

Yulgok's Timeline

년도	나이	내용
1536 31st year of the reign of Jungjong	1	▶ Born on December 26 [lunar calendar] to Yi Won-su (age 36) and Saimdang (age 33) at the hour of tiger at the parental house of his mother in Bukpyeongchon, Gangneung.
1538 33rd year of the reign of Jungjong	3	▶ Began to read Chinese classics to the surprise and admiration of all
1540 35th year of the reign of Jungjong	5	▶ Prayed for his mother Saimdang's recovery at the shrine of his maternal grandfather ▶ Became worried about the safety of a man who was about to fall into a flooded stream while all onlookers were laughing, and showed relief when the man stood upright
1541 36th year of the reign of Jungjong	6	▶ Moved to Sujinbang in Seoul from Gangneung with his mother Saimdang
1542 37th year of the reign of Jungjong	7	▶ Interpreted Chinese texts after learning them from his mother and mastering the Four Confucian Classics [<i>Analects of Confucius</i> (論語), <i>Mencius</i> (孟子), <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> (中庸), and <i>Great Learning</i> (大學)]
1543 38th year of the reign of Jungjong	8	▶ Composed an eponymous poem at the Hwaseokjeong Pavilion in Yulgok-ri, Paju
1544 39th year of the reign of Jungjong	9	▶ Painted a scene of all his brothers living in a house, serving the parent after reading the story of Zhang Gongyi's nine generation household in the book <i>Two Moral Rules</i>
1546 Myeongjong's coronation year	11	▶ Cut his arm to give blood to his ill father and prayed for his recovery at the ancestral shrine
1548 3rd year of the reign of Myeongjong	13	▶ Passed the first-level Jinsasi [Literary Licentiate Examination], winning first place and made him famous as a prodigy
1551 6th year of the reign of Myeongjong	16	▶ Death of his mother Saimdang ▶ Authored <i>the Biography of My Deceased Mother</i>
1554 9th year of the reign of Myeongjong	19	▶ Began his lifelong friendship with Ugye Seong Hon ▶ Went to Mt. Geumgang in March and was involved in Buddhism
1555 10th year of the reign of Myeongjong	20	▶ Returned to the mundane world in spring; visited his maternal grandmother in Gangneung ▶ Wrote <i>Jagyeongmun</i> [<i>Self-Admonitions</i>] at Ojukheon

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1556 11th year of the reign of Myeongjong	21	▶ Returned to the house in Seoul in spring.
1557 12th year of the reign of Myeongjong	22	▶ Married the daughter of Noh Gyeong-rin, the Magistrate of Seongju, in September
1558 13th year of the reign of Myeongjong	23	▶ Visited Toegye Yi Hwang (age 58) in Ye-an, Gyeongsangbuk-do in spring, and discussed the classics and philosophies with him; dropped by at Maehakjeong in Seonsan to meet Gosan Hwang Ki-ro, who seemed to have given the occasion for his brother Oksan to marry Gosan's daughter
1561 16th year of the reign of Myeongjong	26	▶ Death of his father Yi Won-su in May; buried in Paju next to Saimdang
1564 19th year of the reign of Myeongjong	29	▶ Wrote Cheongsong Seong Su-chim's biography, after his death, in spring ▶ Obtained the licentiate titles of Saengwong and Jin-sa after passing a series of exams in July
1565 20th year of the reign of Myeongjong	30	▶ Appointed to Yejo-Jwarang [Assistant Section Chief of the Ministry of Rites, Sr. 6] in spring
1566 21st year of the reign of Myeongjong	31	▶ Appointed to the Fourth Censor (Sr. 6) ▶ Appointed to the Ijo-Jwarang in winter; brought order and transparency to the civil service system
1567 22nd year of the reign of Myeongjong	32	▶ Wrote King Myeong jong's mansa* [mourning text] ※ Mansa: The writing crying for dead ones.
1568 Seonjo's coronation year	33	▶ In February, appointed to the Fourth Inspector (Jr. 5) ▶ In April, death of Noh Gyeong-rin, his father-in-law ▶ In November, reappointed to the Ijo-Jwarang, but he resigned from it to return to Gangneung on receiving the news that his maternal grandmother Lady Yi fell seriously ill ※ The Office of Censor-General requested the King to dismiss him on the ground that attending to the maternal grandmother is no legitimate reason for a leave of absence, but King Seonjo did not approve the request for dismissal, arguing that if Yulgok's love for his grandmother is so great, he must go and take care of her to do his filial duty.
1569 2nd year of the reign of Seonjo	34	▶ In June, appointed to the Fifth Counselor (Sr. 5); back to Seoul in July ▶ In September, presented Donghomundap to the King ▶ In October, returned to his maternal grandmother Lady Yi with a leave of absence specially granted by the King; Lady Yi's death at the age of 90

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1570 3rd year of the reign of Seonjo	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In April, went back to Seoul, and was appointed to the Gyori ▶ In August, death of his eldest brother Seon ▶ In October, resigned from the post because of illness and returned to Yaduchon in Haeju, his wife's parental house ▶ In December, on receiving the news of Toegy's death, he set up an altar and cried aloud.
1571 4th year of the reign of Seonjo	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In January, left Haeju for Yulgok-ri in Paju ▶ Went back to Seoul; appointed to the Gyori and successively to Uijeongbu-Geomsangsain, Hongmungwan-Bueunggyo concurrently with Jijegyo and Gyeongyeon-Sidokgwan, and Chunchugwan-Pyeonsugwan [legal secretary, counselor, royal editor, royal lecture reader, and state record compiler, ranks Sr. 3–Sr. 5]; resigned from all positions for health reasons and returned to Haeju ▶ In Haeju, took an excursion with scholars to Seokdamgugok [nine-bend river valley of Seokdam] in Mt. Gosan; named the fourth bend Song-ae [pine tree cliff] and wrote a prose; gave names to the other eight bends; planned to establish a retreat dwelling there ▶ In June, appointed to the Magistrate of Cheongju; cultivated the people to practice moral behavior and good customs; set out Hyangak [Village Pact], and guided the people to keep it.
1572 5th year of the reign of Seonjo	37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In March, resigned as the magistracy and returned to Seoul ▶ In summer, returned to Yulgok-ri; developed the theory of Li and Ki with Ugye.
1573 6th year of the reign of Seonjo	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In July, appointed to the Jikjehak [Second Counselor, Sr. 3]; back to Seoul after failing to obtain the approval to resign. ▶ In August, returned to Yulgok-ri after obtaining the approval to resign after a three-time appeal; composed the poem Gamguneum [Appreciation for the King's Grace] ▶ In September, reappointed to the Jikjehak; went back to Seoul. ▶ Successively appointed to Tonjeongdaebu [prestige title granted to the officials of the senior third rank] Seungjeongwon-Dongbuseungi, Jijegyo concurrently with Gyeongyeon-Chamchangwan, and Chunchugwan Suchangwan [royal secretary, royal editor, royal lecture participant, and state record editor]
1574 7th year of the reign of Seonjo	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In January, promoted to the Fifth Royal Secretary [Sr. 3]; presented <i>Maneongbongsa</i> [Sealed 10,000-Word Supplication, also called <i>Maneonso</i>] and made proposals for saving the country from political and social crises ▶ In March, appointed to the Censor-General ▶ In June, birth of first son Gyeong-rim as seoja ▶ In October, appointed to the Governor of Hwanghae-do

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1575 8th year of the reign of Seonjo	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Commencement of the East-West Faction Rivalry ▶ In September, presented the <i>Seonghakjibyo</i> [Essentials of the Studies of the Sages] to the King.
1576 9th year of the reign of Seonjo	41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In February, returned to Yulgok-ri ▶ In October, built Cheonggyedang as the first dwelling facility in Haeju
1577 10th year of the reign of Seonjo	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In January, gathered the extended families in Seokdam and write the <i>Donggeogyesa</i> [Community Life Code of Conduct]; built the family shrine and invited the widowed wife of his eldest brother Seon to bring the ancestral tablets with her and hold Jesa; served his stepmother Kwon with devotion and filial duty ▶ In December, wrote <i>Gyeongmongyogyaeol</i> [The Secret of Expelling Ignorance]; set out the Hyangak [Village Pact] to correct corrupt customs; implemented the village granary system for the well-being of all villagers
1578 11th year of the reign of Seonjo	43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Built a retreat house Eubyeong-Jeongsa at the fifth bend east of Cheonggyedang; composed the <i>Gosangugokga</i>, comparing the nine bends of Seokdam in Mt. Gosan to those of Mt. Wuyi of Zhu Xi ▶ In March, appointed to the Censor-General; went back to Seoul. ▶ In April, returned to Yulgok-ri ▶ In May, presented <i>Maneonso</i> to the King ▶ In winter, returned to Seokdam.
1579 12th year of the reign of Seonjo	44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In March, built Dobong Seowon (a Confucian academy) ▶ Birth of second son Gyeong-jeong as seoja ▶ Wrote <i>Sohakjipju</i> [Collected Comments on Lesser Learning]
1580 13th year of the reign of Seonjo	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In May, compiled <i>Gijasilgi</i> [Veritable History of Gija Joseon]
1581 14th year of the reign of Seonjo	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In April, proposed to hold a conference to rescue the people from misery and voluntarily hosting it ▶ In June, promoted to the Gaseondaebu [prestige title for the officials of the junior second rank] Inspector-General ▶ In October, promoted to the Jaheondaebu [prestige title for the officials of the senior second rank] Minister of Taxation.

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1582 15th year of the reign of Seonjo	47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In January, appointed to the Minister of Personnel ▶ In July, wrote the Commentary on <i>the Human-Tao Mind Dichotomy</i>, <i>Biography of Kim Shi-seup</i>, and <i>School Models and Functions</i>, and presented them to the King. ▶ In October, a King's order to led the reception committee to meet the Ming Imperial Envoys as Wonjeopsa ▶ In December, appointed to the Minister of Military Affairs
1583 16th year of the reign of Seonjo	48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In February, presented reform programs to address the rampant national problems ▶ In April, presented again a series of innovative rescue programs, such as eliminating unnecessary civil service positions, clustering villages in larger administrative units, encouraging production, reclaiming waste land, reforming the tributary payment regulations to ease the people of excessive burdens, strengthening castles and fortresses, keeping clear records of military servicemen, hiring soejas, and giving opportunities to the servant class to be upgraded to the commoner class against grain donation; claiming the necessity of training 100,000 soldiers to strengthen the national border defense. ▶ In June, impeachment of the Samsa [three censoring bodies] for the northern Orangkae invasion; voluntary dismissal; returned to Yulgok-ri; return to Seokdam in Haeju. ▶ In September, appointed to the Deputy Director of the Royal House Administration, followed by the Minister of Personnel
1584 17th year of the reign of Seonjo	49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ On January16[lunar calendar], death at the house in Daesa-dong, Seoul. ▶ On March 20, burial in Mt. Jawun, Paju. ▶ Forty years later, grant of the posthumous honorary title Munseonggong in August 1624, the second year of the reign of Injo.

Saimdang and Yulgok

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