

# Auschwitz

Auschwitz, the largest of the German concentration camps, is perhaps the ultimate symbol of the Holocaust. Located in what is now southern Poland it is estimated that over a million people died in the concentration camp. Resources on WW2History.com trace the development of the camps, what it was like to be imprisoned there and explores the issues over its liberation.

HOLOCAUST | JUNE 1940

## Development of Auschwitz 1



How did Auschwitz develop - 1940?

Auschwitz accepted its first Polish prisoners on 14 June. It was a surprising beginning for a place later so associated with the Holocaust, because the original purpose of Auschwitz was not to exterminate Jews. [Click here to read more in 'Development of Auschwitz 1'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | JUNE 1941

## Development of Auschwitz 2



How did Auschwitz develop - 1941?

The Nazi war of 'annihilation' fought on the Eastern Front was to make its mark on Auschwitz, as the SS started killing Soviet prisoners at the camp - eventually with Zyklon B. [Click here to read more in 'Development of Auschwitz 2'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | SEPTEMBER 1941

## Development of Auschwitz 3



How did Auschwitz develop - 1941-2?

In September 1941 the Nazis began building a huge new camp, just a mile and a half away from the existing main camp. They called this new camp Birkenau. [Click here to read more in 'Development of Auschwitz 3'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | MARCH 1943

## Development of Auschwitz 4



How did Auschwitz develop - 1943?

The spring of 1943 is a landmark moment in the history of Auschwitz, with the opening of a combined crematorium and gas chamber complex at Birkenau. [Click here to read more in 'Development of Auschwitz 4'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | MARCH 1944

## Development of Auschwitz 5



How did Auschwitz develop - 1944?

1944 was to be the year in which Auschwitz overtook all the other killing facilities in the Third Reich and became the site of the largest mass murder in the history of the world. [Click here to read more in 'Development of Auschwitz 5'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | 27TH JANUARY 1945

## Liberation of Auschwitz



How did Auschwitz end - 1945?

The Soviet soldiers who discovered Auschwitz on 27 January were appalled at what they had found. But just how did the Nazis try and conceal what had happened here? [Click here to read more in 'Liberation of Auschwitz'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | JUNE 1940

## Prisoner in Auschwitz



Jerzy Bielecki

As one of the first prisoners to be sent to Auschwitz, Jerzy Bielecki suffered many of the initial horrors of the place – including the infamous 'hanging' torture. [Click here to read more in 'Prisoner in Auschwitz'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | 27TH JANUARY 1945

## Liberation of Auschwitz



Soviet soldiers from the First Ukrainian Front arrived at Auschwitz. They found around 600 prisoners alive in the Monowitz slave labour camp, 1,000 at Auschwitz main camp and just under 6,000 at Birkenau. [Click here to read more in 'Liberation of Auschwitz'.](#)

HOLOCAUST | 26TH JUNE 1944

## USA rejects bombing of Auschwitz



John McCloy, American Assistant Secretary of War, rejected a request received via the War Refugee Board that the railway lines to Auschwitz should be bombed. [Click here to read more in 'USA rejects bombing of Auschwitz'.](#)

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