

## About D-Day (from [Duckster's](#))

On June 6, 1944 the Allied Forces of Britain, America, Canada, and France attacked German forces on the coast of Normandy, France. With a huge force of over 150,000 soldiers, the Allies attacked and gained a victory that became the turning point for World War II in Europe. This famous battle is sometimes called D-Day or the Invasion of Normandy.

## D-Day Document

- **Highlight, underline, or circle the information from this reading that answers the following prompts:**

1. Identify the name of the Operation that began in Normandy, France
2. Identify how Americans benefited from, "early recruitment of manpower and resources"
3. Identify how bombing was used by the Allies
4. Identify the targets of Allied bombers several months before D-Day
5. Identify the outcome of D-Day.

"Operation Overlord," the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe that began on D-Day -- June 6, 1944 -- on the beaches of Normandy, France.

June 1944 was a major turning point of World War II, particularly in Europe. Although the plan had been seized from the Germans some months before, so far the western Allies had been unable to get enough men and material to risk an attack in northern Europe.

By mid- 1944 early recruitment of manpower and resources in America was beginning to pay off. Millions of American men had been trained, equipped, and welded into fighting and service units. American industrial production had reached its wartime peak late in 1943. While there were still critical shortages -- in landing craft, for instance -- production problems were largely solved. Increasing streams of supplies from the United States were reaching the Allied forces throughout the world.

By the beginning of June 1944, the United States and Great Britain accumulated the largest number of men and the greatest amount of war material ever assembled so they could launch and sustain an amphibious (water to land) attack in Northern Europe.

Also at this time, strategic bombing of Germany was reaching its peak. In May 1943, the Royal Air Force (Britain's Air Force) and the U.S. Army Air Forces were conducting round-the-clock bombardment of German industry and communications. In general, British planes bombed by night and American planes bombed by day. To put this in perspective, an air raid of 200 planes had been considered large in June 1943, and on D-Day, a year later in June 1944, bombing was undertaken by 1,000 heavy bombers.

Three months before D-Day, a strategic air campaign was implemented to pave the way for invasion by restricting the enemy's ability to move its backup forces. French and Belgian railways were crippled, bridges were demolished in northwestern France, and enemy airfields within a 130-mile radius of the landing beaches were put under heavy attack. The Allies also put into effect a deception (fake) plan to make the Germans believe that D-Day would take place farther north along the Pas de Calais.

Despite unfavorable weather forecasts, General Eisenhower made the decision to attack on June 6, 1944. At 2AM that morning one British and two American airborne divisions were dropped behind the beaches in order to secure exit routes from the beaches for the seaborne forces. After an intensive air and naval bombardment, assault waves of troops began landing at 0630. More than 5,000 ships and 4,000 ship-to-shore craft were employed in the landings. British forces on the left flank and U.S. forces on the right had comparatively easy going, but U.S. forces in the center (Omaha Beach) met the most difficult opposition. Nevertheless, by nightfall of the first day, large numbers of forces had a firm foothold on Hitler's "fortress Europe. There were three British, one Canadian, and three American infantry divisions, plus three airborne divisions, holding down Normandy's beaches.