**1939**

* Hitler invades Poland on 1 September. Britain and France declare war on Germany two days later.

**1940**

* Rationing starts in the UK.
* German 'Blitzkrieg' overwhelms Belgium, Holland and France.
* Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Britain.
* British Expeditionary Force evacuated from Dunkirk.
* British victory in Battle of Britain forces Hitler to postpone invasion plans.

**1941**

* Hitler begins Operation Barbarossa - the invasion of Russia.
* The Blitz continues against Britain's major cities.
* Allies take Tobruk in North Africa, and resist German attacks.
* Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, and the US enters the war.

**1942**

* Germany suffers setbacks at Stalingrad and El Alamein.
* Singapore falls to the Japanese in February - around 25,000 prisoners taken.
* American naval victory at Battle of Midway, in June, marks turning point in Pacific War.
* Mass murder of Jewish people at Auschwitz begins.

**1943**

* Surrender at Stalingrad marks Germany's first major defeat.
* Allied victory in North Africa enables invasion of Italy to be launched.
* Italy surrenders, but Germany takes over the battle.
* British and Indian forces fight Japanese in Burma.

**1944**

* Allies land at Anzio and bomb monastery at Monte Cassino.
* Soviet offensive gathers pace in Eastern Europe.
* D Day: The Allied invasion of France. Paris is liberated in August.
* Guam liberated by the US Okinawa, and Iwo Jima bombed.

**1945**

* Auschwitz liberated by Soviet troops.
* Russians reach Berlin: Hitler commits suicide and Germany surrenders on 7 May.
* Truman becomes President of the US on Roosevelt's death, and Attlee replaces Churchill.
* After atomic bombs are dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders on 14 August.