

Hitler

Adolf Hitler

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Adolf Hitler (20 April 1889 – 30 April 1945) was an Austrian-born German politician who was the dictator of Germany during the Nazi period from 1933 until his suicide in 1945. He rose to power as the leader of the Nazi Party, becoming the chancellor in 1933 and then taking the title of Führer und Reichskanzler in 1934. His invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 marked the start of the Second World War. He was closely involved in military operations throughout the war and was central to the perpetration of the Holocaust: the genocide of about six million Jews and millions of other victims.

Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn in Austria-Hungary and moved to Germany in 1913. He was decorated during his service in the German Army in the First World War, receiving the Iron Cross. In 1919 he joined the German Workers' Party (DAP), the precursor of the Nazi Party, and in 1921 was appointed the leader of the Nazi Party. In 1923 he attempted to seize governmental power in a failed coup in Munich and was sentenced to five years in prison, serving just over a year. While there, he dictated the first volume of his autobiography and political manifesto *Mein Kampf* (lit. 'My Struggle'). After his early release in 1924, he gained popular support by attacking the Treaty of Versailles and promoting pan-Germanism, antisemitism, and anti-communism with charismatic oratory and Nazi propaganda. He frequently denounced communism as being part of an international Jewish conspiracy. By November 1932 the Nazi Party held the most seats in the Reichstag, but not a majority. Former chancellor Franz von Papen and other conservative leaders convinced President Paul von Hindenburg to appoint Hitler as chancellor on 30 January 1933. Shortly thereafter, the Reichstag passed the Enabling Act of 1933, which began the process of transforming the Weimar Republic into Nazi Germany, a one-party dictatorship based upon the totalitarian, autocratic, and fascistic ideology of Nazism.

Upon Hindenburg's death on 2 August 1934, Hitler became simultaneously the head of state and government, with absolute power. Domestically, Hitler implemented numerous racist policies and sought to deport or kill German Jews. His first six years in power resulted in rapid economic recovery from the Great Depression, the abrogation of restrictions imposed on Germany after the First World War, and the annexation of territories inhabited by millions of ethnic Germans, which initially gave him significant popular support. One of Hitler's key goals was *Lebensraum* (lit. 'living space') for the German people in Eastern Europe, and his aggressive, expansionist foreign policy is considered the primary cause of World War II in Europe. He directed large-scale rearmament and, on 1 September 1939, invaded Poland, causing Britain and France to declare war on Germany. In June 1941, Hitler ordered an invasion of the Soviet Union. In December 1941, he declared war on the United States. By the end of 1941, German forces and the European Axis powers occupied most of Europe and North Africa. These gains were gradually reversed after 1941, and in 1945 the Allied armies defeated the German army. On 29 April 1945 he married his longtime partner, Eva Braun, in the Führerbunker in Berlin. The couple committed suicide the next day to avoid capture by the Soviet Red Army.

The historian and biographer Ian Kershaw described Hitler as "the embodiment of modern political evil". Under Hitler's leadership and racist ideology, the Nazi regime was responsible for the genocide of an estimated six million Jews and millions of other victims, whom he and his followers deemed *Untermenschen* (lit. 'subhumans') or socially undesirable. Hitler and the Nazi regime were also responsible for the deliberate killing of an estimated 19.3 million civilians and prisoners of war. In addition, 28.7 million soldiers and civilians died as a result of military action in the European theatre. The number of civilians killed during World War II was unprecedented in warfare, and the casualties constitute the deadliest conflict in history.

Nazi Germany

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Nazi Germany, officially the German Reich and later the Greater German Reich, was the German state between 1933 and 1945, when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party controlled the country, transforming it into a totalitarian dictatorship. The Third Reich, meaning "Third Realm" or "Third Empire", referred to the Nazi claim that Nazi Germany was the successor to the earlier Holy Roman Empire (800–1806) and German Empire (1871–1918). The Third Reich, which the Nazis referred to as the Thousand-Year Reich, ended in May 1945, after 12 years, when the Allies defeated Germany and entered the capital, Berlin, ending World War II in Europe.

After Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany in 1933, the Nazi Party began to eliminate political opposition and consolidate power. A 1934 German referendum confirmed Hitler as sole Führer (leader). Power was centralised in Hitler's person, and his word became the highest law. The government was not a co-ordinated, cooperating body, but rather a collection of factions struggling to amass power. To address the Great Depression, the Nazis used heavy military spending, extensive public works projects, including the Autobahnen (motorways) and a massive secret rearmament program, forming the Wehrmacht (armed forces), all financed by deficit spending. The return to economic stability and end of mass unemployment boosted the regime's popularity. Hitler made increasingly aggressive territorial demands, seizing Austria in the Anschluss of 1938, and the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia. Germany signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union and invaded Poland in 1939, launching World War II in Europe. In alliance with Fascist Italy and other Axis powers, Germany conquered most of Europe by 1940 and threatened Britain.

Racism, Nazi eugenics, anti-Slavism, and especially antisemitism were central ideological features of the regime. The Nazis considered Germanic peoples to be the "master race", the purest branch of the Aryan race. Jews, Romani people, Slavs, homosexuals, liberals, socialists, communists, other political opponents, Jehovah's Witnesses, Freemasons, those who refused to work, and other "undesirables" were imprisoned, deported, or murdered. Christian churches and citizens that opposed Hitler's rule were oppressed and leaders imprisoned. Education focused on racial biology, population policy, and fitness for military service. Career and educational opportunities for women were curtailed. The Nazi Propaganda Ministry disseminated films, antisemitic canards, and organised mass rallies, fostering a pervasive cult of personality around Hitler to influence public opinion. The government controlled artistic expression, promoting specific art forms and banning or discouraging others. Genocide, mass murder, and large-scale forced labour became hallmarks of the regime; the implementation of the regime's racial policies culminated in the Holocaust.

After invading the Soviet Union in 1941, Nazi Germany implemented the Generalplan Ost and Hunger Plan, as part of its war of extermination in Eastern Europe. The Soviet resurgence and entry of the United States into the war meant Germany lost the initiative in 1943 and by late 1944 had been pushed back to the 1939 border. Large-scale aerial bombing of Germany escalated and the Axis powers were driven back in Eastern and Southern Europe. Germany was conquered by the Soviet Union from the east and the other allies from the west, and capitulated in 1945. Hitler's refusal to admit defeat led to massive destruction of German infrastructure and additional war-related deaths in the closing months of the war. The Allies subsequently initiated a policy of denazification and put many of the surviving Nazi leadership on trial for war crimes at the Nuremberg trials.

Hitler Youth

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The Hitler Youth (German: Hitlerjugend [ˈhɪtlɐˈjuːnʃt] , often abbreviated as HJ, [haʔʔjʃt]) was the youth wing of the German Nazi Party. Its origins date back to 1922 and it received the name Hitler-Jugend, Bund deutscher Arbeiterjugend ("Hitler Youth, League of German Worker Youth") in July 1926. From 1936 until 1945, it was the sole official boys' youth organisation in Germany (although the League of German Girls was a wing of it) and it was partially a paramilitary organisation. It was composed of the Hitler Youth proper for male youths aged 14 to 18, and the German Youngsters in the Hitler Youth (Deutsches Jungvolk in der Hitler Jugend or "DJ", also "DJV") for younger boys aged 10 to 14.

With the surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945, the organisation de facto ceased to exist. On 10 October 1945, the Hitler Youth and its subordinate units were outlawed by the Allied Control Council along with other Nazi Party organisations. Under Section 86 of the Criminal Code of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Hitler Youth is an "unconstitutional organisation" and the distribution or public use of its symbols, except for educational or research purposes, is illegal.

Hitler family

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The Hitler family consists of the relatives and ancestors of Adolf Hitler. The family has long been of interest to historians and genealogists because of the biological uncertainty of Hitler's paternal grandfather, as well as the family's inter-relationships and their psychological effect on Hitler during his childhood and later life.

Alois Schicklgruber (Adolf's father) changed his surname on 7 January 1877 to "Hitler" (derived from that of his deceased stepfather, Johann Georg Hiedler), which was the only form of the last name that his son Adolf used. Before Adolf Hitler's birth, his family used many variations of the family surname "Hitler" almost interchangeably. Some of the common variants were Hiedler, Hüttler, Hytler, and Hittler.

Adolf Hitler's sister Paula, who died in 1960 and did not have children, was the last member of the family still bearing the Hitler surname on their tombstone. As of 2023, only five members of the Hitler family bloodline, all men who bore no children, were still living. Though three of these descendants were sons of Adolf Hitler's nephew Willie, Willie Hitler was not on good terms with Adolf Hitler, who even referred to Willie as his "loathsome nephew". Willie had publicly criticized his uncle by 1938, fought with the United States military during World War II and had even later changed his last name from Hitler to Stuart-Houston. None of Willie's sons, who all bear the last name Stuart-Houston, have had children of their own.

Hitler (disambiguation)

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Heil Hitler (song)

"Heil Hitler", also known by the alternative version title "Nigga Heil Hitler", and later known as "Hallelujah", is a song by American rapper Kanye West

"Heil Hitler", also known by the alternative version title "Nigga Heil Hitler", and later known as "Hallelujah", is a song by American rapper Kanye West. It was independently released on May 8, 2025, as the third single from his upcoming thirteenth studio album, In a Perfect World. Titled after the exclamation said when doing the Nazi salute, the song features additional vocals from West's group the Hooligans.

Written by American rapper Dave Blunts, it was produced by Quadwoofer and Sheffmade.

The track received negative reviews from critics, including outrage and condemnation due to its antisemitism and praise of Adolf Hitler. West has claimed that the controversial nature and subject matter of "Heil Hitler" caused the song to be banned from all major digital streaming platforms. The song has been banned in Germany due to Germany's laws against extremist symbolism and hate speech. West's travel visa to Australia was revoked due to the song's content.

West has re-released "Heil Hitler" in multiple altered forms since it was taken down. An instrumental version was uploaded in its place on May 14, titled "The Heil Symphony" (later "Hit Symphony"). After announcing that he was "done with antisemitism", West released "Hallelujah" on May 31, an alternate version of "Heil Hitler" that replaces its references to Nazism with lyrics relating to Christianity.

Death of Adolf Hitler

Adolf Hitler, chancellor and dictator of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, committed suicide by gunshot to the head on 30 April 1945 in the Führerbunker

Adolf Hitler, chancellor and dictator of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, committed suicide by gunshot to the head on 30 April 1945 in the Führerbunker in Berlin after it became clear that Germany would lose the Battle of Berlin, which led to the end of World War II in Europe. Eva Braun, his longtime companion and wife of one day, also committed suicide by cyanide poisoning. In accordance with Hitler's prior written and verbal instructions, that afternoon their remains were carried up the stairs and through the bunker's emergency exit to the Reich Chancellery garden, where they were doused in petrol and burned. The news of Hitler's death was announced on German radio the next day, 1 May.

Eyewitnesses who saw Hitler's body immediately after his suicide testified that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot, presumably to the temple. Otto Günsche, Hitler's personal adjutant, who handled both bodies, testified that while Braun's smelled strongly of burnt almonds – an indication of cyanide poisoning – there was no such odour about Hitler's body, which smelled of gunpowder. Dental remains found in the Chancellery garden were matched with Hitler's dental records in May 1945 and are the only portion of Hitler's body confirmed to have been found.

The Soviet Union restricted the release of information and released many conflicting reports about Hitler's death. Historians have largely rejected these as part of a deliberate disinformation campaign by Joseph Stalin to sow confusion regarding Hitler's death, or have attempted to reconcile them. Soviet records allege that the burnt remains of Hitler and Braun were recovered, despite eyewitness accounts that they were almost completely reduced to ashes. In June 1945, the Soviets began promulgating two contradictory narratives: that Hitler died by cyanide or that he had survived and fled to another country. Following extensive review, West Germany issued a death certificate in 1956. Conspiracy theories about Hitler's death continue to attract interest.

Alois Hitler

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Alois Schicklgruber was born out of wedlock. His mother was Maria Schicklgruber, but his biological father remains unknown. This uncertain parentage has led to claims that Alois's third wife, Klara (Adolf's mother), may have also been either Alois's first cousin once removed or his half-niece.

Alois married his first wife, Anna, in 1873. In 1876, Alois convinced the Austrian local authorities to acknowledge his deceased stepfather Johann Georg Hiedler as his biological father. This meant that Klara legally became Alois's first cousin once removed. Alois then legally changed his last name to that of his deceased stepfather Johann, but the authorities misspelled the last name as "Hitler" for unknown reasons.

Also in 1876, while Alois was still married to his first wife, Anna, he hired his relative Klara as a household servant, and began an affair with her. Their relationship continued in secrecy until Alois's second wife, Franziska, died and Klara became pregnant, which prompted Alois to marry her in 1885. According to a close friend, Alois was "awfully rough" with his wife Klara and "hardly ever spoke a word to her at home". Alois treated his children with similar contempt and often beat them.

Religious views of Adolf Hitler

The religious beliefs of Adolf Hitler, dictator of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, have been a matter of debate. His opinions regarding religious matters

The religious beliefs of Adolf Hitler, dictator of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, have been a matter of debate. His opinions regarding religious matters changed considerably over time. During the beginning of his political career, Hitler publicly expressed favorable opinions towards traditional Christian ideals, but later deviated from them. Most historians describe his later posture as adversarial to organized Christianity and established Christian denominations. He also staunchly criticized atheism.

Hitler was born to a practicing Catholic mother, Klara Hitler, and was baptized in the Roman Catholic Church; his father, Alois Hitler, was a free-thinker and skeptical of the Catholic Church. In 1904, he was confirmed at the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Linz, Austria, where the family lived. According to John Willard Toland, witnesses indicate that Hitler's confirmation sponsor had to "drag the words out of him ... almost as though the whole confirmation was repugnant to him". Toland offers the opinion that Hitler "carried within him its teaching that the Jew was the killer of God. The extermination, therefore, could be done without a twinge of conscience since he was merely acting as the avenging hand of God ..." Michael Rissmann notes that, according to several witnesses who lived with Hitler in a men's home in Vienna, he never again attended Mass or received the sacraments after leaving home at 18 years old.

In a speech in 1932, Hitler declared himself "not a Catholic and not a Protestant, but a German Christian". The German Christians were a Protestant group that supported Nazi ideology. Both Hitler and the Nazi Party promoted "nondenominational" positive Christianity, a movement which rejected most traditional Christian doctrines such as the divinity of Jesus, as well as Jewish elements such as the Old Testament. In one widely quoted remark, Hitler described Jesus as an "Aryan fighter" who struggled against "the power and pretensions of the corrupt Pharisees" and Jewish materialism. Hitler spoke often of Protestantism and Lutheranism, stating, "Through me the Evangelical Protestant Church could become the established church, as in England" and that the "great reformer" Martin Luther "has the merit of rising against the Pope and the Catholic Church".

Hitler's regime launched an effort toward coordination of German Protestants into a joint Protestant Reich Church, and moved early to eliminate political Catholicism. Even though Nazi leadership was excommunicated from the Catholic Church, Hitler agreed to the Reich concordat with the Vatican, but then routinely ignored it, and permitted persecutions of the Catholic Church. Several historians have insisted that Hitler and his inner circle were influenced by other religions. In a eulogy for a friend, Hitler called on him to enter Valhalla but he later stated that it would be foolish to re-establish the worship of Odin (or Wotan) within Germanic paganism. Most historians argue he was prepared to delay conflicts for political reasons and that his intentions were to eventually eliminate Christianity in Germany, or at least reform it to suit a Nazi outlook.

20 July plot

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The 20 July plot, sometimes referred to as Operation Valkyrie, was a failed attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler, the chancellor of Germany, and overthrow the Nazi regime on 20 July 1944. The plotters were part of the German resistance, mainly composed of Wehrmacht officers. The leader of the conspiracy, Claus von Stauffenberg, tried to kill Hitler by detonating an explosive hidden in a briefcase. However, due to the location of the bomb at the time of detonation, the blast only dealt Hitler minor injuries. The planners' subsequent coup attempt also failed and resulted in a purge of the Wehrmacht.

As early as 1938, German military officers had plotted to overthrow Hitler, but indecisive leadership and the pace of global events stymied action. Plotters gained a sense of urgency in 1943 after Germany lost the Battle of Stalingrad and Soviet forces began to push towards Germany. Under the leadership of Stauffenberg, plotters tried to assassinate Hitler at least five different times in 1943 and 1944. With the Nazi secret police, the Gestapo, closing in on the plotters, a final attempt was organised in July 1944. Stauffenberg personally took a briefcase containing a block of plastic explosive to a conference in the Wolf's Lair. The explosives were armed and placed next to Hitler, but it appears they were moved unwittingly at the last moment behind a table leg by Heinz Brandt, inadvertently saving Hitler's life. When the bomb detonated, it killed Brandt and two others, while the rest of the room's occupants were injured, one of whom, Rudolf Schmundt, later died from his injuries. Hitler's trousers were singed by the blast, and he suffered a perforated eardrum and conjunctivitis, but was otherwise unharmed.

The plotters, unaware of their failure, then attempted a coup d'état. A few hours after the blast, the conspiracy used Wehrmacht units to take control of several cities, including Berlin, right after giving them disinformation on the intention of the orders they were given. This part of the coup d'état attempt is referred to by the name "Operation Valkyrie", which also has become associated with the entire event. Within hours, the Nazi regime had reasserted its control of Germany. A few members of the conspiracy, including Stauffenberg, were executed by firing squad the same night. In the months after the coup d'état attempt, the Gestapo arrested more than 7,000 people, 4,980 of whom were executed. Roughly 200 conspirators were executed.

The apparent aim of the coup d'état attempt was to wrest political control of Germany and its armed forces from the Nazi Party (including the Schutzstaffel) and to make peace with the Western Allies as soon as possible. The details of the conspirators' peace initiatives remain unknown, but they would have included unrealistic demands for the confirmation of Germany's extensive annexations of European territory.

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