

# Germany 1929-1945 [Revision Cascade]

<b>Nazi reorganisation 1924–28</b>	Merged with other right-wing parties	Hitler took over or merged with other Nationalist and right-wing groups, turning the Nazis into a national organisation; in 1925, the Nazi Party had 27,000 members; in 1928 it had 100,000
	Rich supporters in Germany and America	Hitler secured the help of rich backers in both Germany and America, by appealing to their fear of communism.
	Hitler Youth	Hitler set up the Hitler Youth (HJ) and BDM (Bund Deutscher Madel or League of German Girls), which gave young people fun, but taught them to love Hitler.
	Goebbels organised Nazi propaganda	Hitler put Josef Goebbels in charge of propaganda (e.g. posters and radio); the Nazis controlled the Volkischer Beobachter and Der Sturmer (which published scandals with a Nazi spin).
	A modern organisation	Hitler made the Nazis appear a really modern organisation (e.g. he campaigned by plane).
<b>Growth in Nazi support, 1929–32</b>	1930s Depression	Alienated people and created angry young men who were prepared to adopt fascist ideas
	Financial backing	From financiers and industrialists such as Schacht and Krupp (and the American Ford) who wanted weak trade unions and feared communism
	Goebbels organised Nazi propaganda	Josef Goebbels was in charge of propaganda (e.g. posters, radio, Nuremberg rallies); the Nazis controlled the Volkischer Beobachter and Der Sturmer (which published scandals with a Nazi spin)
	Sturmabteilung	Attacks on other parties by the 60,000 SA not only frightened the Nazis' opponents, but made voters want strong government and law and order
	Hitler's personal qualities	Hitler was a war-hero, well known because of Mein Kampf and the Munich Putsch, a brilliant speaker and a good organiser, motivated by driven self-belief; he travelled by plane (seemed modern)
<b>Depression: impact on Germany</b>	Unemployment created anger	The Crash wrecked the economy – unemployment grew (from 2 million in 1928 to 6 million in 1932); many people blamed the government
	Bruning's government, 1930–1932	Bruning's government cut social benefits and public workers' pay – there was social hardship and the government became unpopular
	Growth of Communism	Workers turned to Socialism – the number of Communists in the Reichstag grew (from 54 in 1928 to 101 in November 1932); but this frightened the middle class
	Hindenburg ruled by Article 48	Hindenburg was forced to rule by decree (Article 48) – a sign of the political chaos
	Growth of the Nazi Party	The number of Nazi seats in the Reichstag rose (from 12 in 1928 to 230 in July 1932); the number of SA grew to 60,000

<b>Failure to deal with the Depression</b>	Bruning	Bruning's government (1930–1932) cut social benefits and public workers' pay – there was social hardship and the government became unpopular
	Papen	Papen's government (Jun-Nov 1932) was called the 'cabinet of barons'; after riots and marshal law, he was defeated in a vote of confidence and had to resign
	Schleicher	Schleicher (Nov 1932) set up a huge public works programme, but he was hated by his Cabinet and unable to form a 'cross-front' of support in the Reichstag; in Jan 1933 he resigned
	Hindenburg	Hindenburg was forced to rule by decree (Article 48) – a sign of the political chaos
	Hindenburg and Papen	Hindenburg and Papen foolishly invited Hitler to join the coalition government in 1933
<b>Hitler became Chancellor: causes</b>	1930s Depression	Alienated people and created angry young men who were prepared to adopt fascist ideas
	Weaknesses of the Weimar government	The historian AJP Taylor blamed the Weimar politicians – weak, selfish and uncommitted to democracy – more than anything else for the rise of Hitler
	Strong party organisation	Gave Hitler the finance and the platform for his bid for power
	The elections of 1930 and 1932	Did not give the Nazis a majority, but made them the largest party
	Hindenburg and Papen	Hindenburg and Papen foolishly invited Hitler to join the coalition government in 1933
<b>Hitler became Chancellor: events</b>	Bruning's government, 1930–1932	Bruning's government cut social benefits and public workers' pay – there was social hardship and the government became unpopular
	Period of unstable government, 1932–33	Political disagreements over the crisis led to short, unstable, powerless governments (Bruning → Papen → Schleicher in 1932)
	Nazi electoral success, Jul & Nov 1932	The number of Nazi seats in the Reichstag rose (from 12 in 1928 to 230 in July 1932), though it fell back slightly to 196 in November 1932
	Papen's offer to Hitler, 4 Jan 1933	On 4 January 1933, Franz von Papen offered Hitler the post of Vice Chancellor in a coalition government led by Papen; Hitler demanded to be Chancellor
	Hitler becomes Chancellor, 30 Jan 1933	On 30 January 1933, Papen and Hindenburg agreed: Papen became Vice Chancellor – Hindenburg and Papen thought they could 'box in' Hitler
<b>The coalition government, 1933: facts</b>	Papen became Vice Chancellor	Papen thought that through his allies in the Cabinet he would be the real power in the government – decisions were taken by a majority vote
	Hugenberg became Economic Minister	Papen's DNVP ally Alfred Hugenberg was Economic Minister AND Minister of Agriculture
	The Cabinet was anti-Nazi	Of Hitler's 10 Cabinet members, 6 had been in Papen's 'Cabinet of Barons' (1932) and 2 more were from Papen's allies the DNVP
	Frick and Goering	The Nazis only had two of the ten Cabinet seats – Wilhelm Frick Minister of the Interior, and Hermann Goering, Speaker of the Reichstag
	Plans to 'box in' Hitler	Hindenburg and Papen thought by controlling the Cabinet they could 'box in' Hitler, whilst using his Nazi deputies to give them a majority in the Reichstag

<b>Consolidating power: facts</b>	Reichstag Fire, 27 Feb 1933	Hitler used this as an opportunity to take emergency powers and arrest his Communist opponents
	General Election, 5 Mar 1933	Although only 44% voted Nazi, by arresting some deputies and terrorising others, Hitler was able to get a majority in the Reichstag
	Enabling Act, 23 Mar 1933	The Enabling Act gave the Cabinet the right to make laws and overrule the Constitution
	Elimination of opposition, 1933–34	A series of acts destroyed opposition – in the trade unions, other political parties and in the Nazi Party ('Night of the Long Knives')
	Death of Hindenburg, Aug 1934	Hindenburg died and Hitler declared himself Fuhrer; the army swore an oath of allegiance to him, and a plebiscite gave Hitler a 90% approval
<b>The Reichstag Fire, 27 Feb 1933: facts</b>	Van der Lubbe	A Dutch Communist was captured in the Reichstag with petrol, rags and matches – he was executed in 1934
	Leipzig Trial, Dec 1933	Held in Germany, it found der Lubbe guilty, but found the Communists accused NOT guilty
	Sefton Delmar	Delmar was a Daily Express journalist who happened to be with Hitler when he learned of the fire; he said Hitler was surprised, and immediately blamed the communists
	Paris counter-trial, 1934	Hitler's opponents claimed the Nazis started the fire; in Paris, Communists held a counter-trial which produced a (forged) confession from an SA leader, Karl Ernst
	Franz Halder	One of Hitler's generals, at the Nuremberg trials after the war, claimed that in 1942 Goering had said he had started the fire; Goering denied this
<b>The Reichstag Fire: results</b>	Reichstag Fire Decree	Abolished civil rights and allowed the Nazis to ban anti-Nazi leaflets
	Communists arrested	Hitler arrested thousands of Communists and stopped them voting in the March 1933 election
	Nazi propaganda of a Communist coup	Nazi propaganda terrified people that the Communists were about to take over, and of the need to vote Nazi in the March 1933 election
	General Election, 5 Mar 1933	By creating fear of a Communist coup, the Nazis were able to get 44 % of the vote in the March election, which (with the support of the DNVP) gave Hitler a majority in the Reichstag
	People's Courts, Apr 1934	Hitler was furious with the Leipzig Trial – he introduced Volksgerichtshof ('People's Courts') with Nazi judges who gave the 'right' verdict
<b>The Enabling Act, 23 Mar 1933: events</b>	General Election, 5 Mar 1933	Although only 44% voted Nazi, the Nazis were supported by the DNVP, giving Hitler 340 votes – he needed a two-thirds majority (432)
	Opponents arrested	Under the Reichstag Fire Decree, Hitler was able to arrest all the communist and some SDP deputies
	Catholic Centre Party's support	Hitler got the support of the Catholic Centre Party (73 votes) by promising its leader, Ludwig Kaas, protection for the Catholic religion and schools
	Intimidation by the SA	On the day of the vote, thousands of Nazi SA intimidated deputies entering the Chamber
	Passed 444 to 94	Only 94 (SDP) deputies voted against the abolition of democracy in Germany

<b>The Enabling Act: effects</b>	Hitler became legal dictator	The Act gave Hitler the right to make laws, break the constitution and ignore the President – it made him the legal dictator of Germany
	The Reichstag lost power	The Reichstag rarely met again, except to listen to Hitler's speeches at key moments (such as the outbreak of war)
	German democracy was destroyed	The Weimar Republic, set up in 1919, came to end
	German elections	Future elections (Nov 1933, 1936 and 1938) simply asked voters to approve a list of Nazi Party candidates
	Gleichschaltung	Gleichschaltung means 'bringing into line' – Hitler was able to use his powers to abolish all opposition, 1933-34
<b>Nazi rule facts</b>	42 Gauleiters	Germany was divided into 42 Gaus, each with a Nazi Gauleiter with the power to make laws
	Control of the police	The police were put under the control of Himmler
	Blockleiters	Each street and block of flats had a Blockleiter who reported 'grumblers' to the police
	People's Courts, Apr 1934	Volksgerichtshof (People's Courts) were set up with Nazi judges who gave the 'right' verdict
	Volksgemeinschaft	The Nazis believed in 'national community' and encouraged community, charity and obedience; informers enthusiastically reported troublemakers to the Gestapo
<b>Eliminating opposition: events</b>	Hitler set up the Gestapo, 26 Apr 1933	The Gestapo (State Secret Police) was formed under Heydrich; opposition groups like the Reichsbanner (SDP terrorists) were hunted down and destroyed
	Trade unions were banned, 2 May 1933	Trade unions were given May day as a holiday ... and banned; their offices were raided, their leaders arrested and their funds confiscated
	Law against the Formation of Parties, 14 Jul 1933	All political parties except the Nazis were banned
	Night of the Long Knives, 30 Jun 1934	Codeword 'Hummingbird' – Hitler ordered the SS to kill more than 400 SA men
	Hitler became Fuhrer, Aug 1934	Hindenburg died and Hitler declared himself Fuhrer; the army swore an oath of allegiance to him, and a plebiscite gave Hitler a 90% approval
<b>Night of the Long Knives: causes</b>	A rebellious organisation	A million SA – formed to rebel and destabilise the government – were an embarrassment now Hitler was in power
	Rohm wanted a Socialist revolution	Rohm, the SA leader, wanted a socialist revolution; Hitler's rich backers wanted a Fascist state
	Rohm wanted to control the Army	Rohm wanted control of the army; the generals wanted rid of him – Hitler chose the army
	Rohm was homosexual	Rohm and many SA were homosexuals; this contrasted with the traditional, 'family' morality Hitler wanted to encourage
	Codeword 'Hummingbird'	Codeword 'Hummingbird' – Hitler ordered the SS to kill more than 400 SA men

<b>Nazi police state: facts</b>	Gestapo, 26 Apr 1933	The Gestapo (State Secret Police) was formed under Heydrich
	200,000 SS	Led by Himmler, the SS hunted down opponents and ran the concentration camps
	Concentration camps for opponents	Jews, Communists, gypsies, homosexuals, alcoholics and prostitutes were sent there for e.g. anti-Nazi graffiti, owning a banned book, saying business was bad
	Blockleiters	Each street and block of flats had a Blockleiter who reported 'grumblers' to the police
	'Speak through a flower'	Germans learned Durch [die] Blume reden ('speak through a flower'); parents feared their children would report them to the Gestapo
<b>Censorship and propaganda: facts</b>	The Reich Ministry of Propaganda	Set up under Joseph Goebbels, it spread Nazi beliefs like Volksgemeinschaft (people's community); newspapers were heavily censored
	Volksempfänger	Radio – every family was given a cheap Volksempfänger ('people's receivers')
	Reich Chamber of Culture	Reich Chamber of Culture – 'decadent' art was stopped (book-burnings, jazz banned)
	Triumph of the Will	Films were produced – e.g. Triumph of the Will by Leni Riefenstahl (the 1934 Nuremberg rally) and Der Ewige Jude (The Eternal Jew, 1940)
	Olympic Games, Aug 1936	The August 1936 Olympic Games showcased Nazi achievements
<b>Persecution of the Churches: facts</b>	Concordat with the Pope, 20 Jul 1933	Hitler agreed to leave the Catholic Church alone if it stayed out of politics
	Bishop von Galen of Munster	Bishop von Galen of Munster opposed euthanasia of the mentally ill; Hitler stopped it
	"With Burning Concern", 1937	The Pope issued the Encyclical 'With Burning Concern' against Nazism; priests & nuns arrested
	Niemöller's Confessional Church	Niemöller's Confessional Church opposed Nazism; he was sent to a concentration camp
	Reich Church	Hitler formed the Reich Church (old Aryan mythology) as an alternative religion
<b>Opponents of the Nazis</b>	Reichsbanner, 1933	Reichsbanner (paramilitary wing of the SPD) – hunted down and destroyed in 1933
	Warsaw Ghetto, 1943	Some Jews fought back (e.g. Bielski brothers in Belarus; Warsaw ghetto uprising 1943)
	'Swing' groups, 1944–45	'Swing' groups such as the Edelweiss Pirates – 12 youths arrested and hanged in Cologne, 1944
	Sophie Scholl and the White Rose, 1944	White Rose group (Munich students) led by Sophie Scholl – guillotined in 1944
	Claus Stauffenberg & the Beck Group, 1944	Beck group (army) attempted the 1944 bomb plot (led by Claus Stauffenberg) – all executed.
<b>Jewish persecution: causes</b>	Long history of Anti-Semitism	There was a long history of anti-Semitism in Germany
	Gegenrasse theories	Nazi race theories led them to regard 'lesser races' as Untermenschen; Jews were held to be even worse – a Gegenrasse (an anti-race)
	Hitler blamed the Jews	Hitler blamed the Jews for all Germany's problems
	Boycott of Jewish businesses, 1933	Many Germans hated Jewish businessmen for their success; the Nazi persecution started with a boycott of Jewish businesses
	Juden sind hier unerwünscht, 1935	The Nazis encouraged Germans to indulge their anti-Semitism; eg 'Jews not wanted here' signs

<b>Jewish persecution: facts</b>	Nuremberg Laws, Sep 1935	Law for Protection of German Blood forbade Germans to marry Jews; other Nuremberg Laws forbade Jews to vote, to be lawyers, own a bicycle, go out at night
	Kristallnacht, 8–9 Nov 1938	Kristallnacht – Jewish businesses, synagogues and homes were destroyed; many male Jews were killed or put in concentration camps
	Ghettoes, 1939 onwards	Jews were forced to live in ghettos
	Einsatzgruppen, 1940–1941	Einsatzgruppen (1 million Jews were killed by shooting and executions)
	Wannsee Conference, 20 Jan 1942	The Wannsee Conference was held which proposed the 'Final Solution' – death camps (Auschwitz), gassing, medical experiments
<b>Other persecuted groups</b>	Untermenschen	The Nazi regime despised some people as socially or racially Untermensch (subhuman) – whom it called the 'germs of destruction'
	Gypsies	Gypsies were sent to extermination camps with the Jews – 85% of Germany's gypsies were killed
	Black people	Black people were sterilized and killed
	The physically or mentally disabled	The physically or mentally disabled, deaf people, and people with a hereditary illness were sterilised (and put to death before Bishop Galen's campaign)
	'Undesirables'	'Undesirables' (homosexuals, prostitutes, mentally ill) were sent to concentration camps
<b>Control of education: facts</b>	Indoctrination	Indoctrination to create 'Nazi' people – e.g. Hitler: 'Your child belongs to us already'; 97% teachers were in the Nazi Teachers' League
	Nazi ideas	The work reinforced Nazi ideas (e.g. maths questions about the cost of the mentally ill, science taught Aryan superiority)
	Order Castles	There was an emphasis on PE; pupils good at sport went to Adolf Hitler schools, and the best to 'Order Castles', where they were trained to be soldiers
	Kinder, Küche, Kirche	Girls' education focussed on the three Ks – children, cooker, church – and become a mother
	Anti-Semitism	Young pupils read anti-Semitic books such as the Poisonous Mushroom; Jewish children from the class used as examples that Jews were Untermenschen
<b>Nazi boys facts</b>	Hitler Jugend	Range of youth groups – boys 6-10 went to the Little Fellows, boys 10-14 went to the Young Folk
	Youth Law, 1936	The Youth Law (1936) made the HJ (Hitler Youth) compulsory – it had 5 million members
	Military activities	'Military' activities (uniforms, camps, marches, war games) to train boys for the army and to love Hitler
	Volkssturm	In 1945 Goebbels organised the Volkssturm (a German Home Defence Force) for teenagers and old men for a last defence of Berlin
	Edelweiss Pirates	Towards 1945, youth gangs such as the Edelweiss Pirates rejected Nazi youth culture, drinking and dancing to American jazz and 'swing' music

<b>Nazi girls facts</b>	Bund Deutscher Madel	Range of youth groups – girls 10-14 went to the Young Girls
	Lebensborn	'Aryan' girls were sent to have babies to SS officers in special camps; Aryan-looking children were kidnapped and given to German families for adoption
	Preparation for motherhood	Activities to learn to be good mothers (cooking, chores) and keep fit for childbirth
	Community work	BDM girls took part in community service, and during the war collected money, knitted socks, visited wounded soldiers etc. Before starting work, many did a 'Land Girl Year' working on a farm
	Sophie Scholl and the White Rose, 1944	Not all German girls accepted Nazi ideals (e.g. Sophie Scholl)
<b>Nazi women: facts</b>	Job discrimination	Not equal to men – banned from jury service, 'encouraged' to resign jobs for men; they were not allowed to serve in the armed forces – even during the war
	Kinder, Kuche, Kirche	Emphasis on 'family': 3Ks – children, cooker, church
	Law for the Encouragement of Marriage, 1933	The Law for the Encouragement of Marriage (1933: loans for newly-weds and families with children); Mother Cross (for having eight children)
	German Women's Enterprise	German Women's Enterprise trained women to be good wives and mothers
	Plain peasant fashions	Women were banned from smoking, and encouraged to be plain (flat heels, plaited hair, no make-up)
<b>Economic policy: features</b>	Autarky failed, 1936	The 4-Year Plan, first under Schacht, then Goering, tried to achieve autarky (self-sufficiency) – it failed
	Full employment	Full employment – on public works (autobahns, housing), on rearmament, on conscription (army, National Labour Service), and because Jews were sacked
	Rearmament	Schacht invented Mefo bills (a way of paying for rearmament without borrowing); the government bought 12 billion Reichsmarks' worth of rearmament
	National Labour Service	National Labour Service – compulsory work camps for young men (e.g. environmental work)
	Failure and crisis	Promises (e.g. rebuilding Berlin, 'Volkswagen') never happened and the public works and rearmament programmes created inflation and the 1939 economic crisis
<b>Standard of living</b>	Nazi Party members benefited	Nazi Party members got the best jobs, best houses and special privileges; businessmen who joined the Nazi Party got government orders
	KdF and SdA	Kraft durch Freude ('strength through joy') offered such as picnics, theatre trips, holidays; Schonheit der Arbeit (Beauty of Work) taught workers to be proud
	DAF	Trade unions and strikes were illegal – under the DAF (German Labour Front), conditions and hours worsened, wages fell
	Better health	Smoking was discouraged and there was screening for breast cancer
	Failed promises	Promises of hospitals, swimming baths, rebuilding Berlin, and the 'Volkswagen' never materialised

<b>Germany in the Second World War</b>	Victory and defeat	Initial successes (controlled all Europe), but slide to defeat after Stalingrad (1943)
	Speer and the War economy	Economy geared up to war production; Speer became Minister of Armaments
	Slave labour	Use of slave labour (Jews, Slavs etc.) and prisoners of war
	Technological developments	German inventiveness was applied to military – nerve gas, rocket (first manned rocket flight, 1945), microwave ovens, missile guidance systems, ejection seat, atomic research
	Economic disaster	The long war wrecked the German economy
<b>Life in Germany in the Second World War</b>	Hardship and suffering	Hardship – food rationing (1939) and food shortages after 1942, no post, clubs closed, fear, grief and mourning for dead
	Bombing	Bombing (e.g. Dresden 1945) led to housing shortage and millions of refugees – led to loss of morale
	Patriotism	Patriotism – e.g. women donated fur coats for the Eastern Front
	Propaganda	Propaganda and increased repression; ghettos and the Holocaust
	Women were conscripted into war work	Women were never allowed to join the armed forces, but were conscripted to war work (1942)