



General Election Dates 1832-2005

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This note gives the dates for all UK General elections since 1832. The span of dates for elections which took place before 1918 indicates the first and last polling days for that General Election. Polling took place on one day only for the first time in 1918. The note also gives details of changes in Prime Minister/Party administration between General Elections; the name of the first Prime Minister to serve is in bold, and any subsequent Prime Minister, who formed an administration before the next General Election, is in brackets.

A. General Election dates 1832-2005

Abbreviations:

C – Caretaker Prime Minister

R – Resigned

VNC – resigned after Vote of No Confidence Motion passed

GENERAL ELECTION	MAJORITY PARTY	GOVERNMENT FORMED BY (Subsequent Prime Minister)
Monday 10 December 1832 - Tuesday 8 January 1833	Whig (Whig) (Conservative) (Conservative)	Grey 22.11.1830 - 9.7.1834 (R) (Melbourne 16.7.1834 - 14.11.1834) (D) ¹ (Wellington 17.11.1834 - 9.12.1834) (C) (Peel 10.12.1834 - 8.4.1835)
Tuesday 6 January 1835 – Friday 6 February 1835	Conservative (Whig)	Peel 10.12.1834 - 8.4.1835 (R) (Melbourne 18.4.1835 - 30 .8.1841)
Monday 24 July 1837 – Friday 18 August 1837	Whig	Melbourne 18.4.1835 - 30 .8.1841 (R)
Tuesday 29 June 1841 – Thursday 22 July 1841	Conservative (Liberal)	Peel. 30.8.1841 - 29 6.1846 (R) (Russell 30.6.1846 - 21.2.1852)
Thursday 29 July 1847 – Thursday 26 August 1847	Liberal (Conservative)	Russell 30.6.1846 - 21.2.1852 (R) (Derby 23.2.1852 – 17.12. 1852)
Wednesday 7 July 1852 – Saturday 31 July 1852	Conservative (Cons/Lib coalition ²) (Liberal)	Derby 23.2.1852 – 17.12.1852 (R) (Aberdeen (Conservative) 19.12.1852 - 30.1.1855) (R) (Palmerston 6.2.1855 - 20.2.1858)
Friday 27 March 1857 – Friday 24 April 1857	Liberal (Conservative)	Palmerston 6.2.1855 - 19.2.1858 (R) (Derby 20.2.1858 - 11.6.1859)
Thursday 28 April 1859 – Wednesday 18 May 1859	Conservative (Liberal)	Derby 20.2.1858 - 11.6.1859 (VNC) (Palmerston 12.6.1859 - 19.10.1865)
Tuesday 11 July 1865 – Monday 24 July 1865	Liberal (Liberal) (Conservative) (Conservative)	Palmerston 12.6.1859 - 19.10.1865 (DIO)³ (Russell 29.10.1865 - 26.6.1866) (R) (Derby 28.6.1866 - 25.2.1868) (R) (Disraeli 27.2.1868 - 1.12.1868) (R)
Tuesday 17 November 1868 – Monday 7 December 1868	Liberal	Gladstone 3.12.1868 - 17.2.1874
Saturday 31 January 1874 – Tuesday 17 February 1874	Conservative	Disraeli 18.2.1874 - 21.4.1880 (R)
Wednesday 31 March 1880 – Tuesday 27 April 1880	Liberal (Conservative)	Gladstone 23.4.1880 - 9.6.1885 (R) (Salisbury 23.6.1885 - 28.1.1886)

¹ Dismissed by King William IV

² See Appendix

³ Died in Office

Tuesday 24 November 1885 – Friday 18 December 1885	Conservative (Liberal)	Salisbury 23.6.1885 - 28.1.1886 (R) (Gladstone 1.2.1886 - 20.7.1886)
Thursday 1 July 1886 – Tuesday 27 July 1886	Conservative	Salisbury 25.7.1886 - 11.8.1892
Monday 4 July 1892 – Tuesday 26 July 1892	Conservative (Liberal) (Liberal) (Conservative)	Salisbury 25.7.1886 - 11.8.1892 (R) (Gladstone 15.8.1892 - 2.3.1894) (R) (Rosebery 5.3.1894 - 22.6.1895) (R) (Salisbury 25.6.1895 - 11.7.1902)
Saturday 13 July 1895 – Wednesday 7 August 1895	Conservative/Liberal coalition	Salisbury (Conservative) 25.6.1895 - 11.7.1902
Monday 1 October 1900 – Wednesday 24 October 1900	Conservative (Conservative) (Liberal)	Salisbury 25.6.1895 - 11.7.1902 (R) (Balfour 12.7.1902 - 4.12.1905) (R) (Campbell-Bannerman 5.12.1905 - 5.4.1908)
Friday 12 January 1906 – Thursday 8 February 1906	Liberal (Liberal)	Campbell-Bannerman 5.12.1905 - 5.4.1908 (R) (Asquith 5.4.1908 - 5.12.1916)
Saturday 15 January 1910 – Thursday 10 February 1910	Liberal	Asquith 5.4.1908 - 5.12.1916
Saturday 3 December 1910 – Monday 19 December 1910	Liberal	Asquith 5.4.1908 - 5.12.1916 (R)
First World War	Liberal Liberal/Unionist/Labour wartime coalition	Asquith (Liberal) May 25.5.1915 – 5.12.1916 (R) Lloyd George (Liberal) 7.12.1916 - 14.12.1918
⁴ Saturday 14 December 1918 ⁵	Liberal/Unionist⁶ wartime coalition (Conservative)	Lloyd George (Liberal) 14.12.1916 - 19.10.1922 (R) (Bonar Law 23.10.1922 - 20.5.1923)
Wednesday 15 November 1922	Conservative (Conservative)	Bonar Law 23.10.1922 - 20.5.1923 (R) (Baldwin 22.5.1923-22.1.1924)
Thursday 6 December 1923	Conservative (Labour)	Baldwin 22.5.1923 - 22.1.1924 (R) (MacDonald 22.1.1924 - 4.11.1924)
Wednesday 29 October 1924	Conservative	Baldwin 4.11.1924 - 5.6.1929
Thursday 30 May 1929	Conservative (Labour)	Baldwin 4.11.1924 - 5.6.1929 (R) (MacDonald 5.6.1929 - 7.6.1935)
Tuesday 27 October 1931	National Government⁷ (National Government)	MacDonald (Labour) 5.6.1929 - 7.6.1935 (R) (Baldwin (Conservative) 7.6.1935 - 28.5.1937)

⁴ *Representation of the People Act 1918* chapter 64, Section 21 (1), states “at a General Election all polls shall be held on one day”

⁵ Results declared Saturday 28 December 1918

⁶ The Labour Party withdrew from the coalition in June 1918

⁷ See Appendix

Thursday 14 November 1935	National Government (Conservative)	Baldwin (Conservative) 7.6.1935-28.5.1937 (R) (Chamberlain 28.5.1937 - 10.5.1940)
Second World War	Conservative (National Govt. Sept 1939) (National Government) (National Government)	Chamberlain 28.5.1937 - 10.5.1940 (R) (Churchill (Conservative) 10.5.1940 - 23.5.1945) (R) (Churchill (Conservative) 23.5.1945 - 26.7.1945) (C)
Thursday 5 July 1945 ⁸	Labour	Atlee 26.7.1945 - 26.10.1951
Thursday 23 February 1950	Labour	Atlee 26.7.1945 - 26.10.1951
Thursday 25 October 1951	Conservative (Conservative)	Churchill 26.10.1951 - 5.4.1955 (R) (Eden 6.4.1955 - 9.1.1957)
Thursday 26 May 1955	Conservative (Conservative)	Eden 6.4.1955 - 9.1.1957 (R) (Macmillan 10.1.1957 - 18.10.1963)
Thursday 8 October 1959	Conservative (Conservative)	Macmillan 10.1.1957 - 18.10.1963 (R) (Douglas-Home 19.10.1963 - 16.10.1964)
Thursday 15 October 1964	Labour	Wilson 16.10.1964 - 19.6.1970
Thursday 31 March 1966	Labour	Wilson 16.10.1964 - 19.6.1970
Thursday 18 June 1970	Conservative	Heath 19.6.1970 - 4.3.1974
Thursday 28 February 1974	Labour	Wilson 4.3.1974⁹ - 5.4.1976
Thursday 10 October 1974	Labour (Labour)	Wilson 4.3.1974 - 5.4.1976 (R) (Callaghan 5.4.1976 - 3.5.1979)
Thursday 3 May 1979	Conservative	Thatcher 4.5.1979 - 28.11.1990
Thursday 9 June 1983	Conservative	Thatcher 4.5.1979 - 28.11.1990
Thursday 11 June 1987	Conservative (Conservative)	Thatcher 4.5.1979 - 28.11.1990 (R) (Major 28.11.1990 - 1.5.1997)
Thursday 9 April 1992	Conservative	Major 28.11.1990 - 1.5.1997
Thursday 1 May 1997	Labour	Blair 2.5.1997 - 27.6.2007
Thursday 7 June 2001	Labour	Blair 2.5.1997 - 27.6.2007
Thursday 5 May 2005	Labour (Labour)	Blair 2.5.1997 - 27.6.2007 (R) (Brown 27.6.2007 - present)

Sources:

Days of week 1832-1918 -- Times Digital Archive

General Election Dates 1832-2005 -- *British Electoral Facts 1832-2006*, edited by Rallings and Thrasher 2007

Party and Prime Minister details -- *Facts About the British Prime Ministers*, edited by Englefield et al 1995

⁸ Results declared Thursday 26 July 1945

⁹ Edward Heath remained in office over the week-end

Appendix

Single-Party Government – when one party has a clear majority vote at the General Election

Coalition Government – this is formed when political parties unite and secure a majority in Parliament over other groups; this may happen when the winning party has a small majority at the General Election

National Government – has representatives all the political parties; usually in times of war when political attachments give way - national necessity and an electoral truce is declared.

Source: *An Encyclopaedia of Parliament*, Wilding and Laundry 1972