

# Japan's Pacific Campaign

## BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the war against Hitler in Europe.

In this section, you will learn about the war against Japan in the Pacific.

## AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to record key events in the war in the Pacific.

### TERMS AND NAMES

**Isoroku Yamamoto** Japanese admiral who decided that the U.S. fleet in Hawaii had to be destroyed

**Pearl Harbor** Navy base in Hawaii attacked by the Japanese

**Battle of Midway** Sea and air battle in which American forces defeated Japanese forces near Midway Island in the Pacific

**Douglas MacArthur** U.S. general who commanded Allied forces in the Pacific

**Battle of Guadalcanal** Six-month battle on the island of Guadalcanal in which American and Australian troops defeated Japanese defenders

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESULT</b>
<b>Pearl Harbor</b>	<i>Japanese bomb American fleet.</i>	
<b>Battle of the Coral Sea</b>		
<b>Battle of Midway</b>		
<b>Battle of Guadalcanal</b>		

## Surprise Attack on Pearl Harbor

*How did the United States fight Japan before declaring war?*

The military leaders who ran the Japanese government also had plans to build an empire. Japan was overcrowded and did not have enough raw materials or oil.

The Japanese captured part of China in 1931. In 1937, they invaded the center of China. There they met strong *resistance*. Needing resources for this war, they decided to move into Southeast Asia.

The United States feared that Japanese control of this area would threaten U.S. holdings in the Pacific. Roosevelt gave military aid to China. He also cut off oil shipments to Japan.

Japanese Admiral **Isoroku Yamamoto** decided that the U.S. *fleet* in Hawaii had to be destroyed. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese navy began a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at **Pearl Harbor** in Hawaii. In just two hours, Japanese planes sank or damaged a major part of the U.S. Pacific fleet—19 ships, including 8 battleships. The next day, Congress, at the request of President Roosevelt, declared war on Japan and its allies.

**1. How did the United States respond to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?**

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**Japanese Victories**

*What areas of Asia did the Japanese conquer between December 1941 and mid-1942?*

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was just one of many sudden strikes. Japan also captured Guam, Wake Island, and the Philippines from the United States. It took Indonesia from the Dutch and Hong Kong, Malaya, and Singapore from the British.

Japan then invaded Burma, located between India and China. Japan wanted to stop China from receiving supplies through Burma. Burma fell in May 1942. By that time, Japan had conquered more than 1 million square miles of land with about 150 million people.

Before these conquests, the Japanese had tried to win the support of Asians. They used the anti-colonial slogan "Asia for the Asians." After their victory, the Japanese made it clear that they had come as conquerers.

**2. What countries lost territory to Japan early in the war?**

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**The Allies Strike Back; An Allied Offensive**

*How did the Allies strike back?*

The Japanese seemed unbeatable after a string of victories. But the Allies wanted to strike back in the Pacific. In April 1942, the United States sent planes to drop bombs on Tokyo. The attack raised the *morale* of Americans. In May 1942, the Allies suffered heavy losses at the Battle of the Coral Sea. Still, they were able to stop the Japanese advance and save Australia.

The next month, the U.S. Navy scored an important victory near Midway Island in the central Pacific. In the **Battle of Midway**, Japan lost four aircraft carriers, the most important naval weapon in the war. The victory turned the tide of war against Japan.

The United States now went on the attack. General **Douglas MacArthur** did not want to invade the Japanese-held islands that were most strongly defended. He wanted to attack weaker ones. The first attack came on Guadalcanal, in the Solomon Islands in August. The Japanese were building an air base there. It took six months of fighting for U.S. and Australian troops to drive the Japanese off the island in the **Battle of Guadalcanal**. The Japanese abandoned the island in February 1943.

**3. Name three Allied victories against Japan.**

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