

Establishment of the Kyoto Imperial Palace

When the capital first moved to Kyoto in the Heian Period, the Imperial Palace was situated 2 km west of its current location. The first emperor to reside at the current site of the Kyoto Imperial Palace was Emperor Kogon, who turned the Higashi no Toin Tsuchimikado-den into a temporary palace in 1331. This later became the official Imperial Palace after the unification of the northern and southern dynasties in 1392.

From the medieval period onwards, rulers who were able to exert control over Kyoto often demonstrated their power and prestige by rebuilding the Imperial Palace. In the Momoyama period, Toyotomi Hideyoshi decided to create an area that would incorporate compounds for other members of the Imperial family, as well as households of the extended nobility, within the immediate palace surroundings. This became the court nobles' residential area.

Locations of the Imperial Palace through the centuries

Before 994 until the time of Fujiwara no Michinaga

995 – 1027 until the death of Fujiwara no Michinaga

1028 – 1074 until the death of Fujiwara no Yorimichi

1075 – 1101 until the death of Fujiwara no Morozane

1102 – 1162 until the death of Fujiwara no Tadazane

Imperial Palace in the early Edo Period

Imperial Palace in the middle Edo Period

Imperial Palace in the late Edo Period

Perimeter of Kyoto Gyoen

Imperial Palace

Homes of Imperial Family members

Homes of nobility

Changes in the Imperial Palace during the Edo Period

In the early part of the Edo Period, *machiya* townhouses belonging to commoners existed in the area. However, these were gradually replaced by the estates of the nobility. By the late Edo period, more than 140 compounds for the nobility were located in this area.

Incremental changes also took place in the Imperial Palace itself, and in the houses of members of the Imperial Family.

Three Edo-period maps of Kyoto Gyoen show the changes in ownership of the palaces and court nobles' residential areas.

Kyoto Gyoen (light green in the diagram) is located at the northeast corner of the old Heian-kyo city. The other colored areas on the map show the Imperial Palaces during the different periods.