

Timeline of Key Events - Paper 2 - Authoritarian States

Adolf Hitler and Germany

Revision Activities - Remembering the chronological order and specific dates is an important skill in IBDP History and can help you to organise the flow of events and how they are connected. Study the timeline of key events below to test yourself.

Rise to Power - Consolidation of Power - Domestic Policies - Foreign Policies

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| 1871 | 18 January - Germany becomes a unified state , with Wilhelm I of Prussia crowned as German Emperor. |
| 1889 | 20 April - Adolf Hitler is born in Braunau am Inn, Austria-Hungary. In 1905 he left school to move to Vienna, attempting to pursue his dream to become a famous artist. He was rejected from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 1907, the same year his mother died, leaving him penniless, being forced to live in homeless shelters. It was in Vienna where Hitler was first exposed to anti-semitism, exploited by the city's mayor, Karl Lueger . He moved to Munich in 1914, hoping to evade conscription into the Austro-Hungarian army. Instead, he enlisted in the Bavarian Army . He served as a dispatch runner in the war, being wounded at the Battle of the Somme in 1916 and receiving the Iron Cross first class on 4 August 1918. He later described his experience in the war as 'the greatest of all experiences' and was profoundly shocked by Germany's capitulation in November 1918. After the war he returned to Munich, being appointed as an Intelligence Agent of the Reichswehr and assigned to monitor the activities of the German Workers' Party (DAP). He would join the party on 12 September 1919. |
| 1918 | 9 November - The November Revolution occurs as Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicates ; Friedrich Ebert , leader of the SPD , takes over as Chancellor and Minister President of Prussia. A republic is declared by Philip Scheidemann of the SPD. 10 November - The Ebert-Groener Pact is signed between Wilhelm Groener , Quartermaster General of the German Army and Friedrich Ebert, Head of the Government. In this secret deal, Ebert promised to respect the military, allowing it to operate as a 'state within a state' and to take action against leftist groups. In return, the military promised its loyalty to the new government. 11 November - Germany signs an armistice to end World War One . Italy had lost over 600,000 men dead with a casualty rate of 39.1% of all its forces. Germany had lost 15% of its active male population and a further 470,000 civilian deaths due to food shortages and malnutrition. |
| 1919 | 4 January - The Spartacist Uprising begins in Germany as the newly formed Communist Party of Germany (KPD) and Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) launched a general strike in an attempt to seize power. The revolt is eventually put down in violence by the Freikorps militia of ex-soldiers. 5 January - The nationalist German Workers' Party (DAP) founded by Anton Drexler in Munich. It would later be renamed the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) in 1920 after Adolf Hitler joined the party. 6 April - The Bavarian Soviet Republic is declared in Munich, announcing its |

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| | <p>independence from the Weimar Republic. It was quickly dissolved after bitter street fighting by the Freikorps in May.</p> <p>28 June - The Treaty of Versailles is signed by Germany. Germany loses 13% of its territory and 10% of its population. Its army is limited to 100,000 men, banned from having an air force, its navy restricted to 6 battleships, Anschluss with Austria forbidden, 132 billion gold marks in reparations, all its colonies stripped and blamed for the war. Article 231 blamed Germany for the war.</p> <p>11 August - The Weimar Constitution is signed into law by President Ebert which under Article 17 introduced a proportional representation electoral system and universal suffrage from the age of 20, but under Article 48, the President reserved the power to suspend the Constitution and rule by emergency decree if needed.</p> <p>12 September - Adolf Hitler joins the German Workers' Party in Munich, quickly rising to become the Party's most active orator and chief of propaganda.</p> <p>Weimar Constitution declared</p> |
| 1920 | <p>10 January - The League of Nations formally comes into being as established by Part I of the Treaty of Versailles.</p> <p>24 February - The German Workers' Party is renamed the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) and adopts the swastika as its symbol.</p> <p>13 March - The Kapp Putsch occurs as members of the Freikorps led by Dr. Wolfgang Kapp attempt a coup in Berlin. The military refused to put down the Putsch, stating that 'Reichswehr does not fire upon Reichswehr'. The putsch failed after a general strike was called by workers in the city. This in turn led to an uprising of workers in the Ruhr which was only ended when President Ebert gave the army and Freikorps permission to execute workers. The response to the Kapp Putsch splintered the left-wing in Germany and angered the extreme-right, undermining the legitimacy of the Weimar government.</p> |
| 1921 | <p>28 July - Adolf Hitler elected party chairman of the NSDAP, gaining the title 'Führer' and establishing the Führerprinzip which reorganised the Party into a top down, highly centralised entity with Hitler as absolute leader.</p> <p>3 August - The Sturmabteilung (SA) or Storm Detachment founded by Hitler. Originally named the 'Gymnastic and Sports Division' of the party, they became known as the Storm Detachment for their fierce defense of party meetings against communist agitators. They would become the paramilitary wing of the NSDAP.</p> |
| 1922 | <p>16 April - The Treaty of Rapallo signed between Germany and the USSR which restored diplomatic and economic relations.</p> |
| 1923 | <p>11 January - French and Belgian troops Occupy the Ruhr after Germany failed to pay its reparations bill in 1922. In response, the German government ordered a campaign of passive resistance. This required the government to continue to pay striking workers by printing money. This exacerbated already high levels of inflation with the German mark, creating hyperinflation which caused the mark to plummet in value, wiping out savings and pensions, particular amongst the middle classes. This further undermined support for the Weimar government.</p> <p>13 August - Gustav Stresemann appointed Chancellor in coalition government. Under Stresemann's leadership, Germany recovered, ushering in a Golden Era between 1924-1929.</p> <p>23 October - The Hamburg Uprising occurs as members of the German Communist Party attempted to overthrow the city government. The uprising was</p> |

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| | <p>quickly put down and led to the split between the German Socialist Party (SPD) and German Communists (KPD).</p> <p>8 November - The Munich Beer Hall Putsch is launched in Bavaria as Hitler attempts to take over the regional government, inspired by Mussolini's March on Rome. Hitler was arrested and sentenced to five-years, writing Mein Kampf in jail at Landsberg Prison. He sets out his ideological and racial vision for Germany based on Pan-Germanism and Social Darwinism. He argued that Germany needed more 'living-space' in Eastern Europe and that this would involve dispossessing 'inferior' nations and people.</p> |
| 1924 | <p>4 May - German Federal Elections take place. SPD remain largest party with 20.5% of vote and 100 seats, followed by DNVP with 19.5% and 95 seats. New minority government formed by Chancellor Wilhelm Marx of the Centre Party.</p> <p>August - The Dawes Plan is passed in Germany, providing the German economy with over 800 million marks in loans from the US, allowing the economy to boom.</p> <p>7 December - German Federal Elections take place. SPD remain largest party with 26% of vote and 131 seats, followed by DNVP with 20.5% and 103 seats. Hans Luther invited to become Chancellor in a minority coalition.</p> <p>20 December - Hitler is released from Landsberg Prison in Munich.</p> |
| 1925 | <p>27 February - Hitler officially relaunches the NSDAP after the ban on the party is lifted on 16 February. Hitler promised to reform the party in order to contest nationwide elections, hoping to win power through the ballot box. Despite the lifting of the ban, Hitler was still prevented from speaking in Bavaria. He therefore appointed Gregor Strasser, Otto Strasser, and Joseph Goebbels to grow the NSDAP in northern Germany.</p> <p>29 March - General Paul von Hindenburg elected as President, replacing Friedrich Ebert who had died in February. Hindenburg represented the right-wing.</p> <p>5 October - The Locarno Pact. Germany demonstrates its commitment to the European status quo by signing the Locarno Treaties which confirmed Germany's Western borders. This ushered in a new period of cooperation known as the 'Locarno Spirit', marking a reconciliation with France.</p> <p>9 November - The Schutzstaffel (SS) is created as Hitler's personal protection squad.</p> |
| 1926 | <p>14 February - The Bamberg Conference takes place in Bamberg, Upper Franconia. The conference was called for by Hitler who was dismayed at the increasingly rebellious line taken by the northern branches of the NSDAP under Gregor Strasser, which had become increasingly left-wing. The conference reasserted the Fuhrerprinzip and party unity around Hitler was consolidated.</p> <p>8 September - Germany, under the Chancellorship of Wilhelm Marx and Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann, joins the League of Nations.</p> |
| 1928 | <p>20 May - German Federal Elections take place. SPD largest party with 29.8% of vote and 153/491 seats, followed by DNVP with 14.2% and 103 seats. Hermann Muller becomes Chancellor, creating the 'Grand Coalition' of the SPD, DDP, and DVP - the last genuinely democratic government of the Weimar Republic. It was also the first election contested by the NSDAP after its ban was lifted in 1925. They won only 2.6% of the vote, giving them 12 seats in the Reichstag.</p> |

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| 1929 | <p>31 August - The Young Plan agrees to give further loans to Germany and new reparation scheme established, giving Germany a further 50 years to repay. The nationalist right-wing were enraged by the Plan, leading to a temporary alliance between the NSDAP and Alfred Hugenberg's DNVP to oppose the Plan. This enabled the Nazis to take advantage of Hugenberg's huge media empire, which included the UFA film theatre chain, in order to spread their propaganda.</p> <p>3 October - The sudden death of German foreign minister Gustav Stresemann. Stresemann was the key figure who had done much to bring together pro-Weimar coalitions.</p> <p>24 October - The Wall Street Crash. The US recalled all its loans and financial support to Europe, causing the German economy to crash. Unemployment rose to from 1.3 million before the Crash to over 5 million by 1931 and 6 million in 1932 ($\frac{1}{3}$ of all workers). Farmers were hit particularly hard as food prices fell, with industrial production declining by 50%. The Weimar government was undermined as Chancellor Brüning struggled to tackle the crisis, calling for elections in 1930 in order to increase his support.</p> |
| 1930 | <p>27 March - The cabinet of Chancellor Müller collapses as President Hindenburg refuses to allow Chancellor Müller to rely on Article 48 powers to pass through decrees to deal with the economic crisis. Müller's coalition government was torn over the issue of funding the rapidly rising cost of unemployment insurance.</p> <p>30 March - President Hindenburg appoints Heinrich Brüning from the Centre Party as Chancellor, marking a shift away from democracy and towards 'Presidential Cabinets'. Brüning was known as the 'Hunger Chancellor' due to his deflationary economic policies which attempted to solve the economic crisis by increasing taxation and reducing welfare benefits. This pleased no-one, leading to a collapse in his support in the September elections. Brüning had to rely on the aid of emergency decrees issued by Hindenburg in order to govern.</p> <p>14 September - In the Federal Election, the Nazi Party gains 18.3% of the vote in the Reichstag elections, winning 6 million votes and increasing their seats in the Reichstag from 12 to 107. The Social Democratic Party remained the largest party with 143 seats.</p> |
| 1931 | <p>1 October - The National Socialist Women's League (NSF) is established as the women's wing of the NSDAP led by Gertud Scholtz-Klink. By 1938 it had 2 million members.</p> <p>11 October - The Harzburg Front was created as a short-lived right-wing political alliance between the NSDAP, DNVP, the Stahlhelm, the Agricultural League, and the Pan-German League. The Front collapsed within months as Hitler refused to compromise the independence of the NSDAP. Yet the Front was instrumental in forming contracts between the NSDAP and right-wing elites, helping to persuade Hindenburg to appoint Hitler as Chancellor in January 1933.</p> |
| 1932 | <p>27 January - The Industry Club Speech in Dusseldorf is given by Hitler in a clear attempt to woo right-wing industrialists to the Nazi cause. The speech marked a clear move away from the left-wing aspects of the 25-Point Programme.</p> <p>13 March - The Presidential Elections in Germany as Hitler loses against General Paul Von Hindenburg but won 11 million votes (30%) in the first round of voting and 13 million votes (36%) in the second round. This rise in popularity encouraged the belief amongst conservatives that Hitler could be used by the elites as a means to restore order.</p> |

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| | <p>13 April - The SA and SS are banned from operating by Chancellor Brüning due to a rise in street violence.</p> <p>1 June - Franz von Papen is appointed Chancellor in Germany a day after Heinrich Brüning resigned. Brüning had incurred the anger of the upper classes for proposing that land should be distributed to unemployed workers. Hindenburg himself was a large landowner. In response, the President refused to sign any further emergency decrees for Brüning, thus giving him no choice but to resign. Von Papen's cabinet became known as the 'Baron's Cabinet' due to the number of aristocrats in it. His failure to solve economic issues led to further rise in support for extremist parties.</p> <p>15 June - Chancellor Von Papen lifts the ban on the SA and SS under the direction of Kurt Von Schleicher, who was hoping that increased violence on the streets would justify his plans for a more authoritarian government and gain the government the support of the NSDAP.</p> <p>31 July - In the German Federal Elections, the Nazi party gains 37% of the vote, becoming the largest party with 230 seats. The SPD come second with 133 seats. 305 seats were needed for a majority.</p> <p>12 September - A motion of no confidence is passed in Von Papen's government by the Reichstag, forcing Von Papen to call fresh elections for November. Von Papen had lost support from the NSDAP and other parties.</p> <p>6 November - In the German Federal Elections, the Nazi vote drops to 33% and 196.</p> <p>3 December - Defense Minister Kurt von Schleicher is appointed Chancellor after the failure of Von Papen to gain Reichstag support. He attempted to split the Nazi Party by opening talks with the left-wing of the Party led by Gregor Strasser. For this, he was killed during the Night of the Long Knives.</p> |
| 1933 | <p>4 January - Von Papen and Hitler meet to discuss ways in which to oust Chancellor Schleicher. Von Papen believed that Schleicher had been working against him the previous year. Hitler pursued an 'all or nothing' strategy, demanding to be made Chancellor. On 20 January, Von Papen met with Hindenburg's secretary Otto Meißner and his son, Major Oskar von Hindenburg. It was agreed to persuade the President to appoint Hitler as Chancellor, believing he could be controlled by them.</p> <p>30 January - Hitler is appointed Chancellor of Germany with the NSDAP gaining three seats in the new cabinet: Hitler as Chancellor; Wilhelm Frick as Minister of the Interior; and Hermann Göring as Minister of the Interior for Prussia.</p> <p>27 February - The Reichstag Fire breaks out which is blamed on the Communists by Hitler. The Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of People and State is decreed by President Hindenburg which is used by the Nazis to suspend freedom of the press, speech, and association. Leading communists were also arrested and imprisoned.</p> <p>5 March - In the Federal Elections the Nazis win 43.9% of the vote and 288/647 seats, continuing as the largest party in the Reichstag, yet falling short of the 324 seats needed for a majority.</p> <p>13 March - The Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda is created, headed by Reich leader of NSDAP propaganda, Joseph Goebbels. The ministry centralised control of all aspects of German cultural and intellectual life.</p> |

22 March - [The Dachau Concentration Camp](#) is opened outside of Munich as a prison for political prisoners in 'protective-custody'. After the passage of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935, minority groups were increasingly held.

24 March - [The Enabling Act](#) is passed, giving Hitler the power to pass laws without the consent of the Reichstag. The Act was voted by $\frac{2}{3}$ majority, with Hitler gaining the support of the [Centre Party](#) by promising to protect the rights of the Catholic Church and by allying with the [DNVP](#), and by preventing the Communists (12%) from taking their seats. Hitler used the act to ban all political parties and trade unions, consolidating his power. The vote passed by 444 to 94.

31 March - [The First Gleichschaltung Law](#) passed, dissolving the diets of all Lander in Germany, except Prussia. Combined with an amendment on 7 April, assigning a [Reichsstatthalter](#) (Reich Governor) to each state with complete control, these laws effectively de-federalized Germany.

1 April - [The Nazi boycott of Jewish businesses](#) was launched as a one-day boycott and marked the first governmental action against the Jews, revealing the intent of the Nazis.

7 April - [The Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service](#) is signed, banning all 'non-Aryans' from serving in the civil service. This excluded most Jewish civil servants from being teachers, professors, judges, lawyers, doctors, and other professions.

26 April - [The Gestapo](#) (Geheime Staatspolizei) is formed by Hermann Goring as the official state secret police. With 30,000 members at its height, the Gestapo relied on fear and collaboration from the public.

1 May - [The National Socialist People's Welfare](#) (NSV) was established as the primary social welfare organisation of the Reich led by Erich Hilgenfeldt. The NSV oversaw old age insurance, rent supplements, unemployment and disability benefits and other programmes.

2 May - [The German Labor Front](#) is created, led by [Robert Ley](#). It replaced all other independent unions. Membership of the DAF was made a mandatory duty. Its subsidiary organisations included the [Strength through Joy](#) (KdF) organisation that provided state-operated leisure activities for workers, boosting tourism.

10 May - The first of many public [book burnings](#) is overseen in Berlin by Joseph Goebbels, as non-German literature was destroyed.

5 July - [The Law for the Encouragement of Marriage](#) is passed to encourage a rise in the birthrate. All newly married couples could claim a [loan](#) of 1000 marks which was reduced by 25% for every child they had. 800,000 couples took up this offer.

14 July - [The Law Against the Establishment of Political Parties](#) signed. It declared the NSDAP to be Germany's only legal party, dissolving all others.

14 July - [The Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring](#) is signed which called for compulsory sterilization in order to enforce 'racial hygiene'. The programme was later extended into a state euthanasia policy which killed over 72,000 before being halted in 1941.

20 July - [The Concordat](#) signed between Germany and the Vatican. The treaty guaranteed the rights of the Catholic Church in Germany. In return, bishops had to swear an oath of loyalty to the President of the Reich upon taking office.

27 September - [The Reich Church](#) is created through the forced amalgamation of the 28 regional Protestant Church organisations in Germany. [Ludwig Muller](#) was elected as Reich Bishop and under his leadership transformed the Church along radical Nazi lines, outlawing the Old Testament for being a Jewish book in an

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| | <p>attempt to create a new national religion. This led to a schism in the Church, with evangelical ministers setting up the rival Confessing Church under Martin Niemoller, who would later be arrested in 1937 for speaking out.</p> <p>23 October - Hitler withdraws Germany from the World Disarmament Conference at Geneva, blaming the French for refusing to allow Germany to have parity in arms. He also withdraws from the League of Nations, calling it a French 'conspiracy' to keep Germany weak.</p> <p>12 November - German Parliamentary Elections take place, with the NSDAP as the only legal party represented, winning 92% of the vote and all 661 seats in the Reichstag. A referendum on the recent German withdrawal from the League of Nations was held on the same day, and passed with 95.1% support.</p> |
| 1934 | <p>26 January - A 10-Year Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and Poland signed. The Pact broke the French diplomatic encirclement of Germany by drawing Poland away from its 1921 alliance with France. The Pact also strengthened the British view of Hitler as a sensible international statesman.</p> <p>20 April - Heinrich Himmler, leader of the SS, takes over as head of the Gestapo, placing it under SS control and is appointed Chief of all German Police outside Prussia. Himmler consolidated all these agencies into the SiPo. The SiPo merged the SD (SS secret police) with the Gestapo (secret state police) and the Kripo (national criminal police). The SiPo existed alongside the ORPO, which were the ordinary uniformed police forces of Germany. Himmler then appointed Reinhard Heydrich as chief of the SiPo and ORPO.</p> <p>24 April - The People's Court is established under orders by Hitler as a supreme special court with jurisdiction over a broad range of political offences. The Court operated outside of the existing judicial system and sentences over 5,243 to execution.</p> <p>1 June - Bernhard Rust is appointed Minister of Science, Education and National Culture. In charge of state education, Rust was tasked with preparing the next generation of National Socialist Germans. He purged schools and universities of Jewish educators and made membership of the National Socialist Teachers' League (NSLB) compulsory. Indoctrination was introduced to enforce conformity. Curriculum changes emphasised sports, racial biology (eugenics), history, and Germanics. Adolf Hitler Schools, NAPOLAS, and Order Castles were set-up to train the future ruling elite. This was complemented by Youth Groups like the Hitlerjugend (HJ) and League of German Maidens (BDM) which further increased indoctrination.</p> <p>30 June - The Night of the Long Knives begins as Hitler purges the SA and other leaders, with over 200 people killed including Gregor Strasser, Ernst Rohm, and Kurt von Schleicher.</p> <p>2 August - President Hindenburg dies - With the support of the army, Hitler merges the offices of Chancellor and President, becoming Fuhrer of Germany. Commander-in-chief Werner von Blomberg orders all members of the Wehrmacht to take an oath of loyalty to the Fuhrer.</p> <p>3 August - Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, is appointed Reich Minister of Economics. Under Schacht's 'New Plan', he advocated deficit spending on public-works projects to reduce unemployment and a move to autarky to reduce reliance on foreign imports which was draining Germany of foreign currency. He introduced the idea of Mefo Bills in order to pay for rearmament.</p> |

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| | <p>19 August - Plebiscite held asking the German public whether they approved of Hitler merging the offices of President and Chancellor, with 90% agreeing.</p> |
| 1935 | <p>13 January - The Saar Plebiscite occurs as 90.9% of the population in the Saar votes to return to Germany from French control. Supervised by the League of Nations, it was a triumph for Hitler and strengthened his position within Germany and Europe.</p> <p>16 March - Hitler publicly announces German rearmament, reintroducing conscription for over 500,000 men and revealing the existence of the Luftwaffe, which had been strengthened in secret to over 2,500 planes.</p> <p>28 March - Propaganda film Triumph of the Will is released. Directed by Leni Riefenstahl, it chronicled the 1934 Nazi Party Congress in Nuremberg, attended by over 700,000 supporters.</p> <p>18 June - The Anglo-German Naval Agreement is signed, breaking the Stresa Front. Britain hoped to appease Hitler by agreeing to German naval rearmament and did so without consulting France or Italy. Total tonnage of the Kriegsmarine was limited to 35% of the total tonnage of the British Royal Navy.</p> <p>26 June - The Reich Labour Service (RAD) is established. At first voluntary, then later compulsory for all Germans aged 19-25 before their military service and for all unemployed, the RAD provided cheap and regimented labour for large-scale public works which helped boost the German economy. It also served the purpose of indoctrinating the workforce with Nazi ideology.</p> <p>15 September - The Nuremberg Laws were passed in Germany, stripping Jews of German citizenship in the Reich Citizenship Law and banning sexual relationships and marriage with Jews in the Law for the Protection of German blood and German Honour.</p> <p>12 December - The Lebensborn Programme is established by the SS which encouraged extramarital relations between 'racially pure and healthy' persons in order to raise the birth rate.</p> |
| 1936 | <p>4 March - The Franco-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty is ratified, which Hitler argued violated the spirit of the Locarno Pact and was threatening to Germany. Hitler uses this as a pretext for the remilitarisation of the Rhineland.</p> <p>7 March - German troops march into the Rhineland whilst Britain and France do nothing to stop him. This move is accompanied by a peace offer by Hitler.</p> <p>11 July - The Austro-German Agreement is signed as Hitler and Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg promise non-intervention in Austria in return for Austrian recognition of being a 'German state'.</p> <p>17 July - Germany intervenes in the Spanish Civil War.</p> <p>1 August - The 1936 Summer Olympics opens in Berlin. Hitler built a new 100,000 seat track and field stadium as propaganda opportunity to promote his ideals of racial supremacy and were the first Olympic games to be televised. German went onto to win the most medals, 89.</p> <p>1 September - The Four Year Plan is introduced by Hitler, pushing the German economy towards autarky and rearmament. Headed by Hermann Goring, the Plan led to huge increases in war production, but neglected consumer goods. Wages only rose slowly yet it did provide for further employment.</p> <p>25 October - The Rome-Berlin Axis Treaty signed by Italian foreign minister Galeazzo Ciano and German foreign minister Konstantin von Neurath.</p> <p>5 November - The Hossbach Memorandum is compiled, Hitler outlines his awareness that war with France and Britain was inevitable and that Germany</p> |

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| | <p>should prepare for war by 1943-45 at the latest. It mentioned that Germany should aim to annex Austria and Czechoslovakia as first steps.</p> <p>25 November - The Anti-Comintern Pact is signed between Germany and Japan to combat Soviet influence.</p> |
| 1937 | <p>10 March - The Papal Encyclical Mit Brennender Sorge (With Burning Concern) is issued by the Vatican, criticising breaches of the 1933 Concordat and condemning the neopaganism of the Reich State.</p> <p>26 April - The German Condor Legion bombs the Spanish town of Guernica, killing over 200 civilians.</p> <p>19 July - The Degenerate Art Exhibition is held in Munich showcasing over 650 works of art that had been confiscated for its modernism that the NSDAP felt was anti-German.</p> |
| 1938 | <p>4 February - The Blomberg-Fritsch Affair occurs as scandals involving Generals Werner von Blomberg and Werner von Fritsch are used by Hitler to replace them with more compliant men. The duties of the Ministry of War were then transferred to a new organisation called the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (OKW) led by Wilhelm Keitel and under the control of Hitler, which weakened the traditional army command, giving Hitler de facto control of the army.</p> <p>12 February - Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg pressured by Hitler into signing an ultimatum. He returns to Austria and on 9 March announces a plebiscite on independence scheduled for 13 March.</p> <p>12 March - Hitler invades Austria to enforce Anschluss which is announced on the 13 March by Hitler after visiting his hometown of Linz. The Austrian army was ordered not to resist. Austria became the province of Ostmark, and Arthur Seyss-Inquart was appointed governor.</p> <p>10 April - Austrian plebiscite on Anschluss confirmed by 99% vote.</p> <p>24 April - The Karlsbad Programme is presented to the Czech government by Sudeten German Party leader Konrad Heinlein. It consisted of eight demands including autonomy and special rights for the Sudeten Germans.</p> <p>20 May - The May Crisis occurs as rumours of German military preparations on the Czech border begin to circulate. As a result, the Czech government ordered a partial mobilisation of forces, with Britain and France sending warning to Hitler. Hitler was forced to deny the rumours, making it appear that he had backed down to French and British threats.</p> <p>5 September - With violence increasing in the Sudeten region, Czech President Benes submitted the Fourth Plan, agreeing to all the demands of the Sudeten Germans for autonomy. Hitler told Heinlein to reject this proposal, deciding upon war instead.</p> <p>15 September - The Berchtesgaden Meeting occurs as British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain meets with Hitler to discuss the Sudeten issue. It is agreed to transfer the Sudetenland to Germany in return for peace.</p> <p>24 September - The Godesberg Memorandum is issued by Hitler insisting that Hungarian and Polish demands for Czech land are also met and that German troops can occupy the Sudetenland by 28 September. The Czechs and French reject the demands. War seems likely.</p> <p>29 September - The Munich Conference occurs Mussolini, Hitler, Chamberlain and Daladier meet and sign the Munich Agreement. Sudetenland would be given to Germany on 1 October, Poland to be given Teschen, Hungary given South Slovakia, and all powers would guarantee the independence of Czechoslovakia.</p> |

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| | <p>Without any input, Czech President Edvard Benes was forced to resign. War is averted.</p> <p>9 November - Kristallnacht or the Night of the Broken Glass occurs as attacks are made across Germany on synagogues and Jewish people and property. It is estimated that the SA were responsible for over 90 deaths, and the destruction of over 1,000 synagogues and 7,000 Jewish businesses. 30,000 Jewish men were also arrested and incarcerated.</p> <p>16 December - The Cross of Honour of the German Mother is introduced as a state decoration for women who exhibited probity, exemplary motherhood, or who had raised at least four children.</p> |
| 1939 | <p>15 March - Hitler invades the rest of Czechoslovakia, breaking the Munich Agreement and going beyond simple treaty revision. Mussolini was not consulted. Slovakia was made an independent state, whilst Bohemia and Moravia were declared a protectorate of Germany..</p> <p>20 March - Germany demands Danzig from Poland and Memel from Lithuania.</p> <p>30 March - The Anglo-Polish Agreement is signed, with a British guarantee to aid Poland in the event of an attack by Germany.</p> <p>2 April - Hitler declares the Anglo-German Naval Agreement and Polish-German Non-Aggression Pact of 1934 to be null and void. Planning for 'Operation White', the Nazi attack on Poland begins.</p> <p>24 August - The Nazi-Soviet Pact is signed between Germany and the USSR. Italy was only informed two days before the Pact. Each pledged to remain neutral in the event of either nation being attacked by a third party. Its secret protocols divided Northern and Eastern Europe into German and Soviet spheres of influence. Poland was divided between the two.</p> <p>25 August - The British-Polish military alliance signed, extending British military cooperation with Poland in the event of war.</p> <p>1 September - Germany invades Poland at 4.45am, starting the European War and Italy declares itself a non-belligerent.</p> <p>1 September - The Aktion T4 Programme of state-sanctioned involuntary euthanasia is launched by Hitler. Over 70,000 were killed in.</p> <p>3 September - Britain and France declare war on Germany.</p> <p>27 September - The Reich Main Security Office (RSHA) was created which consolidated all security and police forces in Germany into one central body led by Reinhard Heydrich and under the ultimate control of Himmler as Chief of German Police and Reichsführer-SS.</p> |
| 1940 | <p>9 April - German troops invade Denmark and Norway in order to secure Swedish coal and steel supplies.</p> <p>10 May - Germany invades Holland, Belgium and France simultaneously, ending the Phoney War in the West.</p> <p>4 June - 330,000 British troops evacuated from Dunkirk in Operation Dynamo.</p> <p>22 June - France surrenders to Germany near Compiègne.</p> <p>10 July - The Battle of Britain begins as the German Luftwaffe attempts to compel Britain to negotiate a peace settlement by destroying British air supremacy. By October, the Luftwaffe had failed to defeat the RAF, leading to the abandonment of Operation Sealion, the proposed invasion of Britain.</p> <p>27 September - The Tripartite Pact is signed in Berlin between Germany, Italy and Japan. Directed primarily at the US, the Pact was a military alliance between the Axis powers.</p> |

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| 1941 | <p>6 April - German forces invade Yugoslavia and Greece in support of Italy</p> <p>22 June - Operation Barbarossa begins as Germany invades the USSR.</p> <p>13 July - Catholic Bishop of Munster, Clemens von Galen, begins a series of public sermons criticising Nazi terror tactics, attacks on the Church, and the Nazi policy of euthanasia.</p> <p>18 August - Over 300 members of the Swingjugend are arrested in clampdown by the police. The Swingjugend were an anti-government youth group of young jazz and swing lovers which the Nazis had banned.</p> <p>11 December - Germany and Italy declare war on the USA.</p> |
| 1942 | <p>7 January - The Battle of Moscow ends in Soviet victory as German forces are prevented from capturing the capital, thereby ending the German blitzkrieg, resulting in a war of attrition for Germany. After the battle, Hitler took personal charge of the Wehrmacht and all military decisions.</p> <p>20 January - The Wannsee Conference commences in Berlin, chaired by Reinhard Heydrich. The Conference was called to decide upon the details of the final solution to the 'Jewish Question', whereby Europe's Jews were to be sent to concentration camps and exterminated by the SS.</p> <p>8 February - Albert Speer is appointed as Reich Minister of Armaments and War Production. Despite regular Allied bombing, Speer managed to double war production between 1942-1944, mainly through logistical streamlining, reducing bureaucracy, and the use of slave labour.</p> <p>8 November - Operation Torch begins as Allied forces invade French North Africa in their first direct offensive operations against Axis forces.</p> |
| 1943 | <p>2 February - The Battle of Stalingrad ends with the surrender and capture of the German 6th Army, marking a turning point in the war on the Eastern Front.</p> <p>18 February - The White Rose opposition group is arrested by the Gestapo in Munich. The group has called for passive resistance against the Nazi state.</p> <p>13 May - The Battle of Tunisia ends with the surrender of over 230,000 German and Italian troops, resulting in the loss of North Africa for Axis forces.</p> <p>10 June - The Allied Bomber Offensive on Germany begins with Anglo-American air forces targeting German military and industrial targets, ending in April 1945.</p> <p>5 July - The Battle of Kursk begins as German forces launch their last offensive on the East Front. It culminated in one of the largest tank battles in history, and the resulting Soviet counter-offensives gave the Red Army the strategic initiative for the rest of the war.</p> <p>3 September - The Allied Invasion of Italy begins, with Southern Italy captured by October.</p> |
| 1944 | <p>4 June - Rome is captured by Allied forces</p> <p>6 June - The Allied Invasion of France commences with a combined amphibious landing in Normandy and Southern France. By August, Paris had been liberated.</p> <p>22 June - Operation Bagration begins on the Eastern Front as Soviet forces completely destroy German Army Group Centre, leading to the capture of Warsaw and opening the way to Berlin.</p> <p>20 July - The 20 July Plot to assassinate Hitler fails. Organised by the Beck-Goerdeler group of military-conservative opposition, the plan required army officer Claus von Stauffenberg to assassinate Hitler with a bomb inside his Wolf's Lair field headquarters in East Prussia. The army reserve would then be used to take control of government and disarm the SS. The bomb exploded but Hitler</p> |

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| | <p>survived, leading to a rounding up of over 5000 suspects, which purged the army of any remaining opposition to Hitler.</p> <p>25 October - Members of the Edelweiss Pirates alternative youth group are arrested in a crackdown ordered by Himmler. Six teenagers were executed. The group was a loose collection of youth that opposed the paramilitary nature of the Hitler Youth, instead engaging in petty and rebellious actions, often fighting with the Hitler Youth.</p> <p>16 December - The Battle of the Bulge commences on the Western Front as German forces commit to one last offensive in the hope of splitting the Allied advance. Germany sustained severe losses in armoured forces.</p> |
| 1945 | <p>22 March - The Allied Invasion of Germany begins as Allied forces cross the River Rhine before overrunning Western Germany and Austria.</p> <p>16 April - The Battle of Berlin begins as Soviet forces encircle and attack Berlin.</p> <p>30 April - Hitler commits suicide in his Führerbunker in Berlin. Grand Admiral Karl Donitz replaced Hitler as Head of State and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Donitz ordered a fighting retreat in the East, hoping to negotiate a surrender with Allied forces rather than the Soviets. This enabled 1.8 million soldiers to avoid capture by the Red Army.</p> <p>8 May - The German Instrument of Surrender is signed in Berlin, ending the war in Europe.</p> <p>20 November - The Nuremberg Trials begin in Germany, leading to the prosecution of leading members of the Nazi Party and Government who planned and carried out the Holocaust and other war crimes.</p> |