

Calenders used in India

The National Calendar of India is the Saka calendar which has 365 days, just like the Gregorian year and is divided into 12 months. Since its inception in 1957, it has represented a standardized calendar.

The Vikram Samvat and the Saka Samvat are the main calendars of Hindus and are used to evaluate Holi and Diwali dates and other important festivals. These lunisolar cinders are traditionally used for social purposes as well.

Types of Calendars in India

In history, ancient Indian rulers used to declare new zero dates at the beginning of a new dynasty. These new calendars were followed throughout their rule until they were replaced by a new dynasty. Later, these were replaced by permanent calendars based on solar and lunar movements. At present, there are four types of Calendars in India, and these are-

- Vikram Samvat
- Saka Samvat
- Hijri Calendar
- Gregorian Calendar

Saka Calendar

King Shalivahana of the Satavahana dynasty founded the Saka era. King Kanishka is accredited for bringing the **Saka calendar** into existence, marking its 1st date Chaitra 1, on March 21 or March 22, taking into account the slower movement of the Sun across the ecliptic at this time. The National Calendar of India, the Saka calendar, is used by the Gazette of India, news broadcast on All India Radio, and communications issued by the government alongside the Gregorian Calendar.

There are 12 months in Saka Calendar, and these are mentioned in the table below:

Gregorian Calendar	Saka Varsha Months
March 21 - April 20	Chhaitra
April 21 - May 21	Vaishakha
May 22 - June 21	Jyeshtha
June 22 - July 22	Ashadha
July 23 - August 22	Shravana
August 22 - September 22	Bhaadra
September 23 - October 22	Ashwin
October 23 - November 21	Kartika
November 22 - December 21	Agrahayana

December 22 - January 20	Pausha
January 21 - February 19	Magha
February 20 - March 20/21	Phalgun

Also, the Saka Samvats has seven days and these are:

- Ravivara
- Somvaram
- Mangalvaram
- Budhvaram
- Vrihaspativaram
- Shukravaram
- Shanivaram

Important Facts about the National Calendar of India

Some important facts about the National calendar of India, i.e., the Saka Calendar are as follows:

- Corresponding to the Julian year 78, the Saka Calendar is a historical calendar.
- It is also known as the Mahasakkarat Era or Shalivahana Saka era.
- The Indonesian Hindus of Java and Bali also use this national calendar of India.
- Along with the Gregorian calendar, Saka Calendar is used by the Gazette of India.
- Chief Military Triumphs of King Shalivahana were marked by the Saka era.

Vikram Samvat Calendar

The Vikram Samvat calendar is named after King Vikramaditya and came into focus after the 9th century, marking the epigraphical artwork's beginning. Its new year begins with Baisakhi and ends with Chaitra. The names of the months are the same as those of the Saka calendar, except Arghayan is often termed Mangsir. The days of the week are the same.

The important features of the Vikram Samvat Calendar in India are as follows-

- It marks the beginning of the Vikram era.
- It is the official calendar of Nepal.
- It started in 57 B.C. before the 9th century with Vikramaditya.
- Unlike the Saka calendar, this calendar has 354 days and is based on the movement of the moon.
- The 2 phases of the Vikram Samvat months are the Shukla Paksha which begins with the new moon and ends with the full moon, and the Krishna Paksha, which begins with the full moon and ends with the new moon.

The division of a year in Vikram Samvat months is as under-

Gregorian Calendar	Vikram Samvat
April-May	Baishakh
May-June	Jestha
June-July	Ashadh
July-August	Shrawan

August-September	Bhadra
September-October	Ashwin
October-November	Kartik
November-December	Mangsir
December-January	Poush
January-February	Magh
February-March	Falgun
March-April	Chaitra

According to the Vikram Samvat calendar, the first day is celebrated after Diwali in Maharashtra and Gujarat. The Calendar is used by Hindus and Sikhs and is designed according to the Gregorian Calendar, and ancient human cultures developed this Calendar. The year's division is according to the solar sidereal years and lunar months.

Hijri Calendar in India

The Islamic Lunar calendar with 12 lunar months and 355/354 days is the Hijri Calendar. This Calendar was created in Arabic. The people following Islam use the Hijri Calendar to determine the Islamic holidays and other rituals like the pilgrimage to Mecca and Ramadan (the annual fasting period).

Here are the essential details about the Hijri Calendar:

- According to Islamic culture, the Islamic year began in 622 AD.
- It was also known as Amalfi. However, the term was replaced by Hejira or Hijri after the sad demise of Prophet Mohammed.
- Hajar is the term used for the migration of Prophet Muhamad from Mecca to Medina in 622. Because of his hijar, this year was called the Hijri era's zero years.
- The day in the Hijri calendar begins with a sunset.
- The Muslim Indians adopted it under the influence of Muslim rulers.

The division of the year according to the Hijri Calendar is as follows-

- Muharram
- Safar
- Rabi-al-Awwal
- Rabi-ath-Thani
- Jumada-al-ula
- Jumada-al-akhirah
- Rajab
- Shaban
- Ramadan
- Shawwal
- Dhu-al-Qadah
- Dhu-al-Hijjah

Out of these 12 months, four months of the Hijri Calendar, i.e., first, seventh, eleventh, and twelfth, are considered scary. Also, the Hijri Calendar is a year behind the Gregorian Calendar (every 33 years) as it is based on the lunar year. However, it is used by some Muslim countries

to timestamp certain events with the Gregorian Calendar, particularly for performing Hajj and observing Ramadan.

Gregorian Calendar in India

The Gregorian Calendar was introduced by Pope Gregory XII in October 1582 and is commonly used as the civil Calendar. It is the most commonly used, but not the national calendar of India. This Calendar was initially developed as a correction to the Julian Calendar, and it was named after its creator. The Gregorian Calendar is based on Earth's revolution around the Sun, thus, making an average year with 365.2425 days.

The division of the Gregorian Calendar is as follows:

- January
- February
- March
- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December

