**1918**

* **3rd March**- Treaty of Brest Litovsk – Germans punished Russia severely
* **29th September** – Ludendorff called for armistice negotiations
* **30th September**– Kaisar promised political reform
* October Reforms
* **3rd October** – Prince max wrote to Wilson asking for armistice
* **26th October** – Ludendorff resigned and fled to Sweden
* **30th October** – Naval mutiny at Wilhelmshaven
* **3rd November** – Naval mutiny spread to Kiel
* **4th November** – Revolt spread to city – workers and soldiers councils were established
* **6th November** – workers and soldiers councils springing up all over Germany
* **8th November**– Republic proclaimed in Bavaria – Bavarian monarchy deposed
* **9th November**– SPD called on German workers in Berlin to join a general strike to force the Kaisar to abdicate – also threatened to withdraw support from Max’s government unless Kaisar abdicated within 24 hours – Max could not govern without SPD
* **9th November**– Max took matters in his own hands – released press statement claiming the emperor had abdicated
* **9th November**– Prince Max resigned as chancellor – handed position to Ebert – leader of SPD
* **9th November**– Scheidemann stood on Reichstag balcony and declared that the German Republic was now in existence
* **9th November**– General Groaner told the Kaisar that the army would no longer fight for him
* **10th November**– Ebert-Groaner pact – Ebert had support of army – in return he had to resist demands of soldiers’ armies to democratise army – and defend Germany against communist revolution
* **11th November**– Armistice signed with Allies
* **22nd November**– agreement was reached between new government and the Berlin workers and soldiers councils whereby the government accepted that it only exercised power in the name of these councils – temporary compromised
* **6th December**– Spartacist demonstration in Berlin was fired on by soldiers killing 16
* **23 – 24th December**– sailors revolution against government in Berlin – put down by the army
* **Late 1918** – political situation in Germany highly unstable – many officers believed Germany faced the danger of the Bolshevik revolution which would lead to civil war and possible occupation by Allied forces.

**1919**

* Weimar constitution established
* Country divided into 35 electoral districts – each with about one million voters
* Full democracy in local government as well as central government
* Need for stability placed above need for thoroughly democratic system of government – the army, civil service, judiciary, landowners, owners of big businesses – largely unreformed
* **1919 – 1923** – there had been 376 political assassinations
* New government faced with debt of 1.44 billion marks.
* A law was passed limiting the working day to a maximum of eight hours
* The state health insurance system, introduced by Bismarck but was limited to workers in employment, was extended to include wives, daughters and the disabled.
* Aid for war veterans incapable of working because of injury became the responsibility of national government; aid for war widows and orphans was also increased
* **5th January**– The Spartacist League – led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg – staged an armed uprising in Berlin to overthrow Ebert’s government and set up a revolutionary communist regime
* **6th January**– Spartacists launched an armed revolution against government – became known as January revolution – crushed after a week of heavy fighting
* **13th January**– The Spartacist rising had been crushed after brutal street fighting in which many prisoners, including Liebknecht and Luxemburg were executed
* **18th January**– Peace Conference at Palace of Versailles
* **19th January** – Constituent Assembly held – SPD secured largest share of votes – did not gain majority – had to compromise with other parties to establish new constitution and govern country
* Ebert elected as president by assembly
* Philip Scheidemann became chancellor – lead new government
* First coalition – SPD – Centre Party – German Democratic party
* Workers and soldiers’ councils handed over their powers to the Constituent Assembly
* New constitution drawn up and designed to enshrine and guarantee the rights and powers of the people – represented clear break from autocratic constitution.
* **March**– Another Spartacist rising in Berlin – in Bavaria a communist government based on workers’ councils was established – both suppressed.
* **April**– Wave of strikes in Germany’s industrial heartlands – strikers asked for short hours – demanded more control over their own industries – and a government based on worker’s councils.
* **7th May**– Germans allowed to see the terms of the treaty
* **16th June**– Germans given seven days to sign the treaty – provoked political crisis
* **20th June**– Coalition cabinet collapsed because of divisions over signing the treaty
* Scheidemann resigned
* New coalition cabinet – led by Gustav Bauer was formed
* Groaner informed Ebert that military resistance to treaty would be futile
* Bauer Cabinet signed the treaty
* **22nd June**– Reichstag voted to accept the treaty
* **28th June**– the Versailles Treaty was signed by all powers
* **October**– Hugo Haase, who had been a member of the People’s Commissars was shot in front of Reichstag and died of wounds a month later.
* **February 1919 – November 1923** – no less than 10 coalition governments – continuity of policy was impossible to achieve.

**1920**

* Coalition led by Fehrenbach
* Communists formed a ‘Red Army’ of 50,000 workers and seized control of the Ruhr – virtual civil war followed as regular army and Freikcorps struggled to crush the risin.
* **January**– government was obliged to put into effect terms of treaty of Versailles and needed to reduce size of army and disband some Freikorps units
* **February**– defence minister Gustav Noske ordered two Freikorps units, comprising 12,000 men to disband
* Trade Unions – encouraged by socialist members of Ebert’s government called a general strike
* Berlin was brought to a standstill
* Within four days the Putsch collapsed

**1921**

* America made separate peace with Germany as Republicans in American Congress opposed the treaty of Versailles and refused to ratify it
* Although national debt was high – unemployment had virtually disappeared – rapid recovery in economic activity
* Unemployment was 1.8% – encouraged investment especially from USA
* Reparations commission presented report to German government with the ultimatum to accept the terms within six days – caused a political crisis
* cabinet of Fehrenbach resigned in protest at what it considered to be excessively harsh terms
* new cabinet – led by Joseph Wirth
* Germany made first payment
* start of policy of fulfilment – cooperation would win sympathy – would lead to revision in terms of Treaty of Versailles.
* **March**– KPD tried to force a revolution beginning with a rising in Saxony – spread to Hamburg and the Ruhr – but the risings were crushed by the police – 145 people killed
* **August**– Former finance minister Matthias Erzberger was assassinated in the Black Forest by two members of the terrorist league Organisation Consul – he had led the Germany delegation for armistice and signed the Treaty of Versailles – also Germany’s representative for reparations committee – after his death widow kept receiving abusive letters including threats to defile his grave.

**1922**

* By the end of 1922 Germany had fallen seriously behind in its payments of reparations to France in the form of coal.
* National Youth Welfare Act required all local authorities to set up youth offices with responsibility for child protection – decreed that all children had the right to an education.
* **January**– Germany was in such economic difficulties that the Reparations Commission granted a postponement of the January and February instalments
* He was popular and his death had an impact in Germany and abroad
* 700,000 protesters lined the streets the following day.
* **24th June**– Foreign minister Walther Rathenau – driving to work in an open top car when four assassins from Organisation Consul shot at him and hurled a hand grade for good measure – he was a Jew and a leading minister in the republican government.
* **July**– German government asked for a further suspension of the payments due that year
* **July** – Reichstag passed a law ‘for the protection of the Republic’ – imposed severe penalties for on those involved in conspiracy to murder and banned extremist organisations
* He Organisation Consul was forced to disband.
* In Bavaria the conservative government refused to implement it
* 326 Right wing murderers went unpunished.
* 10 Left wing murderers were sentenced to death.
* **November**– German government asked for a loan of 500 million gold marks and to be released from its obligations for three to four years in order to stabilise its currency – French suspicious and refused to agree to Germany’s requests

**1923**

* French and Belgian forces occupied the Ruhr industrial area of western Germany in an attempt to extract payment by force
* **January 1923** – this prompted the French and the Belgians to send a force of 60,000 men to occupy the Ruhr industrial area to force the Germans to comply
* in the course of 1923, the numbers of occupying forces grew to 100,000
* government of Chancellor Cuno knew the government could not fight back
* paramilitary groups working with the army secretly organised acts of sabotage against French
* 150,000 Germans were expelled from area
* 132 Germans were shot in the 8 months of occupation including 7-year-old boy
* French bought in their own workers.
* **May**– deliveries were only a third of the average monthly deliveries in 1922 and the output of the Ruhr had fallen to a fifth of its pre-occupation output
* **1923** – further strike activity – suppressed
* **Until 1923** – only one right wing murderer was convicted and sentenced to severe punishment
* **November**– Hitler attempted to seize power
* Hitler secured support of Ludendorff.
* **8th November**– Hitler burst into Munich beer hall where von Kahr and von Lossow were addressing a meeting of 2000 – surrounding it with his stormtroopers and announcing that the revolution had began
* Von Kahr and von Lossow were persuaded to agree to Hitler’s plan to march on Berlin and install Ludendorff as the new commander in chief
* Their support evaporated overnight and so did Hitler’s chances of persuading others to support him
* The stormtroopers were unable to gain control of the Munich army barracks.
* **9th November** – it was clear Hitler’s original plan had failed – he still went ahead with the march on Munich
  + Hitler fled – captured next day
  + Ludendorff walked up to police and allowed himself to be arrested
  + Nazis banned – Hitler imprisoned

The early years of the Weimar Republic were characterised by instability and political conflict. The conflict of the early years, however, left a legacy of bitterness and distrust in the democratic process