

Some Key Events of the War

THE ROAD TO WAR

FROM 1936	Rearmament Policy of Appeasement (Prime Minister Chamberlain)
MARCH 1938	Anschluss (Hitler took control of Austria)
29 SEPTEMBER 1938	Munich Agreement (Hitler gained control of the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia, with the agreement of Britain and France – “peace in our time”)
MARCH 1939	Destruction of Czechoslovakia
AUGUST 1939	Molotov – Ribbentrop Pact (alliance between Germany and the USSR to divide Eastern European nations between them in return for the USSR taking no action to prevent German expansion/aggression to the West)
1 SEPTEMBER 1939	Germany invaded Poland
3 SEPTEMBER 1939	Britain and France declared war on Germany

BLITZKRIEG

SEPTEMBER 1939 – JUNE 1940	German forces took over Poland, while Russian forces established bases in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In November the Russian army invaded Finland. Denmark was occupied and Norway invaded in April 1940. Then, in May, the German army invaded Holland, France and Belgium. British troops were forced to fall back to Dunkirk where, from 27 May to 4 June, almost 340,000 British and Allied troops were evacuated.
10 MAY	Coalition Government formed in Britain under Winston Churchill
10 JUNE	Italy declared war
22 JUNE	Surrender of France
10 JULY	French Republic was legally abolished and Vichy regime set up under German control in unoccupied France

BRITISH RESISTANCE

FROM JUNE 1940

Britain was the only obstacle to complete Nazi control of Europe

AUGUST
– SEPTEMBER

The Battle of Britain (German planes attacked convoys in the Channel, RAF bases as a prelude to invasion. However, the Germans were held back and the invasion was called off in October but the Luftwaffe continued to bomb British cities until May 1941.)

MARCH – MAY

War between Italy and Britain in North Africa

FROM 1940

War at sea with German U-boats attacking supply ships

JUNE 1940
– APRIL 1941

German and Russian forces took over the Balkan countries

GLOBAL WAR

23 JUNE 1941

Germany invaded the USSR

FROM JULY

Supplies sent to the USSR from Britain (and from September, from the USA) via Arctic convoys

7 DECEMBER

Japanese aircraft bombed the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbour

8 DECEMBER

The USA declared war on Japan and her allies and the War extended to the Far East

TURNING POINTS

OCTOBER 1942

El Alamein (British and American troops under General Montgomery won a decisive victory over German forces under Rommel)

NOVEMBER 1942
– JANUARY 1943

Stalingrad (Russian troops forced the Germans to surrender and continued to push them back)

MARCH – JULY

The Battle of the Atlantic (British forces began to win out against German U-boats building more ships, increasing air support and using technology such as radar to spot the submarines)

JUNE 1943

American naval victory at the Battle of Midway marked the turning point in the Pacific War against the Japanese

THE ALLIES PUSH BACK

FEBRUARY	The German Army surrendered at Stalingrad – their first major defeat
JULY – SEPTEMBER	The invasion of Italy (Italian generals overthrew Mussolini and surrendered to the Allies but Germans in Italy resisted strongly and Rome was not entered until June 1944)
6 JUNE 1944	D-Day (British, American and Canadian troops landed in Normandy and pushed through France towards Germany. Meanwhile the Russians were advancing along the Baltic towards Poland)
10 JULY	A group of German officers tried to assassinate Hitler
FEBRUARY 1945	The Yalta Conference (Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met to decide the future of Europe – the end of the war was in sight)
25 APRIL	Berlin was surrounded by Russian troops
30 APRIL	Hitler committed suicide
7 MAY	Germany surrendered unconditionally to Britain, the USA, the USSR and France
8 MAY	VE DAY
26 JULY	Japan rejected an ultimatum from the Allies
6 AUGUST	The USA dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima killing 78,000
9 AUGUST	A second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki Japan surrendered unconditionally
15 AUGUST	VJ DAY

THE AFTERMATH

1954	End of rationing
1962	End of National Service