Nazi Core Knowledge 1: **Democracy to Dictatorship**

Below is a list of the core knowledge for this bit of your History GCSE. This is the absolute basic amount you must know. You must learn this off by heart.

Hitler and the Nazi Party:

- **Adolf Hitler:** Party leader since 1921.
- **Joseph Goebbels:** Clever and highly educated man. In charge of propaganda and helped to create Hitler's image and the party message
- **Heinrich Himmler:** Leader of the SS - the Nazi's elite guard. These were fanatical Nazis who ran the concentration camps.
- **Rudolph Hess:** Deputy Leader of the Party. Third in power to Hitler
- **Ernst Rohm:** Leader of the SA. The SA were known as the brownshirts and were the Nazis private army that helped to bring them to power.
- **Hermann Goring:** Second in power to Hitler. He formed the Gestapo – the Nazi secret police



Nazi Ideas:

- **Scrap the Treaty of Versailles**.
- **Destroy Marxism** and Communism
- **Anti-Semitism:** subdue the Jews who are to blame for Germany's problems
- **Aryan supremacy:** Northern Europeans are the *Ubermenschen* (super-humans)
- **Lebensraum** (living space): Germany should take over Eastern Europe for itself
- **Nationalism**: an extreme form of patriotism
- **Strong central government and education**: everyone taught to think the same based on Nazi ideas



Establishing the dictatorship:

- **Reichstag Fire**: working alone, young communist Marinus Van der Lubbe was tried with the crime. However, the Nazis convinced lots of the German public that it was a wider communist plot to take over Germany.
- **Reichstag Fire decree**: Hitler persuaded Hindenburg and the country that civil liberties needed to be suspended to deal with the communist threat. 4000 communists were arrested.
- **Intimidation**: Terror, repression and propaganda used on a mass scale before the March election.
- **March Election**: the Nazis win but fail to gain an outright majority (288 out of 647 seats)
- **Enabling Act**: Key law passed giving Hitler the power to pass laws without the consent of the Reichstag. SA soldiers intimidated politicians from other parties to pass it.
- **Gleichschaltung**: Germany was 'brought into line'. Civil servants were replaced with Nazi supporters, anti-Semitism was promoted, books that opposed Nazi ideas were burnt and widespread terror was used to arrest and imprison opponents.
- **Removing opposition**: Trade Union leaders were arrested, left-wing newspapers were shut down, other party leaders were imprisoned and new parties were banned from forming.

Achieving total power:

- **Local Government Act**: Germany is made a centralised state as local power is reduced
- **People's Court**: A new separate court is developed to deal with 'political offences'. This could be anything from slow workers to treason plotters.
- **The Night of the Long Knives**: Over 80 leading members of the SA, plus other political rivals were murdered by the Nazis without trial, the SA was merged into the army. Hitler insisted he was 'supreme judge of the German people' and opponents realised what could happen to them
- **Death of President Hindenburg**: Hindenburg dies August 1934 and the power of the President is merged with the Chancellor under a new title, *Fuhrer*, meaning leader.

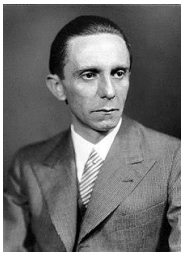
Nazi Core Knowledge 2: **Control and opposition, 1933 - 1939**

Below is a list of the core knowledge for this bit of your History GCSE. This is the absolute basic amount you must know. You must learn this off by heart.



The machinery of terror:

- **The SD (secret service):** was the main **official intelligence-gathering agency.** The SD spied on various aspects of German society but **did not take action against individuals** but **passed on** information to those who did – the Gestapo.
- **The Gestapo (secret police):** The Gestapo **investigated all activities that posed a danger to the state**. Initially they focussed on **political opponents** but later focussed on **Jews, homosexuals and religious dissenters**. They tapped telephones, opened mail and relied on informers to pass on information. The Gestapo would **interrogate prisoners and try to get confessions**.
- **Police:** In **1936** they were put under the control of the **SS**. They carried out their normal duties but also **provided intelligence** on potential enemies and arrested them.
- **Judges and courts:** Judges had to **swear an oath to Hitler**. The number of criminal offences punishable by a death sentence rose from **3 in 1933 to 46 in 1943.**
- **Concentration camps:** These were camps that gathered people who **threatened the state** and 'concentrated them' in one area. These were **different from the extermination camps,** like Auschwitz that came later. Early concentration camps were set up to **imprison political opponents.** By the mid-1930s other inmates began to arrive, religious opponents, criminals, the work shy and some Jews.



Nazi Propaganda:

- **Newspapers:** Nazi's controlled newspapers through the **Reich Press Chamber** and by **1929** the Nazi's owned **2/3** of the newspapers. Content was tightly **censored.**
- **Radio:** National and local stations were controlled by the **Reich Radio Company**. By **1939 70%** of all Germans owned a radio in their home.
- **Rallies:** Were used to show the strength of the Nazi Party. **Nuremberg** was the biggest Rally, in 1934 over **250,000** people attended.
- **Posters:** Often portrayed Hitler as God like and often showed the ideal Aryan family.
- **Berlin Olympics 1936:** This event was used as an important piece of propaganda, Anti – Semitic signs were taken down and the newspapers toned down. **Nearly all winners were Aryan** with the exception of Jesse Owens.
- **Film:** Nazi's limited the amount of foreign films shown in Germany. By **1939 2/3** of all films were paid for by the state and **promoted Hitler or criticised the Jews.**

Opposition (The Left):

- **Social Democrats:** Formed resistance groups who produced **anti – Nazi leaflets and posters**. Many were hunted down by the **Gestapo**.
- **Communists:** Held **meetings** and produced a **communist newsletter** called **The Red Flag** every month. Also hunted by the Gestapo.

Opposition (The Church):

- **Martin Niemoller:** Founded the **Confessional Church**. By **1934 6,000** priests had joined, leaving 2,000 in the Nazi Reich Church. He was arrested and sent to a Concentration Camp.
- **Cardinal Galen: Openly criticised Nazi racial policy**. He was too high profile for the Nazi's to remove.
- **Pope Pius XI:** Wrote a letter called **With Burning Anxiety** which was smuggled in to Germany and read out at church services on Palm Sunday. The Gestapo raided churches to confiscate the letter.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Refused to give the **Hitler salute and compulsory military service**. They wrote anti – Nazi leaflets and 6,000 were imprisoned in Concentration Camps.

Opposition (Youth Groups):



- **Swing Kids:** Were angry that the Nazi's **imposed German culture** and **banned** American culture. They listened to Jazz music, grew their hair and wore baggy trousers.
- **Edelweiss Pirates:** Were opposed to **Nazi politics and the enforced Hitler Youth Groups**. They wore a white edelweiss flower as a sign of resistance and picked fights with the Hitler Youth.

Living Under Nazi Rule, Unit 3: Changing Lives, 1933 - 1939

Core Knowledge

On the surface the Nazis improved the life of German workers but the reality was more complex.

- **Unemployment significantly reduced**. By 1939 only 35,000 out of 25 million were unemployed.
    - But wages were frozen at 1933 levels. As prices rose families struggled to live.
    - Workers were expected to pay a voluntary tax, the **Winter Relief** to provide soup stations for the poor. The SA pressurised families to pay 3% of their earnings.
- In 1933 the trade unions came under the control of the **Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF)**. Three of its notable functions were:
    - **Strength through Joy.** Very cheap holidays, theatre tickets and leisure activities were offered to workers. Activities nearly always involved some sort of political lecture.
    - **Reich Labour Service.** Set up to tackle unemployment it offered cheap labour for big state projects like building motorways.
    - **Volkswagen scheme.** Workers could pay 5 marks a week until they owned a car. No one ever received a car.

Women's lives changed as the Nazis encouraged women to stay at home and be wives and mothers.

- The Nazis had very traditional views of women. They thought they should stay at home, not smoke and not wear make up.
- Women were encouraged to have more children who would grow up to be new Nazis.
    - **Loans were given to encourage marriage**. The loan repayments reduced by 25% for each child the couple had.
    - The **Honour Cross for German Motherhood** medal was issued for large families. Bronze for 4 children, Silver for 6 children and Gold for 8.
- The impact of Nazi policies was not totally successful.
    - Marriages did increase from 516,00 in 1932 to 772,000 in 1939.
    - Births did initially rise but had declined again by 1939.
    - The number of women in employment increased.

Young people were indoctrinated to follow Nazi ideas through school and youth organisations.



- The Nazis controlled all aspects of education.
    - They controlled teachers through the Nazi Teacher League.
    - They tightly controlled the curriculum and what was taught. E.g. Biology taught Nazi racial ideas.
- The Nazis had their own youth organisation, the **Hitler Youth**.
    - Boys activities prepared them for the military.
    - Girls activities focused on preparing them for motherhood.
- It is difficult to know the impact of the Nazis on young people. Attendance at youth organisations was high but we don't know how much the young people believed in the Nazi ideas.

The Nazis were obsessed by race. They believed some people were stronger than others.

- They thought that humans could be divided into distinct races of people with similar features. Scientists now think this is completely wrong.
- They believed the best race were the **Aryan** peoples of Northern Europe. They saw these people as **ubermenschen** (super humans). The most superior group of Aryans were the Nordic group who had blond hair and blue eyes.
- The Nazis called non-Aryans **untermenschen** (sub-humans) and this included **gypsies**, **Slavic** people, black people and notably the **Jews**.
- The Nazis believed in horrific myths about the Jews to justify their hatred. These included blaming them for the failure of WW1, saying they were all Communists and that Jews dominated Germany. None were true.

Due to Nazi racial ideas, the persecution of Jews got increasingly worse from 1933 to 1939.

- Jews were physically excluded from society and faced **anti Semitic propaganda** in German media.
- There was a lot of anti Semitic laws. These started out excluding Jews from legal systems but increased in severity. In 1935 the **Nuremberg Laws** removed Jews as German citizens and banned marriage and sex between Jews and non-Jews.
- In 1938 Jews were widely attacked on **Kristallnacht** where 267 synagogues were burned, 7500 Jewish businesses smashed and 91 Jews murdered.

Nazi Core Knowledge 4: Germany in War

Below is a list of the core knowledge for this bit of your History GCSE. This is the absolute basic amount you must know. You must learn this off by heart.

War economy: 1939-1941:

- Military expenditure rose dramatically. In **1939 23%** of goods produced in German factories were for the Military; by **1941** this had risen to **47%**
- By 1941 55% of the German workforce was war-related work.
- However, inefficiency and a lack of central control limited innovation.

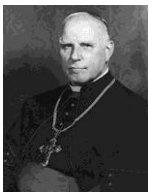


Impact of Albert Speer:

- Speer was made Minister for Armaments and War Production in February 1942.
- His efforts to employ more women in factories, use concentration camp prisoners as workers and focus factories on a single product increased production in Germany.

Life for German citizens during the early war years:

- War economy led to **food shortages** and **rationing was introduced** but German citizens spent much time queuing and the quality of food was reduced.
- **Women were never conscripted** in to factories because Nazi leadership disagreed over the role of women.
- In 1939, **760,000** women worked in war industries (mostly farming) and this had **risen to 1.5 million by 1941.**
- From 1939, women aged **under 25** had to complete **6 months Labour service** before they could get a full time job.
- In **September 1940**, the child **evacuation programme Kinderlandverschickung** began and children under 14 were eligible for a 6 month stay in a rural area.



Wartime opposition:

- The **July Bomb Plot of 1944**, by unhappy army soldiers, was **almost successful** in assassinating Hitler.
- **Cardinal Galen** delivered three famous **sermons criticising the Nazi's** in 1941. The Priests who gave the sermons were killed but Galen was too high profile to kill.
- **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** was a Protestant pastor who **publically criticised** the Nazi's. He joined the ***Abwehr*** (military intelligence) and helped Jews to escape to Switzerland. He was arrested and murdered by the SS.
- **The White Rose Group** secretly distributed leaflets. All members of the group were executed.
- **Passive resistance** increased during the War years.
- However, **opposition was still only a minority** of the population as the Nazi propaganda was highly effective and people were still living in fear of the Gestapo and the SS.

Impact of total war on the German People, 1943-1945:

- The Nazi's moved to **'total war' in 1943.**
- **3 million** women between 17 and 45 were **called up** to work. Only 1 million took up the call.
- Professional sport was ended, magazines closed down and non – essential businesses were closed.
- In **July 1943**, the Allies bombed **Hamburg**. **40,000** people were **killed** and half the city was destroyed.
- In **November 1943**, the Allies attacked **Berlin** with 750 planes. **500,000** people were made **homeless** and **100,000 injured.**

Nazi leaders became paranoid and increased their use of terror against the German people:

- Huge numbers of refugees from Soviet occupied areas put **pressure on food and fuel supplies** in Germany.
- The July Bomb Plot led to a **surge in Hitler's popularity and a rise in executions** – 5,000 people were executed after the plot.
- **Half a million workers were ordered to become soldiers** and by summer of 1944 **7.6 million** foreign workers had been brought to Germany to cover German jobs.

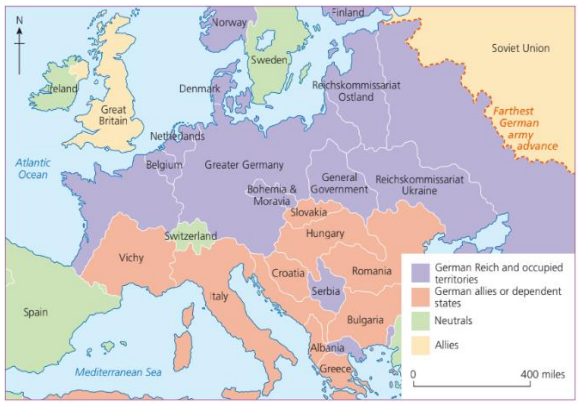
Volkssturm: (People's storm – a militia of old and young) and German surrender.

- All males between 16 and 60 were forced to join the Volksstrum. They received just 4 days training and were ineffective.
- By April 1945 all that remained of the Nazi Reich was Central Berlin. Germans kept fighting.
- Germany surrendered on 2nd May 1945.



Nazi Core Knowledge 5: Occupation

Below is a list of the core knowledge for this bit of your History GCSE. This is the absolute basic amount you must know. You must learn this off by heart.



▲ Europe in 1942 at the height of Nazi control

Nazi occupation:

- The Nazis occupied a number of countries across Europe. The occupation in the east was very different to the occupation in the west.

Nazi occupation of Poland:

- Poland was to be ***'Germanised'*** and any trace of Polish culture was to be removed. Schools and universities were shut down.
- Hundreds of thousands of Polish people were expelled and **500,000** 'ethnic Germans' settled here.
- **1.9 million** Non-Jewish Poles were **killed** and over **1.5 million** were sent to **labour camps**.
- The **Polish Decrees** established rules for Poles working in Germany. Sexual relationships with Germans was **banned** and they earned a lower wage than Germans.
- From 1940 Polish Jews were concentrated in **Ghettos**. By the end of the war 3 million Polish Jews had been murdered.
- August 1944 the Poles staged an **uprising** in Warsaw that lasted 2 months. It was brutally crushed. Warsaw ghetto was destroyed. **200,000** people were killed.

Nazi occupation of the Netherlands:

- The Dutch shared the same **ethnic background** as Germans and were treated very differently to the Poles.
- Initially accepted authority and at first complied with Nazi demands. In **1941** things began to **change**. Jewish men were rounded up for deportation. Some Dutch citizens went on strike in **protest** but the **Nazis retaliated with violence**.
- 1943-1944 the Nazis enforced **intimidation and violence**. In 1943 Jews were deported in huge numbers. **76%** of Jewish population were deported.
- May 1943 all men between 18-35 were to become forced labourers. This spurred on many to **resist**. Illegal printing presses were established.
- 5th May 1945, Nazi occupation came to an end.

The Holocaust:

- The first solution was **persecution and emigration** (1938-1939). First adopted in Austria. '**The Vienna model**' saw 110,000 Jews leaving Austria.
- The second solution was **concentration in ghettos** (1939-1941). Having Jews in one place would make mass deportation in the future easier.
- The largest ghetto was in Warsaw. By March 1941 it had **445,000** Jewish inhabitants.
- **The final solution: murder** (1941-1945). Mass murder of Jews began with the invasion of the Soviet Union. Mobile killing units or ***Einsatzgruppen*** rounded up Jews and Communists to be shot. 1 million people were killed between autumn and winter of 1941.
- **The final solution: death by gas** (1942-1945). Autumn 1941 **Operation Reinhard** was agreed, the extermination of all Jews. This extermination was to be carried out at extermination camps which were shrouded in secrecy.
- 20th January 1942 at the **Wannsee Conference** Nazi officials agreed on plans of **mass murder** of all Jews, even from country's not occupied yet.
- In total there were roughly **11 million deaths**. Of this around **6 million were Jews**. Poland and Germany lost **90%** of their Jews.

Collaboration, accommodation and resistance:

- **Collaboration** (working with the Nazis and helping them to rule.) Examples such as Coco Chanel, the Belgium DeVlag movement and the Croatian Ustasa party.
- **Accommodation** (doing as you were told by the Nazis.) Examples such as the Monaco police and the Danish industrial production agreements.
- **Resistance** (opposing the Nazis.) Examples such as the French Resistance, André Trocmé and the Bielski partisans.