

Timeline of the Nazi Holocaust

1933--1941

30 January 1933

Adolph Hitler, leader of the Nazi Party, is appointed chancellor of Germany.

22 March 1933

Nazis established first concentration camp near the town of Dachau.

15 September 1935

Nuremburg “racial laws” decreed making all Jews second-class citizens.

6-15 July 1938

Delegates from 32 countries meet in Evian, France to discuss expanding immigration quotas for German refugees. The United States and many other countries were unwilling to ease their immigration restrictions.

30 September 1938

Britain, France, Italy, and Germany signed the Munich Pact, forcing Czechoslovakia to cede its western border areas, known as the Sudetenland to Germany.

9-10 November 1938

A nationwide *pogrom* in Germany, called *Kristallnacht* (night of broken glass), sanctioned by Nazis, saw the systematic looting of Jewish homes and businesses, and torching of synagogues across the nation. 91 Jews died, and 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and imprisoned.

A synagogue burns in Germany.



Illustration of the SS *St. Louis* in Cuba.

13 May- 17 June 1939

The ocean liner *St. Louis*, with 900 mostly Jewish refugees were denied permission by Cuba and the United States to embark. The vessel had to return to Europe with its refugees still on board.

1 September 1939

German troops invade Poland, marking the start of World War II. Two days later, Britain and France fulfill their promise to Poland and declare war on Germany.

1 December 1939

Jews were required to wear arm bands or have clothes pinned with the yellow star.

10 May 1940

German troops invade the Low Countries and France. By 22 June, all these nations are occupied except for southern (Vichy) France.

20 May 1940

Auschwitz Concentration Camp Number 1 is established near the Polish city of Oswiecim. Several other notorious concentration camps were created in the fall of 1941 in other parts of Poland:

Belzec Sobibor Treblinka Chelmno Maidanek

30 June 1940

German authorities order the first major Jewish ghetto in Lodz to be sealed off, confining at least 160,000 people in it.

15 November 1940

In Warsaw, the largest Jewish ghetto in occupied Poland is ordered sealed off. More than 350,000 Jews are confined to 2.4 percent of the city’s total area.

Sketched image from within the Warsaw ghetto.



Sketch of Jewish women and children, some wearing the yellow star.



Women at Auschwitz, illustration.



22 June 1941

German and other Axis forces invade the Soviet Union, called Operation Barbarossa. By the spring of 1943, German squads have executed an estimated one million Jews and other Soviet citizens.

7 December 1941

Japan attacked the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The next day, the U.S. declares war on Japan. On 11 December, Germany and Italy declare war on the U.S.