

World War II **Facts**



World War II (WWII), also known as the Second World War, was a global war which took place between 1939 to 1945. Most of the world's countries, including all of the great powers, fought as part of two military alliances: the Allies and the Axis.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- ★ World War II was a military conflict that lasted from 1939 to 1945 and involved nearly all the nations of the world.
- ★ It was caused by the Treaty of Versailles and the German people's resentment toward the League of Nations. The Treaty of Versailles was created in 1919 to ensure peace in Europe following World War I. The treaty said that land was to be taken away from Germany.



World War II Facts

- ★ In the Battle of Britain, the Royal Air Force known as the RAF defeated the German Air Force, known as the Luftwaffe. As a result, Hitler halted his plan to invade Britain. By 1941, the US Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act which provided aid to Great Britain.
- ★ In June 1941, Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa which ordered the German invasion of the Soviet Union. At the same time, the Final Solution or extermination of the Jewish race was also introduced by Hitler.
- ★ On December 7, 1941, World War II awakened the Pacific after 360 Japanese aircraft attacked Pearl Harbor located in the islands of Hawaii. The following day, the US Congress and President Franklin D. Roosevelt officially declared war against Germany and Japan.



World War II Facts

- ★ On June 6, 1944, combined Allied forces invaded Normandy, France and began to liberate territories held by Germany. Hitler's army fought with the Soviet, British, American, French, and Canadian forces, and faced defeat in the event now known as D-Day.
- ★ After the Battle of the Bulge, Allied forces invaded Germany in February 1945.
- ★ The Allies dropped 3.4 million tons of bombs, averaging about 27,700 tons of bombs each month. On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. A B29 superfortress bomber, called the 'Enola Gay' dropped the bomb. On August 9, 1945, another atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan. Over 225,000 people were killed or later died from radiation poisoning in both of these attacks. These attacks virtually ended the war with Japan.
- ★ Adolf Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945. Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945. On August 14, 1945, Japan surrendered. World War II ended on August 15, 1945. The war was not officially over until President Harry Truman issued a "proclamation of formal cessation of World War II hostilities". This occurred on December 31, 1946.
- ★ After the German defeat, the Big Three - British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, US President Franklin Roosevelt, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin met at the Yalta Conference to come up with an agreement on how to deal with Germany. It was followed by the Potsdam Conference attended by British Prime Minister Attlee, US President Truman, and Soviet Premier Stalin.

