

The Six Ruling Families of Matsumoto Domain

Matsumoto domain was ruled by six families in succession, and each family left their mark on the castle and surrounding town. Some of the families were only briefly in power, but the duration of each family's rule did not dictate the extent of its impact.

During the Edo period (1603–1867), the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868) chose which daimyo governed each domain. These appointments could be granted or revoked at any time. Loyal daimyos were generally given more prosperous domains, or those located closer to the seat of power in Edo (now Tokyo). Conversely, daimyos who were perceived as threats to the shogunate were often reassigned to less-desirable domains or stripped of their positions entirely. Matsumoto was considered a desirable domain; the castle was in a key military location, and the daimyos who controlled it were typically related to the shogun by birth or marriage.

Ishikawa Family (1590–1613)

Ishikawa Kazumasa (d. 1592) was appointed lord of Matsumoto by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), a great warlord and unifier of the country. One of Kazumasa's priorities as daimyo was the construction of a multistory keep, which could be used to monitor the surrounding territory. Kazumasa died during one of Hideyoshi's invasions of the Korean Peninsula, and the construction ultimately fell to his son Yasunaga (1554–1642). Under Yasunaga's leadership, the Great Keep, the Northwest Tower, and the Roofed Passage were completed in 1594.

Ogasawara Family (1613–1617)

Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate, removed the Ishikawa family and granted control of Matsumoto to Ogasawara Hidemasa (1569–1615), who had married his granddaughter. Hidemasa and his successor, Ogasawara Tadazane (1596–1667), greatly improved the infrastructure of the castle town.

Toda Family (1617–1633)

When the Ogasawara family was moved to another domain, Toda Yasunaga (1562–1633) was appointed lord of Matsumoto. Yasunaga was married to a half-sister of Ieyasu, and his appointment demonstrates how daimyos who ingratiated themselves with the shogunate were often appointed to strategically important domains. During their appointment, the Toda family had each village in the domain choose a headman and alderman to oversee its affairs.

Matsudaira Family (1633–1638)

Although he was lord of Matsumoto for only a few years, Matsudaira Naomasa (1601–1666) played a significant role in creating Matsumoto Castle as it stands today.

Naomasa expanded the castle by adding the Southeast Wing and the Moon-Viewing Tower. His decision to omit defensive features such as loopholes and *ishi otoshi* from these structures reflects the sense of peace and stability that pervaded during the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868). The expansion of existing castles was strictly prohibited at the time, but Naomasa, being a grandson of the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, likely received special permission.

Hotta Family (1638–1642)

The Matsudaira family was reappointed to a larger domain, and control of Matsumoto was given to Hotta Masamori (1609–1651). Political connections played a part in this appointment: Masamori's grandmother-in-law was Kasuga no Tsubone (1579–1643), who wielded significant political influence as the wet nurse of the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651). Masamori never set foot in Matsumoto during his short reign, but he is believed to have ordered the construction of a rice storehouse in the Agetsuchi neighborhood, to the east of the castle.

Mizuno Family (1642–1725)

Mizuno Tadakiyo (1582–1647) and his descendants governed Matsumoto for 83 years, a markedly longer rule than those of the previous daimyos. In addition to conducting extensive land surveys, in 1724 the Mizuno family compiled the *Shinpu tōki* (Compiled Chronicles of Matsumoto) a record of the domain's history, geography, and even yearly crop yields. Despite these contributions, the Mizuno family's appointment was swiftly ended after Mizuno Tadatsune (1701–1739) attacked another daimyo's son with a sword inside the grounds of Edo Castle.

Toda Family (1726–1869)

For a year after the Mizuno family was removed, the shogunate oversaw Matsumoto domain directly. Control was then returned to the Toda family, who had governed the domain roughly a century earlier. Toda Mitsuchika (1712–1732) and his younger brother Mitsuo (1716–1758), who succeeded him as daimyo, toured the entire domain in 1731 to win the hearts of the people. In 1793, the Toda also established a school called Sōkyōkan, which later became the renowned Kaichi School. Following the rapid

political changes brought about by the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the last daimyo, Toda Mitsuhsa (1828–1892), relinquished control of the domain to the new government in 1869, and Matsumoto domain was formally abolished two years later.