

Western Expansion Timeline – Key

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1848	California gold rush begins.
1856	Aboriginal peoples discover gold on the Thompson River (B.C. or New Caledonia).
1858	Gold is discovered on the Fraser River in British Columbia.
1860	Gold is discovered in the Cariboo Mountains of B.C. (Barkerville area).
1870	Northwest Territories and Manitoba (Red River Valley) become part of Canada.
1870s	American traders enter the Canadian Northwest to make profits selling whisky and trading furs.
1871	British Columbia becomes a province of Canada.
1873	250 Assiniboine Indians are killed by American whisky traders in Cypress Hills, Alberta.
1873	The North West Mounted Police are founded to keep law and order and establish Canadian control in the West so the Americans do not annex the territory.
1875	Work begins on the CPR line moving west from Fort William (Thunder Bay).
1878	First train arrives from the East in Winnipeg; work on the CPR line progresses toward the West.
1880	Canadian Pacific Railway is formed.
March 12, 1883	First steel arrives at Port Moody, B.C. to begin construction of the CPR line moving toward the East.
1880-1885	15,000 Chinese labourers are hired to build the B.C. section of the railway, blasting through mountains in dangerous conditions.
November 17, 1885	The last spike of the railway is driven: the western line and the eastern line meet at Craigellachie, B.C. 4660 km of track have been completed.
June 28, 1886	The first passenger train travels across Canada from Montreal to Port Moody, B.C.
1896	Klondike gold rush begins in the Yukon.
1898	Yukon becomes a territory of Canada.