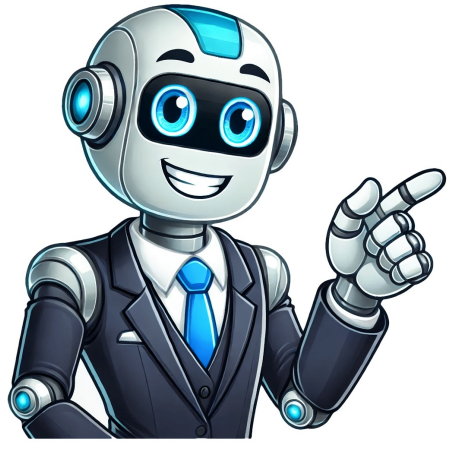


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Dunkirk/Getty ImagesNot every victory means you won a battle. Sometimes a victor's well-executed retreat, and thus exactly what happened during the Battle of Dunkirk late May 1940. With the expeditious collapse of French resistance against German forces during the Battle of France, British troops found themselves trapped in Dunkirk, a town in Northern France. A massive effort by both military and civilian vessels successfully ferried 338,000 British Expeditionary Force members across the channel to Britain. The maneuver became known as the Miracle at Dunkirk, and it proved a powerful rallying cry for the dark days ahead. The greatest aid in the allies escape strangely came from Adolf Hitler himself, who, likely fearing an Allied counterattack, halted Nazi armored forces bearing down on Dunkirk for two days. Those 48 hours were vital in the Allied effort to rescue the soldiers cornered on the European continent. Although buoyed by the retreat, Winston Churchill also countered with a dose of reality that hard fighting was still ahead, saying we must be very careful not to assign to this deliverance the attributes of a victory Wars are not won by evacuations.[Bonus: Lost Winston Churchill Essay Archives/Getty ImagesOn Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945, the last major battle of the global conflagration known as World War II began on the island of Okinawa, some 400 miles south of mainland Japan. As part of Operation Iceberg, Allied forces landed on the beaches of Okinawa in the largest amphibious assault in the Pacific theater. As the U.S. and its allies pushed relentlessly toward the Japanese mainland, they first needed to conquer Ryukyu and Okinawa islands, and Japanese commanders knew if the islands fell, the countryside populated mainland would be next. The battle for the islands lasted nearly three months, and is known today as a typhoon of steel because of the fierce fighting. On April 7, U.S. carrier-based bombers sank the Japanese battleship Yamato, considered to be one of the most powerful ships in history before being sunk by American B-29 Superfortresses. But the real key to the success of the operation was the support of the Navy's fleet of LSTs, which carried tanks and other supplies directly onto the beach.

Whats the Difference?Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowKeystone/Getty ImagesAfter the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the Japanese launched a major offensive in the Philippines that eventually led to U.S. forces and soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth to be cornered on the Bataan peninsula in the Philippines. Under direct orders from President Franklin Roosevelt, a reluctant General Douglas MacArthur escaped from Bataan to Australia, vowing one day to return and continue the fight. Allied forces held off Japanese troops for three months, which stymied Japans hopes of growing its territorial gains in the Pacific theater. However, on April 9, 1942, 76,000 Allied troops surrendered to the Imperial Japanese Army; the transfer of those POWs from the battle became known as the Bataan Death March due to the physical abuse and arbitrary killings of prisoners along the way. Remember Bataan became a popular rallying cry for the U.S. war effort.[Did You Know?] The U.S. Never Successfully Fielded an Instant Foxhole Bomb, But Russia Sure Did!KeyStone/Getty ImagesDuring the Guadalcanal campaign from August 1942 to February 1943, the Battle of Tulagi and Gavutu-Tanabogo small islands in the Solomonsbecame a grim prelude to the fierce island-hopping battles ahead. While the Allied land forces fought on nearby Guadalcanal faced much less resistance, U.S. forces on those three islands were met by an outnumbered Japanese force that fought to protect the island to the last man. This fierce, almost suicidal Japanese resistance was common throughout the rest of the war in the Pacific, and Americans got their first taste of it in the remote island of Tulagi.[Up Next] Japan Is Building the Biggest Warships in Asia!Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowU.S. Forces Push Back Against Japanese Invasion of New GuineaIn November 1942, the Second Battle of El Alamein put an end to Edwin Rommel, AKA the Desert Fox, and his offensive in the Western Desert Campaign. The hugely-fought British victory over the Afrika Korps ended the Axis advance eastward towards Egypt and Suez Canal. In addition, the defeat forced Germany to divert resources away from North Africa to defend Italy, leading to a series of setbacks for the Wehrmacht. The Germans had hoped to capture the oil fields around Mosul in Iraq, but after suffering heavy losses in the desert, they decided to withdraw back to Tunisia. In an attempt to dislodge Nazis Germany hold on the French North African Coast and open up the Mediterranean to the Allies, Operation Torch was also the first time U.S. troops saw combat against Germany in World War II. On November 8, 1942, troops landed in Casablanca, Algiers, and Oran with mild resistance. By the end of the month, Allied forces were planning their assault on Tunis in Tunisia. The Allies had officially opened another front in the war in northern Africa, a key demand of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin.[Well, This Is Awkward: A Guy Hid a Real WWII Panther Tank in His Basement. Now, There Are Consequences!]Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowUllrich/bild BildL/Getty ImagesThis Battle of Narva to not be confused with the other Battle of Narva that occurred between 1700 and 1721 during the Great Northern War (although both were fought in Narva, Estonia). The WWII Battle of Narva saw Germany and the Leningrad Front trying to control Narva Isthmus. The battle consisted of two phases: the Battle for Narva Bridgehead and the Battle of Tannenberg Line. The USSRStalin in particularwanted to take control of Estonia and use strategic locations in the country to attack Finland and Prussia via sea and air. German forces held their own and hampered the SSRs attempts to build a stronghold in Narva. Both sides lost more than 500,000 soldiers combined.[Blast From the Past: Remembering That Time the Soviet Union Shot a Top-Secret Space Cannon While in Orbit]KeyStone/Getty ImagesThe Siege of Leningrad, also known as the 900-day siege, since it nearly lasted that long (in actuality, it lasted 872 days), occurred when German and Finnish forces surrounded Leningrad and took over the city. The Soviet government had its citizenry work on building fortifications throughout the city, although the area was almost entirely encircled by invading forces by November. The siege claimed more than 650,000 Soviet lives in a single year alone due to starvation, disease, and shelling. [Check This Out: An Atomic Bomb Was Dropped BY THE Russians.]

Battle of Midway/Bettmann-Bridgeman Getty ImagesOn June 4–7, 1942, the United States Navy defeated the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Battle of Midway, turning the tide of the Pacific War. The goal was to prevent the Japanese from capturing Hawaii, but instead, the Japanese suffered a decisive naval loss. The battle resulted in the sinking of four aircraft carriers and several cruisers, while the US Navy lost no ships. The battle was a turning point in the war, marking the beginning of the end for Japanese expansion in the Pacific. It also demonstrated the importance of intelligence gathering and codebreaking in warfare.

The Battle of Stalingrad/Wikimedia CommonsThe Battle of Stalingrad was a pivotal moment in World War II, marking the turning point on the Eastern Front. It was a brutal urban battle between the German Sixth Army and the Soviet Red Army. The battle lasted from July 17, 1942, to January 31, 1943, resulting in a decisive Soviet victory. The battle was named after the city of Stalingrad, now Volgograd, in honor of the Russian dictator Joseph Stalin. The battle was one of the bloodiest and deadliest in history, with millions of casualties on both sides. The Soviet victory at Stalingrad significantly weakened the German army and paved the way for the final push into Berlin.

World war 2 important battles watchmojo. What are the 5 major battles of world war 2. What were the 3 major battles of ww2. What are the major battles of world war ii. Battles of ww2. What are the battles of world war 2.