**WWII Timeline**

**January 30, 1933**

Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.

**October 03, 1935**

Italy, under the leadership of Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, invades Ethiopia.

**May 01, 1937**

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the 1937 Neutrality Act, which bans travel on belligerent ships, forbids the arming of American merchant ships trading with belligerents, and issues an arms embargo with warring nations.

**July 07, 1937**

The Japanese defeat Chinese forces in a clash near Peking, taking control of North China.

**September 14, 1937**

President Franklin D. Roosevelt forbids U.S. ships from carrying arms to China or Japan.

**October 05, 1937**

In response to Japanese action in China, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivers a speech in which he calls for peace-loving nations to act together to "quarantine" aggressors to protect the world from the "disease" of war.

**December 12, 1937**


**January 21, 1938**

Time Inc. releases an anti-Nazi propaganda newsreel entitled March of Time in Nazi Germany.

**February 20, 1938**

German Chancellor Adolf Hitler announces support for Japan.

**February 1938**

In the United States, popular support for American action against Japan far exceeds support for action against Nazi Germany.
March 13, 1938

German Chancellor Adolf Hitler declares Austria part of the Third Reich.

March 26, 1938

Hermann Goering, marshal of the Third Reich and Hitler's second in charge, warns all Jews to leave Austria.

April 06, 1938

The United States grants recognition to the new Austrian government.

May 14, 1938

In a speech in Rome, Benito Mussolini, fascist leader of Italy, promises to fight the democracies alongside Adolf Hitler's should war break out.

May 17, 1938

The U.S. Congress passes the Naval Expansion Act giving President Franklin D. Roosevelt one billion dollars to enlarge the navy.

September 12, 1938

Adolf Hitler is poised to invade and conquer the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia.

September 29, 1938

Leaders of France and Great Britain meet with representatives from Germany, including Adolf Hitler, to discuss Germany's demands, ultimately granting Hitler the Sudetenland in the hopes of gaining "peace with honor." The Czechs are not consulted.

September 29, 1938

Adolf Hitler, in return for the Sudetenland, promises to leave the rest of Czechoslovakia alone.

November 10, 1938

During the German Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass), 7500 Jewish businesses are looted, 191 synagogues are set afire, nearly 100 Jews are killed, and tens of thousands are sent to concentration camps.

January 02, 1939

Time magazine prints its 1938 Man of the Year edition choosing Adolf Hitler for the title, but does not show the Nazi leader's face on the cover of the publication.

March 15, 1939

Adolf Hitler reneges on the promise made in September of 1938 and takes all of Czechoslovakia.
April 1939

President Franklin D. Roosevelt writes letters to both Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, requesting they promise not to attack a list of nations for at least ten years. Hitler would respond on behalf of the Italian leader and himself, assuring Roosevelt that he had nothing to fear.

May 1939

A group of U.S. Senators block the President's request for permission to offer economic aid to Britain and France in case of war.

June 06, 1939

Passenger ship *St. Louis*, containing 907 Jewish refugees, begins its journey back to Europe after the United States refuses to grant it permission to dock.

August 23, 1939

Germany and the Soviet Union agree to a nonaggression pact leaving the Soviets free to strengthen their western frontier, and Hitler free to attack Poland.

September 01, 1939

German troops invade Poland on the ground while Hitler's air force bombs Polish cities from the sky.

September 03, 1939

Britain and France declare war on Germany honoring their commitment to Poland. President Franklin D. Roosevelt invokes the Neutrality Act but notes, "Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience."

November 03, 1939

Congress grants President Franklin D. Roosevelt's request to revise neutrality laws, to repeal an arms embargo so that munitions could be sold to Britain and France, and to prevent American ships from sailing into war zones.

1940

American author Ernest Hemingway publishes *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a novel about a young American in Spain who joins an antifascist guerrilla force in the Spanish Civil War.

April 01, 1940

Adolf Hitler takes neutral Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg.

April 1940

German fighter planes and ground troops pummel France.
April 1940

Britain forces retreat from France and Adolf Hitler's armies defeat French forces.

May 1940

The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies is founded.

May 1940

President Franklin D. Roosevelt moves the United States Pacific Fleet base from San Diego, California to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

May 16, 1940

In a speech to Congress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt requests new defense spending, an enlarged army, and an expanded air fleet. Public opinion favors the new defense program.

June 10, 1940

Benito Mussolini’s Italian forces attack France from the south.

June 22, 1940

France, crushed, surrenders to Germany and signs an armistice. Great Britain now stands alone against the Axis powers.

July 26, 1940

The United States orders gasoline withheld from Japan sparking protest from the Japanese government.

August 1940

Congress appropriates $16 billion for defense needs, and enacts the first peacetime draft in American history.

September 1940

The America First Committee is formed.

September 03, 1940

President Franklin D. Roosevelt makes a deal to give Great Britain 50 destroyers in exchange for naval bases in Newfoundland, Bermuda, and sites in the Caribbean and the South Atlantic.

September 25, 1940

The United States extends the Japanese embargo to include iron and steel.

September 27, 1940

Responding to the embargoes imposed by the United States, Japan joins the German-Italian coalition.
October 29, 1940

The first draft numbers are drawn, sending thousands of draftees to drill camps all over the country.

November 1940

In the presidential election, Democrats break with the two-term tradition and re-nominate Franklin D. Roosevelt for a third term. Republicans nominate Wendell L. Willkie, a public-utilities executive who shared FDR's views on the war in Europe. Franklin D. Roosevelt defeats Wendell L. Willkie by nearly 5 million popular votes.

December 1940

United States Naval Intelligence cryptographers crack Japan's secret communications code and learn that Japan intends to conquer China.

December 29, 1940

President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivers a fireside chat to the American people announcing, "We must be the great arsenal of democracy."

January 06, 1941

Before the U.S. Congress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proposes a "lend-lease" program, which would deliver arms to Great Britain to be paid for following the war's end. Congress approves the bill.

March 30, 1941

President Franklin D. Roosevelt orders the United States Coast Guard to seize German ships that sail into American ports. 65 Axis ships are held in "protective custody."

May 15, 1941

In the South Atlantic the American merchant ship Robin Moor is sunk by a German torpedo. President Franklin D. Roosevelt responds to the German attack by declaring a national emergency.

June 16, 1941

President Franklin D. Roosevelt demands Germany and Italy close their American consulates located in the United States.

June 22, 1941

Germany invades the Soviet Union violating the Nonaggression Pact. U.S. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson estimates that it will take Hitler less than three months to conquer the Soviet Union.

June 24, 1941

The United States extends lend-lease aid to the Soviet Union.
July 07, 1941

President Franklin D. Roosevelt announces that the United States will take over defense of Iceland for the duration of the war.

August 09, 1941

On a British battleship, President Franklin D. Roosevelt meets with the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill. The two leaders write up the Atlantic Charter.

August 17, 1941

President Franklin D. Roosevelt warns the Japanese government to cease all aggression toward neighboring countries or else face United States forces.

September 04, 1941

Provoked by the American destroyer Greer, a German submarine fires on the ship. In response to the attack, President Franklin D. Roosevelt orders the navy to shoot any Axis battleships they encounter.

October 17, 1941

German submarines damage the U.S.S. Kearny in a skirmish near Iceland, killing 11.

October 31, 1941

The U.S. destroyer Reuben James is sunk near Iceland, killing 115 seamen.

November 1941

In response to the destruction of the battleship Reuben James, the U.S. Congress authorizes American merchant ships to carry arms.

November 1941

The United States extends "lend-lease" to the Soviet Union.

November 03, 1941

The Japanese government decides to attack Pearl Harbor if negotiations with the United States fail.

November 29, 1941

U.S. Naval cryptographers learn from secret code that Japan plans aggressive action if an agreement with the United States is not met.

December 01, 1941

Japan dismisses American demands to withdraw forces from China.
December 07, 1941

Japanese fighter planes attack the American base at Pearl Harbor destroying U.S. aircraft and naval vessels, and killing 2,355 U.S. servicemen and 68 civilians.

December 11, 1941

Germany and Italy, Japan's axis partners, declare war on the United States. The United States declares war on Germany, Italy, and Japan.

January 06, 1942

President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivers his State of the Union address in which he proposes a massive government spending budget, the largest in American history.

October 23, 1942

In the first major Allied offensive, British and U.S. armies attack Germany's Africa Korps on the Mediterranean chasing forces back toward Libya.

November 08, 1942

Under the leadership of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, U.S. troops land in Algiers, Oran, and Casablanca in North Africa.

January 01, 1943

Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt meet in Casablanca in North Africa to plan attacks on all fronts, to invade Sicily and Italy, to send forces to the Pacific, and to better aid the Soviet Union.

January 31, 1943

The Russian Red Army traps and captures German armies that had invaded the Soviet Union.

September 08, 1943

The Italian government officially surrenders to the Allied powers; still, German forces occupy much of Italy.

September 28, 1943

The Allies capture German holdings in Naples.

December 01, 1943

The Allied powers announce the Cairo Declaration in which all three declare their intention to establish an international organization to maintain the peace and security of the world.
In England, the Allied powers assemble 2.9 million men, 2.5 million tons of supplies, 11,000 airplanes, and hundreds of ships in preparation for D-Day.

June 04, 1944

Rome falls to Allied forces.

June 06, 1944

D-Day: The first of nearly 3 million Allied soldiers arrive in Normandy, on the northern shores of France.

July 24, 1944

Allied troops take large portions of Normandy and Brittany initiating a German retreat.

August 25, 1944

U.S. forces, aided by a Free French division, liberate Paris from Nazi control.

February 11, 1945

The Allied powers meet in Yalta to negotiate Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe. The Yalta Conference would result in the dual administrations in Berlin, the break up of Germany, and the prosecution of war criminals.

April 12, 1945

President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies of a cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia.

April 28, 1945

Italian insurgents capture Mussolini, murder him, and mutilate his body.

May 01, 1945

Adolf Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.

May 02, 1945

The German army signs an unconditional surrender.

May 05, 1945

The American air force in Europe heads for the war in the Pacific.

May 1945

Demobilization of the American army begins.
July 16, 1945
An atomic bomb is successfully detonated in the New Mexico desert.

July 26, 1945
Allied leaders meet in Potsdam, Germany to send an ultimatum to Japan. Japanese military leaders ruling the government issue no surrender.

August 06, 1945
The United States drops an atomic bomb—the first to be used in warfare—on Hiroshima, killing 75,000 people instantly, and injuring more than 100,000.

August 08, 1945
With still no surrender from Japan, the Soviet Union enters the Pacific war as promised in Yalta, defeating Japanese forces in Manchuria.

August 09, 1945
A second atomic bomb is dropped in Nagasaki.

August 10, 1945
Tokyo asks for peace on the condition that Emperor Hirohito will retain his throne. The Allies accept.

September 02, 1945
A formal surrender ceremony is conducted in Tokyo Bay on the U.S. battleship Missouri. World War II officially ends.