*"Louis XIV" and "Louis Quatorze" redirect here. For other uses, see*[*Louis XIV (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_XIV_%28disambiguation%29)*and*[*Louis Quatorze (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Quatorze_%28disambiguation%29)*.*

*"Sun King" and "Le Roi Soleil" redirect here. For the Beatles song, see*[*Sun King (song)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_King_%28song%29)*. For the French musical, see*[*Le Roi Soleil (musical)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le_Roi_Soleil_%28musical%29)*.*

**Louis XIV** (5 September 1638 – 1 September 1715), known as **Louis the Great** or the**Sun King** (French: *le Roi-Soleil*), was a [Bourbon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Bourbon) monarch who ruled as [King of France](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_French_monarchs) and[Navarre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Navarre).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Louis_XIV#cite_note-0) He holds the distinction of being the [longest-reigning king](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_longest-reigning_monarchs) in European history, reigning for 72 years and 110 days.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Louis_XIV#cite_note-1)

Louis began his personal rule of France in 1661 after the death of his chief minister, the Italian [Cardinal Mazarin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardinal_Mazarin).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Louis_XIV#cite_note-CatEn-2) An adherent of the theory of the [divine right of kings](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_right_of_kings), which advocates the divine origin and lack of temporal restraint of monarchical rule, Louis continued his predecessors' work of creating a [centralized state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centralized_government) governed from the capital. He sought to eliminate the remnants of [feudalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feudalism) persisting in parts of France and, by compelling the noble elite to inhabit his lavish [Palace of Versailles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace_of_Versailles), succeeded in pacifying the aristocracy, many members of which had participated in the [Fronde](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fronde%22%20%5Co%20%22Fronde) rebellion during Louis' minority. By these means he consolidated a system of absolute monarchical rule in France that endured until the [French Revolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution).

During Louis's reign France was the leading European power and fought three major wars: the [Franco-Dutch War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franco-Dutch_War), the [War of the League of Augsburg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nine_Years_War), and the [War of the Spanish Succession](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_the_Spanish_Succession)—and two minor conflicts—the [War of Devolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_Devolution) and the [War of the Reunions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_the_Reunions). Louis encouraged and benefited from the work of prominent political, military and cultural figures such as [Mazarin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazarin), [Colbert](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Baptiste_Colbert), [Turenne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henri_de_la_Tour_d%27Auvergne%2C_Vicomte_de_Turenne) and [Vauban](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vauban), as well as [Molière](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moli%C3%A8re%22%20%5Co%20%22Moli%C3%A8re), [Racine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Racine%22%20%5Co%20%22Jean%20Racine),[Boileau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolas_Boileau-Despr%C3%A9aux), [La Fontaine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_de_La_Fontaine), [Lully](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Baptiste_Lully), [Le Brun](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Le_Brun), [Rigaud](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyacinthe_Rigaud%22%20%5Co%20%22Hyacinthe%20Rigaud), [Bossuet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques-B%C3%A9nigne_Bossuet), [Le Vau](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Le_Vau), [Mansart](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jules_Hardouin_Mansart%22%20%5Co%20%22Jules%20Hardouin%20Mansart), [Charles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Perrault) and[Claude Perrault](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Perrault), and [Le Nôtre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andr%C3%A9_Le_N%C3%B4tre).

Upon his death just days before his seventy-seventh birthday, Louis was succeeded by his five-year-old great-grandson, [Louis XV](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_XV_of_France). All his intermediate heirs—his son [Louis, *le Grand Dauphin*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis%2C_Dauphin_of_France_%281661%E2%80%931711%29); the Dauphin's eldest son [Louis, duc de Bourgogne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis%2C_Dauphin_of_France_%281682-1712%29); and Bourgogne's eldest son and his second eldest son, [Louis, duc de Bretagne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis%2C_Dauphin_of_France_%281707-1712%29) (the older brothers of the future Louis XV)—predeceased him.