake](/wiki/Great_Kantō_earthquake) devastated Tokyo on September 1, 1923. On December 27, 1923, [Daisuke Namba](/wiki/Daisuke_Namba) attempted to assassinate Hirohito in the [Toranomon Incident](/wiki/Toranomon_Incident) but his attempt failed. During interrogation, he claimed to be a [communist](/wiki/Japanese_Communist_Party) and was executed but some have suggested that he was in contact with the Nagacho faction in the Army.[[5]](#cite_note-5) The [General Election Law](/wiki/General_Election_Law) was passed on May 5, 1925, giving all men above age 25 the right to vote.

## Marriage and children[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|upright|Prince Hirohito and his wife, Princess Nagako, in 1924](/wiki/Image:Emperor_Hirohito_and_empress_Kojun_of_japan.JPG) Prince Hirohito married his distant cousin Princess Nagako Kuni (the future [Empress Kōjun](/wiki/Empress_Kōjun)), the eldest daughter of [Prince Kuniyoshi Kuni](/wiki/Prince_Kuniyoshi_Kuni), on January 26, 1924. They had two sons and five daughters.

The daughters who lived to adulthood left the imperial family as a result of the American reforms of the Japanese imperial household in October 1947 (in the case of Princess Shigeko) or under the terms of the [Imperial Household Law](/wiki/Imperial_Household_Law) at the moment of their subsequent marriages (in the cases of Princesses Kazuko, Atsuko, and Takako).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Birth** | **Marriage** | | **Issue** |
| [Shigeko, Princess Teru](/wiki/Shigeko_Higashikuni) | December 6, 1925 died, July 23, 1961 || October 10, 1943 || [Prince Morihiro Higashikuni](/wiki/Morihiro_Higashikuni) || Prince Nobuhiko Higashikuni Princess Fumiko Higashikuni Naohiko Higashikuni Hidehiko Higashikuni Yūko Higashikuni |  |  |  |
| [Sachiko, Princess Hisa](/wiki/Sachiko,_Princess_Hisa) | September 10, 1927 died, March 6, 1928 || || || |  |  |  |
| [Kazuko, Princess Taka](/wiki/Kazuko_Takatsukasa) | September 30, 1929 died, May 28, 1989 || May 21, 1950 || [Toshimichi Takatsukasa](/wiki/Takatsukasa_Toshimichi) || Naotake Takatsukasa (adopted) |  |  |  |
| [Atsuko, Princess Yori](/wiki/Atsuko_Ikeda) | March 7, 1931 | October 10, 1952 | Takamasa Ikeda |  |
| [Akihito, Emperor of Japan](/wiki/Akihito) | December 23, 1933 | April 10, 1959 | [Michiko Shōda](/wiki/Empress_Michiko) | [Naruhito, Crown Prince of Japan](/wiki/Naruhito,_Crown_Prince_of_Japan) [Fumihito, Prince Akishino](/wiki/Fumihito,_Prince_Akishino) [Sayako, Princess Nori](/wiki/Sayako_Kuroda) |
| [Masahito, Prince Hitachi](/wiki/Masahito,_Prince_Hitachi) | November 28, 1935 | September 30, 1964 | [Hanako Tsugaru](/wiki/Hanako,_Princess_Hitachi) |  |
| [Takako, Princess Suga](/wiki/Takako_Shimazu) | March 2, 1939 | March 3, 1960 | Hisanaga Shimazu | Yoshihisa Shimazu |

## Accession[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|left|Imperial Standard as Emperor](/wiki/Image:Flag_of_the_Japanese_Emperor.svg) On December 25, 1926, Hirohito assumed the throne upon his father, [Yoshihito's](/wiki/Emperor_Taishō), death. The Crown Prince was said to have received the succession (*senso*).[[6]](#cite_note-6) The [Taishō era's](/wiki/Taishō_period) end and the [Shōwa era's](/wiki/Shōwa_period) beginning (Enlightened Peace) were proclaimed. The deceased Emperor was posthumously renamed [Emperor Taishō](/wiki/Emperor_Taishō) within days. Following Japanese custom, the new Emperor was [never referred](/wiki/Naming_taboo) to by his given name, but rather was referred to simply as [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo), which may be shortened to [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo). In writing, the Emperor was also referred to formally as [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo).

In November 1928, the Emperor's ascension was confirmed in [ceremonies](/wiki/Enthronement_of_the_Japanese_Emperor) (*sokui*)[[6]](#cite_note-6) which are conventionally identified as "enthronement" and "coronation" (*Shōwa no tairei-shiki*); but this formal event would have been more accurately described as a public confirmation that his Imperial Majesty possesses the Japanese [Imperial Regalia](/wiki/Imperial_Regalia_of_Japan),[[7]](#cite_note-7) also called the [Three Sacred Treasures](/wiki/Three_Sacred_Treasures), which have been handed down through the centuries.[[8]](#cite_note-8)

## Early reign[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[thumb|upright|Emperor Hirohito after his enthronement ceremony in 1928, dressed in](/wiki/Image:Emperor_Showa.jpg) [sokutai](/wiki/Sokutai) [left|thumb|upright|Hirohito in his early years as Emperor](/wiki/Image:Hirohito_wartime.jpg)

The first part of Hirohito's reign took place against a background of [financial crisis](/wiki/Shōwa_financial_crisis) and increasing military power within the government, through both legal and extralegal means. The [Imperial Japanese Army](/wiki/Imperial_Japanese_Army) and [Imperial Japanese Navy](/wiki/Imperial_Japanese_Navy) had held [veto](/wiki/Veto) power over the formation of cabinets since 1900, and between 1921 and 1944 there were no fewer than 64 incidents of political violence.

Hirohito narrowly missed assassination by a [hand grenade](/wiki/Hand_grenade) thrown by a [Korean independence](/wiki/Korean_independence_movement) activist, [Lee Bong-chang](/wiki/Lee_Bong-chang), in Tokyo on January 9, 1932, in the [Sakuradamon Incident](/wiki/Sakuradamon_Incident_(1932)).

Another notable case was the assassination of moderate [Prime Minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Japan) [Inukai Tsuyoshi](/wiki/Inukai_Tsuyoshi) in 1932, which marked the end of [civilian control of the military](/wiki/Civilian_control_of_the_military). This was followed by an attempted [military coup](/wiki/Coup) in February 1936, the [February 26 incident](/wiki/February_26_incident), mounted by junior Army officers of the [*Kōdōha*](/wiki/Kōdōha) faction who had the sympathy of many high-ranking officers including [Prince Chichibu](/wiki/Prince_Chichibu) (Yasuhito), one of the Emperor's brothers. This revolt was occasioned by a loss of political support by the militarist faction in [Diet](/wiki/Diet_of_Japan) elections. The coup resulted in the murders of a number of high government and Army officials.

When Chief [Aide-de-camp](/wiki/Aide-de-camp_to_the_Emperor_of_Japan) [Shigeru Honjō](/wiki/Shigeru_Honjō) informed him of the revolt, the Emperor immediately ordered that it be put down and referred to the officers as "rebels" (*bōto*). Shortly thereafter, he ordered [Army Minister](/wiki/Ministry_of_War_of_Japan) [Yoshiyuki Kawashima](/wiki/Yoshiyuki_Kawashima) to suppress the rebellion within the hour, and he asked reports from Honjō every thirty minutes. The next day, when told by Honjō that little progress was being made by the high command in quashing the rebels, the Emperor told him "I Myself, will lead the [Konoe Division](/wiki/Imperial_Guard_of_Japan) and subdue them." The rebellion was suppressed following his orders on [February 29](/wiki/February_26_incident#Events_of_February_29,_1936).[[9]](#cite_note-9)

## Sino-Japanese War and World War II[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[thumb|The Emperor and the Imperial stallion Shirayuki (literally: 'white-snow')](/wiki/Image:Hirohito_Sirayuki.jpg)

### Entering World War II[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

Starting from the [Mukden Incident](/wiki/Mukden_Incident) in 1931, Japan occupied various Chinese territories and established various [puppet governments](/wiki/Puppet_state). Such aggression was recommended to Hirohito by his chiefs of staff and prime minister [Fumimaro Konoe](/wiki/Fumimaro_Konoe), and Hirohito never personally objected to any Japanese invasions of China.[[10]](#cite_note-10) His main concern seems to have been the possibility of an attack by the Soviet Union in the north. His questions to his chief of staff, [Prince Kan'in](/wiki/Prince_Kan'in), and minister of the army, [Hajime Sugiyama](/wiki/Hajime_Sugiyama), were mostly about the time it could take to crush Chinese resistance.

According to Akira Fujiwara, Hirohito personally ratified the Japanese Army's proposal to remove the constraints of international law on the treatment of Chinese prisoners on August 5.[[11]](#cite_note-11) And the works of [Yoshiaki Yoshimi](/wiki/Yoshiaki_Yoshimi) and Seiya Matsuno show that the Emperor authorized, by specific orders (rinsanmei), the use of chemical weapons against the Chinese.[[12]](#cite_note-12) During the invasion of [Wuhan](/wiki/Wuhan), from August to October 1938, the Emperor authorized the use of toxic gas on 375 separate occasions,[[13]](#cite_note-13) despite the resolution adopted by the [League of Nations](/wiki/League_of_Nations) on May 14 condemning Japanese use of toxic gas.

On September 27, 1940, ostensibly under Hirohito's leadership, Japan was a contracting partner of the [Tripartite Pact](/wiki/Tripartite_Pact) with [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) and [Fascist Italy](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Italy_(1861–1946)), forming the [Axis Powers](/wiki/Axis_Powers). Before that, in July 1939, the Emperor quarreled with his brother, [Prince Chichibu](/wiki/Prince_Chichibu), who was visiting him three times a week to support the treaty, and reprimanded the army minister [Seishirō Itagaki](/wiki/Seishirō_Itagaki).[[14]](#cite_note-14) But after the success of the [Wehrmacht](/wiki/Wehrmacht) in Europe, the Emperor consented to the alliance.

On September 4, 1941, the Japanese Cabinet met to consider war plans prepared by Imperial General Headquarters, and decided that:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

The objectives to be obtained were clearly defined: a free hand to continue with the conquest of China and Southeast Asia, no increase in US or British military forces in the region, and cooperation by the West "in the acquisition of goods needed by our Empire".

On September 5, Prime Minister Konoe informally submitted a draft of the decision to the Emperor, just one day in advance of the Imperial Conference at which it would be formally implemented. On this evening, the Emperor had a meeting with the chief of staff of the army, Sugiyama, chief of staff of the navy, [Osami Nagano](/wiki/Osami_Nagano), and Prime Minister Konoe. The Emperor questioned Sugiyama about the chances of success of an open war with [the Occident](/wiki/Western_world). As Sugiyama answered positively, the Emperor scolded him:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Chief of Naval General Staff Admiral Nagano, a former Navy Minister and vastly experienced, later told a trusted colleague, "I have never seen the Emperor reprimand us in such a manner, his face turning red and raising his voice."

[right|thumb|Emperor Hirohito riding Shirayuki during an Army inspection in August 1938](/wiki/Image:Emperor_Shōwa_Army_1938-1-8.jpg)

According to the traditional view, Hirohito was deeply concerned by the decision to place "war preparations first and diplomatic negotiations second", and he announced his intention to break with tradition. At the Imperial Conference on the following day, the Emperor directly questioned the chiefs of the Army and Navy general staffs, which was quite an unprecedented action.

Nevertheless, all speakers at the Imperial Conference were united in favor of war rather than diplomacy.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Baron [Yoshimichi Hara](/wiki/Yoshimichi_Hara), President of the Imperial Council and the Emperor's representative, then questioned them closely, producing replies to the effect that war would only be considered as a last resort from some, and silence from others.

At this point, the Emperor astonished all present by addressing the conference personally, and in breaking the tradition of Imperial silence left his advisors "struck with awe." (Prime Minister Konoe's description of the event.) Hirohito stressed the need for peaceful resolution of international problems, expressed regret at his ministers' failure to respond to Baron Hara's probings, and recited a poem written by his grandfather, Emperor Meiji which, he said, he had read "over and over again":

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Recovering from their shock, the ministers hastened to express their profound wish to explore all possible peaceful avenues. The Emperor's presentation was in line with his practical role as leader of the [Shinto](/wiki/Shinto) religion.

At this time, Army Imperial Headquarters was continually communicating with the Imperial household in detail about the military situation. On October 8, Sugiyama signed a 47-page report to the Emperor (sōjōan) outlining in minute detail plans for the advance into Southeast Asia. During the third week of October, Sugiyama gave the Emperor a 51-page document, "Materials in Reply to the Throne", about the operational outlook for the war.[[15]](#cite_note-15) As war preparations continued, Prime Minister Konoe found himself more and more isolated and gave his resignation on October 16. He justified himself to his chief cabinet secretary, Kenji Tomita :

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

The army and the navy recommended the candidacy of [Prince Higashikuni](/wiki/Prince_Higashikuni), one of the Emperor's uncles. According to the Shōwa "Monologue", written after the war, the Emperor then said that if the war were to begin while a member of the imperial house was prime minister, the imperial house would have to carry the responsibility and he was opposed to this.[[16]](#cite_note-16)[thumb|The Emperor as head of the](/wiki/File:Imperial_general_headquaters_meeting.jpg) [Imperial General Headquarters](/wiki/Imperial_General_Headquarters) in 1943 Instead, the Emperor chose the hard-line General [Hideki Tōjō](/wiki/Hideki_Tōjō), who was known for his devotion to the imperial institution, and asked him to make a policy review of what had been sanctioned by the Imperial Conferences. On November 2, Tōjō, Sugiyama and Nagano reported to the Emperor that the review of eleven points had been in vain. Emperor Hirohito gave his consent to the war and then asked: "Are you going to provide justification for the war?"[[17]](#cite_note-17) The decision for war against the United States was presented for approval to Hirohito by General Tōjō, Naval Minister Admiral [Shigetarō Shimada](/wiki/Shigetarō_Shimada), and Japanese Foreign Minister [Shigenori Tōgō](/wiki/Shigenori_Tōgō).[[18]](#cite_note-18) On November 3, Nagano explained in detail the plan of the [attack on Pearl Harbor](/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor) to the Emperor.[[19]](#cite_note-19) On November 5, Emperor Hirohito approved in imperial conference the operations plan for a war against the [Occident](/wiki/Western_world) and had many meetings with the military and Tōjō until the end of the month. On November 25 Henry L. Stimson, United States Secretary of War noted in his diary that he had discussed with US President Franklin D. Roosevelt the severe likelihood that Japan was about to launch a surprise attack, and that the question had been "how we should maneuver them [the Japanese] into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves".

On the following day, November 26, 1941, US Secretary of State [Cordell Hull](/wiki/Cordell_Hull) presented the Japanese ambassador with the [Hull note](/wiki/Hull_note), which as one of its conditions demanded the complete withdrawal of all Japanese troops from French Indochina and China. Japanese Prime Minister Tojo Hideki said to his cabinet, "this is an ultimatum". On December 1, an Imperial Conference sanctioned the "War against the United States, United Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Netherlands". On December 8 (December 7 in Hawaii) 1941, in simultaneous attacks, Japanese forces struck at the US Fleet in [Pearl Harbor](/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor) and in the [Philippines](/wiki/Philippines) and began the [invasion of Malaya](/wiki/Invasion_of_Malaya).

With the nation fully committed to the war, the Emperor took a keen interest in military progress and sought to boost morale. According to Akira Yamada and Akira Fujiwara, the Emperor made major interventions in some military operations. For example, he pressed Sugiyama four times, on January 13 and 21 and February 9 and 26, to increase troop strength and launch an attack on [Bataan](/wiki/Bataan). On February 9, March 19 and May 29, the Emperor ordered the Army Chief of staff to examine the possibilities for an attack on [Chungking](/wiki/Chungking), which led to [Operation Gogo](/wiki/Operation_Gogo).[[20]](#cite_note-20) As the tide of war began to turn against Japan (around late 1942 and early 1943), some people argue [Template:By whom](/wiki/Template:By_whom) that the flow of information to the palace gradually began to bear less and less relation to reality, while others suggest that the Emperor worked closely with Prime Minister Tōjō, continued to be well and accurately briefed by the military, and knew Japan's military position precisely right up to the point of surrender. The chief of staff of the General Affairs section of the Prime Minister's office, Shuichi Inada, remarked to Tōjō's private secretary, Sadao Akamatsu: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

[left|thumb|upright=1.2|The Emperor with his wife](/wiki/File:Showa-family1941_12_7.jpg) [Empress Kōjun](/wiki/Empress_Kōjun) and their children in 1941 In the first six months of war, all the major engagements had been victories. As the tide turned in the summer of 1942 with the [battle of Midway](/wiki/Battle_of_Midway) and the landing of the American forces on [Guadalcanal](/wiki/Guadalcanal) and [Tulagi](/wiki/Tulagi) in August, the Emperor recognized the potential danger and pushed the navy and the army for greater efforts. In September 1942, Emperor Hirohito signed the Imperial Rescript condemning to death American Fliers: Lieutenants Dean E. Hallmark and William G. Farrow and Corporal Harold A. Spatz and commuting to life sentences: Lieutenants [Robert J. Meder](/wiki/Robert_J._Meder), [Chase Nielsen](/wiki/Chase_Nielsen), Robert L. Hite and George Barr and Corporal [Jacob DeShazer](/wiki/Jacob_DeShazer). When informed in August 1943 by [Sugiyama](/wiki/Hajime_Sugiyama) that the American advance through the [Solomon Islands](/wiki/Solomon_Islands) could not be stopped, the Emperor asked his chief of staff to consider other places to attack: "When and where are you ever going to put up a good fight? And when are you ever going to fight a decisive battle?"[[21]](#cite_note-21) On August 24, the Emperor reprimanded Nagano and on September 11, he ordered Sugiyama to work with the Navy to implement better military preparation and give adequate supply to soldiers fighting in [Rabaul](/wiki/Rabaul).[[22]](#cite_note-22) Throughout the following years from 1943 to 1945, the sequence of drawn and then decisively lost naval and land engagements was reported to the public as a series of great victories. Only gradually did it become apparent to the Japanese people that the situation was very grim due to growing shortages of food, medicine, and fuel as U.S submarines began wiping out Japanese shipping. Starting in mid 1944, U.S. air raids on the cities of Japan made a mockery of the unending tales of victory. Later that year, with the downfall of Hideki Tōjō's government, two other prime ministers were appointed to continue the war effort, [Kuniaki Koiso](/wiki/Kuniaki_Koiso) and [Kantarō Suzuki](/wiki/Kantarō_Suzuki)—each with the formal approval of the Emperor. Both were unsuccessful and Japan was nearing defeat.

### Civilian deaths and suicides[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

As the war turned against the Japanese, Hirohito personally found the threat of defection of Japanese civilians disturbing because there was a risk that civilians would be surprised by generous U.S. treatment.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Native Japanese sympathizers would hand the Americans a powerful propaganda weapon to subvert the "fighting spirit" of Japan in radio broadcasts. At the end of June 1944 during the [Battle of Saipan](/wiki/Battle_of_Saipan), Hirohito sent out the first imperial order encouraging all Japanese civilians to commit suicide rather than be taken prisoner.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

The Imperial order authorized Lieutenant General [Yoshitsugu Saitō](/wiki/Yoshitsugu_Saitō), the commander of [Saipan](/wiki/Saipan), to promise civilians who died there an equal spiritual status in the afterlife with those of soldiers perishing in combat. General [Tojo](/wiki/Hideki_Tōjō) intercepted the order on June 30 and delayed its sending, but it was issued anyway the next day. By the time the [Marines](/wiki/United_States_Marine_Corps) advanced on the north tip of the island, from 8–12 July, most of the damage had been done:[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) over 1,000 Japanese civilians committed suicide in the last days of the battle to take the offered privileged place in the afterlife, many jumping from "[Suicide Cliff](/wiki/Suicide_Cliff)" and "[Banzai Cliff](/wiki/Banzai_Cliff)".[[23]](#cite_note-23)

### Last days of the war[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) In early 1945, in the wake of the losses in [Battle of Leyte](/wiki/Battle_of_Leyte), Emperor Hirohito began a series of individual meetings with senior government officials to consider the progress of the war. All but ex-Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe advised continuing the war. Konoe feared a communist revolution even more than defeat in war and urged a negotiated surrender. In February 1945, during the first private audience with the Emperor which he had been allowed in three years,[[24]](#cite_note-24) Konoe advised Hirohito to begin negotiations to end the war. According to Grand Chamberlain [Hisanori Fujita](/wiki/Hisanori_Fujita), the Emperor, still looking for a *tennozan* (a great victory) in order to provide a stronger bargaining position, firmly rejected Konoe's recommendation.[[25]](#cite_note-25) With each passing week a great victory became less likely. In April the Soviet Union issued notice that it would not renew its neutrality agreement. Japan's ally Germany surrendered in early May 1945. In June, the cabinet reassessed the war strategy, only to decide more firmly than ever on a fight to the last man. This strategy was officially affirmed at a brief Imperial Council meeting, at which, as was normal, the Emperor did not speak.

The following day, [Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal](/wiki/Lord_Keeper_of_the_Privy_Seal_of_Japan) [Kōichi Kido](/wiki/Kōichi_Kido) prepared a draft document which summarized the hopeless military situation and proposed a negotiated settlement. According to some commentators,[Template:Who](/wiki/Template:Who) the Emperor privately approved of it and authorized Kido to circulate it discreetly amongst less hawkish cabinet members; others suggest that the Emperor was indecisive, and that the delay cost many tens of thousands of lives. Extremists in Japan were also calling for a death-before-dishonor mass suicide, modeled on the "[47 Ronin](/wiki/Forty-seven_Ronin)" incident. By mid-June 1945, the cabinet had agreed to approach the Soviet Union to act as a mediator for a negotiated surrender, but not before Japan's bargaining position had been improved by repulse of the anticipated Allied invasion of mainland Japan.

On June 22, the Emperor met with his ministers, saying "I desire that concrete plans to end the war, unhampered by existing policy, be speedily studied and that efforts be made to implement them." The attempt to negotiate a peace via the Soviet Union came to nothing. There was always the threat that extremists would carry out a coup or foment other violence. On July 26, 1945, the Allies issued the [Potsdam Declaration](/wiki/Potsdam_Declaration) demanding [unconditional surrender](/wiki/Unconditional_surrender). The Japanese government council, the Big Six, considered that option and recommended to the Emperor that it be accepted only if one to four conditions were agreed upon, including a guarantee of the Emperor's continued position in [Japanese society](/wiki/Culture_of_Japan). The Emperor decided not to surrender.

### The Emperor and the atomic bomb[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

On August 9, 1945, following the [atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki](/wiki/Atomic_bombings_of_Hiroshima_and_Nagasaki) and the Soviet declaration of war, Emperor Hirohito told [Kōichi Kido](/wiki/Kōichi_Kido): "the Soviet Union has declared war and today began hostilities against us."[[26]](#cite_note-26) On August 10, the cabinet drafted an "[Imperial Rescript ending the War](/wiki/Imperial_Rescript_ending_the_War)" following the Emperor's indications that the declaration did not compromise any demand which prejudiced the prerogatives of His Majesty as a Sovereign Ruler.

On August 12, 1945, the Emperor informed the imperial family of his decision to surrender. One of his uncles, [Prince Asaka](/wiki/Prince_Asaka), asked whether the war would be continued if the [*kokutai*](/wiki/Kokutai) (national polity) could not be preserved. The Emperor simply replied "of course."[[27]](#cite_note-27) On August 14, the Suzuki government notified the Allies that it had accepted the [Potsdam Declaration](/wiki/Potsdam_Declaration).

On August 15, a recording of the Emperor's surrender speech ([*"Gyokuon-hōsō"*, literally *"Jewel Voice Broadcast"*](/wiki/Jewel_Voice_Broadcast)) was broadcast over the radio (the first time the Emperor was heard on the radio by the Japanese people) signifying the unconditional surrender of Japan's military forces. During the historic broadcast the Emperor stated: "Moreover, the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is, indeed, incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives. Should We continue to fight, not only would it result in an ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also it would lead to the total extinction of human civilization." The surrender speech also noted that "the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage" and ordered the Japanese to "endure the unendurable" in surrender. The speech, using formal, archaic Japanese, was not readily understood by many commoners. According to historian Richard Storry in *A History of Modern Japan*, the Emperor typically used "a form of language familiar only to the well-educated" and to the more traditional [samurai](/wiki/Samurai) families.[[28]](#cite_note-28) However, in his first ever press conference given in Tokyo in 1975, when he was asked what he thought of the bombing of Hiroshima, the Emperor answered: "It's very regrettable that nuclear bombs were dropped and I feel sorry for the citizens of Hiroshima but it couldn't be helped because that happened in wartime."[[29]](#cite_note-29) Die-hard army fanatics opposed to the surrender attempted a [coup d'état](/wiki/Coup_d'état). They seized the Imperial Palace (the [Kyūjō Incident](/wiki/Kyūjō_Incident)). However, the physical recording of the surrender speech was hidden and preserved overnight, and the coup was quickly crushed on the Emperor's order.

### Accountability for Japanese war crimes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

Some historians believe Emperor Hirohito was directly responsible for [the atrocities committed by the imperial forces](/wiki/Japanese_war_crimes) in the Second Sino-Japanese War and in World War II. They feel that he, and some members of the imperial family such as his brother [Prince Chichibu](/wiki/Prince_Chichibu), his cousins [Prince Takeda](/wiki/Prince_Takeda_Tsuneyoshi) and [Prince Fushimi](/wiki/Prince_Fushimi_Hiroyasu), and his uncles [Prince Kan'in](/wiki/Prince_Kan'in), [Prince Asaka](/wiki/Prince_Asaka), and [Prince Higashikuni](/wiki/Prince_Higashikuni_Naruhiko), should have been tried for [war crimes](/wiki/War_crime).[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[31]](#cite_note-31) The debate over Hirohito's responsibility for war crimes concerns how much real control the Emperor had over the Japanese military during the two wars. Officially, the imperial constitution, adopted under [Emperor Meiji](/wiki/Emperor_Meiji), gave full power to the Emperor. Article 4 prescribed that, "The Emperor is the head of the Empire, combining in Himself the rights of sovereignty, and exercises them, according to the provisions of the present Constitution," while, according to article 6, "The Emperor gives sanction to laws and orders them to be promulgated and executed," and article 11, "The Emperor has the supreme command of the Army and the Navy." The Emperor was thus the leader of the [Imperial General Headquarters](/wiki/Imperial_General_Headquarters).[[32]](#cite_note-32) Poison gas weapons, such as [phosgene](/wiki/Phosgene), were produced by [Unit 731](/wiki/Unit_731) and authorized by specific orders given by Hirohito himself, transmitted by the chief of staff of the army. For example, Hirohito authorised the use of toxic gas 375 times during the battle of [Wuhan](/wiki/Wuhan) from August to October 1938.<ref name=matsuno2729/>

In 1971, David Bergamini showed how primary sources, such as the "[Sugiyama](/wiki/Hajime_Sugiyama) memo" and the diaries of [Kido](/wiki/Kōichi_Kido) and [Konoe](/wiki/Fumimaro_Konoe), describe in detail the informal meetings Emperor Hirohito had with his chiefs of staff and ministers. Bergamini concluded that the Emperor was kept informed of all main military operations and that he frequently questioned his senior staff and asked for changes.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Historians such as [Herbert Bix](/wiki/Herbert_Bix), [Akira Fujiwara](/wiki/Akira_Fujiwara), Peter Wetzler, and [Akira Yamada](/wiki/Akira_Yamada) assert that the post-war view focusing on imperial conferences misses the importance of numerous "behind the chrysanthemum curtain" meetings where the real decisions were made between the Emperor, his chiefs of staff, and the cabinet. Historians such as Fujiwara[[33]](#cite_note-33) and Wetzler,[[34]](#cite_note-34) based on the primary sources and the monumental work of Shirō Hara,[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) have produced evidence suggesting that the Emperor worked through intermediaries to exercise a great deal of control over the military and was neither bellicose nor a pacifist, but an opportunist who governed in a pluralistic decision-making process. American historian [Herbert P. Bix](/wiki/Herbert_P._Bix) argues that Emperor Hirohito might have been the prime mover of most of the events of the two wars.[[31]](#cite_note-31) The view promoted by both the Japanese Imperial Palace and the American occupation forces immediately after World War II portrayed Emperor Hirohito as a powerless [figurehead](/wiki/Figurehead_(metaphor)) behaving strictly according to protocol, while remaining at a distance from the decision-making processes. This view was endorsed by Prime Minister [Noboru Takeshita](/wiki/Noboru_Takeshita) in a speech on the day of Hirohito's death, in which Takeshita asserted that the war "had broken out against (Hirohito's) wishes." Takeshita's statement provoked outrage in nations in East Asia and Commonwealth nations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.[[35]](#cite_note-35) According to historian Fujiwara "the thesis that the Emperor, as an organ of responsibility, could not reverse cabinet decision, is a [myth](/wiki/Myth) fabricated after the war."[[36]](#cite_note-36) In Japan, debate over the Emperor's responsibility was taboo while he was still alive. After his death, however, debate began to surface over the extent of his involvement and thus his culpability.[[35]](#cite_note-35) In the years immediately after Hirohito's death, the debate in Japan was fierce. Susan Chira reported that, "Scholars who have spoken out against the late Emperor have received threatening phone calls from Japan's extremist right wing."[[35]](#cite_note-35) One example of actual violence occurred in 1990 when the mayor of Nagasaki, [Hitoshi Motoshima](/wiki/Hitoshi_Motoshima), was shot and critically wounded by a member of the ultranationalist group, [Seikijuku](/wiki/Seikijuku). A year prior, in 1989, Motoshima had broken what was characterized as "one of (Japan's) most sensitive taboos" by asserting that Emperor Hirohito bore responsibility for World War II.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Motoshima managed to recover from the attack.

Kentaro Awaya argues that post-war Japanese public opinion supporting protection of the Emperor was influenced by U.S. propaganda promoting the view that the Emperor together with the Japanese people had been fooled by the military.[[38]](#cite_note-38)

## Postwar reign[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|left|ALT=Black and White photo of two men|](/wiki/Image:macarthur_hirohito.jpg)[Gaetano Faillace's](/wiki/Gaetano_Faillace) photograph of General MacArthur and the Emperor at Allied GHQ in Tokyo. September 17, 1945.

As the Emperor chose his uncle [Prince Higashikuni](/wiki/Prince_Naruhiko_Higashikuni) as prime minister to assist the occupation, there were attempts by numerous leaders to have him put on trial for alleged [war crimes](/wiki/War_crimes). Many members of the imperial family, such as Princes Chichibu, Takamatsu and Higashikuni, pressured the Emperor to abdicate so that one of the Princes could serve as regent until Crown Prince [Akihito](/wiki/Akihito) came of age.[[39]](#cite_note-39) On February 27, 1946, the Emperor's youngest brother, [Prince Mikasa](/wiki/Prince_Mikasa) (Takahito), even stood up in the privy council and indirectly urged the Emperor to step down and accept responsibility for Japan's defeat. According to Minister of Welfare Ashida's diary, "Everyone seemed to ponder Mikasa's words. Never have I seen His Majesty's face so pale."[[40]](#cite_note-40) U.S. General [Douglas MacArthur](/wiki/Douglas_MacArthur) insisted that Emperor Hirohito retain the throne. MacArthur saw the Emperor as a symbol of the continuity and cohesion of the Japanese people. Some historians criticize the decision to exonerate the Emperor and all members of the imperial family who were implicated in the war, such as [Prince Chichibu](/wiki/Prince_Chichibu), [Prince Asaka](/wiki/Prince_Asaka), Prince Higashikuni and Prince [Hiroyasu Fushimi](/wiki/Hiroyasu_Fushimi), from criminal prosecutions.[[41]](#cite_note-41) Before the war crime trials actually convened, the [SCAP](/wiki/Supreme_Commander_of_the_Allied_Powers), the [IPS](/wiki/International_Peace_and_Security), and Japanese officials worked behind the scenes not only to prevent the Imperial family from being indicted, but also to slant the testimony of the defendants to ensure that no one implicated the Emperor. High officials in court circles and the Japanese government collaborated with Allied GHQ in compiling lists of prospective war criminals, while the individuals arrested as *Class A* suspects and incarcerated solemnly vowed to protect their sovereign against any possible taint of war responsibility.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Thus, "months before the [Tokyo tribunal](/wiki/Tokyo_tribunal) commenced, MacArthur's highest subordinates were working to attribute ultimate responsibility for [Pearl Harbor](/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor) to [Hideki Tōjō](/wiki/Hideki_Tōjō)"[[43]](#cite_note-43) by allowing "the major criminal suspects to coordinate their stories so that the Emperor would be spared from indictment."[[44]](#cite_note-44) According to [John W. Dower](/wiki/John_W._Dower), "This successful campaign to absolve the Emperor of war responsibility knew no bounds. Hirohito was not merely presented as being innocent of any formal acts that might make him culpable to indictment as a war criminal, he was turned into an almost saintly figure who did not even bear moral responsibility for the war."[[45]](#cite_note-45) According to Bix, "MacArthur's truly extraordinary measures to save Hirohito from trial as a war criminal had a lasting and profoundly distorting impact on Japanese understanding of the lost war."[[46]](#cite_note-46)

### Imperial status[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|left|Emperor Hirohito visiting](/wiki/File:Emperor_Showa_visit_to_Hiroshima_in_1947.JPG) [Hiroshima](/wiki/Hiroshima) in 1947.

Hirohito was not put on trial, but he was forced[[47]](#cite_note-47) to [explicitly reject](/wiki/Humanity_Declaration) the quasi-official claim that the Emperor of Japan was an [*arahitogami*](/wiki/Arahitogami), i.e., an incarnate divinity. This was motivated by the fact that, according to the [Japanese constitution of 1889](/wiki/Meiji_Constitution), the Emperor had a divine power over his country, which was derived from the [Shinto](/wiki/Shinto) belief that the Japanese Imperial Family was the offspring of the sun goddess [Amaterasu](/wiki/Amaterasu). Hirohito was however persistent in the idea that the Emperor of Japan should be considered a descendant of the gods. In December 1945, he told his vice-grand chamberlain Michio Kinoshita: "It is permissible to say that the idea that the Japanese are descendants of the gods is a false conception; but it is absolutely impermissible to call [chimerical](/wiki/Wiktionary:chimerical) the idea that the Emperor is a descendant of the gods."[[48]](#cite_note-48) In any case, the "renunciation of divinity" was noted more by foreigners than by Japanese, and seems to have been intended for the consumption of the former.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) The theory of a constitutional monarchy had already had some proponents in Japan. In 1935, when Tatsukichi Minobe advocated the theory that sovereignty resides in the states, of which the Emperor is just an organ (the *tennō kikan setsu*), it caused a furor. He was forced to resign from the House of Peers and his post at the Tokyo Imperial University, his books were banned and an attempt was made on his life.[[49]](#cite_note-49) Not until 1946 was the tremendous step made to alter the Emperor's title from "imperial sovereign" to "[constitutional monarch](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy)".

Although the Emperor had supposedly repudiated claims to divine status, his public position was deliberately left vague, partly because General MacArthur thought him likely to be a useful partner to get the Japanese to accept the occupation, and partly due to behind-the-scenes maneuverings by [Shigeru Yoshida](/wiki/Shigeru_Yoshida) to thwart attempts to cast him as a European-style monarch.

[thumb|left|The Empress, First Lady](/wiki/Image:Ford_and_Emperor1975.jpg) [Betty Ford](/wiki/Betty_Ford), the Emperor and U.S. President [Gerald Ford](/wiki/Gerald_Ford) at the White House prior to a state dinner held in honor of the Japanese head of state for the first time. October 2, 1975.

For the rest of his life, Hirohito was an active figure in Japanese life, and performed many of the duties commonly associated with a constitutional [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state). He and his family maintained a strong public presence, often holding public walkabouts, and making public appearances on special events and ceremonies. He also played an important role in rebuilding Japan's diplomatic image, traveling abroad to meet with many foreign leaders, including Queen [Elizabeth II](/wiki/Elizabeth_II) (1971) and President [Gerald Ford](/wiki/Gerald_Ford) (1975). [thumb|upright|Emperor Hirohito and U.S. President](/wiki/File:Photograph_of_The_Reagans_and_Japanese_Emperor_Hirohito,_Tokyo,_Japan_-_NARA_-_198544.jpg) [Ronald Reagan](/wiki/Ronald_Reagan), Tokyo, November 9, 1983

The Emperor was deeply interested in and well-informed about [marine biology](/wiki/Marine_biology), and the [Imperial Palace](/wiki/Kokyo) contained a laboratory from which the Emperor published several papers in the field under his personal name "Hirohito."[[50]](#cite_note-50) His contributions included the description of several dozen species of [Hydrozoa](/wiki/Hydrozoa) new to science.[[51]](#cite_note-51)

### Yasukuni Shrine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

Emperor Hirohito maintained an official boycott of the [Yasukuni Shrine](/wiki/Yasukuni_Shrine) after it was revealed to him that Class-A war criminals had secretly been enshrined after its post-war rededication. This boycott lasted from 1978 until his death. This boycott has been maintained by his son [Akihito](/wiki/Akihito), who has also refused to attend Yasukuni.

On July 20, 2006, [*Nihon Keizai Shimbun*](/wiki/Nihon_Keizai_Shimbun) published a front page article about the discovery of a memorandum detailing the reason that the Emperor stopped visiting Yasukuni. The memorandum, kept by former chief of [Imperial Household Agency](/wiki/Imperial_Household_Agency) Tomohiko Tomita, confirms for the first time that the enshrinement of 14 [Class A War Criminals](/wiki/Class_A_War_Criminal) in Yasukuni was the reason for the boycott. Tomita recorded in detail the contents of his conversations with the Emperor in his diaries and notebooks. According to the memorandum, in 1988, the Emperor expressed his strong displeasure at the decision made by Yasukuni Shrine to include Class-A war criminals in the list of war dead honored there by saying, "At some point, Class-A criminals became enshrined, including [Matsuoka](/wiki/Yōsuke_Matsuoka) and [Shiratori](/wiki/Toshio_Shiratori). I heard Tsukuba acted cautiously." Tsukuba is believed to refer to Fujimaro Tsukuba, the former chief Yasukuni priest at the time, who decided not to enshrine the war criminals despite having received in 1966 the list of war dead compiled by the government. "What's on the mind of Matsudaira's son, who is the current head priest?" "Matsudaira had a strong wish for peace, but the child didn't know the parent's heart. That's why I have not visited the shrine since. This is my heart." Matsudaira is believed to refer to Yoshitami Matsudaira, who was the grand steward of the Imperial Household immediately after the end of World War II. His son, Nagayoshi, succeeded Fujimaro Tsukuba as the chief priest of Yasukuni and decided to enshrine the war criminals in 1978.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Nagayoshi Matsudaira died in 2006, which some commentators have speculated is the reason for release of the memo.

## Death and state funeral[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|Hirohito's tomb in the](/wiki/Image:Showa_Shrine.jpg) [Musashi Imperial Graveyard](/wiki/Musashi_Imperial_Graveyard), [Hachiōji, Tokyo](/wiki/Hachiōji,_Tokyo) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) On September 22, 1987, the Emperor underwent surgery on his [pancreas](/wiki/Pancreas) after having digestive problems for several months. The doctors discovered that he had [duodenal cancer](/wiki/Duodenal_cancer). The Emperor appeared to be making a full recovery for several months after the surgery. About a year later, however, on September 19, 1988, he collapsed in his palace, and his health worsened over the next several months as he suffered from continuous internal bleeding. On January 7, 1989, at 7:55 AM, the grand steward of Japan's Imperial Household Agency, Shoichi Fujimori, officially announced the death of Emperor Hirohito, and revealed details about his cancer for the first time. Hirohito was survived by his wife, his five surviving children, ten grandchildren and one great-grandchild.[[53]](#cite_note-53) The Emperor was succeeded by his son, the current Emperor [Akihito](/wiki/Akihito), whose [enthronement ceremony](/wiki/Enthronement_of_the_Japanese_Emperor) was held on November 12, 1990.

The Emperor's death ended the [Shōwa era](/wiki/Shōwa_period). On the same day a new [era](/wiki/Japanese_era_name) began: the [Heisei era](/wiki/Heisei_period), effective at midnight the following day. From January 7, until January 31, the Emperor's formal appellation was [Template:Nihongo3](/wiki/Template:Nihongo3). His definitive [posthumous name](/wiki/Posthumous_name), [Template:Nihongo3](/wiki/Template:Nihongo3), was determined on January 13 and formally released on January 31 by [Toshiki Kaifu](/wiki/Toshiki_Kaifu), the prime minister.

On February 24, Emperor Hirohito's state funeral was held, and unlike that of his predecessor, it was formal but not conducted in a strictly [Shinto](/wiki/Shinto) manner. A large number of world leaders attended the funeral. Emperor Hirohito is buried in the [Musashi Imperial Graveyard](/wiki/Musashi_Imperial_Graveyard) in [Hachiōji](/wiki/Hachiōji,_Tokyo), alongside [Emperor Taishō](/wiki/Emperor_Taishō), his father.

## Titles, styles and honours[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Infobox royal styles](/wiki/Template:Infobox_royal_styles)

* **29 April 1901 – 30 July 1912**: *His Imperial Highness* The Prince Michi
* **30 July 1912 – 25 December 1926**: *His Imperial Highness* The Crown Prince
  + **29 November 1921 – 25 December 1926**: *His Imperial Highness* The Regent
* **25 December 1926 – 7 January 1989**: *His Imperial Majesty* The Emperor
* ***Posthumous title***: *His Imperial Majesty* Emperor Shōwa

### Military appointments[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

* **Second Lieutenant**, [IJA](/wiki/Imperial_Japanese_Army) and **Second Sub-Lieutenant**, [IJN](/wiki/Imperial_Japanese_Navy) (9 September 1912)
* **Lieutenant**, IJA and **Sub-Lieutenant**, IJN (31 October 1914)
* **Captain**, IJA and **Lieutenant**, IJN (31 October 1916)
* **Major**, IJA and **Lieutenant-Commander**, IJN (31 October 1920)
* **Lieutenant-Colonel**, IJA and **Commander**, IJN (31 October 1923)
* **Colonel**, IJA and **Captain**, IJN (31 October 1924)
* **Grand Marshal** and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Empire of Japan (25 December 1926; upon ascending the throne)

[[54]](#cite_note-54)

### National honours[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

* Collar and Grand Cordon of the [Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum](/wiki/Supreme_Order_of_the_Chrysanthemum)
* Grand Cordon of the [Order of the Rising Sun](/wiki/Order_of_the_Rising_Sun) with [Paulownia](/wiki/Paulownia) Blossoms
* Grand Cordon of the [Order of the Golden Kite](/wiki/Order_of_the_Golden_Kite) (*abolished in 1947*)
* Grand Cordon of the [Order of the Sacred Treasure](/wiki/Order_of_the_Sacred_Treasure)

### Foreign honours[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Cordon of the [Order of Leopold (Belgium)](/wiki/Order_of_Leopold_(Belgium))
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : 1st Class of the Order of the Crown of Brunei
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Cross Special Class of the [Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany](/wiki/Order_of_Merit_of_the_Federal_Republic_of_Germany)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : [The Most Auspicious Order of the Rajamitrabhorn](/wiki/The_Most_Auspicious_Order_of_the_Rajamitrabhorn)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Cross of the [Order of the Southern Cross](/wiki/Order_of_the_Southern_Cross)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Member of the [Order of Ojaswi Rajanya](/wiki/Order_of_Ojaswi_Rajanya) (19 April 1960)[[55]](#cite_note-55)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Collar of the [Order of Sikatuna](/wiki/Order_of_Sikatuna) [[56]](#cite_note-56)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Knight of the [Order of the White Eagle](/wiki/Order_of_the_White_Eagle_(Poland))
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Cross with Collar of the [Order of the White Rose of Finland](/wiki/Order_of_the_White_Rose_of_Finland); conferred in 1942 ([Finland](/wiki/Finland_during_World_War_II) and Japan were on the same side in World War II 1941–1944), the [swastika](/wiki/Swastika) collar was replaced by [fir](/wiki/Fir) cross collar within the state visit of the [president of Finland](/wiki/President_of_Finland) [Mauno Koivisto](/wiki/Mauno_Koivisto) in 1986
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Knight Grand Cross with Collar of the [Order of Merit of the Italian Republic](/wiki/Order_of_Merit_of_the_Italian_Republic)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Cross with Collar of the [Order of St. Olav](/wiki/Order_of_St._Olav)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Knight of the [Order of the Golden Fleece](/wiki/Order_of_the_Golden_Fleece) (6 October 1928)[[57]](#cite_note-57)[[58]](#cite_note-58)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Knight of the [Royal Order of the Seraphim](/wiki/Royal_Order_of_the_Seraphim)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Knight of the [Order of the Elephant](/wiki/Order_of_the_Elephant)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Grand Cross of the [Order of the Redeemer](/wiki/Order_of_the_Redeemer)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Collar of the [Order of Saints George and Constantine](/wiki/Order_of_Saints_George_and_Constantine)
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Honorary Knight Grand Cross of the [Royal Victorian Order](/wiki/Royal_Victorian_Order) (GCVO) – conferred in May 1921.
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Honorary Knight Grand Cross of the [Order of the Bath](/wiki/Order_of_the_Bath) (GCB) – conferred in May 1921.[[59]](#cite_note-59)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : [Knight of the Order of the Garter](/wiki/Knight_of_the_Order_of_the_Garter) (KG); conferred in 1929, revoked in 1941, restored in 1971[[60]](#cite_note-60)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Honorary [General](/wiki/General_(United_Kingdom)) in the [British Army](/wiki/British_Army); conferred in May 1921[[61]](#cite_note-61)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Honorary [Field-Marshal](/wiki/Field_marshal_(United_Kingdom)) in the British Army; conferred in June 1930.[[62]](#cite_note-62)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) : Elected a [Foreign Member of the Royal Society (ForMemRS) in 1971](/wiki/List_of_Fellows_of_the_Royal_Society_elected_in_1971)[[63]](#cite_note-63)

## Ancestry[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

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[Template:Ahnentafel-compact5](/wiki/Template:Ahnentafel-compact5)

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* (1988) *The hydroids of Sagami Bay collected by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan.*
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## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

* [Empire of Japan](/wiki/Empire_of_Japan)
* [Japanese nationalism](/wiki/Japanese_nationalism)
* [List of Emperors of Japan](/wiki/List_of_Emperors_of_Japan)
* [*Gyokuon-hōsō*](/wiki/Gyokuon-hōsō) — the "Jewel Voice Broadcast"
* [Otoya Yamaguchi](/wiki/Otoya_Yamaguchi)
* [*The Sun*](/wiki/The_Sun_(film)) — a biographical film about the Emperor

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

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## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

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* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

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* [Kunaicho | Emperor Shōwa and Empress Kōjun](http://www.kunaicho.go.jp/e-about/history/history11.html)
* [Hirohito biography and timeline](http://www.rotten.com/library/bio/dictators/hirohito/) at the [Rotten Library](/wiki/Rotten.com)
* [Reflections on Emperor Hirohito's death](http://www.scarsdalemura-kara.com/emperor.htm)
* [*Booknotes* interview with Herbert Bix on *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, September 2, 2001](http://www.booknotes.org/Watch/165148-1/Herbert+Bix.aspx)
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* [Template:IMDb name](/wiki/Template:IMDb_name)

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