Story Timeline Template

One row per event, in story order. Gray italic rows are an invented example (the Mist-Veil City novel). Type over them or delete them. Free to use. From litmemo.com/en/templates/timeline-sheet

1. Event timeline

Event	When (story time)	Chapter	Track	Characters	Place	What it changes
The Purge reaches House Su	*LY 300, 7th of Frost-month, night*	*Ch. 5 (flashback)*	*Backstory*	*Su Wan (7), Ren (29, a sergeant)*	*The cliff houses*	*Ren lets a child go. She never learns it was him (pays off ch. 22)*
Su Wan maps the guild vault	*LY 312, fog day 1, after dark*	*Ch. 1*	*Main plot*	*Su Wan*	*Guild vault, Mist-Veil City*	*She finds a hollow wall: the book's first question*
Ren gets the crown's order to arrest everyone on the list	*LY 312, fog day 9, evening*	*Ch. 6*	*Subplot: Ren*	*Captain Ren*	*Guard house*	*Su Wan's name is on the list; the clock starts*

2. Track view: what everyone is doing at the same time

One row per date, one column per plot thread. Name the columns for your book. Read across a row to see what happens at the same moment.

When	Main plot:	Subplot:	Subplot:	World / backstory
Fog day 9	*Su Wan takes the true charter (ch. 7)*	*Ren gets the arrest order (ch. 6)*		*Last dry night before the rain*

3. Anchors: the dates that can't move

Anchor event	Date	Why it can't move
The Purge	*LY 300, 7th of Frost-month*	*Su Wan's age and the 'twelve years' everyone mentions count from it*

4. Character age grid

Character	Born	Age at anchor 1:	Age at anchor 2:	Age at anchor 3:	Age at anchor 4:
Su Wan	*LY 293*	*The Purge: 7*	*Ch. 1: 19*	*Epilogue: 22*	

5. Chapter order: reading order vs. story time

List chapters in reading order. For a dual timeline novel, use the Timeline column to mark which one each chapter belongs to.

Ch.	POV	Timeline	Story time	Time since previous chapter	Notes
5	*Su Wan*	*Past*	*LY 300, Frost-month*	*Flashback: 12 years back*	*Ren lets her go; she doesn't see his face*
6	*Ren*	*Present*	*Fog day 9, evening*	*3 days after ch. 4*	*Same night as ch. 7*

Free to use for your own writing. From litmemo.com/en/templates/timeline-sheet