

1. **1922 October** Benito Mussolini, Europe's fascist dictator, comes to power in Italy
2. **1933 January** Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party come to power in Germany; Hitler declares that he will undo the treaty of Versailles and restore Germany to its place as a major European power
3. **1935 March** Hitler announces that Germany will begin to rearm in defiance of the limits imposed on the size of the German military by the Treaty of Versailles
4. **1935 October** Italy invades Abyssinia and defies the League of Nations
5. **1935 September** the Nuremberg laws are passed in Germany and deprive the Jews of German citizenship
6. **1936 July** the Spanish civil war begins; both the German and Italian governments provide military aid to the fascist General Franco; the war is used by Hitler and Mussolini to test some of their new weapons
7. **1936 March** the German army occupies the Rhineland on Hitler's orders; according to the conditions of the Treaty of Versailles, the Rhineland was meant to be a demilitarised 'buffer zone' between France and Germany; Britain and France take no action
8. **1936 October-November** Italy and then Japan sign diplomatic agreements with Hitler; this was the beginning of the Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo axis that became known by 1937 as axis alliance
9. **1937 November** at the Hossbach conference, Hitler holds a high-level meeting to set out plans for the occupation of Austria and Czechoslovakia
10. **1938 March** anschluss with Austria; Hitler again successfully defies the Treaty of Versailles when the German army marches peacefully into Austria and makes it part of the German Reich
11. **1938 September** the Sudetenland crisis; Hitler falsely claims that Germans living in the Sudetenland, a part of the newly created state of Czechoslovakia, are being victimised by the Czech government and threatens war; the British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, intervenes and, at the Munich conference, the Sudetenland becomes part of Germany; this is the most well-known aspect of the appeasement policy
12. **1939 August** Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact; Hitler and Stalin sign a non-aggression pact that removes the immediate threat of war on two fronts for Germany and paves the way for the invasion of Poland
13. **1939 January** Germany takes the remainder of Czechoslovakia; following the gains made at the Munich conference and, breaking promises regarding the security of the rest of Czechoslovakia, Hitler orders the German army to invade; the British and French protest but do not act
14. **1939 March** Britain and France promise to support Poland in case of attack; the British and French finally appear to be ready to take action in the face of repeated aggression by Germany but there is little that they can actually do to help Poland
15. **1939 September** the German army attacks Poland on 1 September; Britain and France declare war on Germany on 3 September after an ultimatum demands the withdrawal of German forces from Poland; the Second World War begins; Poland surrenders on 27 September after coming under attack from both Germany and the Soviet Union
16. **1940 April** Germany invades Denmark and Norway
17. **1940 August** the Battle of Britain, the planned destruction of Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) as a prelude to Operation Sealion, the German invasion of Britain, begins and continues until September when plans for an invasion are postponed
18. **1940 January** in Britain food rationing of butter, bacon and sugar begins
19. **1940 June** Operation Dynamo, the evacuation of the British army from the channel port of Dunkirk, is completed, following the success of the German blitzkrieg; Mussolini enters the war on Germany's side on 10 June; France surrenders on 22 June
20. **1940 May** Germany invades Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and France; Winston Churchill replaces Chamberlain as Britain's prime minister
21. **1940 September** the blitz, the German bombing of London and other major British cities, begins
22. **1941 December** the United States of America enters the Second World War, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, and Hitler declares war on the USA
23. **1941 February** the Germans provide troops to support the Italians against the British in North Africa and General Erwin Rommel is given command of the German Afrika Korps
24. **1941 June** the beginning of the Russian campaign, Operation Barbarossa, as Germany attacks the Soviet Union

25. 1941 September	the siege of Leningrad begins and does not end until January 1944
26. 1942 August	the battle of Stalingrad begins; the first German bid to take Stalingrad is launched but the Germans are forced back from the city by the end of the year and the German 6th army is forced to surrender in early 1943
27. 1942 January	the holocaust; plans for a 'final solution' to the Jewish 'problem' are drawn up at the Wannsee conference
28. 1942 November	Operation Torch, a landing of mainly American forces takes place in the west coast of North Africa
29. 1942 October- November	battle of El Alamein results in a major victory for Britain's General Montgomery and the 8th army against the German Afrika Korps
30. 1943 July	the allied invasion of Sicily begins on 10 July; the battle of Kursk, the largest tank battle in history between the Germans and the Soviet red army takes place on the eastern front
31. 1943 May	the German army in North Africa is finally defeated by combined British and American forces in May
32. 1943 September	the allied invasion of Italy begins
33. 1944 December	the battle of the bulge, a brief and failed German attempt to halt the advance of allied armies in the west, begins on 16 December
34. 1944 June	D-day, the allied invasion of France with landings along the Normandy coast begins on 6 June; German v-1 missile attacks on London begin on 13 June; these attacks are followed in September by attacks by the larger v-2 rockets
35. 1944 May	the Soviet red army drives the Germans out of the Crimea
36. 1944 September	the Soviet red army continues its advance and crosses into Bulgaria
37. 1945 April	the Soviet red army captures Vienna; Hitler commits suicide on 30 April
38. 1945 March	allied forces in the west cross the Rhine into Germany on 7 March
39. 1945 May	the Soviet red army captures Berlin on 2 May; Germany surrenders on 7 May, and 8 May is declared VE day (victory in Europe day)
40. 1945 November	Nuremberg war crimes trials and the prosecution of leading Nazis begins on 10 November