Versailles Treaty
28 June 1919
Under the Versailles Treaty Japan gains territory from Germany, including numerous island groups in the Western Pacific.

Japan Invades China
7 July 1937
Japanese troops seize large areas of north east China including the capital, Beijing. Coastal cities are also occupied in the following months. Chinese forces are forced to withdraw west. For China, this marks the start of the Second World War.

Japan Occupies French Indochina
5 September 1940
Following France’s defeat by Germany, Japan moves troops into French Indochina. As well as gaining new bases in the south, this cuts off a major supply route to China.

Japan Attacks Pearl Harbor
7* December 1941
The US Pacific fleet is severely weakened in a surprise attack by carrier-borne aircraft. As a result the USA declares war on Japan.

Japan Invades Malaya
8 December 1941
Japanese troops land in northern Malaya. British Empire troops are forced southwards. Two months later Singapore falls, the largest surrender in British history.

Japan Invades the Philippines
8 December 1941
Japanese troops land on Luzon. US forces withdraw to Bataan Peninsular then to Corregidor Island, which finally falls in early May 1942.

Japan Invades Hong Kong
8 December 1941
Japanese troops invade Hong Kong. British Empire forces withdraw to Hong Kong Island but are forced to surrender on Christmas Day.

Japan Invades the Dutch East Indies
15 December 1941
Over the next 4 months Japanese secure the Dutch islands, which produce key resources such as oil and rubber.

*Because Hawaii lies just east of the International Date line, this is the same as 8 December Western Pacific Time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doolittle Raid</td>
<td>18 April 1942</td>
<td>16 bombers are launched from an aircraft carrier and bomb targets in Tokyo. Only minor damage is caused but it is a major morale boost for the US. For Japan it reveals the vulnerability of the home islands and the need to expand their area of control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Invade Madagascar</td>
<td>5 May 1942</td>
<td>Concerned that Madagascar (occupied by pro-Axis Vichy France forces) might be used as a base by the Japanese, British forces land in northern Madagascar. Central and Southern areas are occupied in September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Invades New Guinea</td>
<td>21 July 1941</td>
<td>Japanese troops land on the north east of New Guinea. Attempts to fight overland to seize Port Moresby are halted by Australian forces after heavy fighting. Mountainous terrain and jungle makes the fighting especially difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Invades Guadalcanal</td>
<td>7 August 1942</td>
<td>US Marines invade Guadalcanal to prevent the Japanese building up a base which would threaten Australia. Japan responds with reinforcements. After 6 months Japan abandons the island after heavy loses in soldiers, ships and aircraft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Invades Burma</td>
<td>16 December 1941</td>
<td>Japanese troops invade from Thailand. By the end of May 1942, British Empire forces are pushed back into India, the longest retreat in British military history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Midway</td>
<td>4 June 1942</td>
<td>A Japanese fleet attempts to invade Midway Island but it is ambushed by the US. Japan loses 4 of its carriers. The US loses 1 carrier. The Japanese lose their naval dominance in the Pacific.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of the Bismark Sea</td>
<td>4 March 1943</td>
<td>A Japanese convoy carrying reinforcements to New Guinea is intercepted and destroyed by Allied aircraft. Further reinforcement of New Guinea by Japan is limited, weakening their hold in the Southeast Pacific.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Japan Advances into India
5 April 1944
Trying to delay an expected Allied advance, Japanese forces attack from Burma into India. In heavy fighting around Kohima and Imphal the Japanese are decisively defeated and by July are forced to withdraw.

US Invades the Marianas Islands
31 January 1944
US Marines land on Kwajalein Atoll. Learning from the fighting on Tarawa, the US take the islands relatively easily.

Japan Advances into Southern China
19 April 1944
Japan launches an offensive into Southern China to remove bases for US long range bombers attacking Japan. The offensive also opens links between North China and Indochina.

US Invades New Britain
15 December 1943
US troops land in New Britain. This bypasses and isolates Japanese forces in New Guinea and the base of Rabaul. This marks the development of “island hopping” where only key points need to be occupied whilst Japanese forces are left to “wither on the vine”.

US Invades the Gilbert Islands
20 November 1943
US Marines land on Tarawa Atoll. Despite heavy resistance and difficult terrain, the Atoll is secured in 4 days. The seizure of Tarawa is the beginning of a new drive through the Central Pacific by the US Navy.

US Invades New Britain
15 December 1943
US troops land in New Britain. This bypasses and isolates Japanese forces in New Guinea and the base of Rabaul. This marks the development of “island hopping” where only key points need to be occupied whilst Japanese forces are left to “wither on the vine”.

Battle of the Philippine Sea
19 June 1944
The Japanese attempt to prevent further advances in the Pacific by destroying the US fleet in a major battle. Instead the Japanese navy suffers heavy loses in ships and aircraft. US pilots call it “The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot”.

US Invades the Marshall Islands
31 January 1944
US Marines land on Kwajalein Atoll. Learning from the fighting on Tarawa, the US take the islands relatively easily.

Liberation of the Philippines
20 October 1944
US troops land on Leyte. Major fighting continues throughout the islands until June 1945. The invasion helps to block Japanese links to the Dutch East Indies and Malaya.
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<tr>
<td>US Invades Okinawa</td>
<td>1 April 1945</td>
<td>US troops land on Okinawa, the last island group before Japan itself is to be attacked. Japan resists strongly, and carries out the first kamikaze attacks. 10,755 of the Japanese garrison of 120,000, surrender; the first time a large number of Japanese became prisoners of war. Over 100,000 civilians are killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Invades Iwo Jima</td>
<td>19 February 1945</td>
<td>US Marines land on Iwo Jima. The island takes over a month to secure. Of the 22,000 Japanese garrison, only 216 surrender. Iwo Jima provides airfields for bombers attacking Japan, and is selected as the base for the aircraft carrying atomic bombs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconquest of Burma</td>
<td>4 December 1944</td>
<td>British Empire forces begin a major offensive to clear Burma. After 5 months heavy fighting Rangoon falls to an amphibious attack just as the monsoon rains bring movement to a halt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leyte Gulf Naval Battles</td>
<td>23 October 1944</td>
<td>The Japanese Navy attempts to destroy the US invasion fleet off Leyte. Over three days the Japanese attacks are beaten off with heavy loss and fail to inflict major damage. The Japanese navy is effectively destroyed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR Invades Manchuria</td>
<td>8 August 1945</td>
<td>Soviet forces invade Japanese held Manchuria. After meeting tough resistance to begin with, the Soviet forces quickly breakthrough the defences and rapidly overrun Manchuria and northern Korea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Drops the Atomic Bomb</td>
<td>6 August 1945</td>
<td>An atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, destroying the city. 3 days later a second bomb is dropped on Nagasaki.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Japan of Japan</td>
<td>2 September 1945</td>
<td>The formal document of Japanese surrender is signed aboard the Battleship USS Missouri, moored in Tokyo Bay. Other surrender ceremonies are held in the remaining Japanese held territories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VJ Day</td>
<td>15 August 1945</td>
<td>Emperor Hirohito announces, via radio, Japan's acceptance of the Allies' surrender terms. Some fighting continues in the Pacific due to communication problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>