Ernst Röhm

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Ernst Rohm in 1934

Born	November 28, 1887 Munich, German Empire
Died	July 2, 1934 (age 46) Stadelheim Prison, Munich, Germany
Cause of death	Shot
Nationality	German
Occupation(s)	Chief of Staff, Sturmabteilung, (SA)
Parent(s)	Julius Röhm and Emilie Röhm

Ernst Julius Gunther Röhm (28 November 1887 in Munich, Bavaria, Germany – 1 July 1934 in Munich, Bavaria, Germany)[1] was an important leader in Nazi Germany.

Röhm co-founded and led the German Sturmabteilung (the Stormtroopers). He was also a member of the German Reichstag from 1933 to 1934.

Röhm was gay. In 1934, on Adolf Hitler's orders, he was murdered during the Night of the Long Knives.

During the First World War, Röhm fought as an officer. He was awarded the Iron Cross First Class.

Early life

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Ernst Röhm was born in Munich on 28 November 1887. He was the third child of a chief train inspector, Julius Röhm, and his wife, Emilie Röhm.[2] He had one older brother and one older sister.[3] His sister's son was Bernhard Lippert, a German diplomat.[4]

In 1906, after his Abitur (school exams) in Munich, Röhm joined the Bavarian army as a Fanjunkare. Two years later he became a Lieutenant.[2]

First World War

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In 1914, at the beginning of the First World War, he was an adjutant and fought on the Western Front. He was wounded three times, and was awarded the Iron Cross First Class. He was badly hurt in that year and lost a

piece of his [nasal bone](#).[3] He worked for the Bavarian [government](#) in the War Department for the first time. Two years later, in 1918, he was given the rank of a [captain](#) (German: *Hauptmann*).

After the First World War, Röhm went to the [Freikorps](#) (Free Corps) of [Franz Ritter von Epp](#). He wanted to fight against the [Communists](#) in Munich. With this group, he went to fight against the Bavarian Soviet Republic.[2] In July 1919, the Freikorps became part of the [Reichswehr](#).[5]

Involvement in the Nazi Party

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> Röhm (second from right) after the court trial following the Beer Hall Putsch

In 1919, Röhm joined the [German Workers' Party](#) ([German](#): *Deutsche Arbeiter Partei (DAP)*). This was the [precursor](#) of the [Nazi party](#). One year later, he became a member of the [German Nazi Party](#). He received the membership number 623.[6] Röhm helped Hitler [establish](#) [relationships](#) with the [Bavarian](#) [politicians](#) and the [industrialists](#). Two years later, Röhm and Hitler started the [Sturmabteilung](#) (SA), attracting many men from the Freikorps.[7] It was founded as a [paramilitary](#) group for the German Nazi Party. Hitler made Röhm the leader of the SA.

Röhm took a part in the [Beer Hall Putsch](#) in 1923. The Nazi Party tried to overthrow the government, but failed. Röhm was arrested and charged with high [treason](#). The [judges](#) decided he was [guilty](#) on 1 April 1924. Röhm went to prison for five months and lost his job in the army.[2] Following the court trial, both the Nazi Party and the Sturmabteilung became [illegal](#).

In 1924, Röhm helped start the *Frontbann*, an alternative to the Sturmabteilung. After an argument with Adolf Hitler,[2] Röhm retired as leader of the SA.[8] He said that he was only a soldier and not a politician.[9] Between 1928 and 1930, he worked for the [Bolivian](#) military as an [advisor](#).

Leader of the Sturmabteilung

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> Röhm with [Hitler](#), both wearing the SA uniform in 1933

On 1 November 1930, he went back to Germany and joined the Nazi Party a second time.[2] In January 1931, Adolf Hitler placed Röhm in charge of the Sturmabteilung. In just over a year, he expanded it from 70,000 to 170,000 members. In April 1932, [Chancellor](#) [Heinrich Brüning](#) banned the SA again. [Franz von Papen](#), who was chancellor after Heinrich Brüning, [annulled](#) the ban in June. In 1933, Ernst Röhm became a *[Reichsminister](#)*, a minister of the

Reichstag.[10] In 1934, the SA had over 4,500,000 members.[11] The power of the SA increased. Because of this, Adolf Hitler and the Schutzstaffel (SS) started a new dispute with Röhm. The SA was about 20 times greater in membership than the *Reichswehr*; Röhm was dreaming to take over the *Reichswehr*.[12]

Hitler was afraid of Röhm's power. Röhm wanted to merge the Sturmabteilung with the general army, with him as leader. He also wanted a "second Nazi revolution"[13] to make Germany more socialist. He was an anticapitalist, and at this time, Hitler was trying to befriend Germany's industrialists. Hitler planned to kill Röhm.

Night of the Long Knives

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Röhm arranged with Hitler that the Sturmabteilung would get four weeks holiday during the summer of 1934. The holiday started on 1 July 1934. Röhm wanted to go to Bad Wiessee for rest. On 29 June 1934, Röhm was arrested, yet had no trial. He was given the choice by Theodor Eicke: to commit suicide or be killed.[14] On 1 July, Theodor Eicke shot Röhm as instructed by Hitler.[15] Röhm was buried in the Munich western cemetery.

Many Sturmabteilung leaders were killed on that same night, mostly by the Schutzstaffel and Gestapo. It was called the "Night of the Long Knives".[11] The next day the German parliament passed a law with only one paragraph making the murders at the Night of the Long Knives legal.

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Other websites

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- "Ernst Röhm". Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved 2009-09-06.

The **Hitler Cabinet** (30 January 1933 – 30 April 1945)
• v • t • e
Adolf Hitler (Chancellor and Führer) Franz von Papen (ind) • Konstantin von Neurath • Joachim von Ribbentrop • Wilhelm Frick • Heinrich Himmler • Lutz Graf Schwerin von Krosigk (ind) • Alfred Hugenberg (DNVP) • Kurt Schmitt • Hjalmar Schacht (ind) • Hermann Göring • Walther Funk • Franz Seldte • Franz Gürtner (DNVP) • Franz Schlegelberger • Otto Georg Thierack • Werner von Blomberg (ind) • Wilhelm Keitel (ind) • Freiherr von Eltz-Rübenach (ind) • Julius Dorpmüller • Wilhelm Ohnesorge • Richard Walther Darré • Herbert Backe • Joseph Goebbels • Bernhard Rust • Fritz Todt • Albert Speer • Alfred Rosenberg • Hanns Kerrl • Hermann Muhs • Otto Meißner (ind) • Arthur Seyß-Inquart • Hans Frank • Hans Lammers • Martin Bormann • Karl Hermann Frank • Rudolf Hess • Ernst Röhm
All ministers were NSDAP members except where indicated ("ind" = nominally independent). Most of them later became NSDAP members, except Von Papen, Hugenberg and Von Eltz-Rübenach.