



## The French Revolution: Causes, Course and Impact

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**Abstract :** The French Revolution of 1789-1799 was one of the most important events in the history of the world. The Revolution led to many changes in France, which at the time of the Revolution, was the most powerful state in Europe. The Revolution led to the development of new political forces such as democracy and nationalism. It questioned the authority of kings, priests, and nobles. The Revolution also gave new meanings and new ideas to the political ideas of the people.

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The French Revolution was spread over the ten year period between 1789 and 1799. The primary cause of the revolution was the disputes over the peoples' differing ideas of reform. Before the beginning of the Revolution, only moderate reforms were wanted by the people. An example of why they wanted this was because of king Louis XIV's actions. At the end of the seventeenth century, King Louis XIV's wars began decreasing the royal finances dramatically. This worsened during the eighteenth century. The use of the money by Louis XIV angered the people and they wanted a new system of government. The writings of the philosophes such as Voltaire and Diderot, were critical of the government.

### **Causes of the French Revolution:**

#### ***Political:***

In the 18th century, France was a feudal society under the authority of an absolute monarchy. The Bourbon monarchs lived in splendor in the royal palace of Versailles. The finances of France were in a deplorable condition.

The treasury was practically empty after the numerous wars that France was involved in. King Louis XVI was incapable of guiding France through the political and financial crises. Queen Marie Antoinette, an Austrian princess, was blamed for squandering away public money. The administration was corrupt and autocratic.

#### ***Socio-economic:***