

# Chronology of WWII

ARRANGE THE EVENTS IN THEIR CORRECT ORDER

**JULY 1944**  
World's largest ever amphibious operation begins the Allied reconquest of Europe

“ ...not the end, or even the beginning of the end, but may well be the end of the beginning ”

**SEPTEMBER 1945**  
Japan surrenders, World War II ends

**DECEMBER 1942**  
Japan attacks USA, and US declares war

**MAY 1940**  
German Blitzkrieg in the Netherlands and France

**MAY 1945**  
Germans unconditionally surrender

**JUNE 1941**  
Germans invade Soviet Union

**JUNE 1940**  
Germans reach Paris and the French surrender

**AUGUST 1945**  
USA drop atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan

**SEPTEMBER 1940**  
Hitler launches the Blitz, the aerial bombing of British cities

GLOSSARY	
<b>Amphibious</b> - involving forces landed from the sea	<b>Evacuate</b> - remove people from a place of danger / withdraw from

**APRIL 1945**  
Hitler commits suicide as Soviets reach Berlin

**JULY 1943**  
Soviet victory halts German advance east

**JUNE 1940**  
British **evacuate** Dunkirk after German advance in France cuts off Allies

**AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1940**  
The Battle of Britain, where Nazi attempts to invade Britain are halted

“ Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few ”

## DUNKIRK

The **Allied** forces were cornered by the advancing German armies at Dunkirk. 338,000 managed to escape across the English Channel. Naval craft and personnel were reinforced by hundreds of 'little ships' and their civilian crews who had volunteered to take part. The escape was a major achievement, but as the **Allies** had been pushed out of Europe, there was a real threat of a German invasion of Britain.

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN

To allow an invasion of Britain the German airforce (Luftwaffe) had to get control of the skies. Fiercely challenged by RAF, it attacked military targets. The raids were effective, but Hitler's decision to change tactics and begin bombing British cities allowed the RAF to recover.

The British invention of radar meant German aircraft could be detected and intercepted early. This, and the slightly superior ability of the British planes, meant Nazi Germany was unable to gain control of the skies and had to delay invasion plans.

Found at [www.SchoolHistory.co.uk](http://www.SchoolHistory.co.uk)

## WAR AT SEA

Britain's survival depended upon the flow of supplies from North America. German submarines, known as U-boats, posed the biggest threat to the supply routes. The Royal Navy tried to protect and escort supply convoys but for much of the war, U-boats caused serious damage to shipping in the Atlantic.

Better anti-submarine weapons and detection devices, trained convoy support groups, long-range aircraft and escort carriers all helped to eventually defeat the threat of the U-boats.

## D-DAY

On June 6 1944, codenamed D-Day, the **Allied** reconquest of Western Europe began. **Allied** forces landed on the Normandy beaches in Northern France. Stormy weather made landing conditions very difficult. The invasion caught the Germans by surprise. It was described by Churchill as 'the greatest **amphibious** operation in history.' Despite huge casualties, this was the beginning of the Allied invasion of Europe.

## OPERATION BARBAROSSA

Nazi Germany and Russia had agreed not to fight in 1939. But in June 1941 Germany invaded, and Russia became an ally of Britain and France.

Churchill denounces Hitler as a "bloodthirsty guttersnipe" as Germany invades Russia

## PEARL HARBOR

Japan wanted to build up her Empire into Asia, which was dominated by the Western powers (Britain, France & USA). With Britain and France occupied by war in Western Europe, the only country who could stand up to Japan was America.

On 7 December 1941 Japanese aircraft attacked Pearl Harbor where a large part of the US navy was based and caused major damage.

The attack on Pearl Harbor was greeted with shock and **indignation** in the United States. President Roosevelt declared war on Japan and Germany and Italy soon declared war on the United States.

## HIROSHIMA

Although devastated by the Allied bombing attacks, Japan's defences threatened to make an **amphibious** invasion extremely costly. The USA decided to use the recently developed atomic bomb to force Japan's surrender. On 6 August 1945 an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and, three days later, a second fell on Nagasaki. The **cataclysmic** effect of the new weapon forced the Japanese to surrender.

## DESERT WAR

**Axis** troops won a brilliant series of victories in North Africa. But shortages of equipment and fuel, along with supply lines under **Allied** attack meant the **Allies** were able to eventually win the desert war at the battle of El Alamein.

## GLOSSARY

**Amphibious** – landing forces from the sea  
**Allies** – (main) Britain, France & (later) USA, Russia  
**Axis** – Germany, Italy & (later) Japan  
**Cataclysmic** – a violent disaster  
**Indignation** – anger at unfair treatment

