

## 1933-Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany

**1935-Nuremberg Laws**-These laws institutionalized many of the racial theories underpinning Nazi ideology and provided the legal framework for the systematic persecution of Jews in Germany. The Nuremberg Race Laws did not identify a "Jew" as someone with particular religious convictions but instead as someone with three or four Jewish grandparents. Many Germans who had not practiced Judaism or who had not done so for many years found themselves still subject to legal persecution under these laws. Even people with Jewish grandparents who had converted to Christianity could be defined as Jews.

**1936 -Olympics held in Berlin**-The Olympic Games were a propaganda success for the Nazi government, as German officials made every effort to portray Germany as a respectable member of the international community. They removed anti-Jewish signs from public display and restrained anti-Jewish activities.

**1938-Kristallnacht** Nazi Party officials, members of the SA and the Hitler Youth carry out a wave of violent anti-Jewish pogroms throughout Greater Germany. The rioters destroyed hundreds of synagogues, many of them burned in full view of firefighters and the German public and looted more than 7,000 Jewish-owned businesses and other commercial establishments. Jewish cemeteries became a particular object of desecration in many regions. Almost 100 Jewish residents in Germany lost their lives in the violence. In the weeks that followed, the German government promulgated dozens of laws and decrees designed to deprive Jews of their property and of their means of livelihood even as the intensification of government persecution sought to force Jews from public life and force their emigration from the country.

**1939 German troops invade Poland-WW2 begins**-The Holocaust took place in the broader context of World War II. On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Over the next year, Nazi Germany and its allies conquered much of Europe. German officials confiscated Jewish property, in many places required Jews to wear identifying armbands, and established ghettos and forced-labor camps. In June 1941, Germany turned on its ally, the Soviet Union. Often drawing on local civilian and police support, Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing units) followed the German army and carried out mass shootings as it advanced into Soviet lands. Gas vans also appeared on the eastern front in late fall 1941.

**1940 Warsaw Ghetto established-** On October 12, 1940, the Germans decreed the establishment of a [ghetto](#) in Warsaw. The decree required all Jewish residents of Warsaw to move into a designated area, which German authorities sealed off from the rest of the city in November 1940. The ghetto was enclosed by a wall that was over 10 feet high, topped with barbed wire, and closely guarded to prevent movement between the ghetto and the rest of Warsaw. The population of the ghetto, increased by Jews compelled to move in from nearby towns, was estimated to be over 400,000 Jews. German authorities forced ghetto residents to live in an area of 1.3 square miles, with an average of 7.2 persons per room.

**1941 Einsatzgruppen actions occur-** Einsatzgruppen were squads composed primarily of German SS and police personnel. During the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Einsatzgruppen followed the German army as it advanced deep into Soviet territory. The Einsatzgruppen, often drawing on local civilian and police support, carried out mass-murder operations. In contrast to the methods later instituted of deporting Jews from their own towns and cities or from ghetto settings to killing centers, Einsatzgruppen came directly to the home communities of Jews and massacred them.

**1942 January-Final Solution decided-** SS General Reinhard Heydrich convenes the Wannsee Conference and presents plans to coordinate a European-wide "Final Solution of the Jewish Question."The "Final Solution" was the code name for the systematic, deliberate, physical annihilation of the European Jews.

**1942 February-First direct deportations to Auschwitz**

**1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising-** Vastly outnumbered and outgunned, individuals and small groups of Jews hid or fought the Germans for almost a month.

**1944 German forces enter Hungary**

**1945 Death marches begin-** As Soviet troops approach, SS units begin the final evacuation of prisoners from the Auschwitz camp complex, marching them on foot toward the interior of the German Reich

**1945 Soviet troops liberate Auschwitz**

**1945 Germany surrenders**