

G U R P S[®]

WWII[™] IRON CROSS

Nazi Germany and Its Forces



By GENE SEABOLT

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

THE REICH ARISING!

Explore the dark heart and soul of Nazi Germany, from its seemingly unstoppable beginnings to its fiery end, in ***GURPS WWII: Iron Cross!*** Inside, you'll find details on:

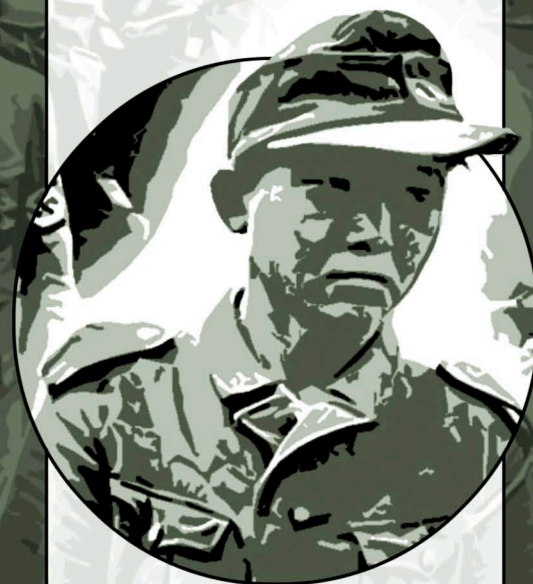
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THE PANZERS ARE ON THE MOVE!

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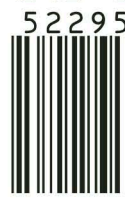
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WWII[™] IRON CROSS

Nazi Germany And Its Forces

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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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ABOUT GURPS

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The **GURPS WWII: Iron Cross** web page is at www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/ww2/ironcross.

Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition**. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the **GURPS Basic Set** – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the **GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition**. Page references that begin with CI indicate **GURPS Compendium I**. Other references are CII to **Compendium II**, VE to **Vehicles**, W to **WWII**, and W:HS to **WWII: Hand of Steel**. The abbreviation for *this* book is W:IC. For a full list of abbreviations, see p. CI181 or the updated web list at www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html.

INTRODUCTION

If Hitler had not created the Nazis, fiction would have had to invent them. From *Indiana Jones* movies to *Hellboy* comics to just about every post-1933 modern game setting, “Nazis” fill a convenient role as faceless villains. Like orcs in fantasy settings or insectlike aliens in science fiction, they possess a fierce facade and the reputation to match it, which only makes it all the more satisfying when a square-jawed hero levels his weapon and mows them down by the dozens.

All this, of course, has little to do with the truth.

“Nazis” were not actually Nazis, for the most part, but rather Germans who did not belong to the party. They faced a choice between, essentially, giving up life itself, or actively playing a small role in Hitler’s big plans. They saw, suspected, and sensed things that told them their leaders were corrupt at best, and probably far worse. Some of them became the Führer’s greatest cheerleaders, all the better to drown out their own doubts. Some of them simply put the unanswered questions aside, since their only alternatives required defying German principles of obedience and community that long predated the swastika.

Few of them deserve to be painted in flat black. They sidestepped courage to do what their cancerous environment demanded, they committed sins that they regretted more often than they admitted, they left behind mothers who cried when they died. They lived flawed, human lives.

That is, until Hitler’s ambitions cut them short. If not monsters, neither were most Germans the technicians of death that military-history buffs often admire with little regard for context. Certainly, the Wehrmacht had a high ratio of elite soldiers, but the average German rifleman entered battle as ill-trained, ill-equipped, and ill to his stomach as any rival. His service provided him with marginally superior tactics and weapons – both of which he used when he could – but it never could provide him a really good cause for the fighting, and only soldiers with a good cause say that one doesn’t matter. Germans routinely surrendered by the hundreds to a few Anglo-American riflemen where, had the roles been reversed, no G.I.s or Brits would have allowed a few grenadiers to do the same. The Germans did not do this because their training reduced them to automata – the popular theory of the time – they did it because they did not truly *believe*. SS and other diehards aside, they wanted *out*. This is not the esprit de corps of which ballads are spun.

Those seeking a simpler, safer Nazi – an evil target devoid of any human worth, suitable only for killing – will still find plenty to satisfy them here. This book describes weapons found almost nowhere else, provides unit histories and inventories that can be used at a glance, and goes into detail on many other aspects of Wehrmacht service. It will flesh out a faceless Nazi or ubergrenadier quite nicely.

It also will help portray a human in inhuman times, for those who so desire. Though it does not provide concrete answers as to exactly how the German people allowed themselves to be led down this path, or exactly how the rest of the world allowed things to get so bad, it will provide many insights into the often tragic, just-as-often banal, and at times perversely heroic epic that was the Third Reich.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gene Seabolt joined Steve Jackson Games in 1997 after more than a decade of newspaper reporting and editing. He has since served in a variety of roles, currently as **GURPS WWII** line editor. He lives in San Antonio with his wife, Lee, and sons, Shane and William. He rarely applies the principles of blitzkrieg, except when rooting in the refrigerator.

1. GERMANY AT WAR



**The Third Reich's motives
reached far back into
the Second Reich's past.**

RINGED BY RIVALS



After unification by Bismarck in 1871 (p. W6), Germany stepped onto what seemed – to German eyes – a particularly hostile world stage. Britain and its all-powerful navy flanked the emerging nation to the north, the Russian behemoth loomed to the east, and an always threatening France lurked in the west. Farther afield, the United States was threatening to set new standards for what constituted a superpower. The table seemed to have been set without a place card for the Second Reich.

While alarming, this status quo did not overwhelm Germany's leaders. More than most of their counterparts, they took to heart the tenets of the Social Darwinism in vogue at the time. This philosophy crudely applied to society the do-or-die dynamics of Darwin's evolutionary insights. The German people could fight, vanquish, prosper – or perish. If they found themselves beginning the struggle from a position of disadvantage, well, then, they would have to work that much harder. Certainly, those disadvantages would excuse the nation from any need to justify its actions when – to German minds – its very survival was at stake.

Realpolitik

Bismarck's own political philosophy of *Realpolitik* (realistic politics) neatly encapsulated this worldview, but with an important distinction: He recognized that the still young Reich would lose any major conflict with its mighty neighbors. Sheathing his sword, Bismarck drew up a tidy set of treaties and led his country toward a modern economy rather than a battlefield. Rather later than its western neighbors, Bismarck's Germany began a rapid industrialization and urbanization.

This late modernization took place in tandem with the growth of socialism. The Reich's growing legions of factory workers knew they had options other than the monarchical state, though they did live in one of Europe's most conservative nations. Germany's lower parliamentary house – the Reichstag – mostly dealt with budgetary matters (a power that it could wield effectively at times), while the upper house – the Bundesrat – controlled real policy.

Elections determined who sat in the Reichstag; various princes and other aristocrats appointed the Bundesrat. Filled with conservatives such as the Junkers (eastern Prussian aristocrats), the Bundesrat backed Bismarck's authoritarian rule, along with the Protestant and rural Conservative Party. Opposing interests ranged from the Center Party, which was primarily Catholic, to the less-than-hardcore Marxists of the Social Democratic Party, known by its German initials as the SPD.

Before his 1890 dismissal, Bismarck fought his last battles within Germany, pitting both his velvet glove and iron hand against these liberal political foes. The velvet glove manifested in his groundbreaking welfare measures – Germany became the first nation to offer real social-security measures, such as retirement pensions and insurance. Bismarck unveiled his iron hand by restricting socialist political activities – but even as these measures grew firmer, the SPD grew more popular.

The Seeds of Hate

In 1869, German Jews received full rights as citizens. In the first recession following that, in 1873, the Jews were blamed. Anti-Semitism would continue to grow until it became the central plank of the *völkisch* (people's) political movement in the late 19th century. These extremists called for the creation of a blood-purified "Third Reich."

Meanwhile, the Second Reich displayed a strong strain of anti-Semitism, often as a concession to *völkisch* and similar movements. Neighboring Austria needed no such prompting to officially persecute Jews.

Weltpolitik

With two years of experience on the throne, Kaiser Wilhelm II dismissed Bismarck and took his place as the real power behind the Reich. To a large degree, Wilhelm II possessed the motivations of a 2-year-old. Wanting to be a popular figure, without necessarily earning the adoration, he loosened Bismarck's measures against the socialists without offering any real reform, then reacted bitterly when the SPD displayed no gratitude.

He also wanted a bigger toybox. Not satisfied with the status quo of Bismarck's *Realpolitik*, he developed an aggressive *Weltpolitik* (world politics) meant to expand the Reich's global reach. The paranoia-tinged patriotism whipped up to serve *Weltpolitik* also served to keep the socialists in line – a good German didn't insist on reforms at home when the Kaiser claimed that the very nation was at peril. The SPD had become the largest party in the Reichstag in 1912, but most members were good Germans first, good socialists second.

Germany already had acquired some African interests, but under Wilhelm II the young nation began to seriously butt heads with Britain, France, and Russia in Africa, the Balkans, and the Ottoman Empire – tensions that served to reinforce the Kaiser's message at home. Wilhelm II began a massive naval-building program in a vain effort to bring Germany's fleet on par with the United Kingdom's. Combined with the colonial conflicts and the ever-increasing amount of international trade that efficient German factories were usurping, the warship buildup transformed its neighbors' irritation into a real concern over Germany's intent and means of obtaining world power. Things came to a head by 1911, when clumsy German meddling into affairs in Morocco prompted Britain, France, and Russia to cement their Triple Entente pact, intended to curb German aggression. Germany's fear of a hostile cordon of nations had become something of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The Fatal Step

By 1914, many German authorities believed that war – sooner, rather than later – offered the only course that would weaken both the Entente powers and the stubborn socialist movement at home. The Germans thought they were ready – and they were – but they grossly overestimated their own strength. In their growing nationalistic zeal, they had long abandoned Bismarck's piercing sense of realism.

THE FORGING FLAMES



German nationalism had provided the ore, and a synthesized fear of both socialism and Jews the coal. World War I would supply the furnace in which Nazism would be forged.

Der Tag

Prussian arrogance may have just barely avoided a one-front, winnable war. Informed that Britain might keep itself and France out of the way if only Russia was attacked, Wilhelm II tried to stop the thousands of troop trains already rolling to execute the Schlieffen Plan (p. W6). His general staff rebuffed him. They had planned long and hard for The Day – *der Tag* – and were not about to abandon their master stroke to some last-minute whim.

Lords of the railroad that they were, the German general staff had not anticipated the French employing their own trains effectively, too. The Schlieffen Plan's failure left them at something of a loss – and the slowly mobilizing Russians would strike soon in the east. They ordered the western troops to grab their shovels, for now, and continued to publicly display confidence in a short, successful war while flailing for solutions.

They were still searching when the Russians rolled in and scored some early victories.

Burgfrieden

Whatever the shortcomings at the fronts, the conservatives leading Germany enjoyed a nearly unified popularity at home. Everyone except the most radical leftists dropped their differences with the state, ushering in *Burgfrieden*, or “peace within the castle.”

This wartime gathering under the banner brought *völkisch* principles into the mainstream in the “Ideas of 1914.” These portrayed the war in the east as a racial conflict, in which the “pure” Germanic bloodlines clashed with the Slav, Mongol, and Tartar mishmash that was Russia. The western war was painted in ideological terms, instead, with the German virtues defying the crass liberal democracies (see *Kultur vs. Zivilisation*, p. 97).

Shared Sacrifice

The only major exception in the national leaning toward *völkisch* values was in anti-Semitism, which became restrained in order that German Jews might do their share in the war effort. They lifted rifles, dug trenches, and died in the French mud in almost the same proportions as their racially Germanic countrymen.

This sacrifice may have created some confusion a generation later, when the Nazis began both persecuting the German Jews and openly preparing for war. An older generation of German Jews could remember similar, though slighter, harassment as part of daily life before the Great War, and the war causing that to be set aside.

Perhaps they expected history to repeat itself.

Heroes of the East

The most pressing need in the east was new army leadership. The general staff wanted to place Gen. Erich Ludendorff in charge, but he lacked the proper seniority, so they brought Gen. Paul von Hindenburg out of retirement and placed him in nominal command, with Ludendorff truly calling the shots as his chief of staff. By late 1914, they turned around Germany's eastern fortunes, with important victories at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes. The Russians would never fully regain the initiative.

Neither would the Germans. As described on p. W6, the Kaiser's troops proceeded to pay huge costs in winning battles while steadily losing the war. After four years of unparalleled sacrifice, Germany was starving. Whenever a horse dropped dead in a German street, bystanders would converge like vultures to strip what meat remained from its bones.



Dolchstosslegende

Under these conditions, *Burgfrieden* broke down.

By 1918, Ludendorff had risen to control the entire war effort. As savvy as ever, he saw that the ongoing Marxist revolution in Russia (pp. W6-7) could repeat itself in Germany.

To avoid that, Ludendorff ordered that the Reichstag be transformed and seek a cease-fire. A new government led by the SPD and other liberal elements took over on Oct. 3, just in time to take the blame when the armistice was signed. At that point, though on its knees from the strains of war, Germany had yielded no ground other than some remote stretches of East Prussia quickly recovered in 1914. Its Western trenches reached within 40 miles of Paris.

After sacrificing so much, many soldiers could not comprehend accepting such a harsh peace with those battle lines. In their *Dolchstosslegende* (“stab-in-the-back” legend), they blamed defeatist civilians and a Jew-led socialist movement for losing the war – either unaware or willfully ignoring that the high command itself had ordered the surrender.

THE WEIMAR YEARS



Its reputation already in shreds, the new government came to be called the Weimar Republic. It would lead a short, precarious existence at the helm of a shrunken, troubled state.

Dangerous Times

Finally in charge, the last thing that the SPD thought it could get away with was promoting its own agenda. As it moved to the center, the Spartakus Union and other hard-core leftists broke off from the SPD and formed the German Communist Party, or KPD, in December 1918. Their localized leftist uprisings came to a head in the Spartakus Revolt of January 1919 in Berlin. This forced the SPD-run government to square off against them – moderate leftist vs. radical leftist. Failure to do so would have tempted the Entente powers to meddle in German affairs, as they were doing in Russia (see p. W7), and might prompt a revolt by the army, then called the Reichsheer.

This pragmatic policy not only opened a fatal rift in the German left, but led the government to hire its own enemies, the *Freikorps*, to take part in the fighting. The paramilitary free corps mostly consisted of war veterans, still bitter over the surrender and with no palatable future in their sights. Predominantly extreme nationalists, they made no effort to conceal their loathing of the Weimar government, but gladly would take its money to fight Communists. The government could not quite shake loose from them; after June 1919, the Versailles limits on the Reichsheer's size made them a handy method of circumventing the restriction.

In March 1920, the Freikorps staged their own coup, the Kapp Putsch. The Reichsheer wasn't about to get involved, but the ministers and clerks who kept the government running were primarily socialists. They called a general strike, and the nationalist rebels didn't have the foggiest notion how to keep things running in their stead. The putsch simply petered out.

Keeping up their track record for being their own worst enemies, the KPD (with the Soviet Comintern pushing them along) expanded the strike into an open revolt in the Ruhr. This in turn forced the government to pardon the Freikorps that had just revolted, so they could go break up the Ruhr uprising. Needless to say, this further alienated the extreme left.

Meanwhile, the Entente powers were beginning to recognize the nature of the Freikorps beast, and pressured the Weimar regime to outlaw them in May 1921. The men simply reassembled under different banners, many emerging in the *Sturm Abteilung*, or SA shock troops, of the National Socialist party.

THE NAZIS FORM RANKS

In September 1919, the Reichsheer assigned a corporal trained in political instruction to infiltrate one of the countless right-wing parties forming at the time, the German Workers Party. The corporal, Adolf Hitler, became member No. 55 and, in short time, the party's leader. In March 1920, he renamed it the National Socialist German Workers Party.

Most of these nationalist groups were monarchist, true conservatives who envisioned the return of Wilhelm or another representative of the Hohenzollern monarchy. They had little to offer the masses of German laborers attracted to socialism.

Hitler was different. To massively increase support, he adopted a few choice left-wing principles. The very name National Socialism highlighted this stance, poised at both extremes of the political spectrum. The Nazis *did* argue for a German egalitarianism. They did not always emphasize that it was *only* in service of the *volk* and *only* for racial Germans.

It wasn't the sort of political compromise that withstood a great deal of reasoned scrutiny, but then the Nazi approach specifically scorned reason. Hitler and his party appealed to the resentments and pride of the downtrodden German, and promised to nourish both if he placed faith in Hitler.

The Beer-Hall Putsch

By the beginning of 1923, the government seriously lagged in its war reparations to France. Since 1920, the French had been sending troops to express their displeasure with Germany, but this time they dispatched a large force and occupied the heart of the Ruhr, Germany's industrial center.

In protest, the Weimar government called for a general strike. It took over newspaper presses to print extra money to pay the idle workers, a move which accelerated the massive inflation of 1919-23 into surrealistic hyperinflation in late 1923. This threw the economy into chaos, which in turn emboldened the KPD yet again. Faced with a no-win situation, the government called the whole thing off in September.

Like the Communists, Hitler saw an opportunity to overthrow the universally loathed Weimar government. Backed by Gen. Ludendorff himself, Hitler modeled his revolt after Mussolini's successful bid for power the previous year (see p. W8). On Nov. 8 in Munich, he announced he would march on Berlin.

Hitler didn't realize that the monarchists, and therefore the Reichsheer, weren't quite sold on his monarchy-free brand of right-wing politics. They withheld support, and the putsch died the next day as Nazis and Munich police traded gunfire.

Hitler received a five-year prison sentence, but served only eight comfortable months, in which he dictated to Rudolf Hess his rambling political views, creating the roughly autobiographical *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggles*).

The Politics of Terror

The Weimar government posed no special threat to German Jews, but the right-wing extremists of the period did. They returned to Jew hatred, folding it into their vast left-wing conspiracy theories. Many of these war-veteran nationalists used the skills that they had – in violence – to express their political grievances. They assassinated hundreds of socialist activists in the years following the Great War. Many of these were Jews, including Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau, whose June 24, 1922, death helped prompt the French intervention of 1923, described above.



The Depression

The U.S. economic collapse of 1929 shattered the fragile German recovery. Businesses failed and millions lost their jobs. These conditions revitalized the political extremes. The Communists had continued to expand and solidify their membership, even during the affluent years, but Hitler had done far better. His Nazis now outmuscled the traditional monarchists in the right wing.

FALSE WATERSHED

Hitler's failed bid seemed to mark the turning point for the Weimar government. The open revolts died away, it somewhat settled the Ruhr question, and even the economy pulled out of its inflationary nosedive. In April 1924, the U.S.-engineered Dawes Plan kicked into gear, delaying the reparation payments and extending U.S. credit so that Germany could recover.

That it did. Even as the French gave up on acquiring some profitable portion of Germany and left the Ruhr in July 1925, the nation was entering a mad, speculative spurt of growth. Some of the ready cash created by the U.S. boom found its way into German investments, just as Josephine Baker and her banana skirts found their way into Berlin theaters. (This having been Berlin, she probably introduced far more audience members to the banana than to the almost-nude dancer.)

February 28, 1925, witnessed the death of the Weimar's first president, the SPD's Friedrich Ebert, a sad man who had sacrificed both his sons in the war, done what he thought best, and been branded a traitor for it. The hard times on his watch had polarized Germany, driving workers to the left for relief and even more shopkeepers to the right for fear of Communism.

The new nationalist majority elected the 77-year-old "wooden Titan" von Hindenburg to replace Ebert. The monarchists rejoiced. They didn't realize that they had elected an empty suit. The man who had let Ludendorff lead in wartime sat back and let the store mind itself, envisioning himself as the Kaiser's regent. The Junker cabal behind him would take a while to comprehend his limitations, giving Germany a brief respite from wholesale political strife.

By 1926, the nation had entered the League of Nations, and was charting a course toward recovery, but a small number of top industrialists and Junker agricultural barons monopolized far too much of the new profits. The middle class still struggled to maintain its status on low-income wages. This led them, in droves, to Hitler's blend of left-laced right-wing politics. These Germans desperately wanted to be conservatives, if only they could make a living at it. The Nazis shifted their attentions from the blue- to the white-collar masses, offered the small-business owner securities at which pure nationalists or capitalists would have scoffed, and could not sign people up fast enough.

Other moderates might have offered similar terms without the hatemongering baggage, but in negotiating the middle ground the SPD had infuriated both right and left. It didn't know it, but it already was dead. The only question was which of its foes would clamber atop the corpse and take its place.

In March 1930, von Hindenburg appointed Heinrich Brüning as chancellor. Germany couldn't pay its unemployment benefits. The Reichstag rejected Brüning's proposal to cut benefits, so in July he persuaded the president to declare an emergency, bypassing democratic procedure. Brüning then called a 1930 special election, hoping to build a more realistic Reichstag. Instead, the Communists gained seats and the Nazis even more, making them second in size only to the SPD.

This ran counter to Brüning's plan. A Reichstag of extremes offered no hope of coalition, so he continued to rule by emergency decree, effectively ending German democracy. Most Germans had harbored doubts about the public's ability to govern, anyway, so no huge outcry greeted Brüning's move. He used this new power to pursue deflationary policies, a tactic that would indeed avoid the hyperinflation of the '20s, but also doubled Germany's unemployment, already at 3 million.

The 1932 Elections

Brüning convinced a reluctant von Hindenburg to run again for president in 1932. An equally reluctant Hitler felt compelled to oppose the aging war hero. Hitler came in a respectable second, and in the following Reichstag elections the Nazis became the largest party, with 37.4% of the vote.

In the meantime, von Hindenburg got tired of backing Brüning's unpopular measures and replaced him with Franz von Papen. The president admired von Papen's horsemanship, and with little further rationale gave him the reins of power. Brüning had kept within the letter of the law; von Papen wasted no time in skirting past its edges to suspend proper procedure in order to consolidate power in his chancellor's office. The SPD and others tried to challenge him legally, but their grievances were shuffled to the bottom of von Papen's stacked deck.

Hitler saw a game into which he wanted to be dealt. With millions of Germans behind him, he demanded the chancellorship held by von Papen, backed only by a few Junkers. The Reichstag Nazis strangled government functions to back him up. Von Papen asked von Hindenburg to make him a dictator, but the president realized von Papen had no support. He turned to Gen. Kurt von Schleicher, who proposed to recruit those Nazis who feared Hitler would ruin the party by betting everything on the chancellorship. Hitler kept his party in line, and von Schleicher in turn asked to be made dictator. Von Papen saw his chance for revenge on von Schleicher, and persuaded the president that the Nazi leader could be controlled. A reluctant von Hindenburg appointed Hitler as chancellor on Jan. 30, 1933.

BIRTH OF THE THIRD REICH

His failed 1923 putsch taught Hitler to make sure he had the army on his side. He wasted no time in assuring the officer corps of its sovereignty, then consolidating his power.

HITLER ASCENDANT

On Feb. 27, 1933, a fire destroyed the Reichstag building, which had become a hated symbol of ineffectual democracy. The Nazis blamed the Communists, though many suspected the Nazis themselves. The fire failed to provide an overwhelming win in the elections a week later, but it did serve as a slim justification for new laws outlawing Communism.

Jailed men could get elected in 1933 Germany, but not vote. On March 23, Hitler used his Communist-purged Reichstag to acquire the two-thirds majority required to give him dictatorial powers under the four-year Enabling Act. In November, he used this authority to fill the Reichstag with Nazis, who renewed Hitler's lease on power in '37 and '41.

The new dictator realized he had made some blood enemies. In April, the Prussian secret police were folded into Hitler's personal bodyguard, the SS, to form the Gestapo. The SA (see p. 8) already had killed hundreds of Communists in the years leading up to victory. The Gestapo would help kill hundreds more afterward, just to be sure.

Gleichschaltung

Still moving quickly, Hitler began trying to mold the nation into the Nazi image. This *Gleichschaltung* policy tried to form the citizenry into cookie-cutter Aryans by bombarding them with spectacle and dogma. Goebbels' (p. 52) propaganda ministry began oversight of all mass media. These intrusions positioned Hitler as a cultlike figure and repetitively glorified the Nazi ideals.

Hitler backed his *volkisch* carrots with brown-shirt sticks. The ever-useful SA had grown to 4 million men with 400,000 veteran fighters. Already masters of the shadowy street brawl, they took to the pavement with a new legitimacy, intimidating and persecuting those who weren't willing or able to shape themselves to the National Socialist template. Hitler and his party deputies patrolled the halls of power in the same fashion, subordinating all local government to the party-cum-regime.

Night of the Long Knives

In the meantime, Hitler's left-wing chickens were coming home to roost. The SA leadership under Ernest Röhm leaned strongly toward the socialism in National Socialism. Accounts vary sharply, but to the suspicious it appeared obvious that they planned to replace the Reichsheer old guard as the nation's army – even oust Hitler if need be – and they had the numbers to do it.

At a minimum, the SA had become hard to control. On June 30, Hitler dispatched Reichsheer-equipped SS units to assassinate the SA leadership. They killed more than 100 men who had fought to bring the Nazis to power. While they were at it, Göring and Himmler (see p. 53) took the opportunity to assassinate non-Nazi conservatives who had troubled the party.

An Engine of War

Hindenburg died Aug. 2, 1934. Hitler combined the offices of president and chancellor office into that of der Führer, a moment that signaled the completion of his rapid revolution.

In the following years, Hitler would continue to transform the German nation into an engine of war. Beginning in 1936, he began reaching out for his much discussed *Lebensraum* (living space), retaking territories claimed by France and encroaching into other nations as described on p. 104 and pp. W10-11.

In 1939, it would all come to a head.

A BRUTAL STATE

Once in power, the Nazis transformed localized persecution into an official agenda aimed at ridding the state of its half-million Jews.

This required defining them. Much arguing resulted in the November 1935 decision that *anyone* who practiced Judaism, or had three or four Jewish grandparents, was a Jew. Half-Jews had two Jewish grandparents and no Jewish spouse. Quarter-Jews had one Jewish grandparent. The partial Jews were called *Mischlinge* (of mixed race).

In 1933, the Nazis forbade Jews and *Mischlinge* to hold government jobs and restricted access to higher education; in 1934, the army became off limits. In 1935, the Nuremberg laws restricted several educated professions, many of which already had been informally purged, and stripped Jews of their citizenship, but restored to *Mischlinge* access to education and the "right" to serve in the Wehrmacht's enlisted ranks. They allowed Jews to marry only Jews or half-Jews (who then legally became full Jews). Half-Jews needed official permission to marry Germans or quarter-Jews. Quarter-Jews could freely marry Germans, but not Jews or other quarter-Jews.

Anti-Semitic measures continued – including some internments along with many other political foes in the Nazis' first concentration camps at Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen – until by 1938 Jewish businessmen were being forced to sell their assets for pennies on the dollar in the "Aryanization" economic program.

Many Jews tried to flee Germany, but other countries only admitted them with extreme reluctance, so that many who fled in 1933-34 were forced to return by 1938. About half of German and Austrian Jews managed to escape by 1939, but many only made it to neighboring countries, where they soon fell under the swastika again . . .

On the night of Nov. 9, 1938, the SA shattered Jewish shop windows (leading to the name "crystal night," or *Kristallnacht*) and murderously rampaged against Jews across Germany. The Nazis had begun using officially sanctioned if rather unsystematic violence against the Jews.

Some that night may have believed that things could not get worse.

CASE WHITE



On March 23, 1939, the Poles rejected Nazi demands for the Danzig corridor (see p. W12) and Romania agreed to give Germany first rights to its oil exports, giving Hitler both a target and the means to take it. In April, he set the General Staff to work on *Fall Weiss* (Case White), invasion plans for Poland. A few days later, Soviet overtures indicated that a pact (see p. W11) might be possible, making Poland that much more attractive.

It could almost seem that circumstances were beseeching Hitler to invade. Within a month, he had Goebbels manufacturing claims of Polish persecution of their racially German citizens.

An August customs dispute in Danzig brought the situation to a head once again. Major powers and minor tried to head off the confrontation, with the Italians becoming thoroughly disgusted with their Axis partner. The Kriegsmarine, meanwhile, dispatched its handful of ready ships and submarines on the 19th to take up battle stations.

Hitler set the fateful day of attack as Aug. 26, though he kept pretending to propose peaceful resolutions to the British simply to keep up appearances. He ended up delaying on the 25th when the Italians refused to support him without receiving German arms; the Führer barely had enough to outfit his own army. As it was, one German unit failed to receive the orders and attacked on the 26th, taking a courthouse and rail station.

Hitler decided that he didn't need the Italians and reset the date for Sept. 1. Reinhard Heydrich (see p. W50) already had ordered a handful of his SS men to prepare a fake Polish attack on a German radio station near the border. The night of Aug. 31, criminals dressed in Polish uniforms were slain on the site to make this flimsy pretext for war seem more realistic.

The Wehrmacht rolled into action at 4:45 a.m. Sept. 1. The unit that prematurely attacked on the 26th once again took its assigned targets. So did just about everyone else (see p. W12). The panzers already had punched fatal holes in the Polish lines when France, Great Britain, India, Australia, and New Zealand declared war against Germany on Sept. 3. South Africa would join them on the 6th and Canada on the 10th.

That night, residents of the Ruhr watched 13 tons of leaflets drop out of the sky – courtesy of the Royal Air Force – stating, “Your rulers have condemned you to the massacres, miseries, and privations of a war they cannot ever hope to win.”

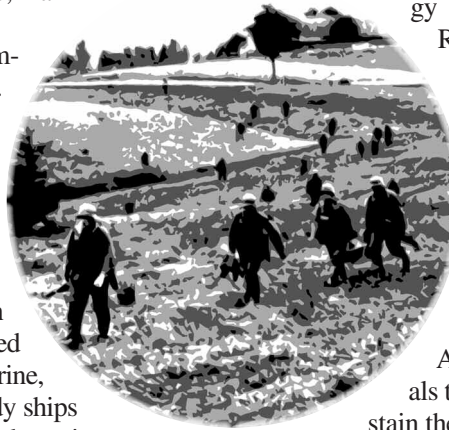
It hardly seemed so at the time. Every arm of German service was performing beautifully, although the Sept. 3 sinking of the liner *Athenia* became the sort of diplomatic debacle that prompted the Nazis to deny that a U-boat torpedoed her. Still, scores of merchant ships bound for England and the carrier HMS *Courageous* would soon slip under the waves, the Luftwaffe owned the sky over Poland, and the land campaign rapidly advanced.

By the end of the war's first month, the Third Reich and its Soviet ally (see p. W12) had completely overwhelmed their hapless victim, and claimed half each.

Holding vs. Taking

In Poland, the Third Reich faced the task of holding onto an unreservedly hostile acquisition. This wasn't a simple prospect. Himmler dispatched *Einsatzgruppen* (special action groups) from his SS right behind the Wehrmacht, to round up likely dissidents from aristocrats to Communists, clergy to Jews. In addition to local resistance, the Reich had acquired hundreds of thousands of POWs in the campaign, men who not only would take up arms if freed, but already had some idea how to use them.

Germany would spend a king's ransom to incarcerate so many Poles for as long as they presented a threat. Other plans of a more cold-blooded nature were devised, in which starvation or a single bullet apiece would avoid these investments. Adm. Canaris (see p. W50) warned the generals that taking part in this policy of murder would stain the Wehrmacht, to little avail. The armed forces already had orders to assist the SS upon request.



THE WESTERN LULL

On Sept. 7, the French began to advance a few miles into Germany, testing the waters. No one shot at them. The Germans were spread paper-thin, with 11 regular and 35 reserve divisions covering all of the border. The last thing Hitler wanted was to get into a shooting match that illustrated this fact. The French, for their part, were ready to run upon sighting their first stern German face, but told the Poles that they were fighting hardily.

During the ensuing *Sitzkrieg* (False War, p. W13), Hitler floated several peace proposals, but only on his own terms and perhaps insincerely. He also may have met secretly with Stalin.

While the generals shuffled units and schemed, the admirals were waging full-scale war. On Oct. 1, three Polish destroyers and three subs slipped out of the Baltic to join the Allied fight. On Oct. 14, a U-boat skulked into Scapa Flow and torpedoed the British battleship *Royal Oak*. On Dec. 17, the captain of the KMS *Graf Spee* sank his wounded ship off of Argentina after battling a British task force, Germany's first major defeat.

PLENTIFUL PLOTS

Told to plan an attack on France, several senior German officers who already were conspiring against Hitler told each other they needed to *act*. They whispered, but did nothing.

Meanwhile, someone did something. On Nov. 8, Hitler made an annual speech to the old party faithful at a Munich beerhouse. He left early. A few minutes later, a bomb exploded near the speaker's platform, killing seven. The Nazis screamed that the British were behind the plot. Other evidence suggests that Himmler staged it with Hitler's blessing as a means of improving war fever and the Führer's popularity. The actual bomber was not executed until the last few days of the war.

CASE YELLOW



Hitler originally intended to attack France on Nov. 12, 1939, but more than a dozen postponements would result as the Wehrmacht scrambled to relocate and refit so many troops, much less replace the mislaid invasion plans (see p. W14) to become known as *Fall Gelb*, or Case Yellow.

In the meantime, the Führer met with Italian dictator Benito Mussolini at the Brenner Pass on March 8, 1940, and patched many of the rifts in their relationship. He also had forged a working relationship with Pope Pius XII. His few supporters in the upper reaches of British society may have verified that their generals were reviewing his invasion plans. Even though U.S. officials were beginning to listen to – and believe in – reports that Hitler eventually planned to assault the United States, the Nazis could still count on a small cadre of American support, including several important business leaders.

The Führer would have needed healthy measures of self-criticism and objectivity to realize that he was becoming a pure caricature of evil in many minds. He possessed neither quality.

COSTLY NAVAL GAMBIT

While the Wehrmacht continued to mass for the French campaign, the Kriegsmarine persuaded Hitler to invade Norway (see p. W13). The navy would pay a heavy price for what it gained. Royal Navy and Norwegian forces sank three cruisers, 10 destroyers, and 11 transports, and severely damaged a battleship and three additional cruisers.

The invasion as a whole – in which German paratroops, or *Fallschirmjäger*, made their combat debut on April 9 – would amount to an indisputable victory. Soon, though, the price paid by the German surface navy would come back to haunt Hitler's ambitions.

The British, meanwhile, took measures to protect themselves from the Kriegsmarine's real killers. They shipped troops to Iceland on May 10 to guard what would be a very important site for either side in the U-boat wars.

A MORE FORCEFUL HAND

In 1939, perhaps in reaction to other nations' reluctance to accept the Reich's Jews, Hitler began publicly speaking of mass extermination. At the same time, Heinrich Mueller was told to accelerate their emigration. (One bizarre scheme would have relocated them all to Madagascar.) After Sept. 1, Poland's Jews faced stunning brutality, restrictions on property, and forced relocation to eastern Poland. Select populations were murdered, others sent to the camps, but most remained in miserably overcrowded urban centers. In November, wearing the Star of David became compulsory. In December, euthanasia programs became formalized.

In February 1940, German Jews were cut off from basic clothing allowances and their deportation began. As the Wehrmacht added new subjects to the Reich, Jews in those lands sometimes were shipped directly to concentration camps. In June, Heydrich pointed out that the Reich then possessed 3.5 million Jews, overwhelming any effort to export them. He proposed that a more "final solution" be sought.

SMASHING VICTORY

Hitler finally hurled the bulk of his forces toward France on May 10 (pp. W14-16). The next night, the British expanded their bombing of military targets to include German civilians. The Luftwaffe did them one better on the 14th, bombing Rotterdam before the Germans' own surrender terms expired.

Both Hitler and Göring moved to headquarters close to the French border to conduct this crucial campaign. At first, the Wehrmacht's success seemed *too* easy to the Führer, who remembered the *Pickelhaubed* troops of 1914 advancing just as breezily before the Battle of the Marne. He became ecstatic when Army Group A reached the coast (p. W14), but his anxiety did not abate. (After the war, Hitler's generals would scoff at their commander's worries, arguing that he simply didn't understand armored warfare. An equally compelling argument can be made that they never understood just how much the Third Reich was gambling on this particular throw of the dice.)

Hungering for a portion of the glory, Göring found the worried Führer an eager listener when the Luftwaffe chief suggested that Hitler halt Army Group A's tanks and let the Luftwaffe destroy the encircled British and French troops. Göring argued that the credit for conquering France would be wasted on the generals, whose inconsistent Nazism already was chafing Hitler, but the Luftwaffe – now *there* was a pure National Socialist fighting arm.

Rundstedt (p. 55) also asked for a halt, for the infantry to catch up. Brauchitsch (p. 55) and other generals vehemently protested the halt – rightly so, it turned out – because Hitler's decision to go with Göring allowed the British just enough time to evacuate their army (see p. W15). This became Hitler's first serious blunder in conducting the German war, but the sheer heroism required of the British at Dunkirk illustrates that the right course wasn't nearly so clear-cut at the time as later commentators have alleged. Even with Hitler's call, the British came within an ace of losing their fighting forces.

On the heels of the last Tommy, Luftwaffe Gen. Erhard Milch inspected Dunkirk. Noticing the vast quantities of destroyed equipment and stores – the myriad materials needed to mount a field army – he hurried to Göring and urged an immediate invasion of Britain, defended by a waterlogged army without rifles or rations.

He may have been right, but Hitler didn't immediately invade. The Wehrmacht first needed to finish off France, so that he could dictate peace terms in which he took a lot of joy and half of France (see p. W16). Nominally, the other half was left to its own devices under the Vichy regime, but this state bordered on becoming a German puppet – and knew it. With strong relations with Spain and Italy, the Third Reich had effectively mastered continental Europe.

Only the British Isles posed any real threat to Hitler's solidifying these gains.

FATEFUL INTERLUDE



No German state had ever contemplated invading England, such was the challenge posed by crowding riflemen into boats and letting the Royal Navy drown them. At first, all three branches of the armed forces found the proposal outrageous. After suffering a black eye in Norway, the Kriegsmarine found itself in need of an image-boosting campaign. A cross-channel invasion began to look more plausible, and while the Heer (army) was gathering all the glory in France, Adm. Raeder (p. 55) introduced the idea to Hitler on May 21, 1940.

Hitler ignored him, through the end of June. Even as the RAF punctuated that the British still wanted to fight – bombing Bremen and Hamburg in mid-month – the Führer hoped that a negotiated peace would suture up his European interests.

SEA LION

Finally, on July 2, the General Staff began drawing up plans for further combat. Hitler ordered the entire Wehrmacht to prepare for Operation *Seelöwe* (Sea Lion) on July 16.

The next day, the army began marching 13 divisions to the coast. The generals planned to ship four divisions from Le Havre to the beaches west of Brighton, six from the Pas de Calais to the Dover coast, and three from Cherbourg to the eastern Lyme Bay coast. The first wave would include 90,000 troops. Six armored and three motorized divisions would follow in the second wave, with 41 divisions in the whole force – more than half a million men.

The western force planned to cut off Devon and Cornwall. The center and eastern forces would form a line from Gravesend to Southampton. They would then bypass London, forming a line from just northeast of the capital toward Birmingham, using the Severn River as a western flank to isolate Wales.

Reviewing what the generals wanted, the admirals realized they'd bitten off far more than they could chew. In late July, they argued for a narrower front, with fewer troops and supplies to ferry, then for a postponement to May 1941. An optimistic Hitler – on July 19 he created 12 new field marshals to spread his own happiness – held out for September.

Eagles Aloft

Of course, all of these plans depended upon the Luftwaffe, already grappling with the Royal Air Force (see p. W17). Without mastery of the air, the Norway-ravaged Kriegsmarine, and hence the Heer, held no hope of obtaining their objectives.

On July 4, Stukas roamed out into the Channel to smash up a small convoy. On July 10, the Luftwaffe dispatched 70 planes to nip at targets on the South Wales coast. The British would reckon the Battle of Britain as beginning on this date.

From July 11 through Aug. 10, Luftflotten 2 and 3 attacked Channel shipping, forcing the Royal Navy to pull out most vessels during daylight. The Germans lost 207 planes to the RAF's 88, but sank several destroyers and merchants.

On Aug. 11, the Germans began crossing the Channel to attack military (primarily RAF) assets. On the 12th, they knocked out a radar station and damaged five more, but Göring did not continue to target these critical resources. He comprehended neither their importance nor fragility.

The Germans called Aug. 13 *Adlertag*, or Eagle Day. They began a maximum effort to destroy the RAF, flying more than 500 bomber and 1,000 fighter sorties on good days. By Aug. 31, the RAF had lost all but two sector (radio-command) stations in the south, without which their radar was useless, but the Luftwaffe had continued to take lopsided losses in the meantime. Furthermore, an accidental Aug. 23 bombing of London led the RAF to begin bombing Berlin the night of Aug. 25, deflating Göring's boasts about the capital's impregnability and angering Hitler immensely.

The Blitz

On Sept. 7, the British broadcasted their codeword for an imminent invasion – “Cromwell” – then stumbled in responding when London's skies filled with bombers. Now that the British had taken the gloves off, Hitler and Göring had switched tactics, reasoning this target would draw out the RAF's last reserves. Had they kept to their guns and knocked out the last radio stations, the Luftwaffe might have won the campaign.

By Sept. 13, the British felt compelled to move their capital ships further south, attractive targets though they were, but their smaller vessels along with RAF bombers were retaking the Channel and decimating the assembled German transports.

On Sept. 15, the Luftwaffe's Kesselring (p. 55) scraped together his ravaged resources and launched one last daylight assault on London. The pilots had been told that the RAF had fewer than 300 fighters remaining; it caused them no end of distress when roughly that many pounced on a single bomber flight. The RAF lacked pilots and radio stations, but not planes.

The night of Sept. 17, RAF bombers caught the Germans practicing their landing, sinking scores of transports and killing untold numbers of troops. That day, Hitler called the whole thing off. The air attacks would continue on a lesser scale, but with no real strategic goal, and the British would consider the battle over and won Oct. 31, though night bombing of British cities continued intermittently through April 1944.

The operation had become an immense failure. The assembled ground troops, transports, and stores lost to bombs paled in comparison to the evisceration of the Luftwaffe. The nearly 1,800 planes lost – and even more urgently, their crews – would be sorely missed in the days ahead. Most of all, by failing to break Britain, the Luftwaffe left a sword of Damocles hanging over the head of the Third Reich.



THE REICH AT ITS HEIGHT

On July 23, 1940, Hitler attended a performance of *Die Götterdämmerung*. Some in his entourage felt this shaped the war to come, and subsequently the world.

To be fair, the Führer had long nurtured plans to conquer the vast Soviet steppes, and two days earlier he told his generals to begin pondering a Fall 1940 invasion in case Sea Lion faltered, but Hitler sometimes talked about tackling immense goals while his lack of action suggested he held less faith in actually attaining them. His generals could think of little larger than conquering Russia, and even Keitel joined in convincing him that a fall campaign would prove impossible. Still, the monumental task gnawed at the Führer's ambition.



Inadvertent Theaters

In the meantime, with Sea Lion's failure, the war had throttled down a bit. The U-boats continued to wreak havoc – and did the Reich's image no good upon sinking a transport carrying British children to Canada on Sept. 17. In October, Hitler came away dissatisfied after meeting with Gen. Franco of Spain and twice with Italy's Mussolini, who in the latter meeting on the 28th announced that his troops had invaded Greece.

Wehrmacht "military advisers" had entered Romania on Oct. 7; Mussolini's mistakes would lead the Führer to expand this force into a considerable investment in both the Balkans and central Mediterranean. From Dec. 6, the Luftwaffe based units in Italy, and in January 1941 it began a long bombing siege of Malta. On Feb. 14, Rommel's Afrika Korps began arriving at Tripoli; 13 days later they were skirmishing with the British. Over the next few months, the fighting across both regions heated up considerably (see pp. W18-19).

Hitler had not really meant to start a fight in either of these inadvertent theaters. He deployed enough troops to win the battles at hand, except in Syria and Iraq, where Vichy and local forces had been expected to do most of the fighting. He did not allocate enough of them to exploit the victories in which he had invested. The bulk of the Wehrmacht remained out of action while quietly moving to occupied Poland.

BARBAROSSA

The 3 million men that the Führer assembled to invade Russia on June 22, 1941 (see p. W21), by far represented the largest fighting force in the world. They also possessed the best training, with a general staff versed in the methods of blitzkrieg (see p. W16). In addition, they had amassed a wealth of combat experience. In short, no other army could have stood up to them on equal terms.

As a defending force, however, the Red Army didn't have to face the Wehrmacht on a level playing field. The rule of thumb was (and remains) that an attacker needs three times the force of a defender to gain a reasonable chance of success. The Soviet units facing the Wehrmacht were substantially under strength, but probably fielded some 1.5 million men – and the Red Army itself had enjoyed a reputation as one of the world's finest not many years earlier. In theory, the Germans had taken on an immense challenge.

In practice, the invasion proved no contest, in some part because the Reich's irregular warfare had grown as potent as its regular forces. The SS may have contributed its share years earlier. After the war, some of them claimed to have planted evidence that helped steer Stalin toward purging his officer corps in 1937. Most of the men in command when Barbarossa washed over them would rather follow than lead. Just before the invasion, Brandenburg (see p. W:HS14) and other special troops parachuted just behind the Soviet lines, or concealed themselves in rail cars heading east. In the morning, they seized bridges and other key infrastructure. Some, dressed in Soviet uniforms, misdirected Red Army units responding to the threat.

To a larger degree, the Soviets simply had failed to keep up with German military improvements. Most of their tanks and planes paled in comparison to the German models. Despite draconian discipline, the Red soldiers counted as little more than uniformed civilians in comparison to the Wehrmacht's well-honed riflemen and panzer crews. As described on pp. W21-22, the advancing German columns knifed through the meat of the Soviet defenses, only rarely pausing when they nicked a bone in the form of a rare Red Army unit offering a vigorous, but usually last, stand.

Behind the Wehrmacht arrived an equally formidable army of Nazi functionaries. They had orders to ship back to Germany anything that could possibly be dismantled, and destroy the rest. They would then thin the remaining populace of anyone who posed a threat, and exploit the survivors in a crude agricultural vassalage while systematically starving them to death. The generals themselves had received the "Commissar Order" – which commanded them to shoot the Soviet political officers on sight and to ignore war crimes by German troops. Hitler had planned a savage war from the start.

Punishment Partition

Barbarossa jumped off five weeks later than planned. The invasion of Yugoslavia (see p. W19) in Operation Punishment had prompted most of the delay. Hitler already hated Serbs as a race and Yugoslavia as a Versailles product; the coup that prompted Punishment also had insulted Nazi pride and delayed his grand plans. (In truth, the muddy Polish roads probably would have delayed Barbarossa by a similar amount, but as it worked out, they didn't become an issue.)

Having leveled Belgrade during Punishment, Hitler wasn't through. In July, he dismembered the nation, awarding chunks to Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, and Hungary. This left only Croatia under a loyal regime and Serbia under heavy occupation.

A NEW CHIVALRY

After Rommel gutted the British in their Operation Battleaxe offensive (see p. W19), the African theater entered a relative lull. The British regrouped and shipped in new tanks to replace those decapitated by the Afrika Korps' 88s.

Rommel also consolidated as he could, but mostly he held back because he could not leave Tobruk in his rear. Both the Commonwealth defenders and Rommel's troops had settled down into a siege after an all-out Wehrmacht assault failed in April. Luftwaffe bombers pounded Tobruk's defenders at all hours, and sank enough shipping to form an archipelago of superstructures in its harbor.

As awful as the British had it in the coastal city, the Germans and Italians facing the city – and the Australians and Indians in the outer defensive line – may have had it even rougher. Though the fighting remained low-key, adding its stresses to the great challenge of simply surviving in the desert presented an immense strain. Each side observed that the other maintained its fighting form despite these shared hardships, and out of this a marked sense of chivalry emerged. In contrast to the brutality in Russia, the combatants at Tobruk maintained an evening ceasefire, so that they could enjoy the few pleasant hours of the day. They treated each other's wounded impartially, and held their fire against stretcher-bearers. In isolated locales, this sense of fair play would continue throughout the African campaign, even leading to a few cases of cross-lines bartering.

Crusader

Hitler may have considered Africa a sideshow, but he failed to respect that to Churchill it offered the British army its last chance to win a fight. The Wehrmacht had swept away the British everywhere else they had met. In November, Operation Crusader (see p. W24) set out to relieve Tobruk and push back the Afrika Korps. Rommel's troops pounded half of the attacking force, then drove straight through the survivors, so that troops who thought themselves well in the British rear looked up to see panzers roaring past.

Rommel, in turn, failed to respect that the British held a long history of taking their losses and reforming the square. The other half of the invading army fought hard while the stunned survivors behind his panzers regrouped into fighting units. Rommel had to pull back, and once he started the British kept nipping and prodding him back through December.

FALLING SHORT

Hitler had given Barbarossa thorough but simple goals. By 1941, the Soviets had crudely industrialized their western lands; those to the east mostly remained wilderness dotted with isolated villages. A line drawn from Leningrad (the nation's second most important city) in the north to Moscow in the center to Rostov (at the eastern tip of the Sea of Azov beyond the Black Sea) in the south would neatly separate the part of the country that poured out tractors and wheat from the part mostly producing pelts. The line also included the Soviet's third most important city, Kharkov, in the south-central region a little farther from Moscow than Rostov.

Whoever held the Leningrad-Moscow-Kharkov line simply dominated what little rail, road, and river infrastructure that the Soviets had. This was Barbarossa's first goal, roughly equivalent to seizing everything in the 1900 United States east of the Mississippi River. The Soviets would be left in the vast eastern hinterlands, to be chewed up at German leisure.

The Wehrmacht's early dominance (see pp. W21-22) made this goal perfectly feasible, except that Moscow was a *long* way from Berlin. Since day one, the panzers had cut off huge pocket after pocket of Soviet troops for the infantry to grind up, but four months later Moscow still waited to the east when the Germans launched Operation Typhoon to take it.

As the panzers rolled up to the capital in October, the first partisan groups began drawing blood in the vast German rear. Meanwhile, the southern German forces swept up Kharkov on Oct. 24 only to discover that their bag was empty; the Soviets had pulled their troops back in time. The enemy was learning.

By November, the Wehrmacht had Leningrad thoroughly besieged, owned Kharkov, and was thrusting into Rostov. Only Moscow and the Sevastopol-Kerch stronghold in the Crimea remained. Typhoon had mired down in October's mud, but November brought winter, freezing the dirt roads perfectly for panzers. The final push began on Nov. 15 in fine form, but a few days later the temperature plummeted. Possessing wills of iron but coats of thin cloth, the Wehrmacht's troopers fell to exposure in numbers that Soviet cannons and rifles had never killed. The subzero hell shattered the discipline of other grenadiers who had fought and marched their way across half a continent, leaving them swaying in the snow, bawling agonized protests at their mostly sympathetic officers.

Meanwhile, at Rostov, the Soviets finally put together a proper counterattack. They lopped off the German panzers in the city and forced the Wehrmacht to retreat Nov. 27 after only eight days of occupation, though they reformed their lines just to the west. This gave the Soviets hope, and in December they tried again at Moscow, bludgeoning the Germans away from their grand prize. Had Barbarossa started on time, avoiding October's mud, they would never have had the chance.

In November 1941, the Wehrmacht was at the apex of its power and the Third Reich stretched across nearly its greatest extent. December found Hitler's exhausted soldiers retreating in both Russia and Africa. The Reich would rebound, but its increasingly thin ranks had hoped for a quick, successful war. December grudgingly taught them that their foes were in it for the long haul.

It also taught them that they could lose.

THE JEWISH QUESTION

By mid-1940, the Nazis were wrestling with “the Jewish question.” They had made killing men a trivial process, as evidenced by their carnage in Poland, but those excesses also had taught them that killing an entire culture numbering in the millions was a far different thing. Even as Auschwitz opened in May – the most notorious in what would become a network of roughly 400 concentration camps around the Reich – the Nazis sought alternatives. Having given up on Madagascar, Hitler spoke of persuading the United States to take the Reich’s Jews. The Reich was weighing the satisfaction of killing against the relative ease of expelling. Several camps in Poland – Auschwitz, Treblinka, Sobibór, Majdanek, Chelmno, Belzec, and Stutthof – had or would by 1942 open up as extermination rather than concentration camps, where the usual goal of terror gave way to outright murder, but killing *many* Jews still fell far short of killing *all* Jews. In the meantime, the Nazis added factory floors to many camps. While starving its internees to death, Germany would try to recover its expenses by working them to death.

By mid-1941, the debate had shifted in favor of genocide, a word coined to describe this unprecedentedly cold-blooded and corporate attempt to extinguish an entire people. As early as May, the SS at Auschwitz began gassing Jews. Once content to corral most Jews into overcrowded ghettos, the Nazis began forcefully moving large numbers into the camps.

The Final Solution

On Jan. 20, 1942, utter extermination became formal policy at the Wannsee Conference. In support of this Final Solution, Heydrich argued that haphazardly starving Jews to death simply ensured that only the toughest would survive – thus laying the groundwork for a new and more formidable Jewish race. The tenets of Social Darwinism (p. 6) would continue to lead Germany down disastrous paths.

Heydrich appointed Adolf Eichmann to oversee the massive infrastructure required for this undertaking, in which Jews would be funneled to the death camps rather than risk that they might survive the often lethal privation and brutality at other camps. At rail sidings across the Reich, Jews were crammed into airless freight cars and required to stand without food or water for a journey often taking days. Even if the locked doors kept bystanders’ eyes off this spectacle, the smells and sounds coming from the cars should have told tales to anyone nearby. As early as July 1940, the Nazis had forbade German Jews from owning telephones, perhaps to slow the spread of news from Poland, but a project of this scope simply defied any realistic attempt to keep it secret. Though prohibited from owning newspapers and magazines, by late 1942 most Jews in the Reich knew of the fate that the Nazis planned for them.

Once the trains arrived at a death camp, guards aided by attack dogs herded out the survivors. Sometimes there were few. In some camps, fit adults were sorted from the infirm, elderly, and children, with the adults going into forced labor

and the others to an immediate execution. At other camps, the SS pulled out only a few men to become *Sonderkommandos* (special units), who actually handled the killings and bodies in exchange for more food and less brutality. Usually, the SS allowed these men only four months of service before gassing them, too, after recruiting replacements.

The SS and Sonderkommandos separated by sex those slated for death and marched them into dressing rooms, where they announced that the arrivals would be taking a shower and ordered them to remove all clothing. Usually, some of the victims had figured out the truth by the time that the killers forced them into a large chamber. The executioners sealed the chamber and released Zyklon-B, a form of prussic acid that usually killed in about three minutes, though routinely the SS allotted 30. Fans cleared most of the gas from the chamber, then the Sonderkommandos entered in protective clothing. They removed rings and gold fillings from the bodies, then the bodies themselves. Initially, at some camps they buried the bodies, but the surrounding grounds rapidly filled and became foul. The SS soon installed special ovens to cremate the remains.

The killings continued as rapidly as possible in 1942 and most of 1943. After several expansions, Auschwitz alone could convert 12,000 people into ashes daily. In October 1942, the SS began especially shipping all Jewish captives there.

Those Who Survived the First Day

Those that the SS spared, or at other concentration camps, usually led lives just a slip away from death, themselves. They usually received only the equivalent of one-half to one meal a day, often while enduring heavy labor. The guards – who had to be particularly callous and brutal simply to endure their jobs – usually had free rein to inflict whatever terror or abuse they saw fit. The SS usually punished any action contrary to orders with mass reprisals.

The prisoners’ filthy pants and tunic each displayed their registration number (p. 45) and a color-coded triangle: green for actual criminals, pink for homosexuals, red for political prisoners, brown for Gypsies, and black for “antisocial” elements who didn’t fit neatly into another category. Jews added a yellow triangle to any of the other triangles that applied to form a Star of David; those who had sex with someone forbidden by the German racial laws added a black stripe around either their yellow or green triangle. The letter F indicated a French citizen, P a Pole, K a war criminal, A someone condemned to hard labor, and the word *Blöd* (stupid) the feeble-minded. Those deemed escape risks wore targets on their chest and back. Many of the interned criminals were not actually serving a sentence – the Nazis imprisoned men with criminal backgrounds to prevent future crimes.

In this environment, death came easily. Each night the internees climbed into triple-tiered wooden bunks lined with straw, and each morning fewer climbed out. The death camps alone did not do all of the Reich’s dirty work.

A NEW ENERGY OF ATTACK

As 1942 opened, Hitler became not just the driving force behind the Wehrmacht, but its titular head as well. December's retreats had provoked him into cashiering a number of generals and taking the position of commander in chief himself.

The "new" boss would tolerate no more retreats, a policy to be sorely tested without delay. Meanwhile, a critical strategic resource would come to dominate his plans, which now had to factor in the United States joining the fight (see p. W23).

THE SOVIET SLEDGE

Buoyed by the Red Army's advances at Rostov and Moscow, Stalin decided to attack along the entire front in January 1942. The intense cold and critical supply shortages had continued to sap German strength. In addition, the troops did not know a great deal about defensive fighting – their formal training had focused almost exclusively on the assault.

They learned quickly. The Soviets mounted a complex offensive, dropping paratroops to reinforce partisans in the German rear, and created three bulges in the line, one on each side of Army Group Center's thrust on Moscow, and one aimed at Kharkov. Elsewhere, the Wehrmacht held its ground. The shivering survivors formed hard pockets of defense that supported one another through their fields of fire. Per Hitler's demands, they held out desperately, and for each yard gained made the Soviets pay a huge price in munitions and men.

By the end of the month, Stalin had run short of both. In February, the advance ground to a near standstill as the Soviets realized that their two northern bulges in effect created a single German bulge aimed at the capital. In March, they tried to cut off this pocket, but also tried to relieve Leningrad and Sevastopol. The German defenders cut down cavalymen who charged in place of the tanks that the Soviets had used up. The thinly spread Red Army advanced nowhere.

The Wehrmacht, meanwhile, left their troops aimed at Moscow, but only as a feint. Ever more conscious of Germany's critical fuel shortages, Hitler had begun looking south even before April's mud forced a practical cease-fire on the Eastern Front. The oil fields of southern Russia were taking on an increasing importance in the Führer's reckoning.

THE AFRICAN ANVIL

Meanwhile, Rommel had wasted no time in reversing his fortunes. His earlier advance had slowed because, with each mile he gained, his precarious supply lines grew a mile longer as well. The British defenders had fallen back on their supplies, growing stronger while the Afrika Korps had grown weaker.

The Desert Fox realized that the same rules applied to his now advancing enemy. The British forces became thoroughly disorganized as they continued to chase the Germans through Libya in January, while the Afrika Korps enjoyed a sudden upsurge in supplies that now reached them quickly.

On Jan. 21, Rommel turned his men around to form an anvil upon which the falling British hammer would bounce.

Four days of fierce fighting left the British armor fleeing east. The Germans pursued lustily, but technically Rommel always had fallen under Italian command. This time, his Italian superiors insisted that he hold up. Since his tanks were running on gas fumes, he had little choice but to obey.

Again, oil would play a leading role in Hitler's strategy. In February, the Führer learned that seizing the Persian Gulf would cripple Britain's own war effort. It seemed far-fetched, even to the Germans, but if Rommel could drive to the Suez Canal, and Army Group South in Russia drive around Turkey to meet him, then the Reich would enjoy oil production second only to the United States while depriving its two most bitter enemies of this crucial resource.

The African campaign ceased to be a sideshow. The general staff drew up plans to finally sweep Malta clean of the British forces constantly bleeding Rommel's supplies, and to provide their charismatic general with the means to reach the Nile and beyond.

A GERMAN LAKE

In May, the Wehrmacht struck at each end of their grand plan to encircle the Mediterranean and Black seas.

The Soviets tried to exploit their bulge aimed at Kharkov on May 12, not realizing the south had become Germany's primary Russian theater. The Wehrmacht was waiting for this and counterattacked five days later, disintegrating the Soviet attack force and opening the door for their summer offensive; nine days later, Rommel sprang into action as well (see p. W24).

The shattering June advances by both armies made it appear that the Wehrmacht had regained its unstoppable form.

HOME FRONT HARASSED

Even as the army reversed its field in the first half of 1942, the German home front was beginning to show the strains of war. British night bombing had become routine and increasingly massive. Many Germans got out of bed most nights and stumbled through darkened streets to an air-raid shelter. The German public also did without coffee or other luxuries, though the troops themselves still had them. Soldiers on leave sometimes welcomed a return to the front, where they at least did not have to endure the war's risks passively.

Even more telling, a few student groups within the Reich began distributing posters and pamphlets criticizing the Nazis and asking the German people why they did nothing in the face of the pogrom against the Jews. The Gestapo quickly rounded up and executed most of these protesters. Their bullets could not change the fact that, by mid-1942, most anyone who cared to listen in Germany (or elsewhere in the Western world) knew of the Nazis' murderous methods.

Slowly, unsavory bit by bit, the German public came to understand that they should not expect any mercy in defeat. If their enemies proved half as bloodthirsty as their own regime, their very survival would depend on victory.

DECIDING MOMENTS



June 1942 ended with a bang for Germany. On the 30th, Rommel's panzers were spreading out to make one last attack on the British Eighth Army, which had pulled up in the 30-mile-wide bottleneck between the sea and the tankproof Qattara Depression at El Alamein. The great Eastern Front offensive to take the oil fields at Baku, Grozny, and Maikop began the same day. That night, the last Soviet defenders blew up their guns and themselves at Sevastopol, giving up the Crimea. In the Arctic Ocean, a U-boat wolfpack and Luftwaffe dive-bombers were stalking convoy PQ 17, from which only 10 of 33 cargo ships would reach their Archangel destination.

Boys of Summer

That summer would continue to favor the Reich in Russia. While the panzers pushed south toward the oilfields, the infantry pushed east to fill the massive triangle of land formed by a bend in the Don River. This would secure the left flank of the southern attack, and deny the Soviets use of the Don for bringing up supplies.

A few miles farther east from the Don bend, the Volga River looped close to hand. Capturing that one point on the Volga would close that river to Soviet traffic, as well, and truly hamstring the Soviets' supply lines.

Both of the attacks poured forward rapidly throughout July and August. By Aug. 20, Gen. von Paulus (p. 55) had crossed the Don with his Sixth Army in the eastern offensive. Shortly thereafter, the southern forces took the highest peak in the Caucasus, Mt. Elbruz. 1942's summer offensive was proceeding beautifully. All that remained for the eastern forces was to take the city that straddled the section of the Volga that Hitler desired: Stalingrad.

Slipping Away in the Sand

Rommel fared far more poorly. Once again at the end of long, shaky supply lines, his enlarged Panzerarmee Afrika faltered. Sand, mines, the Desert Air Force's bombs, and combat had whittled his units down to 55 operational panzers. His early July attack failed, and the reinvigorated British clumsily counterattacked throughout the rest of the month. This left the Germans short on ammo and the British short on men.

Throughout August, both armies regrouped, but the British began receiving massive U.S. aid. Rommel saw nothing similar. The Luftwaffe continued to hammer away at cargo ships approaching Malta, but many still struggled through, and from Malta the Allies were savaging Italian and German shipping bound for Africa.

STALINGRAD SLAUGHTER

At the city bearing the Soviet dictator's own name, the Wehrmacht's rapid advance came to a shattering halt. Beginning his massive attacks in early September (see p. W26), von Paulus simply tried to overwhelm the makeshift Soviet defenders through sheer numbers. The grim realities of urban fighting perversely twisted this theoretical force superiority, so that the immense German reserves added to the pool of victims as much as the odds of victory. On one day, an entire battalion forming up would disappear under an errant Wehrmacht rocket barrage. On the next, a single Soviet MG crew would kill scores as the increasingly confounded Wehrmacht officers fed man after man into their kill zones.

Despite those costs, the Sixth Army killed Soviets in droves – the Red Army lost more men and women defending Stalingrad than the United States lost in the entire war – but reserves trickled in and held on by tooth and nail. Then, the trap closed, as the Soviets encircled Sixth Army and began to slowly wring the life from it. Hitler, the rest of the Wehrmacht, and the German public watched in horror as the Soviets turned the tables and began dismembering German units that had a year earlier ground up countless Reds in the same fashion.



DESERT DEBACLE

More than von Paulus, Rommel realized his clock was ticking. Despite elaborate British measures to conceal their buildup, the field marshal knew that each passing day increased their superiority over his weary troops. As September began, he attacked at Alam Halfa, but the British rapidly turned his ill-prepared thrust. The survivors retreated and dug in for the British attack they knew would be coming.

On Oct. 23, the British Eighth Army obliged with a massive assault at El Alamein no less one-sided than von Paulus' crashing entry into Stalingrad. Rommel's officers barely avoided panic in the ranks, but the Commonwealth troops pushed inexorably forward. The British regrouped and repeated their tactics in Operation Supercharge on Nov. 2. This time, the Panzerarmee Afrika broke. Rommel led them in retreat out of Egypt and halfway across Libya (see p. W26).

WINTER OF DISCONTENT



As 1942 drew to a close, Germany shuddered. The Soviets slowly strangled the Sixth Army at Stalingrad. U.S. bombers had joined the British campaign vs. the Reich in July, and in November the first U.S. ground troops landed in Africa. Rommel's once proud army retreated from the British Eighth Army toward this new foe.

A sense of desperation developed, and did not confine itself to the two major fronts. On Nov. 27, Wehrmacht panzer troops tried to seize the Vichy French navy at Toulon. Sniffing the political winds, the Vichy scuttled all 73 ships. In December, the Kriegsmarine sortied in force to destroy a Barents Sea convoy, but a few woefully outgunned British destroyers sent the German ships packing. A disgusted Hitler gave up on deploying capital ships.

To the clear-eyed German, Hitler already had lost. The Wehrmacht already had left millions of riflemen lying in the snow or sand – and Germany lacked the Soviets' massive population from which to replace them. At home, the scattershot British night bombings had been bad enough, but the USAAF daylight raiders were actually hitting the sensitive targets at which they aimed. Certainly, the Luftwaffe was exacting a dreadful toll among the U.S. air crews, but the Flying Fortresses also were raking their tormentors out of the sky in dreadful numbers. No one in a position to know held any doubt as to who would win a race between U.S. bomber and German fighter production.

The Stalingrad Putsch

The conspirators against Hitler (p. 11) decided that they had to act, while Germany still fielded an army that would induce the Allies to negotiate rather than mandate. In January, Gen. Beck (p. 55) asked von Paulus, besieged at Stalingrad, to issue a call to arms against Hitler. Meanwhile, the Führer had just promoted von Paulus, because no German field marshal had ever surrendered, and he wanted to convey the message that von Paulus should not become the first.

The man at the center of this attention disappointed both sides. On Jan. 31 he walked into Soviet custody without having issued Beck's manifesto. The coup quietly collapsed.

BITTER REVIVAL

In February 1943, the Wehrmacht proved its resiliency yet again. Flush with their Stalingrad victory, the giddy Soviets launched a massive offensive in an attempt to capitalize on their fortunes before March's mud locked up the front. They covered ground almost as quickly as their T-34s' diesels would move them, regaining Kharkov on Feb. 16 and capturing hundreds of thousands of Italians, Romanians, and Hungarians.

If they began to get a little nervous because they had not encountered any Germans, they had good reason. Ordered to restore the German lines, Gen. von Manstein (p. 55) had pooled his troops to the north and south of the main Soviet thrust. On Feb. 20 they struck out and placed the Soviet spearhead in imminent peril. The Soviets had seen this too many

times before. They fell back and the panzers yet again took Kharkov on March 15, but the mud kept von Manstein from truly capitalizing on his success.

In the meantime, the concentration in the south had required the Wehrmacht along the northern front to "shorten its lines," a military euphemism much in favor with Hitler's generals in the face of his ironclad no-retreat policy. The Soviets advanced in their wake, entering burnt-out village after depopulated town. Combat's destruction had been one thing, but the Nazis' deliberate rapine in their rear was quite another. Apparently, it had never occurred to Hitler's generals that they had a secret to hide in occupied Russia, but the Soviets certainly felt as if they had uncovered a vile one.

Too Much, Too Late

As Rommel retreated, Hitler finally realized that the Allies could, indeed, both drive him from Africa and exploit the victory through increased aid to the Soviets. Having ignored Rommel's appeals for more men in victory, the Führer reinforced him in defeat.

A defender between two uncoordinated attackers enjoys a condition called interior lines. The defender can bounce between the two fronts rapidly, in effect presenting full force to each foe. Interior lines now benefited the Desert Fox, but his usual aggressiveness would betray him. Turning to face the new U.S. and British troops to his northwest, Rommel smashed the Americans and captured a good deal of new equipment from their retreating troops by mid-February at Kasserine Pass. His superiors wanted to stop there. Rommel wanted to keep attacking, and won the argument. In the interim, British armor and U.S. artillery formed an impregnable defense, forcing a reluctant Rommel to give up the offensive and turn southeast toward his original adversaries, the Eighth Army.

He was too late. Scattered in its pursuit, the Eighth had found time to regroup and dig in thanks to Rommel's doggedness in the north. When his panzers waded into the Mareth Line on March 6, British antitank guns gutted a third of them.

An ill and spent Rommel returned home. Though continually reinforced, the Panzerarmee Afrika remained outgunned. Through April, the Germans and Italians slowly retreated in front of Eighth Army, leaving for it the same trail of mines and booby traps that they had begun seeding after El Alamein. The fighting changed with the terrain, from epic sweeps through the desert to a nonstop series of small mountain skirmishes.

The Anglo-Americans in the north spread their front through more lightly defended terrain to the German's west, until the two Allied armies joined shoulders on April 19. On May 1, U.S. tanks broke the German line where it met the coast on the west. Five days later, the British pushed everything they had straight up the middle of the German pocket. They broke clean through to Tunis, then looped around the coast in both directions to form two huge pockets of entirely wasted troops. Had Hitler reinforced Rommel to the same degree a year earlier, his men might have won. As it was, they had no chance.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

With the loss of Africa, Hitler now had his one-front war, though few Germans believed it would stay that way for long. The Allies no longer seemed to be a particularly determined foe; they became a veritable force of nature. During the night of May 16, 1943, British bombers unleashed special bombs designed to destroy important dams in the Ruhr. Though they failed to destroy the vital Sorpe dam, which might have crippled Nazi production, they did break open the Möhne and Eder reservoirs. The resulting flooding illustrated that weapons of war would now wreak havoc once reserved to acts of God.

In the next month Germany would suffer an even worse flood, one of heavy bombers themselves. U.S. and British assembly lines had reached full speed, and were pumping out countless planes. Where a dozen bombers ventured in May, a hundred or more filled the sky beginning in June, temporarily overwhelming the Luftwaffe's defenses.

Things looked no more positive for the Wehrmacht. After three and a half years of fighting, its rosters and equipment inventories were becoming dangerously inadequate for the job ahead. Beginning in mid-1943, the army overhauled its table of organization and equipment, reducing squad sizes and replacing many weapons with less expensive but often more potent alternatives. The resulting forces would seem even leaner and meaner than their predecessors, but they simply weren't the same superbly trained men. The Wehrmacht's heyday had passed.

Flashes in the Pan

The officers resisting Hitler had no intention of enduring what had become, in their eyes, a lengthy and painful road to inevitable defeat. In an assassination attempt called Operation Flash, the chief of staff of Army Group Center, Maj. Gen. Henning von Tresckow, sent a package along with one of the officers aboard the Führer's plane when Hitler visited the Eastern Front on March 13, 1943. It contained a time bomb concealed as a bottle of brandy, but the detonator failed to work, forcing von Tresckow to go to great lengths to retrieve it before his plot came to light. A March 21 attempt to place time bombs in Hitler's coat collapsed when the Führer failed to keep his schedule. Quirky circumstances also aborted several other attempts. Although the resistance had begun to act aggressively, Hitler seemed to be leading a charmed life.

SICILY SLICED AWAY

The Allies did not pause long in Africa. After flattening several Italian air bases in the Mediterranean in June, the Anglo-Americans launched 160,000 men against Sicily on July 10. The Wehrmacht fielded 40,000 well equipped veterans backing up some 250,000 Italian defenders on the island, an overwhelming defense on paper.

In practice, the Italians already would have given up, except that the Allied rifles aimed at their bellies worried them less than the German ones aimed at their backs. The continually deteriorating relationship between the Reich and Italy had devolved into little more than brute coercion. Most of the

Italians manned Sicily's defenses only until the fighting started. Those who did fight usually didn't do it well – most of the veterans had been left dead in Africa.

Held in reserve, the Germans moved forward to the beaches, but stumbled across some disorganized but truly persistent Allied paratroops. By the time they cleared that hurdle, the Italians had lost the campaign. The remaining Axis forces turned around and spent the remainder of July retreating toward Messina, the port just across from Italy. They defended it through August, long enough to fortify Italy for the coming storm, then efficiently crossed the strait to fight again.

THE KILLING STROKE

Von Manstein's push to retake Kharkov (p. 19) had created a Soviet bulge centered on Kursk, about 120 miles to the north. The Germans just about had to attack here and the Soviets knew it (see p. W27). On July 5 in Operation *Zitadelle*, Army Group Center launched its Ninth Army to the southeast to meet up with Fourth Panzer Army from Army Group South attacking northeast from the other side of the bulge – an attack by more than a million men and 2,700 armored fighting vehicles. (By this time, turretless and cheaper "assault guns" were steadily replacing pure panzers in the Wehrmacht's formations.)

The Soviets ground them down. German engineers dispatched to clear mines met a machine-gun bullet long before the end of their assigned field. Concealed antitank guns harassed the armor at every turn; often nine or 10 guns would open fire on a single vehicle. Handfuls of Soviets would crawl through the waist-high grass to assault armor farther behind the lines. The Germans also inflicted a great deal of damage, but the Wehrmacht had all of its fighting units in the middle of things, taking damage and becoming numb with battle fatigue.

The Soviets held back most of their units, waiting for the Germans to tire themselves out. On July 12, they launched local counterattacks – the 29th Tank Corps ran head-on into II SS Panzer Corp in a 3-mile-wide stretch of wheatland and orchards between the Psel River and a railway embankment, the centerpiece of the day's epic tank battles. By the 15th, the Soviets launched larger counterattacks to each side of the fighting, confident that they had finally met a German attack in open terrain and defeated the Wehrmacht.

They had, though the Germans didn't feel that they could retreat, for fear of the Soviets regrouping and striking at their target of choice. They stayed in the fight like a punchdrunk boxer clinging to his opponent, but this first defeat fighting on their own terms permanently scarred the Wehrmacht's morale. Never again would it attack with the same élan.

Everyone in the high command – and most of the lower commanders on the ground – had known that Citadel had been nothing more than a high-stakes gamble. Its failure, miserable as it was, surprised few. It had, however, represented one of the better German options for remaining a threat in the East. In its wake – with two armies lying dead at Kursk – the General Staff had run out of solutions.

HOLDING ACTIONS



By September 1943, Germany was fighting a purely defensive war. Even Hitler held few illusions about further gains – he had to worry about holding onto what he already had, a task he found even more daunting because he had lost his last shred of respect for his generals.

He had made his first major move a year earlier, replacing the talented and forceful Gen. Franz Halder with a devoted Nazi as the chief of the General Staff. He dismissed many of his ablest commanders during the disasters that followed, even attempting to himself lead Army Group A in the Caucasus (see p. 18 and p. W24). He quit dining with his staff, refused to shake hands with those that displeased him, and had a small army of secretaries begin recording every word spoken in his conferences – a move designed to stifle free speech.

Von Paulus' surrender at Stalingrad tipped him over the edge. Within months, the Führer would begin referring to his officers as simpletons, liars, and crooks in their presence. He began bypassing the General Staff and further fragmented a chain of command in which he alone received a full report on the entire war effort.

Halder's career declined with his estimate of Hitler, whom he increasingly had recognized as a talented and energetic amateur in charge of a war that had far exceeded his corporal's grasp of tactics and strategy. Here, now, the Wehrmacht would begin suffering from Hitler's forceful incompetence. He refused to let his generals consolidate their more than 240 hollowed-out divisions – he thought strictly in terms of divisions, not how effective each one might be – forcing the army to field far too much administrative structure for its rapidly thinning riflemen. The Führer also tried to limit tank production to the formidable Panthers and Tigers, but his armor pioneer Gen. Heinz Guderian wisely got that order reversed. Hitler refused to make Göring release his plentiful Luftwaffe troops to become regular Heer replacements. Instead, the air marshal formed all-Luftwaffe ground units that performed woefully in battle. Most of all, the Führer's continued refusal to allow timely retreats invariably left his troops to discard their heavy equipment and take huge casualties when they finally did run.

Hitler's rising incompetence did not pose the greatest threat to the Reich, however. The revived Reds and imploding Italians were presenting far more immediate dangers.

DNIEPR STAND

In August, the Soviets near Kursk continued to hammer the Germans to the north, at Orel, and to the south, around Kharkov. The Reds began to formalize what would become their winning style: a *monstrous* artillery bombardment followed by an overwhelming infantry assault to clean out the remains and consolidate the gains, often with armor scattering forward throughout the German rear positions like so many cockroaches when the lights come on. These advances would halt after a short while to let the slow Soviet supply lines catch up, but not before Kharkov was retaken Aug. 22 – despite SS panzer divisions Das Reich, Viking, and Totenkopf joining its defense.

Even Hitler had to trade a little space for time. In September, the Germans retreated about 100 miles to a defensive line they had built based largely on the wide Dniepr and other rivers. Hitler told himself the Reds would waste their superior numbers in vain efforts to breach this line, but he himself had not allowed sufficient time to be invested in building it. The Soviets barely slowed down before crossing over Sept. 28 at Kremenchug, some 230 miles north of the Crimea, despite a defense by elite SS units. Several further breaches rapidly followed.

In October, the Soviets continued their stepping-stone assaults through the southern Ukraine, pushing the lines back far enough that the Germans had to abandon their hard-earned foothold in the Caucasus. In November, the Soviets aimed at Kiev, taking the city Nov. 6. Von Manstein counterattacked, but the forewarned Reds threw him off easily. Almost by default, the Red lines also slid along the Dniepr to isolate the Germans' Crimean garrison. Though rapidly running out of steam, the Red assaults continued throughout December, culminating in a Christmas Eve advance pushing forward their Kiev salient.

By the end of 1943, Hitler retained only a slippery foothold in the southern Soviet Union.

BOOTING THE ITALIANS

As September began, the Italians were negotiating to end their war, and Hitler knew it. He gave Field Marshal Kesselring two complex missions: defend the Italian mainland from the widespread network of Allied landings already under way, and disarm the Italians.

Kesselring ordered his troops out of the "shoe" portion of the Italian boot, but the Allied landing at Salerno threatened his line of retreat. He ordered an attack that nearly erased the beachhead before massive bomber support turned the tables. The Germans filled in their Gustav line anchored at Cassino while fighting a rearguard action back toward it throughout October and November. The Allies had countless bombers and naval vessels supporting them, but the Germans masterfully concealed themselves in the mountainous terrain and let the terrible weather reduce their foes to a crawl. In December, the British resolved to break the Gustav at its Adriatic end, and technically did so in a series of costly close-quarters brawls, but the Germans simply lined up again two miles back.

By this time, the Germans were using a considerable number of Italian weapons, because the disarmament had gone smoothly. Only the Italian garrison in Greece put up much of a fight – and the Germans massacred many of the survivors in reprisal. The Wehrmacht transformed itself into an occupying force, allowing much of the dismissed Italian soldiery to simply go home. Many of these men would return to haunt them.

Hitler loathed the idea of losing his Italian partner. He dispatched Skorzeny (p. 54) to free Mussolini from Allied house arrest in a daring Sept. 13 mountaintop glider assault. Pushed by the Führer, Mussolini declared a new government, but the only real result was to make the Allies very wary of the Reich's continued ability to mount spectacular special operations.

PLAYING OUT THE HAND



1944 opened with the Allies grimly pushing up Italy and across the Eastern Front (see pp. W29-30). By this time, few German planners thought in terms of *if* they could win. They thought in terms of *how* they would lose.

How was all-important. A Germany with fight left in it could hope to negotiate a surrender, despite the Allies' professed intent to accept no terms. In an unconditional surrender, Germany could expect no more mercy than it had itself shown in victory – and this rightfully frightened Germany's leaders, save the uncompromising Führer himself. Men who would later testify to complete ignorance of the concentration camps acted, at the time, as if they knew history would not find them on the side of the angels. It's possible that many soldiers at the front were, indeed, ignorant of the death camps, that a few had not even witnessed the routine brutality in occupied areas and on the front lines. Regardless, the Nazi excesses had charged the Reich with a palpable aura of guilt. One did not need to know details to sense it.

BROKEN WINGS

For all practical purposes, the western Allies defeated the Luftwaffe in the first half of 1944. German bombing of England had tapered off since the Battle of Britain, and finally died altogether in April, both for scarce men and fuel and because the promising V-1 missile (pp. 25 and 123) entered service.

Luftwaffe day fighters also made increasingly rare appearances, largely because the U.S. Army Air Force began protecting its bombers with Mustangs (see p. W110) and other fighters. Attacking the Flying Fortresses had been hazardous enough. (U.S. fighter pilots protecting the B-17s *hated* flying through a "bomber box" with .50s blazing away while pursuing Germans.) Battling through both the fighters and bombers proved too deadly. The Luftwaffe resorted to letting most of the flights pass overhead unmolested, pooling its pilots and increasingly limited fuel to spring deadly ambushes on a few unlucky missions. By June, empty gas tanks and the prohibitive cost of attacks grounded the remaining fighter pilots.

This left Germany relatively defenseless against the ever-increasing Allied bombing campaign. The relentless pounding transformed major sections of many cities into a sea of rubble; others vaporized in awesome firestorms (see p. W25). The rail network in occupied France became a shambles. Crucial war industries sometimes disappeared in a single day, though when forced to rebuild these factories the Germans often introduced enough efficiencies to actually improve production, a phenomenon not unknown to modern business-crisis planners.

These attacks destroyed many aspects of civilized, home-front life. Increasingly, Germany's civilians would begin to lead the lives of war refugees.

UPRISINGS IN THE REICH

In 1944, resistance movements began to fill a larger role in the Reich's woes. Though the Soviets had utilized their partisans in the Eastern Front's rear for two years, in other parts of the Reich the resistance mostly had kept its head down.

With the Wehrmacht thinning its occupation forces for battlefront replacements, and sensing the Nazis' increasing vulnerability, these defiant subjects began to act. The Germans had barely disarmed the Italians before some of those men began striking in the Italian rear as resistance fighters, mostly of leftist bent. By the end of the year, a German in Italy would face little less peril behind the lines than at them. Though still squabbling among themselves, the various French resistance fighters raided a few German assets and kept a constant eye on their occupiers. In January, the Anglo-Americans began air-dropping supplies to them. Special agents also routinely entered occupied France by parachute and left by small naval craft.



These subject peoples also provided some of the Allies' most determined uniformed soldiers. Soon after leaving the Fascist cause, many Italian units were fighting it. Free French units in Italy often outpaced those beside them in that point-blank brawling. They sought to restore their nation's honor and, true to their chivalric past, would jump the starting gun to get a good lead. The Poles proved just as determined in Italy and elsewhere. Germans could expect a remorseless foe when facing these men that they had driven from their own lands.

PRELUDE TO THE STORM

By the beginning of June 1944, the Reich's fortunes had continued to slowly degrade, but its generals had no real reason to believe that they couldn't force a draw relatively near but outside Germany's borders.

The bombers rampaging over occupied France kept them fully aware of the Allies' remaining trump, however, and they deployed as many men as they could spare to fortify the Atlantic Wall and try to keep that card from being played.

THE HORROR UNVEILED

In July 1944, the advancing Soviets began coming across something shocking even to their hardened eyes: the Nazi death camps. The Soviets (in whose path lay all of the major extermination centers) and their Communist Polish supporters (who unwillingly hosted all of them) wasted little more than a month before announcing this German blasphemy to the world, although neither country had unstained hands when it came to Jews. Within a short time, the Allied world saw its first pictures of the ovens and gas chambers.

Incomprehensibly, only at this time did Himmler and his contemporaries begin to speak of their concerns should the Reich lose its lands and have its concentration network exposed, and even so they acted under the apparent belief that they could conceal the extent of their crimes. Furthermore, they were reacting as much to their own success – the SS disposal system was choking on the bodies of all the people it had killed – as in fear of discovery.

For these reasons, on Oct. 26, 1944, Himmler ordered the Auschwitz garrison to discontinue its exterminations and begin concealing the evidence of its past misdeeds. Much of the death gear was shipped to Germany, to be installed in camps farther behind the lines, but never resumed operation. The formal phase of the Final Solution had ended, and the Soviets would enter Auschwitz in January 1945.

Although their commanders had been forewarned, U.S. and British troops still suffered a shock when their advances overran the concentration-camp network in April 1945. The Americans discovered 21,000 emaciated Jews, Russians, Poles, Czechs, Germans, Italians, and Frenchmen at Buchenwald, where some 63,000 internees died during its eight-year history, despite it technically not being a death camp. Days later at Bergen-Belsen, the British would find the grounds covered with 10,000 corpses – the SS had fled and left the internees to starve.

Even after their liberation, thousands of camp survivors died each day from the lingering effects of their mistreatment – 500 daily at Bergen-Belsen alone. Adding to the stress, the troops overseeing their release had to treat them much like prisoners for a short period, rationing their food because an instant return to a regular diet often would kill people in such a skeletal state.

The years immediately after the war would bring further details of the horror into the light. A shocked world learned that the Germans themselves estimated that 6 million people had died in the camps. (No one, not even Hitler's meticulous record-keepers, really knew. Holocaust descendants today sometimes increase the tally to 9 million or higher. Others say figures as low as 3 million are more realistic.) The Auschwitz-Birkenau complex alone claimed some 2 million lives.

Worse yet, some would argue that the dead had been the fortunate ones. Sadists such as Dr. Josef Mengele had treated the survivors as so many resources to be exploited, using them as subjects for horrific experiments, even stitching together twin Gypsy children to create a pseudo-Siamese twin in a mockery of science. The wife of Buchenwald's commander, Ilse Koch, became infamous for having possessed lampshades made of human skin. Those internees not singled out for special treatment had simply watched malnutrition corrode their bodies down to little more than loose skin and bone.



Ironically, much of the evidence condemning the SS camps came from an SS magistrate, Konrad Morgen, a rare Nazi who had valued the letter of the law over Hitler's contempt for it. In late 1943, Himmler had approved Morgen's investigation into corruption at the concentration camps – probably the SS chief did not comprehend the sordidness of his own system – and Morgen promptly brought hundreds of cases to trial, at least 200 of which obtained convictions in German courts.

Himmler finally had to call off Morgen in early 1944, but by then the damage had been done. In conjunction with the Soviet discoveries, Morgen had planted the seeds that belatedly led Himmler to realize the enormity of his crimes. The Reichsführer even went to the extreme of willingly releasing a few Jews to the Red Cross in March and April of 1945, a pitifully small gesture to be weighed against what would come to be called the Holocaust. By then, Himmler was flailing frantically for some means to salvage his fantasy of heading a new German state after the surrender.

Hundreds of others involved in the Holocaust, including Mengele, realized they were damned. They fled prosecution. Allied intelligence (later Interpol) and Jewish investigators (increasingly based in Israel) spent decades pursuing them.

THE WESTERN FRONT ERUPTS

On June 6, 1944, all the best-laid plans of field marshals and Führers came to naught. The conservative commanders, including von Rundstedt and Hitler, had expected the Anglo-American armada to land at Calais, the French port closest to the English shore and offering a direct route into Germany.

Calais seemed too obvious to the shrewder sorts, including Rommel, who now commanded the Normandy defenses that he thought would receive the brunt of the invasion. On the morning of June 5, he set out for an interview with Hitler, in which he hoped to obtain two more panzer divisions and a brigade of Nebelwerfers (p. 67), which might have made a horrific impact had the choppy weather intimidated Gen. Eisenhower into delaying the invasion, as it almost did.

D-DAY AND AFTER

As it was, the rough seas emptied many an Allied stomach, but also contributed to a very poor German response. The commanders on scene scoffed at the first reports of paratroops, given the gray skies. By the time they believed, in the wee hours of June 6, Hitler had taken his sedatives and gone to bed on his usual vampiric schedule. In response to the Rommel-Rundstedt rift over likely landing sites, Hitler had ordered that only he could mobilize the panzers.

The defending troops exacted a stiff price at Omaha (see p. W30), but elsewhere the Allies waded ashore at small cost, and the five beachheads linked up June 10. The British had hoped to take Caen in the first day's rush, to force Rommel to use up his forces in retrieving the vital road hub. They didn't, but reasoned that attacking Caen themselves would accomplish much the same. The Germans did indeed commit the best troops and panzers in France to defending Caen. The attacking British and Canadians suffered terrible casualties before overwhelming them by July 9.

Facing less resistance, the U.S. forces in the west took Carentan on June 14 and Cherbourg on the 29th. The retreating German engineers did a thorough demolition job, ensuring that, even if they were giving up a vital port, the Allies weren't gaining one. The Germans used the French bocage – high earthen embankments on each side of roads topped by thick scrubs – to maximum effect in their fighting retreat through July, but gave up St. Lô on the 18th. Six days later the Americans launched Operation Goodwood, which broke free of the bocage and began racing unmolested through open country. The British had launched Operation Cobra on July 18, out of Caen and aimed at Falaise, to keep the panzers in check.

The Falaise Pocket

On Aug. 1, the only Allied general who really impressed the Germans – Patton – took over Third Army in France and immediately began exceeding his orders. He drove his troops to the south of the German defenders toward Paris. With the

British advances to their north, this left the Reich's panzers and two infantry armies caught in a pocket with only the Falaise-Argentan corridor open for retreat by mid-August.

Allied ground-attack planes and bombers had been hammering anything in gray since D-Day. They saturated the Falaise pocket with high explosives. The German survivors wrestled their way through roads packed with burnt-out tanks, trucks, and men to find escape through the gap, leaving behind all their gear and 60,000 casualties.



Retreat to the Fatherland

The scattered Germans fled as the Allies raced after them through August. Allied troops entered Paris on the 25th.

The onslaught slowed in September – the Allies were running out of fuel – but the Wehrmacht had to give up several more French ports, thoroughly destroying each before their exit. Leaving the Allies no place to offload in bulk was saving lives. Two SS panzer divisions fought off an attempted airborne breakout across the Netherlands in Operation Market-Garden from Sept. 17-25.

The fiercest October fighting hinged on Antwerp, which the Allies couldn't use as a port until Dec. 1. November ushered in some of the worst flooding in decades, but the Allies continued to push forward through the mud. The Germans reached their once-vaunted Siegfried Line, but high command had not told them that it was overgrown and stripped of weapons now lost on the Atlantic Wall. By mid-December, the Allied lines stood pretty much at Germany's pre-war borders.

THE JULY PLOT

The officers conspiring to kill the Führer had no time to waste after D-Day. On July 20, Lt. Col. Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg carried a time bomb in his briefcase into Hitler's Rastenburg headquarters, the Wolf's Lair (see p. W32). He left it in a conference room filled with Hitler and his staff, then excused himself to make a phone call.

In his absence, a colonel moved the case out of his way and next to the table's plinth, which shielded Hitler from the

direct blast. At 12:50 p.m., the bomb exploded, hurling men out the windows, but killing only one immediately.

Hitler suffered moderate injuries, but retained his senses and wasted no time in exacting revenge. The Gestapo and loyal Wehrmacht forces executed von Stauffenberg and many co-conspirators the same day; overall, the bomb plot cost at least 160 men their lives. The Führer had many of the sadistic executions filmed, for his enjoyment and as a warning to incoming cadets, some of whom fainted during their viewing. He also greatly intensified Nazi political training afterward.

OPERATION BAGRATION

On the third anniversary of Barbarossa – June 22, 1944 – the Soviets began a massive assault to the center of the German lines: Operation Bagration. Hitler had not expected an attack there, and the Soviets rolled forward mercilessly through July, obliterating as many as 300,000 men of Army Group Center, and crossing their prewar borders (see p. W31). Army Group North had to retreat to keep its flank even with Center, even though doing so placed it in peril of being penned in Latvia and Estonia, which happened July 31. Hitler had expected another attack in the south, so that reinforced part of the front held well until July 13, when 1.2 million Reds simply leaned their collective shoulders into it and snapped the German lines in two places. Here, too, the Soviets ran amok.

By the end of the month, the Red Army had completely liberated the Soviet Union.

In August, the advance slowed across most of the front, with the Germans even managing some counterattacks, until the Soviets lashed out at Romania on Aug. 20. The Romanian half of the defending army melted away on contact; the Reds rapidly encircled the 360,000 German troops. Only 130,000 would escape as the Soviets captured the vital oilfields and Bucharest in the last days of the month. (Throughout these defeats, many other German forces found themselves almost purposely surrounded. In a make-lemonade-out-of-lemons bit of rationalizing, Hitler and some of his generals had decided that Stalingrad had been a *good* thing, because it pinned down so many Soviet forces and prevented a formidable attack elsewhere. In March, Hitler had formalized his “fortress” policy, in which overrun German units were to avoid retreating, of course, and instead form a strongpoint, supposedly ideal for counterattack. In general, these surrounded men fared no better than their mostly dead predecessors. Hitler took the policy to such extremes that, when a corridor to the stranded Army Group North briefly opened late in August, he refused to pull out the troops, but rather sent *in* two divisions.)

By September, Germany’s erstwhile Balkan allies were leaving the Fascist fold (see pp. W32-33). These defections opened up holes in the lines that the Reich’s southern commanders found themselves hard-pressed to fill. The Red advances toward Budapest and Belgrade threatened to cut off the army groups in Yugoslavia and Greece.

The Soviets had stretched to the end of their supply tethers, however, and did not finally take Belgrade until Oct. 19 in a joint attack with the Yugoslav partisans of Marshal Tito. The attack on Budapest disintegrated after fierce armor clashes. (To his last day, Hitler considered Budapest the key to the Balkans,

and dispatched his finest panzers to defend that city.) Meanwhile, the British wanted to take Greece away from the Germans before the Russians did. On Sept. 23, a makeshift formation of commandos and paratroops began a month-long campaign to push the Wehrmacht out of that country. The Germans in Budapest continued to hold the city throughout November and December while those evicted from Budapest held open a corridor for the Greek contingent to escape.

Finally, on Dec. 26, the Soviets surrounded Budapest, creating yet another “fortress,” and the southern front settled down. The Reds were gathering their strength to strike elsewhere.

WUNDERWAFFEN

After surviving the July bomb, Hitler decided his life really was charmed. Despite the endless series of defeats, he began to speak in mystical terms of the Reich’s destiny to revive from near defeat. An equally suspect belief that “wonder weapons” would turn the tide may have partially fueled his hope.

One of those weapons – the *Vergeltungswaffen* (vengeance weapon) missile – had gone into action a week after D-Day. The Allies had known about the new V-1 “buzz bomb” aimed at London, and vigorously bombed its launch sites months earlier. Despite that attention, the Germans managed to launch 8,000 of them by Sept. 30. Of those, 2,300 reached the city. An elaborate network of barrage balloons snared a considerable number, well-sited AA guns stood some 75% chance of shooting down any flying overhead, fighters often intercepted and destroyed the devices, and the British used subtle misdirection to fool the Germans into aiming at empty fields.

On Sept. 8, the V-2 ballistic missile began augmenting the V-1 cruise missile in this terror campaign, with more than 1,000 launched before war’s end. The explosion gave first notice of the V-2’s supersonic arrival. The missiles cost London thousands of lives and buildings, but could not win the war. Other initiatives (pp. 121-122) never left the drawing board.

THE LOST CAMPAIGN

Amidst all the furor elsewhere, Kesselring’s forces in Italy were yielding the least ground, but doing the Reich the least good. The theater that had started life as an Allied diversion slipped even further in status after D-Day.

After a rough patch in June – losing Rome and escaping only due to American hubris (see p. W29) – the Germans fell back to their Gothic Line in front of a tepid Allied advance in July. The U.S. army facing them sent seven divisions to invade southern France on Aug. 15; the small German force there offered little resistance. The Allies still in Italy began seriously pushing at each edge of the line in August, first the Poles and British on the Adriatic, then the U.S. troops on the Tyrrhenian.

By the end of September, heavy rains slowed down the already grueling attack, but the Allies had pierced the Gothic Line repeatedly. Only October’s flooding and a shortage of infantry prevented them from exploiting the advantage against the thin German units. Throughout the remainder of the year, only the 10th Indian Division – fully at home in the mountains and weather that would kill a goat – posed any serious threat to the defenders.

THE REICH IN RUINS



As 1945 began, it seemed certain that the year would witness the Third Reich's end, well short of its 1,000-year conceit. Still, the Germans had months of agony and destruction to endure before that time came.

THE BULGE AND BEYOND

Hitler had spent months scraping together the armor that he launched in Operation *Wacht am Rhein*, known to the U.S. forces who opposed it as the Battle of the Bulge (see p. W33). The force's very existence had completely surprised the Allies, but the Führer wasted it in an overly ambitious attack that no commanders at the scene thought had any chance of success. Further south, Hitler ordered Operation *Nordwind* launched on Dec. 31, to breach lines thinned by reinforcement of the Bulge battle. French reserves drove back this attack, as well.

Throughout February, the Allies slogged their way toward the Rhine in miserable weather, often through floodwaters created when German engineers sabotaged local dams in retreat. Hitler became enraged when a nimble U.S. unit captured the Remagen bridge intact March 7, but the Allies had gathered massive engineering resources to span the Reich's last bulwark on their own terms. During the last week of the month, the Allies launched numerous crossings. In some spots, artillery already had wiped out the handful of defenders. In others, they contested the landings bitterly. At the end, though, leading probes already had moved rapidly and encircled the Ruhr. The western Allies held a valuable chunk of Germany itself.

Resistance collapsed. By this point, the Soviets posed such a threat that many Germans did not think the western Allies could advance quickly enough. Some troops fought sporadic rearguard battles through April, but increasingly the Western Allies simply motored their way to the Elbe, leaving a relieved German public behind them with each passing mile.

RETRIBUTION'S HORDES

In the East, Hitler had refused his generals' plans to establish reserve lines 12 miles back – two would do, said the ground-greedy Führer. The initial Red onslaught of Jan. 12 simply swallowed up front lines and reserves in one fell swoop.

Despite strong localized defense at spots, 4 million Soviets raced toward the Oder through January, while beating off two of Hitler's relief forces aimed at Budapest. In February, the Soviets filled in their lines on the Oder while finally finishing off the dogged Budapest garrison, which fought to the last bullet before attempting a breakout in which only 700 escaped.

The Red Army paused to catch its breath in March, while the German generals reviewed their thin ranks and wondered if they would hold for five minutes. Hitler refused to release the SS panzer reserves that he had, instead sending them to retake Budapest on March 6 in Operation *Frühlingserwachen*. The Soviets easily repulsed this attack, in which SS troopers began deserting en masse from an obviously hopeless cause, and the Führer lost his last strong units in the East.

The few ragged defenders that remained did not have to wait long. The Soviets launched their final push on Berlin on April 16 (see p. W34), encircling the city within days. Without pausing for a thorough bombardment – Stalin wanted the hammer and sickle flying over the Reichstag by May Day – the Red hordes threw themselves toward the city center from all directions. The capital still held some 1.5 million civilians, who crouched in cellars until thirst and hunger drove them to search the streets for food and water that didn't exist. Around them raged the fiercest fighting since Stalingrad, with bands of SS men enforcing resistance by shooting "deserters" on the spot.

The one man who could end it all lurked 22' underground near the Soviets' target. Almost assuredly, such a humane gesture never occurred to him. He had ordered Germany razed during the Allied advances, ostensibly as a scorched-earth policy, but in truth because he didn't care to have Germany survive if the Reich did not. Finally, realizing the end had become inevitable, Hitler killed himself April 30. Later that day, Soviet troops hoisted the Red banner over the Reichstag.

AFTERMATH

Even in defeat, Hitler had chosen successors, with Dönitz (pp. 49 and 55) as president. The admiral busied himself trying to get as many Germans as possible into the western zone before his inevitable surrender. The government signed an armistice May 4 and its final unconditional surrender May 8.

The Italian front had waited in a grimy stalemate throughout the year until mid-April, when a renewed Allied push tore through the German lines and overran the peninsula. These isolated troops surrendered first, on May 2. Once the government capitulated, other commands quickly followed, except Field Marshal Schörner's still formidable Army Group Center, near Prague. Schörner (p. 55) told his men the news of surrender was a lie, and provoked a fierce Soviet attack May 8. Within two days, though, his men had figured out the truth, and the Wehrmacht's last active unit simply disintegrated in action.

The Nuremberg Trials

By the end of the month, the Allies had arrested all of the leading war authorities that they could find. Some had committed suicide, many had smuggled away vast fortunes to South America or in deep caverns around Europe, and a few had even escaped with their wealth.

In November, an unprecedented special court convened to try 22 of these men. Protests concerning the Nuremberg trials' authority dwindled as its hearings unveiled the depths of Nazi depravities. By October 1946, the court had condemned 12 of them to be hanged, gave three life in prison, sentenced four to prison terms of 10 to 20 years, and set free three of them.

The pursuit of other Nazi war criminals would continue for decades to come, through the threadbare postwar years and into the long bitter tension between a Soviet-controlled East Germany and a capitalistic Western Germany.

In 1945, the nation's drama had far from ended.



2. THE GERMAN ARMY

**Only its groundbreaking
military efficiency
allowed the Third Reich
to endure as long as it did.**

In hindsight, Germany had set itself against nearly impossible military odds, somewhat accidentally when Hitler ordered the invasion of Poland, but intentionally with the decision to invade the vast Soviet Union.

The high standards that enabled these grand agendas declined over time, and Germany's foes constantly improved to further narrow the quality gap. To the end, though, the Reich's soldiers had the respect and fear of their opponents.

THE HIGH COMMAND



In '35, Hitler announced he would breach the Versailles treaties to form an air force, the Luftwaffe. He also renamed his armed-forces command from the Reichswehr to the Wehrmacht, and the army from the Reichsheer to the Heer. The interwar navy, the Reichsmarine, had become the Kriegsmarine in '33.

The Heer, Luftwaffe, and Kriegsmarine all fell under Wehrmacht command. Individual soldiers could routinely transfer from one service to another. Units from one service could find themselves placed under command of another. Given Germany's military history – and Hitler's decided bias – the Heer far and away was the first among the three equals, so references to “Wehrmacht” operations almost invariably referred to Heer operations then and now.

ORGANIZATION

While, on its surface, the truly unified German command offered certain efficiencies that many other nations could only envy, the Wehrmacht evolved into a rather complex organization, and Hitler himself would exploit the redundancy of a distinct Heer command and a Wehrmacht command that thought of itself as a land army with supporting arms.



OKW

The *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, or OKW, commanded this unified structure. Technically, it represented the military to the German government, coordinated the services' efforts in time of war, and issued orders to field commanders.

The OKW operations staff maintained a forward field headquarters – the *Führerhauptquartier* – relatively near the primary war front. Most other functions fell into a rear echelon, usually based in Berlin.

Keitel (p. 55) led OKW during the war. Hitler often threatened, but never replaced this lackluster field marshal who gave him comparatively few arguments.

As supreme commander, Hitler led the Wehrmacht via OKW, but he also established special directorates that fell outside OKW authority. The extent to which these special offices could influence Wehrmacht policy and practice directly depended on Hitler's favor. In a notable case, Hitler recalled his top panzer expert, Guderian, to become a special armor inspector in March 1943, after having sacked him in the December 1941 crisis. Guderian requested that he become a direct report; disgusted with his staffs, the Führer agreed. Nazi party instructors and inspectors also bypassed OKW command. Most

importantly, the ever-expanding Waffen-SS (p. 31) fell outside OKW control except when a Wehrmacht commander led SS units in the field. (Late in the war, an SS commander might instead be given the Wehrmacht's units to command.)

In practice, OKW supervised all theaters except Russia, in which OKH (see below) increasingly monopolized command and kept OKW underinformed. This left Hitler, at the head of both organizations, as Germany's only fully informed leader.

OKH and Peers

Each service also had a high command, the *Oberkommando des Heeres* (OKH), *der Luftwaffe* (OKL), or *der Kriegsmarine* (OKM). While the commander of an army or army group answered to OKW, his subordinates usually dealt with these commands to keep their fighting forces effective.

In December 1941, Hitler replaced Brauchitsch (p. 55) with himself as Heer commander-in-chief. Prior to this, Hitler used OKW to bypass OKH; afterward, he more often bypassed OKW with OKH. Raeder, then Dönitz (p. 55), led the Kriegsmarine. Göring (p. 52) held the post for the Luftwaffe.

During campaigns, each appropriate high command would establish a forward echelon near the fighting, while its rear departments remained in Berlin until late 1943, by which time Allied bombing forced dispersal of these nerve centers. The forward staffs planned the actual fighting. The rear departments kept the supplies coming and took care of the routine paperwork. OKH's forward echelon always located itself close to OKW's *Führerhauptquartier*, which dealt with strategic issues.

OKH included the administration office, which handled supplies, civilian employees, etc.; the general army office, which inspected troops and budgeted funds; the adjutant's office, which maintained and cleared communications; the personnel office, which handled promotions, retirements, etc. for all Heer troops except the General Staff Corps (p. 29) and senior officers (whom Hitler handled personally); the ordnance office, which researched weapons and worked with industry to produce them; the mobile-troops chief, who developed and honed the armored forces before Guderian's office (see above) largely supplanted this work; the cadet inspectorate, which trained new and junior officers; and the General Staff. This staff included five departments: I operations, II training, III organization, IV intelligence, and V historical.

Given that the Führer spread himself so thin, the OKH chief of staff possessed a great deal of influence, in addition to the power bestowed by his command of the *Generalstab*. Hitler never got along with the at-least-competent men who held this post, even after he hand-selected a devoted Nazi whom he thought would serve as a functionary. In their professional eyes, Hitler almost always cocked things up, and their job included telling him about it.

THE GENERALSTAB

When a German referred to the Generalstab (General Staff), he referred to the General Staff Corps, not the OKH General Staff (p. 28). The General Staff Corps consisted of all Heer officers who had undergone the rigorous Generalstab training.

Selection for training represented a high honor. A candidate had to be a *hauptmann* or higher, be under 29 years old, and display exceptional service in at least six months at the front. The aspirant spent one month in a special service school, five at the War Academy, and six probationary months on the OKH staff. Upon acceptance, the new *Generalstabs-Offiziere*, usually a major or better by this point, began wearing dark red stripes down his trouser seams.

The Heer reserved all positions commanding a staff or staff department for these men. They also enjoyed an insider's advantage in receiving command and other plum assignments, since a fellow general-staff officer usually made the recommendation as to whom to employ in these roles.

The OKH chief of staff commanded both the Generalstab and the OKH staff. Only he could promote or retire corps members until they reached *oberst*, at which point Hitler himself took over this authority.

In game terms, a Generalstab officer should have a minimum Administration-12, Intelligence Analysis-10, Savoir-Faire (Military)-12, Tactics-13, and Operations-12. He also takes a Reputation of +1 among the Generalstab but -1 with many Nazi leaders (including many of his *Waffen-SS* contemporaries), worth effectively no points.

The Reich later added the named districts of *Böhmen und Mähren*, covering Czechoslovakia, and *Generalgouvernement*, covering central and southern Poland.

Given this geographical breakdown, Germans often described their divisions by their region, for example "the Pomeranians of 32nd Infantry." This distinction broke down in the later war years, as existing divisions recruited foreigners and any replacements available.

In wartime, each district maintained its corps' worth of units in the field, and identically numbered training and replacement units at home. All the units in action made up the Field Army, while those at home were the Replacement Army. Initially, fighting units replaced their combat losses from their replacement counterpart, which helped to keep unit cohesion high.

The Luftwaffe took men from all districts, preferring those with an aeronautical background. The Kriegsmarine took volunteers from across the Reich, and conscripts from the maritime districts: I, II, X, and XX.

The Military Districts

As the war began, Germany and Austria were divided into 15 geographical military districts. Each district garrisoned 2-5 Heer divisions in peace and supported them in war. Four special "districts" had no geographic base, but either assumed command of other districts' motorized, light, and panzer divisions in war or fully hosted divisions recruited from across the Reich. Two new districts were added after the conquest of Poland. These districts, their regions, and their 1939 divisions included:

<i>District</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Divisions</i>
I	East Prussia	1, 11, 21 Inf; 1 Cav
II	Pomerania, Mecklenburg	2, 12, 32 Inf
III	Brandenburg	3, 23 Inf; 3 Lit; 3 Pan
IV	Saxony, North Sudetenland	4, 14, 24 Inf
V	Southwest Germany	5, 25, 35 Inf
VI	Westphalia, Lower Rhineland	6, 16, 26 Inf; 1 Lit
VII	Upper Bavaria	7, 27 Inf; 1 Mou
VIII	Silesia, East Sudetenland	8, 18, 28 Inf; 5 Pan
IX	Hesse, Thuringia	9, 15, 29 Inf; 2 Lit; 1 Pan
X	Schleswig-Holstein	10, 20, 22 Inf
XI	Hannover, Prussian Saxony	13, 19, 31 Inf
XII	Middle Rhineland	33, 34, 36 Inf
XIII	Franconia, West Sudetenland	10, 17, 46 Inf; 4 Pan
XIV	None (based in Magdeburg)	2, 13, 20, 29 Mot
XV	None (based in Jena)	1, 2, 3, 4 Lit
XVI	None (based in Berlin)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Pan
XVII	Upper and Lower Austria	44, 45 Inf; 4 Lit; 2 Pan
XVIII	Tyrol, Carinthia, Styria	2, 3 Mou
XIX	None (based in Vienna)	(reserved for new units)
XX	Polish Corridor	not applicable
XXI	Western Poland	not applicable

Key: *Inf* means infantry, *Mou* mountain, *Mot* motorized, *Lit* light (weak mechanized), and *Pan* panzer in the table above.

Field Commands

OKW assigned divisions and smaller specialist units from across all districts into temporary field commands as needed.

From corps level on up, these commands possessed their own staffs, with five sections. The first was the general staff, with a chief of staff and four subordinates called 1a (in charge of operations planning and deputy chief of staff), 1b (supply and administration and deputy in charge of rear functions), 1c (intelligence), and 1d (training). Section II, the adjutant, handled routine administration. Section III handled legal issues. Section IV, the intendants, handled supply, medical, and veterinary needs. Section V was the chaplains. Generalstab officers (see above) always filled the adjutant's post as well as the top five general-staff slots. The commanding officer of each troop type (artillery, engineers, etc.) within the unit also joined the staff and answered to its chief. Lesser officers and enlisted men handled the staffs' routine functions.

These units were further organized into three functional groups. The *tactical group* consisted of the 1a and 1c general-staff departments. The *supply group* consisted of Section IV and the 1b general-staff element. The *personnel group* consisted of sections II, III, and V, with a few other non-staff support units attached, including all divisional headquarters.

Each division also had a staff, but not a true general staff. Instead, the senior Generalstab officer within a division became its senior staff officer of operations, or 1a, and performed duties comparable to those of a chief of staff in larger units. The senior commanders of each troop type usually reported to him within the division's own tactical group.

ARMS OF THE WEHRMACHT

In all, 18 million primarily German men served in the Wehrmacht, with a peak of 12 million of them fighting in 1944. Here's where and how they served:

THE HEER

The Prussians had built modern Germany with their state-of-the-art infantry, and the army would remain the Reich's most formidable military arm throughout the war.

Structure

See pp. W36-38 and W48-50 for a general discussion of unit composition and tactics. The Heer based its planning on the division. Basic types included:

Infantry: Ordinary infantry divisions formed the backbone of the Heer. They held the rear areas and lines, and performed much of the dirty work in offensives after the more-celebrated panzer divisions opened the holes.

German infantry walked, with horses pulling their heavy baggage. The best-outfitted divisions had only 615 trucks and 394 cars, with the former reserved for crucial roles such as motorizing all of the antitank-gun companies. This left the troops to employ at least 4,800 horses per division to move the artillery and baggage in a 1939 17,000-man division.

The Germans fought most of the war using this division with three three-battalion infantry regiments. By 1944, they also fielded divisions with three two-battalion regiments, reducing manpower to 12,500 and further trimming motorized transport needs by one-third. They also fielded 10,000-man divisions with two three-battalion regiments in the East. The Volkssturm (p. 46) also could form divisions of three two-battalion regiments with 10,000 men.

Though more respected as the army's fundamental arm than in other countries, the infantry fell near the bottom of Heer purchasing priorities. Throughout the war, many divisions remained short of their allotted men, transport, and weapons.

Panzer: For their part, the panzer divisions never made up more than a small portion of the Heer's total forces, but they rarely remained idle – they spent their time fighting or refitting after the last fight. For this reason, they played an outsized role in both victory and defeat.

The 1939 standard panzer division had contained two two-battalion armor regiments with 324 panzers. For the invasion of Russia, however, Hitler reduced each division's panzer allotment to a single regiment of 196 panzers, while increasing their integral motorized infantry and artillery. By the end of the war, the official tally had declined to 150 panzers and assault guns in the 14,000-man panzer divisions, although their SS counterparts routinely fielded more (see sidebar, p. 31).

Few panzer divisions actually conformed to the table of organization and equipment; some received extra units prior to a major offensive, while many went into action while understrength. Regardless of their initial forces, these units often stayed in the lines for too long, leaving the field with none or just a handful of their armor.

Motorized (Panzer Grenadier): In their prewar planning, the Wehrmacht realized their panzers would need infantry especially equipped to keep up with them. Ideally, these riflemen would ride in lightly armored, cross-country transports, specifically the SdKfz 251 described on p. 75. As the war began, though, very few of these were available. The troops assigned to this role instead rode in trucks, forming motorized divisions that escorted the panzers on their penetrations of enemy lines.

In their 1941 reshuffling, the panzer divisions received plenty of their own infantry to meet their needs. Instead of disbanding their escorts, the Heer began giving them half of a panzer division's armor, thus transforming the armorless "motorized" division into an armored "panzer grenadier" division. Both the panzer and grenadier divisions fielded two two-battalion regiments of motorized infantry, making them very similar in form and function. The 14,000-man panzer-grenadier divisions continued to support panzer divisions, but also began to replace them in limited roles.

By 1942, the Heer began fielding enough armored carriers to place a third of the average panzer or panzer-grenadier division's riflemen in them. The remaining two-thirds continued to ride in trucks.

Light: Before the formation of panzer-grenadier divisions, light divisions took the same form and filled the same role, functioning as a low-grade panzer division. Most of them became panzer divisions in 1940.

Mountain: Given their terrain, the Germans placed a strong emphasis on mountain troops. The 13,000-man *gebirgs-division* or *gebirgsjägerdivision* of two three-battalion regiments had a much lighter baggage train than conventional infantry, with troops especially trained to fight in rugged terrain. Their transport included more mules and fewer horses.

The *jägerdivision* fielded a nearly identical division, except with more motor transport and less mountain gear. Their mission was to bring fast-moving and hard-hitting light-infantry tactics to other terrain types.



THE WAFFEN-SS

In 1933, the Nazi party began training stringently selected Hitler Youth graduates in a military fashion, housing them in special barracks to serve at the whim of the Führer. These men had to possess fine physiques, Aryan features, and an unimpeachable family history.

When the war began, the SS had formed four regiments, called *standarten*, of mostly motorized infantry. These took part in the fighting from the beginning, to little fanfare. Their leaders usually made fine Nazis but mediocre officers.

Regardless, Hitler and Himmler continued to both expand existing units and create new ones in what came to be known in 1940 as the Waffen-SS. An army loyal to party, rather than state, very much appealed to the Führer.

This rapid expansion, coupled with battlefield losses of proper Aryan candidates, caused the SS enrollment standards to erode. Once strictly volunteer, the SS began to strong-arm all Hitler Youth to enlist with it. It also began to accept “non-Germanic” men as worthy of dying for the party (p. 35). Even from its beginnings, however, the Waffen-SS had never been as doctrinally pure as Himmler had intended – a significant number of volunteers secretly disliked the Nazi cause, but recognized that Hitler would transform the SS into his elite service. They simply wanted to serve their inevitable enlistment in the arm that would receive the best supplies and gear.

By '44, the Waffen-SS fielded about one-half of panzer-grenadier and one-third of panzer divisions. SS units usually enjoyed better weapons and substantially larger unit sizes than the Heer units beside them. The 14,000-man SS infantry division fielded three two-battalion regiments and its own AA battalion. The standard 17,000-man SS panzer division included three battalions in each of its two panzer-grenadier regiments and better support, including a formidable rocket-artillery battalion. It also fielded 195 AFVs, often more, with a higher concentration of Panthers. (Increasingly, Tigers were reserved for independent battalions.) The 15,000-man SS panzer-grenadier divisions also possessed three-battalion regiments, but did not go overstrength as often. The 16,000-man SS mountain division often had four battalions in both regiments, as well as an AA battalion that the Heer units lacked.

Peaking at about 840,000 troops in 1945, the Waffen-SS was but one of the three major arms of the SS, and in fact Waffen-SS soldiers did not all receive SS membership. The General-SS, or *Allgemeine SS*, was the “proper” organization that Nazi party members joined, usually in a part-time capacity. The Death's Head formations, or *SS-Totenkopfverbände*, ran the concentration camps. The average Waffen-SS soldier had nothing to do with the camps, but SS units committed their share of German war crimes.

Pre-War Development

Nowhere did the Germans rearm more spectacularly during the 1930s than in the Heer. Versailles had limited Germany to a 100,000-man Reichsheer, though underhanded methods of training reservists commenced almost from the close of the Great War. The Reichsheer began to expand in 1933 with plans to eventually triple its size. In 1934, it planned further expansion to 21 infantry and three cavalry divisions, adding 70,000 men to place 240,000 under arms.

In 1935, in conjunction with the return of conscription, Hitler announced his intent to raise 36 divisions, requiring roughly 500,000 men. After further expansion, and incorporation of the Austrian army, the Wehrmacht fielded 52 active and 51 reserve divisions – 730,000 active soldiers and 1.1 million reservists – as the war was about to begin. After mobilization in September, that became 3.7 million troops that began the war. By 1945, 13 million would serve in field gray, with a peak force of some 6.6 million in mid-1943.

Forces Deployed

The table on p. 38 describes every motorized, panzer-grenadier, light, and panzer division that Germany fielded in World War II, as well as their basic service records.

Behind this steel point stood a spear shaft of no fewer than 310 Heer infantry divisions, numbered from 1st to 719th. (Obviously, many numbers were skipped in the series.) The East Prussians of the 1st proudly bore the Hohenzollern coat of arms as their divisional symbol when they fiercely attacked

in Poland, skirmished in France, besieged Leningrad, broke through a Soviet encirclement when transferred to the Dniepr River line (p. 21), retreated before the Soviets again in 1944, and ended their war in their East Prussian home. The 719th occupied the Netherlands until placed in defense of Antwerp in September 1944; it served as an Anglo-American victim for eight months before its complete destruction.

Most divisions, undermanned and ill-equipped, followed the latter model more closely than the former. These units were formed in “waves,” from the 1st (the prewar Heer), through the 2nd (reservists called up in August 1939), and so on through the 32nd wave (called up in fall 1944). Each wave was supposed to possess identical equipment, to help generals know a unit's capabilities at a glance. Shortages began with the 2nd wave.

The Heer also fielded 11 mountain (the 1st through 9th, 157th, and 188th) and 11 jäger divisions (the 5th, 28th, 42nd, 97th, 100th, 101st, 104th, 114th, 117th, 118th, and 187th), with one reserve mountain division.

One cavalry division began the war: the 1st. Though it became a panzer division, smaller units would continue to serve within some infantry-division reconnaissance battalions.

Other division types included the 10,000-man line-of-communications division, for policing rear areas; the 10,000-man assault division, with fewer infantry but more automatic weapons; and the 13,000-man frontier-guard division.

In addition, the Luftwaffe fielded a significant number of ground troops (p. 32), and toward the end of the war the Kriegsmarine (p. 33) formed a few units, or more frequently released sailors to become poor-quality Heer replacements.

THE LUFTWAFFE

The Führer and Göring had grand plans for the air force, but it would end the war noted mostly for its failures. These would be all the more apparent because the Heer only lived up to its full potential when the Luftwaffe owned the skies.

Structure

The OKL had nine directorates, organized much like OKH, and 16 inspectorates that dealt with specific flying issues.

The Luftwaffe deployed its planes in units much like army units (see pp. W37-38), keeping in mind that, as in all armed forces, the air units had a much higher proportion of support personnel to combatants. An artillery piece might have 10 crew members and one support person, a fighter plane the reverse.

The Luftwaffe compared its air units to the U.S. equivalents one rank higher than indicated by the table on p. W37. That is, the Germans rated a *staffel* as equivalent to a U.S. squadron. In practice, Luftwaffe units tended to be undersized for this comparison, particularly when considering the actual number of pilots in the air rather than how many the unit was supposed to field. The table provides a more realistic comparison, and better represents the appropriate rank for commanders.

The smallest Luftwaffe formation was the *rotte* of two fighters or ground-attack planes; alternatively these types would form a *schwarm* of four planes. Bombers formed up in a *kette* with three planes.

An oberleutnant or hauptmann would lead a staffel of 12-16 planes as its *staffelkapitän*. Each staffel generally mustered 20-25 air-crew and roughly 100 ground-crew members.

A hauptmann generally led a fighter *gruppe* or a major a bomber *gruppe* of about 40 planes, and flew missions as the *gruppenkommandeur*. Each *gruppe* had three, more rarely four, *staffeln*, and mustered roughly 80 air and 500 ground crew.

Tactical control centered on the *geschwader*, usually led by a major or higher as its *geschwaderkommodore*. Each *geschwader* usually contained a proper staff, three operational *gruppen*, and a fourth training *gruppe* that could convert to active duty in an emergency. Its *staffeln* were numbered within the *geschwader* – i.e., 1-12 or 1-16, etc. – rather than within each *gruppe* – i.e., *staffeln* 1-3 of *gruppe* 1, *staffeln* 1-3 of *gruppe* 2, etc. Overall, the *geschwader* had about 120 planes and 2,000 men, but the Luftwaffe often scattered the *gruppen* of a given *geschwader* across wide areas.

Beyond the *geschwader*, desk-bound officers commanded Luftwaffe operations in the larger command structures described on p. W37. The administrative side of the air crews' needs was handled through a geographically-defined *Luftgau*, or air district. The operational and administrative chains of command were tied together in the *luftflotte*, or air fleet, which roughly corresponded to the army level of command for ground units. Usually a generaloberst or higher commanded a *luftflotte*.

A unit composed of fighters usually added the prefix *jagd-* to its unit name, or replaced the term *flieger-* with *jagd-* in the case of the division and corps names. Ground-attack units used the prefix *jabo-* with even more specialized units having their own prefixes, such as *wüstennot-* for a desert-rescue staffel. Bombers and dive bombers usually used the unadorned unit names or the prefix *kampf-*.

The Luftwaffe identified units by *geschwader*, with the *gruppe* (in Roman numerals) or *staffel* number (in Arabic figures) preceding this figure, set off with a slash. Thus, II/KG4 would represent the second *gruppe* of *Kampfgeschwader* 4 while 3/JG51 would represent the third *staffel* of *Jagdgeschwader* 51. A German plane usually displayed a four-character identification code: a letter, a number, then two letters. The first two characters indicated its *geschwader*, the last two its *staffel*, with the second letter being the individual plane's designation within the *staffel* that was indicated by the third and final letter.

Prewar Development

The Germans began working their way around the Versailles prohibition on a German air force in the 1920s. German manufacturers developed civilian and sporting airframes that worked perfectly well – better, even – when converted to military uses. In a covert agreement with the Soviet Union, that country trained German pilots and technicians in exchange for German instruction on military organization.

In March 1935, Hitler announced that the Luftwaffe would become a formal arm of Germany's military. The existing warplanes in commercial clothing began full production, and even more advanced models began development.

Forces Deployed

Göring's favor with Hitler led to a bloated Luftwaffe, with as many as 1.7 million men serving far fewer planes than required a service of this size.

At almost all times, the air force fielded more planes than pilots thoroughly trained to fly them. As the war went on, gasoline shortages also could drastically reduce force strength. In addition, turnover was high – a fighter unit might average losing one plane per month for each in service from late 1943 – leading to frequent fluctuation in force size.

The following table describes rough force strengths before applying the effective-strength modifiers above:

	<i>Fighters</i>	<i>Dive Bombers*</i>	<i>Bombers</i>	<i>Transports</i>	<i>Total</i>
1940:	1,200	300	1,000	225	3,200
1941:	1,300	260	1,000	225	3,400
1942:	1,300	270	1,200	365	3,500
1943:	1,700	500	1,300	400	4,600
1944:	2,100	350	900	700	4,900
1945:	2,300	600	300	270	4,600

* And other ground-attack types from 1942 on.

The Luftwaffe also fielded ground units, to meet the ever-increasing demand for front-line troops but keep them in the air service. The Hermann Göring division evolved into a powerful armored division, then a corp with two divisions, one *panzer* and one motorized; see p. 38. The Luftwaffe attempted to create 23 16,000-man *Fallschirmjäger* divisions with three three-battalion regiments each, though not all had formed up by war's end. As the war progressed, the Luftwaffe scraped together mechanics and AA gunners into 22 regular infantry divisions and many smaller units. These usually lacked proper training and fared poorly if they saw action; eventually, the Heer seized control of them. During the entire war, Luftwaffe crews manned most of the antiaircraft guns in Germany.

THE KRIEGSMARINE

Like the Kaiser, Hitler hoped to build a world-class navy to protect the global interests he foresaw for Germany. Unlike his predecessor, he was not willing to invest in this fleet when his favored Heer remained perpetually short of funding. The Kriegsmarine remained the most disappointing service, and the smallest, never deploying more than 820,000 sailors.

Structure

The Kriegsmarine divided its small armada into three sorts of ship or boat: the *Flottenstreitkräfte* (ocean-going ships), *Unterseeboote* (U-boats), and *Sicherungsstreitkräfte* (coastal security vessels). Each class had its own command. Within the high seas fleet, each type of vessel also had its own administrative command structure, with operational command defined by OKM as needed. The U-boat service had a flatter command structure, befitting the forced independence of each captain. Command of the coastal forces hinged upon defined territories, with flotillas moved in and out of each as need shifted.

Prewar Development

Like the interwar army, the Reichsmarine had suffered severe limits on its overall size and the size of individual ships, though those limits primarily stemmed from international naval accords rather than the Versailles treaties.

When Hitler took power, the Kriegsmarine developed an ambitious “Z Plan” to increase its strength to match that of any rival; however, the Wehrmacht only truly implemented the Z Plan in mid-1939. Ultimately, the Kriegsmarine would end up selling or scrapping many of the hulls laid down then because it became obvious that they would remain unfinished.

The High Seas Fleet

The Kriegsmarine only launched two quality battleships, both in 1939: the ill-fated *Bismarck* and its sister ship, the *Tirpitz*, which was kept guarded in the fjords of Norway until the British finally sank it at berth. The only battleships that the Entente powers allowed Germany to retain after the Great War were the 1908-era *Schlesian* and *Schleswig-Holstein*. The latter fired the first naval broadside of WWII at Danzig, but both already had become obsolete. The interwar navy first built the 1931-34 “pocket battleship” trio of *Lützow* (formerly *Deutschland*), *Admiral Scheer*, and *Admiral Graf Spee*, which met various levels of success filling what were really heavy-cruiser roles. The next two ships in the series – the 1936 *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* – were radically upsized so that they wielded undersized 11” guns but otherwise represented formidable battleships, and enjoyed some success in commerce raiding.

The Kriegsmarine eventually reclassified the *Lützow* as a heavy cruiser. In addition, it commissioned the heavy cruisers *Admiral Hipper*, *Blücher* and *Prinz Eugen*, and light cruisers *Emden*, *Königsberg*, *Karlsruhe*, *Köln*, *Leipzig*, and *Nürnberg*.

The navy also floated about 40 Z-class and 50 T-class destroyers. The Z-class generally featured a heavy number of guns while the T-class relied more on torpedoes and more closely resembled other nations’ destroyers. The Kriegsmarine generally grouped destroyers into flotillas of six.

Once the war began, the Kriegsmarine took over several fast merchant ships that had been built with reinforced hulls for the purpose and began converting them into disguised commerce raiders. These generally displaced some 7,000 tons and mounted six 150mm guns, 2-6 torpedo tubes, and an assortment of AA guns. Most also carried an Arado 196 (p. 84) or speedboat for scouting. *Atlantis* (see p. W20) became the first to prey on the world’s merchant lanes beginning March 11, 1940, followed into service in the next two years by *Orion*, *Widder*, *Thor*, *Pinguin*, *Komet*, *Kormoran*, *Michel*, and *Stier*. By October 1943, the last of these ships left raiding with the sinking of the *Michel*.

The Germans began building one carrier, the 28,000-ton *Graf Zeppelin*, but never finished it.

The high seas fleet also administered the Schnellboot (p. 90) forces, which couldn’t cross open ocean but also did not really belong in the coastal-security command. Much like oversized PT boats, these vessels raided Allied shipping in the English Channel and relatively close to shore in other locales. The Führer did not include these hit-and-run specialists in his overall disdain for the high seas fleet.

The U-Boat Service

The Kaiser’s navy invented modern submarine warfare in the Great War, and Hitler continued to hold high hopes for its potential when his war began. Despite that, the high-seas admirals of the 1939 Kriegsmarine had built only 57 U-boats, many of them small and incapable of patrolling the Atlantic.

Things would rapidly change. The navy would lay down more than 1,000 additional boats during the war, an expansion that seriously diluted the quality of the crews (p. 49), but illustrated that Germany’s only hopes of naval supremacy rested beneath the waves. Of those boats, some 850 would enter service – and Allied forces would destroy a chilling three-quarters of them in combat, often with all hands.

Statistically, Allied submarine-hunting aircraft represented just a bit more threat to the U-boats than Allied destroyers. The airplanes tended to pounce on the subs without much warning, launching torpedoes or strafing them with cannons before the Germans had time to dive below the aircraft’s ability to see the boat. The destroyers usually had to deal with subs running silent and deep, but would spend countless hours and tons of high explosive in boxing in their elusive prey with depth charges or special rockets.

Against this, 22% of active U-boats managed to damage (but not always sink) 1-5 enemy vessels, 8% 6-10 vessels, 4% 11-19, and 3% 20 or more. While formidable, the total tonnage that the U-boats sank fell far short of Germany’s needs for crippling Great Britain and hamstringing foreign aid to the Soviets.

The Coastal Security Force

This branch consisted of minelayers, minesweepers, small submarine hunters, channel-dredging vessels, other boats intended to keep a coast secure for the Reich, and some coastal artillery. A coastal command, called a division, commanded some 6-15 flotillas. Each flotilla consisted of about six boats with identical roles (minesweeping, etc.). These commands faced frequent skirmishing with Allied forces.

THE LANDSER LIFE



National Socialism operated under the principle that a citizen of the Third Reich existed to serve the state. The vast majority of German males, and a good number of non-Germans, found that the Nazis efficiently put this policy into practice.

FROM CRADLE TO RIFLE

In his Gleichschaltung policy (p. 10), Hitler wanted Germans to begin training for his armies as young children. No other nation's troops would enter the military life as well prepared for the role of the ordinary foot soldier, or *landser*.

The Hitler Youth

Early on, the Nazis formed the Hitler Youth (p. 47). Participation honed German boys' physical fitness and taught them basic military skills. It also gave the adult leaders an excellent opportunity in which to instill the Nazi worldview, and plenty of time to assess each child's character.

Because of the program's early start, many of the soldiers who began the war already had participated in the *Hitlerjugend*, though relatively few had spent several years in the organization. As the war progressed, and attendance became mandatory, HJ veterans made up almost all of each year's new recruits.

The Musterung

At age 18 (17 in 1945), the typical German male left the Hitler Youth and registered for conscription, a process called the *Musterung*. All German men from 18 to 45 years old already had registered when Hitler reintroduced conscription in 1935, as did Austrian men after the Reich absorbed their country.

The new registrant received a medical examination and interviews which determined his previous military or otherwise applicable experience. He then was placed in the appropriate of the following categories:

- Aktiv Dienende*: men already on active service.
- Reserve I*: men under 35 and fully trained.
- Reserve II*: men under 35 and partially trained.
- Ersatzreserve I*: men under 35 and untrained.
- Ersatzreserve II*: men under 35 but unfit and untrained.
- Landwehr I*: men 35 to 45 years old and trained.
- Landwehr II*: men 35 to 45 and untrained.
- Landsturm I*: men over 45 and trained.
- Landsturm II*: men over 45 and untrained.

During the war, a Reserve-class registrant then received instructions on reporting to a training center. As the war progressed, the Reich progressively called up the Ersatzreserve and Landwehr, as well. By 1944, the Volkssturm (p. 46) began deploying the Landsturm II in a threadbare fashion.

An eager youth could volunteer for service at 17 (16 in 1944-45). In the final frantic days, some Wehrmacht units embraced recruits as young as 14, but most German boys 16 or younger could avoid service on the front line if they desired. They would face high odds of being assigned to an antiaircraft gun or volunteer fire brigade at home, however.

The Labor Service

Before the war, the Wehrmacht did not call conscripts up before age 20. If the 18-year-old registrant had no job arranged, he had to enroll in the *Reichsarbeitsdienstes*, or National Labor Service. This program employed him in public works, but the service spent much of each day in physical and other military-style training. The Labor Service men lived in barracks and learned to march with a shovel across their shoulders.

Once these men entered Wehrmacht training, the instructors disabused them of the notion that they had learned anything of worth in the Labor Service.

Basic Training

Once the Wehrmacht did call up a recruit, it assigned him to an appropriate Replacement Army unit in his district (p. 29). Those who had shown the extraordinary aptitude desired for mobile formations might instead be assigned to one of the at-large districts, and sent far from home. Likewise, recruits with particular skills might be sent out of district; anyone with climbing experience would be sent to a district hosting a mountain division if his home district had none. This Replacement unit mirrored its Field Army counterpart in every possible way.

Most soldiers received 16 weeks of basic training, though toward the end of the war this period shrank to as low as eight weeks. After that, advanced training relying heavily on field exercises usually would last at least a month, and often far longer if the Field Army delayed in calling up the training unit.

Most Wehrmacht basic training varied markedly from both the Prussian model and other contemporary nations' practices. Most instructors avoided the personalized abuse that other armies used to harden recruits' psyches and dehumanize them – before anyone else, the Germans had realized that the 20th century rifleman needed both a strong habit of obedience *and* a high sense of personal initiative, not simply an ironclad case of the former. Some Wehrmacht instructors even socialized with recruits in the evenings. They motivated the recruit as much through a sort of familial bond and honor as through fear.

On the other hand, the Wehrmacht maintained stark standards for conditioning men to combat, and continued processes that others would consider abusive in the service of what they saw as practical needs. From their first days, German recruits lived in a sleep-deprived haze, the spikes of pain in their skulls competing with their throbbing feet and aching backs, because their trainers knew they routinely would have to go without sleep for days at the front. Live-fire exercises often did not involve a fixed machine gun firing over recruits' head – someone aimed at the recruit, just like the enemy would. Recruits frequently died in German fire drills.

Not every drill instructor had converted to the new methods, and the old Prussian system was an *entirely* different beast. Recruits under one of these old hands could suffer under a barrage of barracks abuses.

Also, the "new age" system had its dark side. U.S. soldiers had to be threatened with courts martial to take part in a firing squad. Wehrmacht units never lacked for volunteers.

AMONG THE SOLDIERY

Some other notable characteristics of serving in the Wehrmacht included:

Advanced Training

For everyone in the Wehrmacht, basic only prepared them for constant training while on active duty. Both replacement and field units trained whenever not actively engaged in another task. Before the war, the entire Heer engaged in field exercises from April through August. Higher ranks also received specialized training:

NCO Training: The Heer placed extreme emphasis on fielding well-trained noncommissioned officers. Before the war, NCO candidates had to enlist for 12 years and received two years of training. After 1939, candidates could rise from the enlisted ranks after combat service and spent less time in training, often between four and eight months.

Officer Training: Before the war, the Heer preselected officer-candidates and made them serve four years in special enlisted ranks prior to commissioning. After the fighting began, the service selected candidates from front-line veterans and trained them for five months before commissioning.



Pay and Expenses

The formula on p. W63 serves well enough to describe Wehrmacht pay, in which all troops received tax-free war-service pay except when POWs, and dependent pay if a conscripted family man, but professional soldiers had some or all of this war pay deducted from their taxable peacetime salaries. Troops also received front-line pay and travel expenses, but these are assumed to be rolled into the lump sum provided by the corebook's Wealth rules. Also see p. 44.

Well Fed and Well Received

The Reich fed its troops far better than it fed its civilian population, even in basic training. Soldiers were the only Germans to see imported fruits and coffee after the war began. These luxuries could serve a soldier as bonus pay when on leave. A little coffee or tobacco opened more doors than any paper currency in wartime Berlin, Paris, and Rome.

When supply lines collapsed, troops could and would go hungry, but even in dire straits their ration rarely became "too little to live" even if it barely exceeded "too much to die." Normally, a mess would draw for each soldier per day 1.6 lbs. of bread; 1.6 ounces of butter or fat; 4.2 ounces of sausage, fish, or

cheese; 7 ounces of jam or honey; seven cigarettes, two cigars, or one roll of sweet drops; ingredients for a hot meal containing 1.6 lbs. of potatoes, pasta, and/or vegetables; 4.2 ounces of meat; 1.6 ounces of fat; 0.5 ounces of condiments; 0.3 ounces of coffee; and 0.4 ounces of tea or a wretched coffee substitute called *Kaffee-Ersatz*. See p. 58 for field rations.

Leaves and Furloughs

As with many European armies, the Wehrmacht was relatively generous with medical and other leaves when compared to U.S. practices. Troopers with moderate injuries might spend months on leave, with the actual recuperation taking only a fraction of that time. Many of the German soldiers who survived the entire war spent a good portion of it on medical leave for two or three non-life-threatening injuries received during their infrequent forays into active service.

Encountering a healthy Heer trooper on leave immediately behind an area of active fighting would be rare, but it would have been equally rare to visit pre-invasion Germany, Italy, or France without encountering many of them.

In 1943, the Reich's unending crises caused this policy to rapidly become more austere. The Wehrmacht suspended all leave other than for serious medical cases in 1944.

Multinational Rolls

Soon after the war started, the Nazi leadership began recruiting foreigners into the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS, recognizing that German manpower would be spread thin in its conquests. Even a few British and U.S. nationals could be found in the German ranks. The Wehrmacht pressured men from Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden to volunteer, since they were racial Germans in Nazi

eyes, but did not usually conscript them. Those who joined served with no restrictions and kept their original citizenship.

By the end of the war, a great number of Poles, Croats, Communist-hating ex-Soviet subjects, and other Eastern Europeans were serving with the Wehrmacht or Waffen-SS. The Reich had conscripted many of them under an increasingly liberal definition of "Germanic" races – no one really believed that these "Section 3" Germans were anything but an excuse for adding cannon fodder. Most of these men had a probationary German citizenship thrust upon them and could serve only as privates. (In game terms, this would be a -10-point Social Stigma.) Those who had joined their country's Fascist movements *before* the Reich occupation often served with full rights and considerable distinction.

Formal German TO/Es began to assume that rear-area menial jobs would be filled by *Hiwis* (literally *helpers*, a term usually applied to Russian volunteers for the Wehrmacht considered of dubious reliability). Late-war squads sometimes consisted of a German corporal leading a group of non-Germans, with one of the privates who spoke German as his assistant. These troops often had no desire to engage in any actual fighting for the Reich.

WHAT THEY CARRIED



Heer troops carried an efficient minimum of equipment for daily usage. See pp. W87-99 for basic gear and weapons.

Papers and ID

Every German soldier carried a standard set of personal identification. This began with his *Soldbuch*, or paybook, a strongly bound booklet somewhat larger than a modern passport and serving much the same purpose. It included a photograph and physical description of the soldier, his service and medical records, a copy of his identity-disc's lettering, and his history of drawing pay outside his own unit. Troopers routinely carried other documents, such as civil driving licenses, folded within their paybook. Generally, when about to take part in an assault, German soldiers left their paybooks with someone in the rear; they carried them at all times, otherwise.

Troops not on active service carried a *Wehrpass*, much like the paybook. Unit administrators kept these for those on duty.

The Wehrmacht issued an identity disc much like dog tags. It was a zinc oval about 3" across, perforated along the long axis and with holes drilled in it for a leather cord. The trooper wore it around his neck. If he was killed, the lower half of the disc could be snapped off and taken, leaving the upper half with the body. Both halves initially gave service number, unit, and blood type. Later discs carried only the service number and a code for rear-area administrators to look up the rest.

German soldiers generally carried a minimal set of personal effects: snapshots of mom (*mutti*), wife, and/or girlfriend(s); pornographic post or playing cards; and (for reasons not entirely clear) photos of atrocities or executions they had witnessed.

Medals

See p. W49. About 16% of German soldiers had an Iron Cross, Second Class, while about 3% wore the First Class version. The Wehrmacht and Nazi party issued hundreds of other medals and awards. Few not discussed on p. W49 would merit a reaction bonus, though the GM is free to judge differently depending on circumstances. For instance, most soldiers simply wouldn't recognize something like the old-pattern Romanian Order of the Crown, but the medal might bestow a +1 reaction from old-guard officers (a small group) if the soldier wore nothing more prominent. If worn with an Iron Cross, the Romanian medal probably would not add to the reaction bonus.

Civilian awards were not common, though the Cross of Honor of the German Mother (in bronze for 5-6 children, silver for 7-8, or gold for more) gave a +1 to reactions among most Germans, even those not particularly devoted to Nazism.

Infantry Kit

An off-duty rifleman wore underclothes, uniform with first-aid kit, service cap, and boots, weighing 11.5 lbs. with jackboots.

Entering combat, he placed two full rifle ammo pouches on his belt, one to each side of the buckle. He added his exterior suspenders (which normally attached to the ammo pouches) to form his load-carrying gear. He attached a bread bag to his belt at the right hip, within which he carried a half-day's

rations, toiletries, personal effects, and usually his service cap. He attached his entrenching tool (see p. W88) to his belt at the left hip with his bayonet (see p. W193) just before it. He attached a canteen to the bread bag such that it rode near his right buttock. He slung a gas-mask container over his right shoulder and fixed it to his belt so that it rode securely over his left kidney or buttock. He then put on his helmet and picked up his Karabiner 98k rifle (see p. W92), often slinging it to the front when marching in the field rather than on parade.

This basic combat load weighed 43 lbs. When possible, riflemen carried into action only this gear and a grenade or two.

Early rifleman also carried a gas cape (see p. W87) on the front side of their gas-mask strap, bringing combat encumbrance to 45 lbs. total. They began to discard these as fighting progressed without threat of chemical warfare. Panzer-grenadiers also often carried goggles for use while in their carriers. They wore these slung around their necks in combat.

On the march or when transport was not available to carry field gear, the rifleman could attach an assault pack or the *tor-nister* full pack (treat as a backpack or mountain backpack respectively; see p. W87) to a yoke hung from his braces high on his shoulders. With this, the trooper's greatcoat (treat as a trenchcoat, p. W87), blanket, and shelter half were rolled together and strapped horseshoe-style over the top of the pack. This assembly added 17.5 (for the assault pack) or 22.5 lbs. to encumbrance before anything was added to the backpack other than stakes and rope for using the shelter half as a tent.

See pp. 57-59 for more details on much of this equipment.

WHAT CARRIED THEM

Whenever possible, troops moved by train. Standard troop trains carried a tank platoon, a motorized company and support elements, or 350 infantrymen with baggage and horses. An infantry division required 35-40 of these trains, a panzer division twice that. Trains averaged 150-200 miles daily in Germany, 60 near the front. They carried 1-3 AA guns.

Once on the road, German infantry divisions averaged 3 mph at all hours, motorized divisions 16 mph in daytime or 10 mph at night, and armored divisions 12 mph during daylight or 7 mph after dark. Infantry could cover short distances at 4 mph but rarely averaged more than 20 miles per day, half that in rough terrain or bad weather. Motorized divisions averaged 90-150 miles, armored divisions 60-90 on good roads. As with all armies, a German division formed an incredibly long column on the march. An infantry division stretched 25 miles with no space between subunits, a panzer division 59.

Less commonly, troops moved by ship. In game terms, the general staff set aside 40 VSPs (see p. W118) of cargo space per soldier, 160 per horse, 200 per light vehicle, 400 per truck or heavy artillery piece, or 500 for a medium tank. (The *GURPS WWII* design system requires *much* less space. These are historical figures, whereas the game rules assume very high efficiency.) This averaged to 110 VSPs per man with gear in an infantry division, with careful loading. Simply rushing everyone on and off ferries multiplied space needs by as much as 7!

VARIETIES OF UNIFORM

Most WWII-era armies issued two uniforms to their troops, a presentable service uniform and a utilitarian field uniform. To save money, the Wehrmacht began issuing only one uniform for both purposes. Standards of dress included:

Ceremonial Dress (grossen Gesellschaftanzug): The most formal uniform, this was always worn with black shoes, never boots. Special collar and cuff fittings in a blue-green (usually imitation) velvet were attached to the jacket. In season, a sophisticated officer would wear a white service jacket in this dress, if he owned one.

Social Dress (kleine Gesellschaftanzug): As above, but slightly less formal.

Walking-Out Dress (Ausgehanzug): The standard uniform for going to town, this included the service uniform, shoes, and a tasseled sword (for officers and NCOs) or bayonet (for enlisted). Decorations and awards could be worn.

Announcement Dress (Meldeanzug): Very similar to walking-out dress, but worn for minor formal occasions.

Service Dress (Dienstanzug): Simply the service uniform with no special additions, this was worn while in classroom or on office duty.

Parade Dress (Paradeanzug): This combined the *Ausgehanzug* with the accouterments of war: helmets, boots, cartridge pouches, rifle, etc.

Field Dress (Feldanzug): This combat dress included helmets, boots, pack, and few frills, at least by German standards.

Troops usually had a fatigue or work suit, as well, which consisted of a crude coverall or shirt-and-pants to be worn when conducting heavy labor that might damage the clothes.

See p. 57 for more information on this clothing.

The service uniform and cap had colored piping, which denoted the wearer's service arm. Generals and any officer in the general staff wore a broad stripe in their piping color down each pants leg. The piping colors were:

Branch	Piping
Armor	Pink
Armored infantry	Green
Artillery, Heavy	Bright red
Artillery, Light	White
Chaplains	Violet
Chemical warfare	Purple red
Engineers	Black
General, any	Bright red
General staff	Crimson
Infantry	White
Medical	Dark blue
Military police	Orange red
Mountain	Light green
Ordnance	Orange
Propaganda	Light gray
Recon/cavalry	Gold yellow
Signal	Lemon yellow
Specialist, officers	Gray blue
Specialist, services	Wine red
Supply and admin	Light blue
Veterinarians	Crimson

These piping colors could allow informed soldiers to distinguish Wehrmacht troops at a glance. ("The Germans must be running desperately short of men, because the loaders on that 88 were wearing light-blue piping.") This could be a tricky business, because several general exceptions existed. For instance, 24th Panzer retained the gold-yellow piping from its cavalry roots, and the crews of self-propelled guns attached to infantry units wore white piping rather than pink.

Emblems of Rank or Grade

The Wehrmacht primarily used their uniforms' shoulder straps to indicate rank or grade.

Enlisted personnel wore a plain strap with only their service piping and usually a unit number in the middle; a diamond emblem and/or 1-2 chevrons on the upper sleeve indicated various higher private and corporal ranks.

NCOs wore a bordered shoulder strap with 1-4 diamonds at higher ranks; they also wore braided collars.

Company officers (lieutenants and captains) wore a fluted shoulder strap with 0-2 diamonds. Field officers (majors and colonels) wore a braided silver strap with 0-2 diamonds. Generals wore a braided gold strap with 0-3 diamonds, or crossed batons if field marshals.

The collar patches also varied. Non-officers wore a plain one and generals a very elaborate one. Officers below general wore one of three very similar patches, depending on rank.

In camouflage uniforms or other specialized clothing, a series of 0-5 stripes and/or 0-2 oak leaves on the lower sleeve indicated rank, with full generals adding diamonds to a particularly thick bar and field marshals adding crossed batons. Regulations forbade wearing any other insignia with camouflage uniforms, but the troops routinely ignored this restriction.

The Luftwaffe, Kriegsmarine, and special Heer troops used minor variations of the same system. German troops rarely would have any problem identifying the rank or grade of those in other Wehrmacht arms.



ARMOR ALLOCATION TABLE

The following table illustrates where Germany deployed its mobile divisions. It and its footnotes reference every motorized, panzer-grenadier, light, and panzer division that the Third Reich fielded.

Many of these divisions would continue to appear on the Wehrmacht's rolls – and Hitler's war maps – after this table indicates their destruction, but they had lost any resemblance to a battle-ready division, even by the leached-out German standards of 1944-45.

Many of these units first formed as ordinary infantry divisions or smaller mobile units; they do not appear on the table until becoming motorized units of division size or larger.

The table rounds service dates for simplicity; for example, many units packed into Tunisia just in time for the 1943 defeat actually arrived in Africa in December 1942, but are not listed among the units of '42 Africa. Though many units switched between the Western and Eastern fronts in 1945, the table lists them only in their primary theater of action.

'39 Poland	2, 13, 20, 29 Mot; 1-4 ¹⁷ Lit; 1-5, KEM Pan.
'40 France	2 ¹ , 13 ³ , 16, 20, 29, 2-4SS Mot; 1-10 Pan.
'40 Sea Lion	20, 29 Mot; 4, 7-8, 10 Pan.
'41 Africa	5 ¹⁸ Lit; 15, 21 ¹⁸ Pan.
'41 Balkans	16, 2SS Mot; 5, 8-9, 11, 14, 16 Pan.
'41 Russia	3, 10 ² , 14, 16, 18, 20, 25, 29, 36, 60, 1-5SS Mot; 1-14, 16-20 Pan.
'42 Africa	90, 164 Lit; 15, 21 Pan.
'42 Russia except: '42-43 in Stalingrad	14 ⁴ , 16, 18, 20, 25, 36, GD, 1-3SS ²⁵ , 4-5SS Mot; 1-13, 17-20, 22, 23, 27 Pan. 3 ⁹ , 29 ⁹ , 60 ¹¹ Mot; 14, 16, 24 Pan.
'43 Africa	999 ¹³ , HEG ²⁵ Mot; 90 ¹⁹ , 164 Lit; 10 , 15 ²² , 21 Pan.
'43 Russia except: '43 Kursk	16 ⁵ , 18 ⁶ , 20 ⁷ , 25 ⁸ , 4SS, 5SS Mot; 1 ²⁰ , 8, 12-14, 17, 23 Pan. 36 ¹⁰ Mot; 10, 1-3SS PzGr; 2-9, 11, 18 ²³ , 19-20, GD Pan.
'43 Sicily	15, 29 PzGr; HEG Pan.
'43 Italy	3, 15, 29, 90 PzGr; 16, 24, 26, HEG, 1SS Pan.
Early '44 East	10 , 16 , 18, 20, 25, FEL, 4-5SS, 11SS, 23SS, 27SS, 28SS PzGr; 1, 3-9, 11-14, 16-20, 23-25, GD, 1-3SS, 9-10SS Pan.
Early '44 Italy	3, 15, 29, 90, 16SS PzGr; 26, HEG Pan.
Late '44 West	3, 15, 10SS, 17SS PzGr; 2, 9, 11, 21, 116, PAN, 1-2SS, 9-10SS, 12SS Pan.
Late '44 East	20, 25, FEL ¹² , 4-5SS, 11SS, 18SS, 23SS, 27-28SS, 31SS PzGr; 1, 3-8, 12, 13, 14, 16-17, 19, 20, 23-25, GD, HEG, 3SS Pan.
Late '44 Italy	29, 90, 16SS PzGr; 26 Pan.
Battle of Bulge	3, 15, FÜP PzGr; 2, 9, 11, 116, FÜH, PAN, 1-2SS, 9-10SS, 12SS Pan.
'45 West	3, 15, 17SS PzGr; 2, 9, 11, 116, 233 ²⁴ , CLA, PAN Pan.
'45 East	20, 25, BRA ¹⁴ , FÜP, KUR, 4-5SS, 11SS , 16SS, 18SS , 23SS , 27-28SS, 31SS , 38SS PzGr; 1, 3-8, 12, 13 ²¹ , 14, 16-17, 19-21, 23-25, 232 , FEP , FÜH, GD , HEG, 1-3SS, 9SS, 10SS , 12SS Pan.
'45 Italy	29, 90 PzGr; 26 Pan.
Berlin	18, 20, 11SS, 32SS PzGr.



Italics indicate unit destroyed but reformed by time of next appearance in the table.

Bold-italics indicate unit destroyed and not effectively reformed; survivors join other units or form battle groups.

Abbreviations: *Lit* refers to light mechanized divisions, *Mot* to motorized divisions, *PzGr* to panzer-grenadiers, and *Pan* to panzer divisions. *BRA* refers to PzGr Div. Brandenburg, *CLA* to Panzer Division Clausewitz, *FEL* to PzGr Div. Feldherrnhalle, *FEP* to 1st Panzer Div. Feldherrnhalle, *FÜH* to Führer Begleit Panzer Div., *FÜP* to Führer PzGr Div., *GD* to Gross Deutschland PzGr Div. (later Panzer Corps), *HEG* to Hermann Göring Div. (from motorized to armored Fallschirmjäger then to two divisions), *KEM* to the improvised Kempf Panzer Div., *KUR* to PzGr Div. Kurmark, *PAN* to Panzer Lehr Div. *1SS* refers to 1st SS PzGr (later Panzer) Div. Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler, *2SS* to 2nd SS PzGr (later Panzer) Div. Das Reich, *3SS* to 3rd SS PzGr (later Panzer) Div. Totenkopf, *4SS* to 4th SS Polizei PzGr Div., *5SS* to 5th SS PzGr (later Panzer) Div. Wiking, *9SS* to 9th SS PzGr (later Panzer) Div.

Hohenstaufen, *10SS* to 10th SS PzGr (later Panzer) Div. Frundsberg, *11SS* to 11th SS Freiwillige PzGr Div. Nordland, *12SS* to 12th SS PzGr (later Panzer) Hitlerjugend, *16SS* to 16th SS PzGr Div. Reichsführer SS, *17SS* to 17th SS PzGr Div. Goetz von Berlichingen, *18SS* to 18th SS Freiwillige PzGr Div. Horst Wessel, *23SS* to 23rd SS Freiwillige PzGr Div. Nederland, *27SS* to 27th SS Freiwillige PzGr Div. Lange-march, *28SS* to 28th SS Freiwillige PzGr Div. Wallonien, *31SS* to 31st SS Freiwillige Grenadier Div. Bohmen-Maren, *32SS* to 32nd SS Freiwillige Grenadier Div. 30 Januar, and *38SS* to 38th SS PzGr Div. Nibelungen.

Not Listed (no major actions or last-minute Eastern Front organizations of battle-group quality): Courland, Donau, Jüterbog, Münchenberg, Nibelungen, Norwegen, Schlesien, Thuringien, and Westfalen panzer divisions.

Footnotes to Armor Allocation

- ¹ Became 12th Panzer, January 1941.
- ² Became 10th PzGr, April 1943.
- ³ Became 13th Panzer, October 1940.
- ⁴ Reverted to non-motorized, May 1943.
- ⁵ Became 15th PzGr, June 1943.
- ⁶ Became 18th PzGr, May 1943.
- ⁷ Became 20th PzGr, June 1943.
- ⁸ Became 25th PzGr, June 1943, no panzers till October.
- ⁹ Became 3rd and 29th PzGr upon reforming, June 1943.
- ¹⁰ Reverted to non-motorized, October 1943.
- ¹¹ Became PzGr Div. Feldherrnhalle on reforming, June '43.
- ¹² Became 1st Panzer Div. Feldherrnhalle, November '44.
- ¹³ Formed from penal units.
- ¹⁴ Formed from Brandenburger special-operations unit.
- ¹⁵ Became panzer division, July 1943.
- ¹⁶ Split into two divisions, October 1944.
- ¹⁷ Became 6-9 Panzer sequentially in October 1939 (1-3 Lit became 6-8 Pan) and October 1940 (4 Lit into 9 Pan).
- ¹⁸ The 5th Light became 21st Panzer, July 1941.
- ¹⁹ Became 90th PzGr on reforming in Sardinia, July 1943.



- ²⁰ Refitted in France, January-June 1943.
- ²¹ Named 2nd Panzer Div. Feldherrnhalle on reform, Jan. '45.
- ²² Became 15th PzGr on reforming in Sicily, July 1943.
- ²³ Destroyed October 1943, reorganized as 18th Artillery.
- ²⁴ Security in Denmark, April-May only.
- ²⁵ Refitted in France, last half of 1942.

PANZER ENCOUNTER TABLE

3d	9/1/39	9/1/40	9/1/41	9/1/42	9/1/43	9/1/44	2/1/45
3	Panzer I A	Panzer I A	Panzer I A	Panzer I A	Elefant	Panzer II L	Nashorn
4	Pz. I Command	Panzer I A	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Flammpz. III	Panzer 38(t)	StmPz IV
5	Panzer I A	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer II F	StuH 42	Jagdpanther
6	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer III J	Panzer IV J	Panzer III N
7	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer II F	Panzer IV G	Panzer III N	StuG IV
8	Panzer I B	Panzer I B	Panzer II C	Panzer II C	Panzer III L	Panther A	Panther G
9	Panzer I B	Panzer II C	Panzer IV F	Panzer III H	Panzer IV H	Panzer IV H	Panzer IV J
10	Panzer II C	Panzer II C	Panzer III H	Panzer III J	StuG III	StuG IV	StuG III
11	Panzer II C	Panzer III F	Panzer III G	Panzer III J	StuG III	StuG III	StuG III
12	Panzer II C	Panzer IV F	Panzer 38(t)	StuG III	Marder	Marder	Hetzer
13	Panzer II C	Panzer 38(t)	StuG III	Marder	Panther A	Panther G	Panther G
14	Panzer 35(t)	Special**	Panzer III F	Panzer IV F2	Marder	Jagd pz. IV	StuH 42
15	Panzer IV D	Panzer 35(t)	Panzer II F	Panzer 38(t)	Tiger	Tiger	Marder
16	Panzer III E	Panzer III F†	Panzer 35(t)	Panzer IV G	Nashorn	Nashorn	Tiger II
17	Panzer 38(t)	StuG III	Flammpz. II	Panzer IV F1	StuH 42	Tiger II	Tiger
18	Special*	StuG III	Flammpz. II	Tiger	StmPz IV	Jagdpanther	Jagdtiger
Total	3,498	3,506	5,216	7,376	7,704	12,406	13,362

* Roll again. The tank has had the main gun removed and field-replaced with a Medium Tank Flamethrower (see p. W132).

** Roll 1d. On 1-4, this is a Panzer I command variant. On 5-6, a Flammpanzer II.

† Mounting 50mm Medium Tank Gun.

The table above converts Wehrmacht panzer inventories at various points in the war into a table for 3 dice. The table counts only vehicles within front-line fighting units; at the bottom it gives the total number of AFVs in all of the German front lines on that date. By necessity, some rarer vehicles have been omitted from the table entries, but are counted in the overall total.

The table can be used to generate random encounters for soldiers fighting the Germans, simply by rolling 3d. Regardless of the time period, for encounters deep behind the Reich's lines, the 1939 column usually should be used.

The table also can be used to determine what sort of tank that a new German armor crew will receive. In this case, the rolling player should be allowed to modify the die-roll result up or down by as much as *half* of his character's positive reaction modifiers that apply to the officer in charge of this selection, assuming that the PC *has* any reaction bonuses. The GM also might apply half of any reaction penalties.

Most of these vehicles are described in *GURPS WWII* or Chapter 4. The remainder can be created by the GM with some minimal research and the corebook's design system.

ACTION DIGEST

The following lists “hot spots” for Wehrmacht ground forces during WWII, regions in which active fighting took place or easily could have. Of necessity, the list omits most zones of occupation, even though to the individual 1943 rifleman two knife-wielding Communists in a darkened Paris alley could pose just as lethal a threat as a Soviet tank army.

GMs should not interpret this as forbidding the insertion of German troops in other regions during a given period. Small units could be ruled to have slipped beneath history’s radar.

Pre-War: Spain (civil war), China (military advisers), U.S.S.R. (training and weapons testing, not directly involved in any internal strife).

Sept.-Oct. '39: Poland (major fighting in September only).

Nov. '39: Poland, Holland (SS incident at border).

Dec. '39-Mar. '40: Poland (one-sided occupation violence).

April '40: Norway (primarily infantry), Denmark (low-key).

May '40: France, Belgium, Netherlands, Norway.

June '40: France, Belgium, Norway (winding down).

July-Sept. '40: French coast (preparing to invade Britain).

Oct. '40: Romania (occupiers posing as “advisers”).

Nov. '40-Jan. '41: Idle. (Luftwaffe bombers still active.)

Feb. '41: Libya (first Afrika Korps units enter skirmishes).

March '41: Norway (British commandos raid coast).

April '41: Yugoslavia, Greece, Libya.

May '41: Crete, Libya-Egypt (Brevity), Syria (undercover).

June-Sept. '41: U.S.S.R., Libya-Egypt border (Battleaxe, most fighting finished by August), Arctic Circle (vs. the Soviets at the northern Russia-Finland border).

Oct. '41: U.S.S.R. (take Moscow!), Libya (take Tobruk!).

Nov. '41: U.S.S.R. (height of Crimean campaign and strong Soviet counterattacks in south), Libya (Crusader).

Dec. '41: U.S.S.R. (Soviets punch hole in Leningrad cordon and open ice road), Libya (Crusader), Norway (British commandos and native resistance).

Jan. '42: U.S.S.R. (Soviet counterattacks everywhere, siege of Sevastopol), Libya (resupply and counterattack of British).

Feb. '42: U.S.S.R. and Libya (low-key), France (commando raid).

March '42: U.S.S.R. (heavy Soviet attacks in north), Libya (low-key), France (St. Nazaire raid; see pp. W:HS4-5).

April '42: U.S.S.R. and Libya (both low-key).

May '42: U.S.S.R. (Soviet attack at Kharkov), Libya (Gazala).

June '42: U.S.S.R. (Sevastopol taken), Egypt (Tobruk taken, long British retreat), Czechoslovakia (SS reprisals).

July '42: U.S.S.R. (southern offensive begins), Egypt.

Aug. '42: U.S.S.R. (Stalingrad reached), Egypt (low-key), France (amphibious assault on Dieppe).

Sept. '42: U.S.S.R. (Stalingrad), Egypt (Alam Halfa).

Oct. '42: U.S.S.R. (Stalingrad), Egypt (El Alamein).

Nov. '42: U.S.S.R. (Soviets encircle Stalingrad), Libya-Egypt (headlong retreat from El Alamein), Algeria-Tunisia (Torch forces land and attack), France (panzers assault Toulon).

Dec. '42: U.S.S.R. (Stalingrad), Libya (fighting retreat).

Jan. '43: U.S.S.R. (Leningrad siege broken, withdrawals to avoid Soviet attacks, Stalingrad), Libya (fighting retreat).

Feb. '43: U.S.S.R. (massed Soviet attacks), Tunisia (Kasserine Pass), Norway (commando raids on heavy-water plants).

March '43: U.S.S.R. (new line formed), Tunisia (retreat).

April '43: U.S.S.R. (low-key), Tunisia (bridgehead held), Poland (Warsaw ghetto uprising).

May '43: U.S.S.R. (low-key), Tunisia (surrender), Poland (uprising ends 16th), Yugoslavia (British agents aid partisans).

June '43: Sicily (Allied invasion), U.S.S.R. (low-key), Crete (British commando raids).

July '43: U.S.S.R. (Kursk), Sicily (fighting retreat), Crete (British commando raids).

Aug. '43: U.S.S.R. (Soviet breakthroughs), Sicily (abandoned).

Sept. '43: U.S.S.R. (rapid retreat), Italy (Allied invasion).

Oct. '43: U.S.S.R. (retreat), Italy (defense lines formed), Aegean (small islands taken).

Nov. '43: U.S.S.R. (Kiev lost), Italy (grinding defense), Aegean (small islands taken), Norway (commando raids).

Dec. '43: U.S.S.R. (Soviet winter assaults begin), Italy.

Jan.-Feb. '44: U.S.S.R. (Soviet assaults), Italy (Anzio).

March '44: U.S.S.R. (retreat in south), Italy (low-key).

April '44: U.S.S.R., Romania (Soviets invade), Italy (low-key).

May '44: U.S.S.R. and Romania (low-key), Italy (Cassino lost and Allies drive rapidly toward Rome).

June '44: U.S.S.R. (overwhelming Soviet attack in center), France (D-Day), Italy (Rome abandoned), Finland (overwhelming Soviet attack).

July '44: U.S.S.R. (rapid retreat from all 1939 Soviet lands), France (Cobra and Goodwood: Allied breakouts), Italy (Gothic Line formed), Finland (Soviets pause mid-month). Germany (reprisals for bomb attempt on Hitler).

Aug. '44: Poland-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Romania-Bulgaria (Soviet advance slows), France (rapid Allied advance, Falaise Gap, new Allied landings in south), Italy (low-key).

Sept. '44: Poland-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Romania-Bulgaria (defections threaten to isolate armies in Yugoslavia and Greece), France-Belgium (Allied advance), Italy (Allies pierce Gothic Line), Baltic region (Soviet attack), Adriatic (Yugoslav partisans and British commandos assault island garrisons), Aegean (islands abandoned).

Oct. '44: Poland-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Romania-Bulgaria (panzer army in Yugoslavia counterattacks), France-Belgium-Netherlands (Allied advance), Italy (lines reformed), Baltic region (defense reduced to small pocket), Greece (fighting withdrawal from British commandos, partisans).

Nov. '44: Poland-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Yugoslavia (minor Soviet advances), France-Belgium-Netherlands (Allied advance), Italy (low-key), Baltic region (Hitler refuses withdrawal), Arctic Circle (Norwegians join Soviet attack).

Dec. '44: Poland-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Yugoslavia (Soviets assault Budapest), France (Battle of Bulge), Italy (low-key).

Jan. '45: Poland-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Yugoslavia (rout in Poland), France-Netherlands (Allied advance), Italy (local resistance attacks).

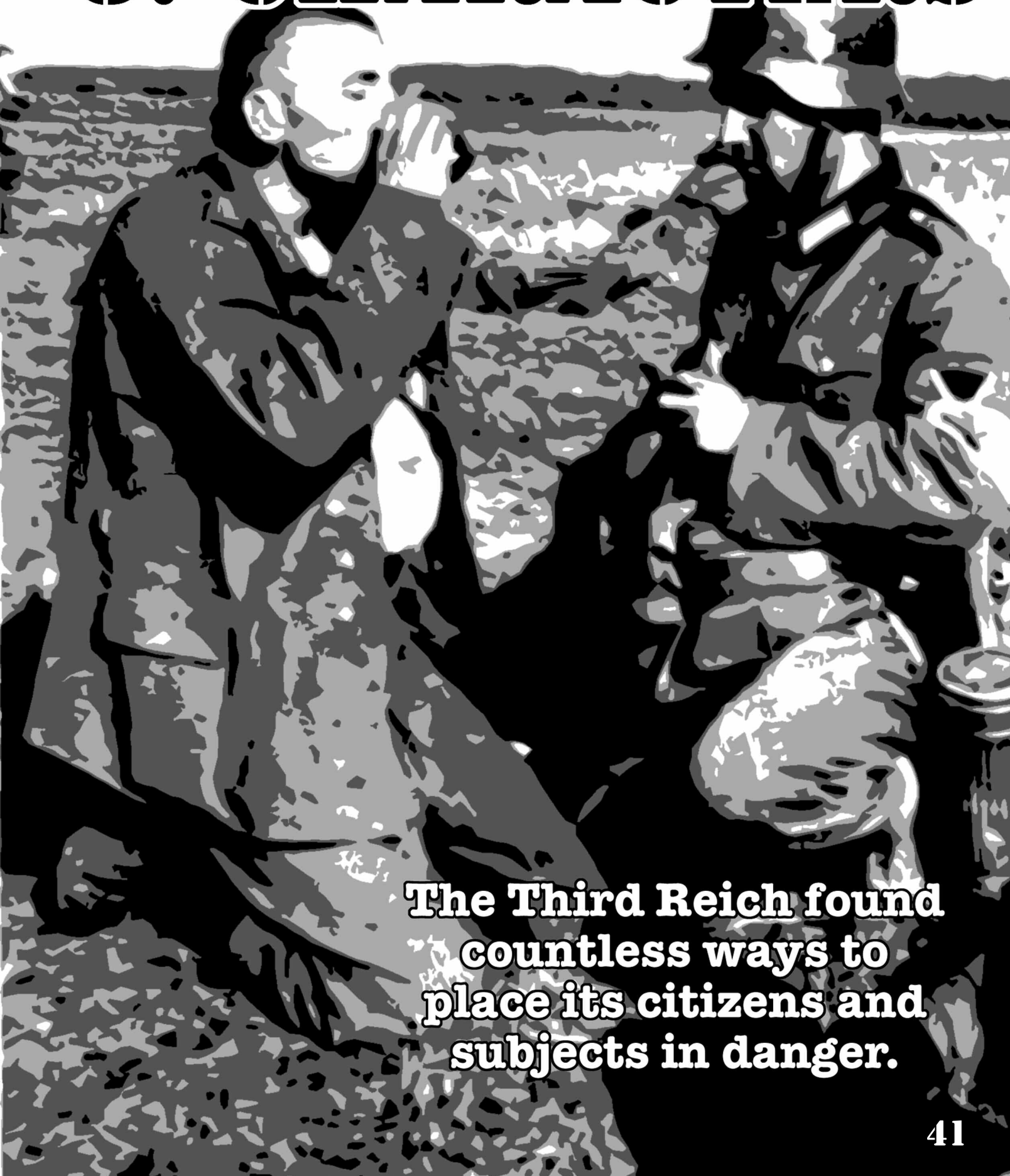
Feb. '45: Poland-Germany-Czechoslovakia-Hungary-Yugoslavia (Soviets at Oder), France-Netherlands (Allies form up on Rhine), Italy (local resistance).

March '45: Germany-Czechoslovakia-Austria (Allies cross Rhine, Soviets form on Oder), Italy (low-key).

April '45: Germany-Czechoslovakia-Austria (Germany overrun and Berlin assaulted), Italy (Allies break out).

May '45: Czechoslovakia.

3. CHARACTERS



**The Third Reich found
countless ways to
place its citizens and
subjects in danger.**

CREATING A CHARACTER



While an SMG-toting stormtrooper might seem the quintessential German character, the Reich thrust its citizens into hundreds of distinct circumstances. Pages W61-85 provide German filters for a variety of general wartime roles. This chapter adds more backgrounds of a distinctly German nature.

Use the table on p. W177 without modification to figure height and weight for native Germans.

FEMALE ROLES

As touched upon on p. W62, Nazi Germany was not a ripe setting for women to explore adventurous lifestyles. With only very rare exceptions (see *Hanna Reitsch*, pp. 53-54), they were forbidden from putting on a military uniform. Many did take up nursing, or joined service corps with similar roles, but these auxiliaries did not get anywhere near as close to the front lines as did their Anglo-American counterparts.

At least, until the front lines came to them. In a campaign set in late 1944 or '45 Germany, women would be perfectly appropriate among a soldier group, because thousands of them were fleeing the oncoming Soviets in the East, or staring out their kitchen windows watching their men fight the Anglo-



Americans in the West. See p. 51 for an example of this sort of woefully unprepared adventurer, who in the East faced almost as many perils as any soldier, whether ready for them or not.

Another fertile ground for females in the Reich would be a campaign featuring the native resistance to Nazism. As low-key as this movement was, it did exist, and women probably played a large role. For starters, Nazism's chauvinism should have alienated a larger percentage of women. Additionally, the Communist movement provided the spine of resistance to Nazism in its home, and the Communists actively recruited women into the political process. Should these Communist rebels also end up in the East during the Soviet advance, they probably will suffer the same brutality as other German women. There was no secret handshake to provide them safeguard.

At the other extreme, women were among Hitler's most steely supporters. A few prominent Nazis had their resolve fortified by a wife who pushed them to do things that their conscience rejected. Such a "good Nazi" wife would make an interesting, if frightening, character concept.

Finally, as if a woman in Nazi Germany doesn't have enough problems, a large percentage of them bore children out of wedlock. The Nazis provided all sorts of incentive for this behavior, to expand the race, but German society at large still regarded the situation as scandalous. The resulting Dependent and Reputation would both pose challenges.

ADVANTAGES,



DISADVANTAGES, AND SKILLS

The following expands upon the options made available to German characters in the *WWII* corebook.

ADVANTAGES

These descriptions cover existing advantages for German characters, providing more detail.

Appearance see pp. W68, W177

Unique among the *National Advantages* packages described on p. W68, German soldier characters may spend points from this pool on improving their physical appearance. Some elaboration is in order. For starters, Germans unsurprisingly tended to meet the Aryan ideal of blue eyes and blond hair more frequently than men from other nations. This in and of itself would not merit a potential Appearance bonus, except that all of Western culture shared similar standards for attractiveness at the time, even more so than today.

Additionally, the German culture of the time, particularly the Nazi German culture, took the male body image far more seriously than Western civilizations had in a long time. Much of the male vanity in modern Western society would have been out

of place outside Germany in this period. Particularly among the Hitler Youth (p. 47), young German males worked hard to achieve a streamlined, sleek physique, motivated to achieve both athletic prowess and a certain sensuality.

Also, the General Staff recognized this self-image in its recruits and catered to it, where other armies were doing their best to strip all conceit from their inductees. They adopted their WWI uniform into the classy lines of the WWII uniform, specifically to make their soldiers look and feel good. (Legend has it that Coco Chanel performed this alteration. Though an unlikely commission for a Paris-based costume designer, the Wehrmacht uniform has become as iconic as her most famous creations.) They also allowed their riflemen to keep their hair stylishly long, unless being punished.

The above does not mean to imply that all Germans were pleasant on the eyes, much less that every combatant of another nationality was not. It simply acknowledges that part of what makes the Wehrmacht so enduringly interesting is how good they looked, not *because* they fought for such a horrible regime but *despite* that fact.

Of course, these fair-haired men ultimately supported the old saw that the army with the best uniforms always loses.

GURPS Nazi Germany Ranks

<i>MR</i>	<i>Army (Air Force)</i>	<i>Waffen-SS, Gestapo</i>	<i>Navy</i>	<i>Police</i>	<i>Nazi Party</i>
8	Generalfeldmarschall†	Reichsführer-SS	Grossadmiral	–	Reichsleiter
8	Generaloberst	SS-Oberstgruppenführer	Generaladmiral	Generaloberst	–
8	General	SS-Obergruppenführer	Admiral	General	Gauleiter
7	Generalleutnant	SS-Gruppenführer	Vizeadmiral	Generalleutnant	–
7	Generalmajor	SS-Brigadeführer	Konteradmiral	Generalmajor	Deputy Gauleiter
6	Oberst	SS-Oberf., -Standartenführer	Kapitän*, Kommodore	Oberst	–
5	Oberstleutnant	SS-Obersturmbannführer	Fregattenkapitän	Oberstleutnant	Kreisleiter
4	Major	SS-Sturmbannführer	Korvettenkapitän	Major	–
4	Hauptmann	SS-Hauptsturmführer	Kapitänleutnant	Hauptmann	Ortsgruppenleiter
3	Oberleutnant	SS-Obersturmführer	Oberleutnant*	Oberleutnant	Zellenleiter
3	Leutnant	SS-Untersturmführer	Leutnant*	Leutnant	Blockleiter
2	Stabsfeldwebel	SS-Sturmscharführer	Stabsoberbootsmann	Meister	Hauptbereitschaftsl.
2	Hauptfeldwebel	SS-Stabsscharführer	Oberbootsmann	Hauptwachtmeister	–
2	Oberfeldwebel	SS-Hauptscharführer	Stabsbootsmann	Kompaniehauptwachtm.	Oberbereitschaftsleiter
1	Feldwebel	SS-Oberscharführer	Bootsmann	Revieroberwachtmeister	Bereitschaftsleiter
1	Unterfeldwebel	SS-Scharführer	Stabssteuermann	Oberwachtmeister	–
1	Obergefreiter	SS-Unterscharführer	Matrosen-Obergefr.	Wachtmeister	Hauptarbeitsleiter
0	Gefreiter	SS-Rottenführer	Matrosen-Gefreiter	Rottwachtmeister	Oberarbeitsleiter
0	Oberschütze	SS-Sturmmann	–	Unterwachtmeister	Arbeitsleiter
0	Schütze (Flieger)	SS-Mann	Matrosen	Anwärter	Helfer

A “–” means no equivalent rank.

Most Heer (army) officer ranks are followed by the branch of service; e.g., Hauptmann der Infanterie.

† Luftwaffe (air force) officer ranks are followed by “der Flieger.” Göring alone held the top Rank 8 title, Reichsmarschall.

* Kriegsmarine (navy) officer ranks marked with an asterisk are followed by “zur See.”

Police officer ranks are followed by “der Gendarmerie” or “der Polizei.”

Patron see pp. W63, W181

Nazi Germany essentially worked on the patronage system. Hitler served as a patron to many generals and party officials, these generals and officials themselves served as patrons for field officers and mid-level functionaries, and so on.

Many of these relationships would not qualify as Patrons in game terms, however. For a superior to qualify as a *GURPS* patron, he would have to be willing to stick by the character in thin times as well as thick. This wasn’t typical Nazi behavior. Hitler would gladly reward an officer who had pleased him, but for the most part he would just as quickly get rid of the fellow once he fouled up. He had his exceptions – Albert Speer (p. 54) certainly qualified as one – but not many.

Those who do have Hitler as a Patron must treat him as a 30-point national government, no matter his personal point cost. In this case, his assertion that he *was* the state holds true.

Rank see pp. 96, W62, W179

All members of the German armed forces, including the police, have Military Rank as described in the corebook.

Nazi officials (p. 96) have Administrative Rank rather than Military Rank. It works exactly the same way, except it applies to the party apparatus rather than armed forces. The two functions often overlapped in one man, and in turn overlapped with civil posts that had their own Administrative Rank. Only the *highest* of these Ranks should be paid for in these cases. A Nazi gauleiter would gain little reach, just breadth, of power by becoming an SS-Obersturmbannführer or civil mayor.

Administrative Rank within Nazi Germany improves Status just like Military Rank (p. W66) does, but characters with a mix of both sorts of Rank only get the Status bonus for the *highest* one.

Note that the Germans had *many* more enlisted grades than was common for the period. In fact, the table still truncates them. For instance, technically a gefreiter was a corporal – but a German gefreiter only held duties comparable to an acting corporal in most armies, not taking a true leader role until becoming an obergefreiter, a sort of senior corporal. The transition from corporal to sergeant was one rank in the U.S. Army. In the Wehrmacht, the obergefreiter advanced to stabsgefreiter, then unteroffizier, then unterfeldwebel, taking on sergeant-comparable duties somewhere within the last two ranks.

Special branches usually had special grades. For instance, a radioman was a funkler rather than schütze, and an ordnance staff sergeant was a feuerwerker rather than feldwebel.

Furthermore, some enlisted grades changed names when the holder reached a certain service-time threshold.

After November 1942, Hitler changed the private grade from schütze to grenadier for most riflemen. Mountain and Jäger units retained the old grade. Riflemen also were called fusilier in regiments with the same name, or musketier within some infantry units of the panzer corps Gross Deutschland.

This state of affairs should illustrate that the GM should feel free to create fictional special grades in his campaign.

Army officer ranks in combat arms had only one alternate name. A hauptmann in the cavalry was called a rittmeister. Non-combat arms had many special officer-equivalent ranks.

Wealth see pp. 99-100, W63

From 1944 on, German soldiers may elect to reduce Wealth by one level, to reflect their increasingly grim economic realities. For instance, an officer with Military Rank 5 would have to purchase Comfortable Wealth if created during 1943 in game time. One created in 1944 could choose Average Wealth, instead, or purchase Comfortable; the latter would represent service in an elite unit, with far better everyday supplies and more access to luxuries at reasonable prices during the increasingly infrequent leaves. Also see p. 100.

The player of the same character in an existing campaign as it enters 1944 could elect to lower Wealth, but would get no points in return unless the GM decides to be generous. If he isn't already in an elite unit, the GM may *require* the reduction.

This reduction also applies to the special effect by which Wealth is used to gauge support services. The typical Struggling rifleman of 1939 received air support. The typical Poor rifleman of 1944 did not, to name but one venue in which the Wehrmacht failed to keep up its standards.

The German currency was the reichsmark, or simply mark. The Nazis maintained that 1 RM exchanged for \$1. The U.S. Army put the 1945 rate at the prewar rate of 2.5 RM to \$1. The latter is used here as being considerably more accurate. See pp. 99-100 for a discussion of civilian wages. The Nazis forcefully massaged the economy, so the official prices of goods often bore little resemblance to their real market value. Increasingly during the war, goods cost more than "list" price if they could be purchased with reichsmarks at all (p. 99).



DISADVANTAGES

The following describes some disadvantages applicable just after the war, as well as during it.

Code of Honor see p. W64

Old-guard officers (p. W81) in Germany will adhere to the traditional Prussian code of honor, a -15-point extreme example of the officer's code described on p. W64.

The Prussian code included all the tenets included in the generic version, with some differences in interpretation. Being "tough but fair" was OK – the new blood in the

Wehrmacht insisted upon it – but a real conservative would be mostly tough – to the edge of ruthless – with his men.

The Prussian code required absolute obedience to the kaiser (or Führer), but *not* to a superior officer, even if that was the head of state himself. (In this regard, the Reich's generals suffered a notable lapse.) A true Prussian judged the wisdom of his orders for himself, and balked at the foolish.

The Prussian code still included older elements of the officer's code. The Prussian treated honor as a thing far more valuable than life itself. He did not let an insult from a civilian go unpunished – if he did, he could be hauled before a court of honor and expelled from the officer ranks. Suicide was his only honorable option after that point. If he got into a physical confrontation with a civilian, failing to seriously injure or kill the offender could result in the same sort of censure!

Most of all, a German officer was supposed to say what he really thought in straightforward fashion. Others often found this practice blunt and boorish.

For all German soldiers, the "rules of war" were highly mutable depending on the enemy at hand. In general, they tried to act with considerable chivalry when facing the British, worried less about such niceties vs. the Americans, and waged total war devoid of mercy against the Russians.

Exceptions always presented themselves – the number of Anglo-American POWs killed in German hands attests to that – but the perpetrators wouldn't qualify for a Code of Honor in game terms, anyway. In particular, SS rituals and ceremony addressed "honor" constantly, but none of their principles – follow Hitler and kill the non-Aryans – rightly belong in a Code of Honor.

Enemies see p. W181

During the war, those deemed "undesirable" take the state as an Enemy worth a base -40 points. For homosexuals or others disliked simply for their sexual mores, frequency is 6 or less for -20 points. For Slavs and Communists, it's 9 or less for -40 points. For Jews, Gypsies, and blacks, 12 or less for -80 points. This disadvantage shouldn't be counted against the usual -40-point limit.

A version with less frequency often would be proper in earlier years, particularly for Jews and Communists. It depends on individual context.

After the war, all German soldiers lose their Extremely Hazardous Duties, of course, but many SS men and a few Wehrmacht regulars accused of atrocities gain one or two Enemies. Many would have Enemy (Allied Intelligence, on a 6 or less), worth -15 points. Those who took an active role against the Jews also may gain Enemy (Jewish Retribution Agents, on a 6 or less) for an additional -15 points.

The Western Allies will imprison any of these suspected criminals that they catch, try them, and very likely execute them if guilty. The Jewish agents (a smaller but more formidable group than the intelligence agencies) or Soviet intelligence often will advance directly to the execution phase.



“Undesirables” during the war or SS men afterward may instead have a hefty Secret (p. W186), which unfolds into these Enemies (and possibly additional loss of Status, Reputation, etc.) when exposed. This often requires establishing a new identity and relocating as far and quickly as possible.

Fanaticism see p. W184

Technically, fervid belief in Nazism qualifies as Fanaticism (Patriotism), even though associating the words “Nazi” and “patriot” can create some discomfort . . .

Social Stigma see p. W180

At any time during the Nazi regime, those who obviously fall into one of the Nazis’ “undesirable” categories suffer this disadvantage, usually at the *Minority Group* or *Outsider* level. Usually, they also will have low Status, and after September 1939 take on the state as an *Enemy*, described on p. 44.

Unnatural Feature -5 points

Normally in *GURPS*, this is a *really* strange feature, something like pointed ears. Given the charged environment of Nazi Germany, however, much more mundane features can qualify for this disadvantage. They include:

Semitic Appearance: A German who looks Jewish, but isn’t, is going to be regarded with suspicion and asked to verify his ancestry enough to justify this disadvantage. Simply being circumcised would qualify for this disadvantage in a German military campaign, where privacy is far from reliable.

Concentration Camp Tattoo: Every internee received a six-digit registration number. At Auschwitz, these were tattooed onto them, at first on the chest, later on the left inside forearm. (Those scheduled for an immediate murder did not receive a tattoo.) In a campaign set in Germany *during the war*, this definitely qualified as an Unnatural Feature, making escape that much harder.

Blood Group Tattoo: SS enlisted men were supposed to have their blood type tattooed on their inside, upper left arm. Not all of them actually were tattooed, and the process was voluntary for officers. In a post-war campaign *only*, this would qualify as an Unnatural Feature, aiding Enemies in ID’ing the man.

STATUS

Long before the Nazis, German officers classified their population as “soldiers and swine.” For the most part, this perception held true in Hitler’s regime. Most people with a high status derived that status from their Military or Administrative (i.e., party or civil-service) Rank.

Extra Status can be purchased, but it has to be purchased from Status 0. A reichsleiter unsatisfied with his default Status 3 will spend 20 points, not 5, to purchase Status 4. (Actually, he’ll usually be Wealthy or better, so spend only 15 points and get Status +1 for free.)

Despite this cost, any Nazi official with a sense of self-preservation would make the investment. It represents the character tying himself into the power infrastructure so intricately that even Hitler must take pause before attempting to dismiss or punish him. If Hitler plucked a milkman off the street and made him a reichsleiter – which he could – that milkman would gain Status 3. A serious political player would want to be *far* beyond that.

Notable exceptions to this Rank-based Status included the nobility – titles still meant something in WWII-era Germany – and big business. The Nazis needed factories, so left their owners their cachet.

The following table provides several examples of Status, and the monthly cost of living for civilians. See p. W66 for military adjustments.

Status/Cost of Living Table

Level	Example	Monthly Cost of Living
8	Der Führer	\$5,000+
7	Powerful minister (Göring, Himmler)	\$2,000+
6	Notable minister (Goebbels)	\$1,000
5	Industrialist (Krupp), major noble title	\$800
4	Noble title, up and coming party official	\$600
3	Minor noble title, field marshal	\$400
2	Business owner, general, local party leader	\$240
1	Doctor, field officer, party functionary	\$120
0	Ordinary citizen	\$60
-1	Poor	\$30
-2	Forced laborer	\$5

VOLKSSTURMMANN

In late 1944, Germany was scraping the bottom of its manpower barrel. With the Soviets looming to the east and Anglo-Americans to the west, Hitler created the Volkssturm (People's Storm, or People's Army) on Sept. 25. This home guard consisted of men who weren't fit for active military service, but could still fire a weapon.

The basic Volkssturm unit was the battalion of 642 men and boys. In theory, they were supposed to be deployed in defense of their native region. In practice, they often were deployed away from home, like real soldiers.

The Volkssturm wore an armband inscribed *Deutsche Wehrmacht* or *Deutscher Volkssturm*. The Wehrmacht rarely had spare uniforms to issue them. Members who owned another uniform – even zoo keepers – sometimes dyed these field gray and wore them into combat, for fear of being captured as a resistance fighter and being treated more harshly than a uniformed combatant.

The Volkssturm usually received weapons that were cheap but potent when up close, particularly the Panzerfaust 30 (p. W98) in the battle for Berlin. Sometimes, *all* they had was a single one of these rockets each. Most units carried some sort of cheap firearm, but a few might have quality arms in the last days because they're the only units on hand to use them.

From the winter of 1944 on, any Allied forces invading Germany itself would encounter Volkssturm units roughly as frequently as regular Wehrmacht units. These irregular troops could be effective when allowed to sit in concealment in order to pop out at point-blank range. In open areas or under maneuver, they would be prone to break up and flee from attack.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 10 [0].

Advantages: A total of 30 points in *National Advantages* (p. W68), appropriate advantages for the volkssturmmann's civilian life, or improved attributes.

Disadvantages: Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20] plus -25 points in *National Disadvantages* (p. W69) and at least one Volkssturm disadvantage that disqualifies the character from regular service. These include any attribute reduced to 8 [-15] or lower; Bad Sight [-25] (representing a disorder that glasses can't correct); Fat [-10 or -20]; Hard of Hearing [-10]; Lameness [-15]; One Arm [-20]; One Eye [-20]; or Youth [-2/-4/-6]. Any of the -25 points remaining after a Volkssturm disadvantage is picked should be applied to the *National Disadvantages*. Very young Volkssturm members usually should have Fanaticism (Patriotism).

Basic Skills: Agronomy (or other civilian skill) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-11; Area Knowledge (Home Region) (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Guns (LAW) (P/E) DX [1/2]-10*; Guns (Light Auto) (P/E) DX [1/2]-10*; Guns (Rifle) (P/E) DX [1/2]-10*; Scrounging (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Soldier (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-9; Stealth (P/A) DX-1 [1]-9; Throwing (P/H) DX-2 [1]-8.

Secondary Skills: First Aid (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-9.



10 POINTS

Optional Skills: Spend 12 points on improving other skills or: Bicycling, Brawling, Guns (Grenade Launcher or Pistol), Motorcycle, or Swimming (all P/E); Boating, Driving (Automobile), Gunner (Cannon or Mortar), or Riding (Horse) (all P/A); Hiking (P/A – HT); Cooking (M/E); or Teamster (M/A).

* Includes +1 for IQ.

Customization Notes:

The template represents an ordinary 25-point citizen given 5 points of military

training and thrown into an Extremely Hazardous Duty.

A significant percentage of the Volkssturm was made up of Wehrmacht veterans. (Without this stiffening force, these units undoubtedly would have shriveled up and blown away in combat.) These soldiers do not use this template *except* to obtain a Volkssturm disadvantage; they would be built on the templates on pp. W72-84. Of course, they may not take Youth. Generally, the Volkssturm disadvantages for these men should represent permanent injuries. Realistically, as with Extremely Hazardous Duty, the GM should not count this disadvantage against the usual -40-point cap on disadvantages.

The template assumes that any boys did not receive thorough training in the Hitler Youth. Those that did would instead use that template, likely at a reduced point total.

GMs may allow additional Volkssturm disadvantages from *Compendium I*, such as Albinism, Hemophilia, Terminally Ill, etc. Only extreme age in and of itself would disqualify someone from active Wehrmacht service by this point; usually the accompanying loss of ST, DX, and HT prompted a discharge.

The Volkssturm had a rudimentary rank system. A rank-and-file member was a volkssturmmann at Military Rank 0. A squad leader was a gruppenführer at Rank 1. A platoon leader was a zugführer of Rank 2. A company commander was a kompanieführer with Rank 3. A battalion commander was a bataillonführer of Rank 4. (Note that these are generally lower than their Wehrmacht equivalents – a “captain” in the Volkssturm did *not* possess the same authority as a proper hauptmann.) The ordnance officer (waffenmeister) and paymaster (zahlmeister) had Military Rank 2. The administrative officer (ordonnanz-offizier) and adjutant had Military Rank 3. The pay for these positions *automatically* takes the post-1944 reduction described on p. 44, and in this case the Poor disadvantage for Ranks 0-1 should be interpreted as *no* pay (and practically no support).

Many older German men would be exempt from Volkssturm service because they already belonged to the Wachdienst (Rural Home Guard), which served as a volunteer fire department or in the fields when not called upon for that emergency service. Given the nature of the blazes set by Anglo-American bombing, serving in the Wachdienst qualified as a -10-point Duty itself.

HITLER YOUTH

Hitler realized that a 1,000-Year Reich would require a sturdy foundation, in the form of a populace dedicated to the ideas of National Socialism. As early as 1922, he began planting the seeds of this people by creating a Nazi youth program.

This program soon became the Hitler Youth. It surpassed 8 million members by the end of 1939, in which attendance became mandatory. The program took in 10-year-old boys and trained them in National Socialist principles, fieldcraft, basic military skills, and martial virtues until they turned 18.

At first the program also took in girls and competed with many similar groups across the political spectrum. It co-opted these groups by stressing the *volk* (folk) aspect of Nazism and downplaying the racism and right-wing extremism when necessary. One of these acquired groups, the *Deutsches Jungvolk* of Austria and Sudetenland, was allowed to keep its name and heraldry – the lightning-shaped victory rune on a black backdrop. The SS would later take the field with a paired set of runes.

In 1942, three weeks of real military training was added for boys 16 to 18. In 1943, many of these youths joined the war effort proper, at first by manning AA batteries at home, later by joining the new Hitler Jugend (12th SS) panzer division.

In June 1944, the teens of the 12th SS defended Caen against overwhelming British and Canadian forces. They fought well, but suffered horrendous casualties.

The template represents a Hitler Youth who has left the program, gone through proper if hurried Wehrmacht training, and been assigned to the Hitler Jugend or another division.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 11 [10].

Advantages: Fit [5]; Strong Will +3 (-25% limitation, Brittle, see below) [9]; and one of: Alertness +1, Attractive, Double-Jointed, Rapid Healing, or Single-Minded [5].

Disadvantages: Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20], Dull [-1], Fanaticism (Patriotism) [-15], Intolerance [-10], Poverty (Struggling) [-10], and Youth [-4].

Basic Skills: Bicycling (P/E) DX [1]-12; Camouflage (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-9; Climbing (P/A) DX [2]-12; First Aid (M/E) IQ [1]-10; Guns (LAW) (P/E) DX+1 [1]-13*; Guns (Rifle) (P/E) DX+3 [4]-15*; Hiking (P/A – HT) HT [2]-11; Jumping (P/E) DX [1]-12; Knife (P/E) DX [1]-12; Philosophy (National Socialism) (M/H) IQ-1 [2]-9; Soldier (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-12; Stealth (P/A) DX [2]-12; Throwing (P/H) DX-2 [1]-10; Traps (M/A) IQ-2 [1/2]-8; Swimming (P/E) DX [1]-12.

Secondary Skills: Armoury (Small Arms) (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-9; Gunner (Machine Gun) (P/A) DX-1 [1/2]-11*; Guns (Light Auto) (P/E) DX [1/2]-12*; Leadership (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-9; NBC Warfare (M/A) IQ-2 [1/2]-8; Orienteering (M/A) IQ [2]-10; Scrounging (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-9; Spear (P/A) DX-1 [1]-11; Survival (any) (M/A) IQ [2]-10.

Optional Skills: Spend 3 points on any of Guns (Pistol) (P/E); Boating, Gunner (Cannon or Mortar), or Riding (Horse) (all P/A); Skiing (P/H); Area Knowledge (any), Cooking, Savoir-Faire (Military), or Telegraphy (all M/E); Electronics Operation (Communications), Freight Handling, or Teamster (all M/A); or Animal Handling (M/H).

* Includes +1 for IQ.

25 POINTS

Customization Notes: The template illustrates a 16-year-old, with -4 points in Youth. A 15-year-old would take an additional -2 points, a 17-year-old would buy off -2 points, and an 18-year-old would entirely buy off Youth. Children as young as 14 were pressed into service: A 14-year-old takes another -2 points in Youth like a 15-year-old *and* subtracts 1 each from ST and IQ. He gets no points in return for the lesser attributes, but gets the +1 ST and IQ for free on his 15th birthday.

The Strong Will represents that these young men were inundated with the martial values, and being children, didn't fully recognize their own mortality. To reflect that part of their bravery stemmed from ignorance, the Strong Will has been given a "Brittle" limitation, which means it counts normally for any Will roll, but if the roll still fails it's not counted for determining the results. *Example:* A typical Hitler Youth with Will 13 makes a Fright Check at -4, rolling a 12. Normally, this would count as a failure by 3 points, but since the Strong Will +3 is Brittle it counts as a failure by 6 points.



The template also illustrates something like the *ideal* Hitler Youth, a child who has bought into the program wholeheartedly. Many teens came to understand and dislike the true Nazi nature. These would buy off Dull (which simply represents that these boys were not trained to think for themselves), Fanaticism, and/or Intolerance. Some portion of the Strong Will usually should be traded against this cost.

What the template doesn't portray is a veteran – this is a soldier fresh out of training, of Military Rank 0. (The 12th SS youths were led by experienced NCOs and officers.) Had the Third Reich survived long enough and conserved enough manpower, it might have created a cadre of Hitler Youth-based elites. Such a fictional HJ-SS veteran would use this template, add +1 to ST and IQ and Combat Reflexes, buy off Youth, and apply another 11 points to skills for a 75-point total cost.

The *Deutsches Jungvolk* took the boys 10 to 14, the Hitler Jugend the older youths. Both Hitler Youth subprograms had military-like ranks – these had no real value in game terms.

Beginning in 1930, girls attended their own program, the Bund Deutscher Mädel. It also stressed physical fitness, but replaced the military training with domestic programs.

Boys still in the Hitler Youth in 1945 should have strong Camouflage and Traps skills. They received sabotage training to become Werewolf resistance fighters after the war.

EASTERN FRONT EXPERTE

100 POINTS

When the Germans invaded Russia, the Luftwaffe entered a situation unique in military-aviation history. Hitler's air force had far too few planes to properly seize air superiority over such a vast area; the Battle of Britain had seen to that. On the other hand, the Soviets could do little to get them out of the air. Their pilots, planes, and AA crews simply weren't up to the task.

This resulted in Germany's eastern-front pilots logging incredible amounts of flight time. They always were needed at half-a-dozen places at once, and the Soviets posed just enough of a threat to keep their skills sharp but allow a good pilot with modest luck to survive thousands of combat hours. Level-bomber, dive-bomber, and fighter crews could spend days on end flying several sorties a day, stopping only long enough to reload fuel and ammo – or switch machines if the Russians dinged the last one bad enough.

In this marathon fighting, several German Experten (aces) racked up surreal kill totals. The Luftwaffe credited Erich Hartmann with 352 kills, Erich Gerhard Barkhorn with 301, 13 pilots with 200 to 299, and many more with 100-200. Even accounting for inflated figures, these were stunning totals when compared to the Anglo-American record of 40 kills. Similarly, ground-attack pilots gained credit for countless destroyed tanks.

These pilots might have faced more danger on the ground than in the air. The Luftwaffe often thrust their bases forward, to preserve turnaround time and fuel. The Wehrmacht rarely consolidated its vast lines enough that the Red Army couldn't probe through them, and partisans lurked behind them. The air crews could find themselves amidst the ground fighting. When the air base did need to be moved, finding the required ground transport and navigating the roads could pose a challenge. When shot down – and most aces outlived several of their planes – the fliers seeking safety had to navigate a war zone that usually was thinly populated but chaotic and dangerous.

The following represents a Luftwaffe fighter or ground-attack pilot who has treated his thousands of flight hours as an endless live-ammo training exercise. He's also a veteran of all the other dangers of combat in this primitive expanse. Ironically, what keeps him alive is the very thing that his ground brethren consider a death sentence: being posted to the Eastern Front. In the West, he eventually would encounter a pilot and plane of his own caliber.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 13 [30]; IQ 12 [20]; HT 11 [10].

Advantages: Alertness +1 [5]; Military Rank 3 [15]; Reputation (Knight's Cross) +2 [5]; and 15 points in any of Acceleration Tolerance [10], Acute Vision [2/level], additional Alertness [5/level], Ally (100-point Wingman or Gunner on 12 or less) [10], Appearance [5 or 15], Combat Reflexes [15], Danger Sense [15], Fit [5], Less Sleep 1-5 [3/level], Military Rank 4 [net 5 plus 10 points Comfortable Wealth before 1944], Patron (Commander, on 9 or less) [10].



Disadvantages: Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20] and -30 points in *National Disadvantages* (p.W69).

Basic Skills: Administration (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Aviation (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14; Electronics Operation (Communications) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Gunner (Bombs) (P/A) DX [1/2]-13*; Gunner (Cannon) (P/A) DX [1/2]-13*; Gunner (Machine Gun) (P/A) DX [1/2]-13*; Leadership (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Navigation (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Operations (Air) (M/H) IQ-3 [1/2]-9; Piloting (Single- or Twin-Engine Prop) (P/A) DX+3 [16]-16; Savoir-Faire (Military) (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-11; Tactics (Air-to-Air) (M/H) IQ+2 [8]-14.

Secondary Skills: First Aid (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Mechanic (Propeller Plane Engine) (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Guns (Pistol) (P/E) DX+2 [1]-15*; Guns (Rifle) (P/E) DX+1 [1/2]-14*; Survival (Plains) (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11.

Optional Skills: Spend 4 points on any of Guns (Light Auto), Knife, or Parachuting (all P/E); Driving (Automobile) (P/A); Area Knowledge (any) or Telegraphy (both M/E); Armoury (Vehicular), Meteorology, or Photography (all M/A); or Explosive Ordnance Disposal (M/H).

* Includes +2 for IQ.

Customization Notes: The template does not leave much room for customization, but in a standard 100-point campaign with a -40 limit on disadvantages, the player can take another -10 points in disadvantages and -5 points in quirks for 15 points to personalize the pilot. Also, this package represents an ace considerably above minimum standards; deleting a few points in one place to spend them elsewhere would be fine. See p. W83 for a guideline to what constitutes minimal competence.

This pilot could begin play with up to 75 kills.

The gunnery skills for this ace may seem low, but per p. W155 they are limited to Piloting skill -3 in action. Further investment in them would be pointless without an additional hefty investment in Piloting.

A pilot of this caliber usually would be Military Rank 4 or 5 at this point in his career. The skills above already provide minimum competency for Rank 4 (p. W70).

The equivalent pilot on the Western Front might want Strong Will, Fearlessness, and a few nerves-related mental disadvantages to reflect his own combat environment!

SUBMARINER

In the few years before the war, the Kriegsmarine trained its potential U-boat officers and crews far harder than any other branch, probably far harder than any other nation.

In charge of this training, Kapitän Karl Dönitz realized that these men would be called upon to lead a war-expanded U-boat fleet, so took on only volunteers that seemed to have the right stuff to rise in rank themselves. Rigorous initial training on the island of Dänholm triggered a few suicides. After a tour on a sailing ship (customary to this day in most naval-officer programs), the potential submariners learned every facet of handling, repairing, and fighting their boats. They had taken a U-boat to sea at least 66 times before beginning active service.

When the war broke out, these hardcore men of the U-bootwaffe were the naval equivalent of special forces. They also could lay claim to being the least politicized branch of the German armed forces. Though a loyal Nazi, Dönitz had convinced the party not to meddle with his men; he had more important demands on their time. Boats filled with these early U-bootwaffe volunteers could even become mildly hostile environments for particularly loyal Nazis. This apolitical attitude did not deter them from being coldblooded killers when the merciless circumstances of their profession called for it.

This template illustrates these early, especially trained submariners, not the more average men who later filled the ranks.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 11 [10]; IQ 13 [30]; HT 11 [10].

Advantages: Fit [5], Military Rank 3 [15], and 15 points in *National Advantages* (p. W68). Alertness and Strong Will would be very appropriate.

Disadvantages: Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20] and -30 points in *National Disadvantages* (p. W69) or Compulsive Behaviors with the -65% limitation (Only while ashore). Fanaticism (Patriotism) could qualify for an additional Reputation (Fervent Nazi) [-5] in the early war years. Bad Sight would be uncommon.



75 POINTS

Basic Skills: Administration (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Electronics Operation (Comm) (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Electronics Operation (Sensors) (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Engineer (Vehicles) (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-11; First Aid (M/E) IQ [1]-13; Gunner (Cannon) (P/A) DX+1 [1]-12*; Gunner (Torpedo) (P/A) DX+1 [1]-12*; Intelligence Analysis (M/H) IQ-3 [1/2]-10; Leadership (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Mechanic (Ocean-going vessel) (M/A) IQ-2 [1/2]-11; Meteorology (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Navigation (M/H) IQ [4]-13; Operations (Sea) (M/H) IQ-3 [1/2]-10; Sailor (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Savoir-Faire (Military) (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-12; Seamanship (M/E) IQ [1]-13; Shiphandling (M/H) IQ-1 [2]-12; Swimming (P/E) DX+1 [2]-12; Tactics (Submarine) (M/H) IQ-1 [2]-12; Telegraphy (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-12.

Secondary Skills: Boating (P/A) DX-1 [1]-10; Guns (Pistol) (P/E) DX+1 [1/2]-12*; Knife (P/E) DX [1]-11; Powerboat (P/A) DX-1 [1]-10.

Optional Skills: Spend 3 points on any of Guns (Light Auto) (P/E); Driving (Automobile) or Gunner (Machine Gun) (both P/A); Carousing (P/A – HT); Area Knowledge (Ocean or Ports of Call), Cooking, or Scrounging (all M/E); Cartography, Demolition, Gambling, Intimidation, or NBC Warfare (all M/A); or Engineer (any), Law (with Maritime specialization), or Traffic Analysis (all M/H).

* Includes +2 for IQ.

Customization Notes: Graduates of the prewar U-bootwaffe training rapidly gained rank in the wartime Kriegsmarine. Almost always, a Kapitänleutnant or Korvettenkapitän (Military Rank 4) serves as a boat's captain. Before 1944, this rank also requires Comfortable Wealth [10]. Each boat's crew also includes 3-8 officers of Military Rank 3. Higher ranks usually lead groups of boats.

The template already includes levels in the skills required for higher ranks (p. W70) sufficient for Military Rank 5. A further increase in Tactics would be appropriate – Dönitz particularly stressed this training, since a U-boat's reliance on stealth rewarded expert handling and punished the clumsy. The GM could go so far as to rule that in the early U-bootwaffe, Military Rank 4 requires a minimum Tactics skill of 15.

The U-boat men suffered very heavy losses in the face of determined British (later Anglo-American) defense of their merchant ships. Very shortly, the quality of the U-bootwaffe became diluted with quickly trained crews and officers. Not all of these were volunteers, and many were ardent Nazis. Most of these men would be built with fewer points, possibly from the Sailor template on p. W84.

By mid-1943, crew training had reached a crisis. The schools simply could not churn out submariners as quickly as Allied antisubmarine forces killed them. By this time leading the entire Kriegsmarine, Dönitz instituted the strange *Agru Front* policy, in which at least one officer (often *not* the captain) and several crewmen purposely sabotaged a new boat while on trials. Essentially, this extended training to the last possible moment for these underprepared crews.

An average new crewman of this era would be built on 25-40 points, an officer on 40-60 points.

GESTAPO AGENT



The term Gestapo abbreviated the name *Geheime Staatspolizei*, or Secret State Police. The agency was formed in the mid-1930s as Himmler and Göring (see pp. 52-53) folded several existing political-police organizations into the SS ranks.

The Gestapo's mission was to ensure the Nazis retained power. They went about this by openly intimidating everyone under Nazi rule, and dealing with anyone suspected of hostility to the party. Though the Gestapo employed countless, often volunteer informers, the organization was hardly secret as the name might imply – everyone knew and feared them. The term “secret” really applied to their accountability. They could question, arrest, interrogate, beat, imprison, and even execute suspected enemies of the state without public disclosure. (They did have to notate confessions obtained under duress, though it made no functional difference.) For cases requiring the appearance of proper procedure, the Gestapo employed a convenient kangaroo court, the *Volksgerichtshof* (p. 98). Defendants there endured the form, if not function, of a trial.

The agency purposely fostered its reputation for brutal thoroughness, because in reality it suffered severe staffing shortages and could in no way pursue every lead it encountered. The German public, in turn, embraced this “all-seeing” image to justify their own lack of defiance toward Nazi excesses.

50 POINTS

The Gestapo included regular agents from all walks of German life – their only common threads being some measure of devotion to the Nazi party and a good stomach for violence. A few were former streetfighters from the early days, still providing muscle for the party, or younger equivalents with plenty of political training but crude policing skills. Others were more cerebral sorts, veterans of the Prussian secret police or similar organizations, highly trained in professional police work but no less brutal on the inside. All would be hunted as criminals after the war.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 11 [10]; IQ 12 [20]; HT 10 [0].

Advantages: Legal Enforcement Powers [10] and 20 points in *National Advantages* (see p. W68). Gestapo agents purchase Military Rank normally. Those at Rank 2+ *must* increase Legal Enforcement Powers to the 15-point version; those with lesser Rank may elect to do so.

Disadvantages: Duty [-15], Fanaticism (Patriotism) [-15], Reputation (-4, all non-Nazis) [-10], and -15 points in *National Disadvantages* (see p. W69). Bully [-10], Callous [-6], and Sadism [-15] are particularly appropriate. This leaves *no* points for personal disadvantages if using the standard -40-point cap.

Basic Skills: Brawling (P/E) DX+2 [4]-13; Broadsword (P/A) DX+1 [4]-12; Guns (Light Auto) (P/E) DX+1 [1/2]-12*; Guns (Pistol) (P/E) DX+3 [2]-14*; Guns (Rifle) (P/E) DX+2 [1]-13*; Interrogation (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Intimidation (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Soldier (M/A) IQ-2 [1/2]-10; Stealth (P/A) DX [2]-11; Streetwise (M/A) IQ [2]-12.

Secondary Skills: Acting (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Criminology (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Holdout (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Intelligence Analysis (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-10.

Optional Skills: Spend 7 points on improving primary and secondary skills or on any of Blackjack, Jumping, Knife, Swimming, or Motorcycle (all P/E); Boating, Boxing, or Driving (Automobile) (all P/A); Carousing or Hiking (both P/A – HT); Area Knowledge (any), First Aid, Savoir-Faire (Military), or Telegraphy (all M/E); Administration, Armoury (Small Arms), Electronics Operation (Communications), Lockpicking, Shadowing, or Traps (all M/A); Forgery or Law (both M/H); or additional languages.

* Includes +2 for IQ.

Customization Notes: A Gestapo agent's Legal Enforcement Powers usually amount to 15 points. Agents had “national” jurisdiction across the Third Reich, including conquered lands, and most of them could ignore the civil rights of most people living under the Reich. That's worth 10 points. Just about any field agent could start a covert investigation or get away with killing someone, worth 15 points, so only the rank-and-file clerks would take the less-expensive version.

The Kripo criminal police (p. 98) would invest more in real policing skills, such as Criminology, and could be detectives of no small prowess. SD “A-men” would be built along standard Gestapo lines, but often invest 75-100 points. This template might also serve for the Schupo beat cops, but they often were little more than old soldiers, best built as low-point Riflemen (see p. W72) with a few policing skills added.

HAUSFRAU

10 POINTS

This represents a German woman. For the most part, the Third Reich excluded her, asking only that she stay home and make babies, but her life had not gone untouched by the war. Early on, she probably directed a French POW in doing the farm chores that her husband would have done in peacetime, or worked in a factory alongside concentration-camp inmates. By mid-war, her husband already may have died, and probably she already had lost friends and family to Allied bombs. Certainly, some of her loved ones had lost their homes to the bombs, and the exhausting routine of seeking out the nearest air-raid shelter on most nights had begun to wear her down.

Late in the war, her relative bystander status did not save her from paying for the Nazis' excesses. She often ended up taking to the road in front of advancing Soviet troops, with only the slightest hope of finding food, potable water, or medical attention. Any enemy soldier might have forced himself upon her, even killed her when done. Assuming she survived, at war's end, she was left to rebuild a life from the rubble.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 10 [0].

Advantages: A total of 15 points in Animal Empathy [5], Appearance [5], Common Sense [10], Danger Sense [15], Empathy [15], Fit [5], High Pain Threshold [10], Less Sleep [3/level], Single-Minded [5], Status [5/level], Strong Will [4/level], or +1 to a single attribute [10].

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Female) [-5] and a total of -20 points in Dependent [varies; see p. W181]; Duty (Particularly risky job "suitable" for a woman) [-2]; Fanaticism (Patriotism); Poverty at Struggling [-10] or Poor [-15]; Skinny [-5]; Reputation (Married to Jew early in war, abuser of forced labor after Allied advance, etc.) [varies]; Secret (Jewish blood, etc.) [varies]; Social Stigma (Slav or other minority) [-10]; Status [-5/level]. After the Allied advances, Enemy (Some Allied soldiers, a small group, on 9 or less) [-10] would be appropriate.

Basic Skills: Agronomy or appropriate professional skill (Housekeeping, Child Care, Telephone Operator, etc.) (M/A) IQ [2]-10; Area Knowledge (Home Region) (M/E) IQ [1]-10; Cooking (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Merchant (M/A) IQ [2]-10; Scrounging (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-11.

Secondary Skills: Bicycling (P/E) DX [1]-10; Diagnosis (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-8; First Aid (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Naturalist (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-8.

Optional Skills: Spend 6 points on improving basic and secondary skills, or on any of Swimming (P/E); Boating (P/A); any additional professional skills (Seamstress, Hairdresser, etc.), Teaching, or Teamster (all M/A); Animal Handling or Musical Instrument (both M/H).

Customization Notes: This template should be customized far more than any military sort. For instance, a life-long resident of Berlin might have no Naturalist skill – having never raised foodstuffs in her life – or might have a very high skill raised during her daily walks in the parks. (As a general rule, Germans tended to be nature enthusiasts.) Before the war, Scrounging would be less likely though not entirely uncommon. Before the Allied advances, Appearance might improve given access to clean clothes, cosmetics, and baths.



Normally, an Enemy must be someone specifically trying to harm you; soldiers cannot take Enemy to represent the faceless opposing ranks already threatening them under their Extremely Hazardous Duty. Here, a mild exception can be made to represent the real threat of rape or worse during Allied occupation – the German woman certainly has no duty to face these risks, but the danger is real all the same.

Many women will possess a Dependent. In assigning the point cost for these, the GM may want to interpret "frequency of appearance" (p. W181) as "frequency in which the dependent faces some sort of crisis." Otherwise, a baby would be a -96-point liability as a loved one built on 0 or fewer points appearing all the time. Justifying this would require the mother to spend all of her time scrambling to keep the child alive, and to run a great risk of the baby's death. Sadly, this can be realistic, in which case the -96 points should be assigned. In other cases, the child might *appear* all the time but be *threatened* less often than that, in which case frequency of appearance should be modified to represent the latter circumstances, reducing the disadvantage to as little as -16 points.

Other dependents could be older children, elderly parents, invalid neighbors, household help, etc. Note that many German women will be built upon few enough points to qualify as a Dependent themselves – but few are fortunate enough to have someone looking out for *them* in this fashion!

MAJOR PERSONALITIES



The following pages describe a few of the most important figures in Nazi Germany. A full character writeup of the sort found in the *Who's Who* books is not provided, because this format allows listing more personalities, and a full writeup usually isn't required for the GM to use them as NPCs.

Where applicable, a brief description of the person's defining traits is provided, to guide both usage as NPCs and full writeups by those GMs who do need them. These descriptions will be calibrated toward a realistic campaign, in which 100-point PCs represent elite enlisted personnel or very competent officers. In more cinematic campaigns, attributes should increase 1-3 points and skill levels 1-8 points, so that these personalities continue to rise above the crowd. For instance, a Tactics skill level that would rival Alexander in a realistic campaign might play second fiddle to Col. Klink in a highly cinematic setting.

The writeups also include the individual's primary title, dates of birth and death, and a brief physical description.

Martin Bormann

Hitler's secretary, 1900-1945, a squat and coarse-featured man, often listening when he doesn't appear to be.

An early follower of Hitler, Bormann became his personal secretary in 1942, a position from which he quietly amassed a huge deal of influence – if you wanted to see Hitler, Bormann had to let you in. The title “secretary” might be misleading: Bormann held Administrative Rank 8 in the party.

Bormann served in the artillery in WWI, so had some military experience, however rusty it might have been. He joined the nationalist movements early while making a living as a farmland inspector. He was an able administrator, but not highly educated, being a high-school dropout.

His disadvantages included Fanaticism (Patriotism), Intolerance, and Unattractive. Bormann led among the many Nazis who included Christianity in their Intolerance, endorsing property seizures and stripping religious content from education.

Bormann disappeared shortly after Hitler killed himself, and was sentenced to death *in absentia* at Nuremberg. He probably died within a rifle's shot of the Führer's bunker, but the hunt for him lasted decades.

Paul Joseph Goebbels

Propaganda Minister, 1897-1945, a small, limping man with a grim expression and dark features.

Goebbels' personality revolved around his polio-crippled foot, which kept him out of WWI. Ashamed of this defect and his small size, he overcompensated by throwing himself into the Nazi Aryan idealism. Joining the socialist end of the party in 1922, he actually called for Hitler's ouster in 1926.



He soon switched to Hitler's side. Amply rewarded for the defection, he in turn created the Führer myth (p. 97), transforming Hitler from fringe politician into demigodlike status. He also fanned the flames of Jew hatred among the public at large, and helped plan the Final Solution. Most importantly for Hitler, he kept the German people fighting. He expertly argued that the American demand for unconditional surrender and the Soviets' thirst for revenge left them no choice.

Goebbels would have IQ 14 and Administration-15, Bard-14, History-13, Literature-13, Philosophy-14, Poetry-12, Politics-15, Pyschology-14, and Writing-15. His supervision of some early streetfighting might qualify for a modest Tactics (Infantry) skill of 12 or so, but given direct war authority in July 1944 he showed no talent for Operations or Strategy.

Other than *Lame*, Goebbels would have *Bad Temper*, *Intolerance*, and *Lecherousness*. He wanted his audience to feel the same hate and pain that he felt, perhaps to an extent that would qualify as *Sadism*. Certainly, the truth never held back his propaganda efforts, but this probably didn't qualify as an outright compulsive need to lie. He constantly had an affair ongoing with a beautiful actress, causing his wife to seek a divorce that Hitler personally smoothed over to avoid scandal.

Deeply cynical, Goebbels came off as the supreme opportunist, yet he remained Hitler's most loyal deputy. After the Führer's suicide, he had his six children lethally injected, then his wife and himself shot on May 1. Whether he qualified as a true Nazi fanatic or simply a callous realist could be endlessly debated.

Hermann Göring

The Luftwaffe's sole reichsmarschall (field marshal) and longtime Hitler heir apparent, 1893-1946, an unabashedly obese man who appeared macabre and/or comic given his extravagant uniforms and heavy makeup.

Easily the most colorful man in Nazi history, Göring became a hero as a WWI aviator. This attracted Hitler to him, as did Göring's loyalty in the failed Beer Hall Putsch. Severely wounded in that escapade, Göring became addicted to morphine during his recovery. He would continue to abuse drugs throughout the Nazi era, in dosages that suggest a very hardy constitution. (HT 13 would be appropriate.)

Göring collected a dizzying array of high civil, political, and military posts, including the Luftwaffe rank of Reichsmarschall created especially for him. For the most part, he left his subordinates to do *all* the real work. He held no real interest in Nazism or even military achievements; he simply rode Hitler's coattails in order to skim wealth and power. He collected vast amounts of both.

His skills as Reichsmarschall should be lower than the minimums on p. W70. Worse yet, as a prototypical Glory Hound, he often promised Hitler that his planes could carry out impossible tasks.



Göring consistently displayed vast charm and flawless manners, which both stood at sharp contrast to his bizarre appearance. He possessed an upbeat personality, ill-suited to racism, but was so amoral that he could promote “the Final Solution” as a political tool, while doctoring the family records of favored subordinates with Jewish backgrounds.

Late in the war, his military incompetence slightly weakened his influence with Hitler, and his spirits soured in defeat. In the last days, he jumped the gun in assuming control of the Reich, and the half-mad Hitler ordered him shot. Göring escaped this sentence, and that of the Nuremberg jurists a year later. He took poison just before his scheduled hanging.

Emmy Sonnemann Göring, his second wife, served as the social queen of the Third Reich, given the Führer was single.

Heinrich Himmler

Reichsführer-SS, 1900-1945, a bookish little man in round glasses and a neat, sinister black uniform.

After serving in WWI, Himmler joined the early Nazi movement. In 1929, Hitler made him chief of his personal bodyguard. From this position he built a personal empire, folding most state-police functions into the SS while wresting away Göring’s share of its control by 1936. Later, he added the military Waffen-SS.

He preferred to work in subtle ways, collecting damning evidence on his enemies, then springing upon them with a *fait accompli*. A case can be made that he was a more dangerous enemy than Hitler himself. Certainly, he held a grudge.

Himmler would have Administration-16, Agronomy-12, Occultism-14, Politics-15, and Research-15. To this day, he is described as a former chicken farmer. In reality, his party activities began far earlier than the shortlived chicken farm (started during a lull in his political career) and he had a degree in agriculture. Despite his clear-eyed and cutthroat political infighting, Himmler took runic magic and occultism seriously, filling the SS with ancient symbolism and creepy rituals, and even considering a scheme to reanimate fallen soldiers.

He would not have good skill in Tactics, Operations, and Strategy – Hitler actually placed him in charge of a crucial sector of the Eastern Front in 1945, much to everyone’s dismay.

The SS leader also possessed Fanaticism (Patriotism), Intolerance, Sadism, and a level or three of Weak Will. One could argue that most of his personality overcompensated for the last disadvantage. Himmler stood behind the concentration and extermination camps, the horrific medical experiments, the starvation-labor programs, and many other coldblooded initiatives. He kept a proper Aryan mistress and sired several children out of wedlock, but didn’t truly possess Lecherousness. He led the reprisals after the 1944 attempt on Hitler (p. 25), in which the SS hung men on meat hooks and strangled them.

Although he knew what non-Germans would think of him, he could not bring himself to really accept it. He started secret peace negotiations in 1945, hoping for terms nearly as deluded as his mystical interests. All he obtained was an arrest warrant when an enraged Hitler found out. Captured by the British in May, Himmler poisoned himself.



Adolph Hitler

Führer of Germany, 1899-1945, an unathletic, short man wearing his trademark mustache. In the late years of the war, he increasingly lost control of his motor functions and his skin color grew worse through a combination of stress, drug abuse from quack medications, possible genetic disease, and injury from the 1944 bomb attempt on his life.



The public face of Hitler’s personality needs little elaboration. He loathed Jews and rarely deigned to conceal it. He also hated Slavs, Gypsies, and others, but could downplay his stance on those cultures when needed. He regarded blacks as beneath hate. Almost assuredly, he eventually would have gotten around to hating everyone who didn’t look like his Aryan ideal.

As a leader, Hitler knew how to both motivate and curtail ambition. He well rewarded those who served him well – but he purposely set his deputies up with competing agendas, such that they almost *had* to fight amongst themselves. This increased his security, by making it very hard for his subordinates to cooperate to uproot him.

Hitler’s rule of the army stemmed from his civil authority, not as simply head of state, but as *the* state. This is Administrative Rank 8 *and* Status 8. Technically, he holds a supreme Military Rank 8 title as Oberster Führer, but this should be assumed as an (admittedly hefty) perk of his party rank.

A full Hitler writeup appears in *Who’s Who 2*, pp. 110-111. It fails to account for his Administrative Rank and his royalties from *Mein Kampf*, which were worth millions since every loyal Nazi felt compelled to buy at least one copy. His wealth should be increased to Multimillionaire +1. He didn’t actually live this way, but the money was there all the same. In the expanded WWII military-skills suite, Hitler would have Soldier-11, Tactics (Infantry)-11, Operations (Land)-12, and Strategy-10. These changes make him a 147-point character. Also, if the GM allows Luck in the campaign, he should have it.



Hanna Reitsch

Test pilot, 1913-1979, a small, attractive woman with short hair, capable of flying anything from gliders to rockets.

The only woman to earn the Iron Cross, Reitsch had a religious mother and physician father who both had plans for her. Her own dream was to fly, so she intended to become a flying missionary physician. She instead became a professional pilot of considerable skill (Piloting-18), setting many records and accepting an invitation to become a Luftwaffe test pilot in 1937.

Among the Nazis, Reitsch traded God for Hitler, and became a little unhinged even by Nazi standards. By 1945, her sensibilities were as feminine as a razor blade. She had petitioned for the Luftwaffe to undertake suicide missions. She read, then tore up, Eva Braun’s last letter to her sister, rather than deliver something so maudlin.

On April 26, 1945, she flew an Arado 96 into besieged Berlin under outrageous conditions, begged Hitler to let her stay and die with him, then when refused flew out again while the AA guns of two Soviet armies banged away at her. She continued to fly after the war, and died of a heart attack.

Joachim von Ribbentrop



Diplomat, 1893-1946, a well-dressed and incredibly pretentious man.

Von Ribbentrop may have harmed Germany's image as much as Hitler himself before the war. A well-traveled former salesman who married into wealth, he shamelessly played up to Hitler, who made him a special diplomat to circumvent the existing Foreign Office in 1934.

In this crucial role, von Ribbentrop displayed an effective IQ 9 and Diplomacy-8. In 1937, he greeted the king of England with a Nazi salute. His insights into foreign affairs often were dangerously wrong.

Von Ribbentrop had a Reputation -4 (Overbearing, pretentious, self-important, shameless . . .) with *everyone* except Hitler, who increasingly ignored him once the war started. The Nuremberg court convicted a sobbing von Ribbentrop of war crimes and hanged him in 1946.

Erwin Rommel

Army Field Marshal, 1891-1944, a stocky man with heavy features and martial bearing.

With his mixture of aggressiveness and talent, Rommel became the most famous German general of the war. Churchill publicly praised his skill in leading the Afrika Korps, a campaign in which Rommel became known as "the Desert Fox." He also supervised the defenses of the Normandy beaches on which the western Allies landed.

Opinions of Rommel's command skills vary considerably. While he did get results, he also gambled more heavily than more careful generals. His armies usually had overextended supply lines, vulnerable to commando actions.

Rommel excels at motivating troops, and can be fearsome when his standards are not met. His supervisors, in turn, often find him difficult and too independent. Those conspiring to kill Hitler recruited him. Though sympathetic, Rommel rebuffed their plan, arguing they would make a martyr. He took poison to safeguard his family when implicated in their failed attempt.

A full writeup of Rommel appears in *Who's Who* 2, pp. 112-113, perfectly suitable for a cinematic campaign. In a lower-point campaign, he could lose the Combat Reflexes, Imperturbable, and Patron advantages, but increase Wealth to Very Wealthy. He would gain the Extremely Hazardous Duty disadvantage. The appropriate skills could be tuned down a bit to Leadership-16, Soldier-13, Tactics (Armored)-16, Tactics (Infantry)-13, Operations (Land)-18, and Strategy-15. Also add Intelligence Analysis-12 and Orienteering-13. These changes make him a 191-point character.



Otto Skorzeny

Commando extraordinaire, 1908-1975, a 6'4" behemoth with dueling scars and ramrod posture.

Skorzeny rapidly rose through the ranks of the Waffen-SS to become a legendary soldier in his own time. He led the gliderborne raid that freed Mussolini, helped fend off the coup following the 1944 bombing attempt on Hitler, kidnapped a Hungarian regent, sent English-speaking troops to sow confusion behind American lines in the Battle of the Bulge, and regularly made the nigh-impossible seem routine.

Even in the most realistic campaign, Skorzeny would be at least a 200-point character. A good start would be to base him on the Commando template (p. W90) then raise ST to 13 and HT to 12. He would have Attractive, Charisma +2, Fearlessness +5, Military Rank 6, and Wealthy. Along with the commando and officer skills, he would improve Tactics to 15 and add Engineer (Civil)-12 and Piloting-12.

Some investment in Fencing would be justified, but the ritualistic duels that Skorzeny fought in university amounted to waving the points in each other's face solely for the purpose of acquiring the sort of scars that he had. The combat value of this practice was nil. Regardless, Skorzeny credited these bouts for his incredible courage, leaving one to wonder about the mettle of those 14 souls who were brave enough to duel *him* . . .

Skorzeny surrendered to the Americans in 1945, acquired excellent lawyers for his 1947 war-crimes trial and won, escaped from a German arrest in 1948, then *according to legend* created or at least led in the secret organizations Die Spinne (the Spider) and ODESSA that helped countless SS veterans flee Germany, relocated to Spain and entered business in the 1950s, possibly dallied with Eva Perón in Argentina, and worked as a sort of high-level mercenary in Egypt. By most accounts, he summered in Ireland from 1959, and died in his Madrid bed in 1975. He may have eluded a few Israelis along the way, and all the while suffered gall-bladder ailments and severe back pain.

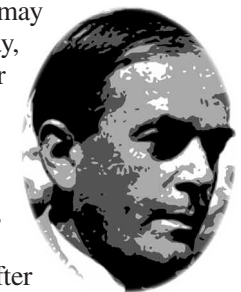
Albert Speer

Hitler's architect and confidante, 1905-1980, dresses well but not flashy.

Speer came into Hitler's favor after designing the stages and lighting that gave Nazi rallies their distinct style. The Führer took a liking to the young man pursuing the career he himself once coveted.

Hitler's patronage soon drew Speer into greater posts. In 1942 he became minister of armaments and war production, where he continued to grow the war economy despite massive Allied bombing. A Nazi by convenience, Speer's sensibilities corroded until he could use slave labor without balking. He did rebel when Hitler demanded a scorched-earth policy within Germany, traveling across the country at great risk to persuade local officials to preserve what little was left for the survivors. He also stood alone at Nuremberg and confessed his guilt.

He received 20 years there and served them.



THE GENERALS

And, to be precise, a scattering of admirals:

Gen. Ludwig Beck, chief anti-Hitler conspirator, 1880-1944. Keenly intelligent and a moral man, Beck led the General Staff from 1935 until resigning in protest over Czechoslovakia in 1938. He then led repeated efforts to topple Hitler. When the 1944 bombing failed, he shot himself, twice; a sergeant finished him with a third shot. Adm. Wilhelm Canaris (p. W50), Rommel, and five other generals shared his fate.

Field Marshal Fedor von Bock, 1880-1945. A classic old guard (p. W81) who led by ruthlessness, Bock commanded the northern army in Poland, Army Group B in France, Army Group Center in 1941, and Army Group South in 1942, before Hitler fired him for overcautiousness for a second and final time. He died in a 1945 air raid.

Field Marshal Walther von Brauchitsch, Commander in Chief, 1881-1948. A Prussian old guard, von Brauchitsch replaced Gen. Werner Freiherr von Fritsch in command of the Heer in 1938. Though the anti-Hitler elements constantly recruited him, he rebuffed them, becoming ever more subservient to Hitler. Severely ill and conflicted in his loyalties, he retired in December 1941. Hitler himself replaced him.

Grand Adm. Karl Dönitz, Hitler's successor, 1891-1980. See p. 49 for his early career. After replacing Raeder, Dönitz became Hitler's heir apparent when Göring fell out of favor. Führer for 23 days before surrendering, Dönitz received a 10-year sentence at Nuremberg, which he served until 1956.

Gen. Alfred Jodl, OKW operations deputy, 1890-1946. A crack strategist, devoted Hitlerite, and chief deputy to Keitel throughout the war, Jodl planned many of the German campaigns. He also signed the German surrender and died on the Nuremberg gallows.

Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, OKW chief, 1882-1946. Looking like an old-guard officer but actually resenting them, Keitel admired Hitler and implemented his plans faithfully, no matter how awful. Jodl tried to clean up after him. Other generals considered him Hitler's lapdog. Hanged at Nuremberg.

Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, Luftwaffe and Heer commander, 1885-1960. Kesselring transferred to the Luftwaffe in 1934 and commanded in the early air campaigns up to the Battle of Britain. He then showed a knack for defensive operations after he took over the entire Mediterranean campaign in 1941, and the Western Front in March 1945. A Hitler devotee, he was sentenced to death but released in 1952.

Field Marshal Ewald von Kleist, 1881-1954. Von Kleist led the panzer breakthrough at Sedan in the 1940 French campaign and gathered notable victories in Russia. He ignored Nazi policy in treating southern Soviets well and recruiting them to arms. Hitler sacked him in 1944 for not following orders. His Western captors turned him over to the Soviets, who imprisoned him until his death.

Field Marshal Günther von Kluge, 1882-1944. A competent but too careful general who obeyed Hitler even when he disagreed, von Kluge led Army Group Center in Russia and commanded the Western Front briefly in 1944. Both implicated in the 1944 bomb plot and sacked after retreating in the Falaise Gap, he killed himself on Aug. 18, 1944.

Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, 1887-1973. A hero after devising the French campaign, von Manstein led the attack on Leningrad in 1941 then several southern successes in 1942, though his bid to relieve Stalingrad failed. He toyed with joining the conspiracy against Hitler but backed away. He would possess about Strategy-21, perhaps the best skill in all of Europe, but Hitler cashiered him in March 1944 for speaking out. The British sentenced him to 18 years in 1950, but released him in 1953.

Field Marshal Walther Model, the Führer's Fireman, 1891-1945. A devoted Nazi and superb defensive innovator (perhaps Strategy-18 overall), Model served wherever Hitler felt the need was greatest, replacing Gen. Ernst von Busch at the head of Army Group Center after Kursk, as well as von Kluge after the Falaise fiasco. His forces pinned in the Ruhr in 1945, he killed himself.

Field Marshal Friedrich von Paulus, 1890-1957. A careful micromanager, von Paulus reined in Rommel in Africa, then led the 6th Army into Stalingrad, his first command of that size. After the Soviets surrounded his troops, Hitler made him field marshal, since no German of that rank had ever surrendered. Paulus became the first. He joined a puppet Soviet organization, then settled in East Germany upon his 1953 release.

Grand Adm. Erich Raeder, 1876-1960. He designed the Kriegsmarine and invasion of Norway. In a January 1943 argument, Hitler threatened to scrap every ship except the S-boats and U-boats. Raeder resigned and Hitler retired him. Sentenced to life at Nuremberg, he was released in 1955.

Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, 1875-1953. An old Prussian and one of the few generals Hitler respected, von Rundstedt helped rebuild the 1930s army, retired, then returned to serve in Poland and command Army Group A in France. He led Army Group South into the Ukraine, but Hitler let him go in November 1941 after a retreat. In 1942, Hitler summoned him again to head the defenses in the West, then replaced him with von Kluge after D-Day in 1944. In September of that year, Hitler *again* called him back to lead in the West during the Battle of the Bulge, an enterprise in which von Rundstedt held little faith, and after that failure he retired in March 1945. The anti-Hitler plotters tried to recruit him, but his only contribution was advising Rommel to join them. He later presided over the proceeding that threw them out of the army.

Field Marshal Ferdinand Schörner, 1892-1973. Hitler's last field marshal actually helped suppress the Beer-Hall Putsch, but his sympathies were strongly Nazi and Hitler held no grudge. A grim disciplinarian, he fought primarily in Russia before the last days, when the Führer promoted him and gave him command of an army that existed only in Hitler's imagination. Schörner tried to escape to the American zone, but was handed to the Soviets, who held him until 1955. In 1957, a West German court sentenced him to 4½ years for conducting an execution without trial. If any German general really could claim Hitler as a Patron, Schörner could.

Gen. Walther Wenck, 1900-1982. Wenck fought in Poland, France, and Russia before playing a leading role in the last days of fighting in the Reich. Though a compassionate and capable leader, Wenck somehow managed to stay in Hitler's good graces.

4. THE GERMAN ARMORY



The Germans paid a great deal of attention to the equipment that they would take into combat.

The Wehrmacht eagerly tinkered with its equipment and vehicles, trying to do the same thing a little bit better, or a little cheaper, or in a bit more specialized way.

As a result, German troops went into the field with perhaps the widest variety of gear seen in any WWII-era army. That equipment's quality and usefulness varied considerably.

PERSONAL GEAR



For equipment not listed below, see pp. W87-90. Chapter 2 discusses standard field gear for riflemen (p. 36).

Clothing

Boots, Jack (Marschstiefel) (15-16) –

These infamous leather boots were soon issued to only infantry, engineers, and motorcyclists, and discontinued entirely late in the war. They abused the wearer's heels on long marches. The hobnails would mar most flooring. PD 2, DR 2. \$15, 4 lbs.

Boots, Late (Schnürstiefel) (15-16) –

These lower, laced boots were worn with leggings. Combined PD 1, DR 1. \$8, 3 lbs.

Cap, Service – The universal officers' cap, except that the Wehrmacht version had a very high upsweep to make the wearer seem taller. \$8, 1 lb.

Shirt – In 1943, the Wehrmacht began wearing a pullover shirt with collar and two breast pockets underneath the field jacket, rather than a traditional undershirt. \$1, 1 lb.

Smock, Jump – Also called "bone bags."

Fallschirmjäger wore these waterproof smocks just under their parachute to keep personal gear from tangling in their harness. The first versions had short legs and were a solid olive color; later versions had snaps to form legs if desired and almost always displayed a mottled pattern (+1 to Camouflage skill). The smock had an integral pistol holster in back and zippered pockets. Some SS and a few elite Heer units wore similar fare; snipers often wore one with a face veil to camouflage the one feature they had to stick out. \$3, 1 lb.

Toque – A knit tube pulled over the head like a ski mask with a full-face opening. Troops in Russia often wore two. \$0.25, 0.1 lbs.

Uniform, Armor – Tank and armored-car crews wore a modified field uniform (see below) in black, with a short, tight-fitting, double-breasted jacket. Assault-gun and mobile-

artillery crews in infantry divisions wore a version in field gray. *Never* worn with jackboots. \$6, 3 lbs.

Uniform, Fatigue or Work – A crude jacket and pants (or coverall) issued in one of many colors or (less often) a camouflage pattern. \$1+, 3.5 lbs.

Uniform, Field (Early) – Jacket and trousers in a quality blend of wool and 30% rayon, usually in feldgrau (a grayish green). The jacket had four external pockets (first-aid gear was to be carried in two of them, and personal items in the other two) and one inner left-breast pocket for the paybook (p. 36). The pants had three pockets plus a watch pocket. \$6, 2 lbs. for jacket and 1.5 lbs. for pants.

Uniform, Field (Late) – A much cheaper version, with more rayon, recycled wool, and unpleated pockets. The early uniform would count as standard clothing for resisting cold (p. W205), while this late uniform would take a -1 penalty as "light" clothing. Looked rumpled even when brand-new. An improvement was that the trousers had an integral belt, rather than requiring suspenders as did the early trousers. Stripping all of one's gear to drop trousers could be tedious, even dangerous. \$2, 3.5 lbs.

Uniform, Service – The field uniform doubled as service dress (p. 37), but officers would want this more elegant version. Private tailors could prepare cotton summer versions. \$25+.

Uniform, SS – Early Waffen-SS units wore a field uniform with a slightly different jacket than the army version; many units simply wore the army version. Increasingly, SS uniforms were camouflaged, and rarely were of the poor quality described for the Wehrmacht's late field uniforms.

Uniform, Winter – As per *Winter Clothing*, p. W87. Reversible, with one side a forest camouflage pattern and the other white (snow camouflage); gives +2 to Camouflage skill in the proper terrain or -2 if not.

Armor and Related

Gas Mask (5) – See p. W87. Germans always carried theirs, in a cylindrical metal DR 3 carrier. The carrier adds \$5, 1.3 lbs. (for 4.3 lbs. total). Fallschirmjäger don't use the carrier.

Helmet, Crash (3-4) – Until 1940, armor crews wore a crash helmet covered by an unflatteringly large black beret. (Afterward, they simply wore field or service caps.) PD 3, DR 3; \$5, 3 lbs.

Helmet, Fallschirmjäger (3-4) – The M1935 helmet whistled annoyingly when worn in a parachute jump. This helmet deleted most of the distinctive flange from that model and added more padding. PD 3, DR 4; \$6, 3 lbs.

Helmet, M1935 (3-4) – The weight and cost of this PD 4, DR 4 helm include a \$1, 1 lb. field cap that can be worn underneath it. \$6, 4 lbs. A lighter parade version also was available, made of aluminum. It had PD 3, DR 3 at \$12, 2 lbs. without field cap.

Helmet, Pith (3-4) – Initially, the Afrika Korps wore this tropical headgear, but rapidly discarded it. The helmet would show up again during southern Russian summers, because it was easy to suspend mosquito netting around the brim. Usually made of khaki cloth over cork. PD 2, DR 2 and offsets -1 in vision penalties for bright light or rain. \$4, 4 lbs.

Field Gear

Ammo Bandolier, Fallschirmjäger – Worn on the chest, this carried 24 5-round clips for the Karabiner 98k in 12 camouflaged pockets. \$2, 1.8 lbs.

Ammo Pouch, Rifle – Divided into three compartments, which each held two 5-round clips for the Karabiner 98k. Most riflemen wore two pouches (12 clips total). \$1, 0.5 lbs. each.

Ammo Pouch, SMG – Made of leather early or canvas later in the war, this held three MP40 clips; usually two were worn. \$1.5, 1.1 lbs.

Belt and Suspenders – These black-leather fittings carried the basic combat load. The Army belt buckle displayed an eagle circled by a wreath below and the claim that “Gott mit uns” (“God is with us”) above. The Waffen-SS buckles instead said “Meine Ehre heisst Treue” (“my honor is called loyalty”). The belt alone was worn by soldiers not carrying gear. The suspenders are *in addition* to those worn with early field uniforms. \$1.5, 0.6 lbs.

Bread Bag (Brotbeutel) – This canvas carryall held the field cap if not worn under the helmet, a towel, toiletries, personal effects, and even rations. \$0.5, 0.5 lbs. empty.

Butter Tin (Fettdose) – Because man does not live by unbuttered bread alone, the GM might impose a -1 to morale-related Will rolls for any soldiers that lose this piece of gear. \$0.5, 0.4 lbs.

Canteen (Feldflasche) – Aluminum or black bakelite, these held 0.8 quarts (1.6 lbs.) of water. \$1, 0.8 lbs.

Compass – The *Marschkompass* had the same markings as an English-language version, except that East was marked by an “O” for *Ost* and the azimuth dial showed only mils (6400 in a circle) rather than offering degrees. The early-war compass counted mils counterclockwise; a late-war version counted them clockwise. Presumably, a leader with modest Orienteering skill could become greatly confused when switching between the two. \$5, neg.

Food Bottle – Field kitchens had these on hand so that squads on the line could send one man back to fetch hot food. Worn like a backpack, each bottle held 12.5 quarts of soup (roughly 27 lbs., 18 meals). \$6, 18 lbs. empty.

Gas Detector Set – The Wehrmacht had established an *extensive* chemical-warfare infrastructure before the war, most of it having to do with defense rather than offense. This is but one of the more useful of many items of personal gear designed to detect war gases. It consisted of a black metal carrier with several vials of detector powder for the five most common war gases, and a small air-sampling pump. The powder in a vial exposed to the air sample would change color if the gas was present. \$18, 7 lbs.

Netting, Camouflaged – Used to conceal vehicles, gun sites, etc. Gave a +2 to Camouflage skill if the proper color, but no penalty if not. \$0.25, 0.5 lbs. per square yard.

Parachutes – See p. W88 and W:HS25. Fallschirmjäger used the RZ-series parachute with one riser. It deployed with a painful jolt, pitched the jumper face forward, gave him little control of his descent, and required a forward roll on landing. It also made it difficult to carry much gear (-1 to Parachuting skill per encumbrance level in addition to the basic -4); weapon containers had to be dropped separately. Its one advantage was that it could fully deploy *quickly*; with as little as 45 yards of elevation. Beginning at Crete, the Fallschirmjäger could use color-coded chutes to ID commanders and containers. At other times, they used camouflaged silk. *Aviators* wore standard two-riser parachutes.

Quadrant, Gunner's – The German version of this essential indirect-fire tool (-4 to Gunner skill without one) used a spirit level on the quadrant arm, coarse and fine screw adjusters, and an elevation arc with two scales. The quadrant tells the gunner how far to elevate his barrel to achieve the desired range. \$15, 1.8 lbs.

Rangefinder, Stereoscopic – The Germans favored these devices, which each consisted of a long tube with a lens at each end, pointed in the same direction. The user saw two images of the same object, one from each lens, and by bringing the images into identical focus could precisely determine the distance to his target. In practice, this required *exceptional* eyesight; roll vs. the appropriate Gunner skill with any vision modifiers. On a normal success or failure, using the rangefinder has no effect on the weapon's Accuracy. On a critical failure, subtract 2 from Acc. On a critical success, add +1 Acc for large weapons (which already account for aiming aids in their Acc) or +4 (as a scope) for a tripod-mounted MG. The 70-cm rangefinder used by some MG crews was the smallest version; others ranged up to 12 meters in length. The 70-cm rangefinder is \$120, 10 lbs. plus a 4.5-lb. carrying case.

Food

German rations were measured per day, rather than per meal. See p. 35 for non-combat rations.

Ration, Close Combat (Nahkampfpackung) – Held 3.5 ounces of chocolate, 7 ounces of hard candy, sweetbreads or fruit bars, and six cigarettes. \$6, 1.5 lbs., or \$2, 0.5 lbs. per meal.

Ration, Iron (Eiserne Ration) – Canned foods that didn't necessarily need to be heated, this included 9 ounces of biscuits, 7 ounces of red meat or fish, 5.5 ounces of vegetables, 0.5 ounces of salt, and 0.5 ounces instant coffee. \$3, 1.8 lbs., or \$1, 0.6 lbs. per meal.

Ration, Marching (Marschverpflegung) – This also did not require preparation. Regulations forbade serving marching rations for more than four consecutive days. Each included 25 ounces of bread, 7 ounces of sausage or cheese, 1.5 ounces of jam, 0.2 ounces of coffee, 0.2 ounces of sugar, and six cigarettes. \$1.2, 3 lbs., or \$0.4, 1 lb. per meal.

Ration, Small (Kleine Portion) – An emergency reserve to be eaten only with permission, this included only the biscuits and meat from the iron ration. This amounted to only two meals' worth of food. An alternate version increased the biscuit ration to 18 ounces, making a proper if utilitarian daily ration. \$2.40, 2.1 lbs., or \$0.8, 0.7 lbs. per meal.

Medical

The Germans did not possess penicillin (p. W90) during WWII.

Pervitin – Wehrmacht personnel routinely used this amphetamine. Roll vs. HT with each dose; the drug restores 1d fatigue for a number of hours equal to half the margin of a successful roll (minimum 1 hour). Add +1 to the fatigue restored if any of it is related to starvation, and -1 if any of it is related to dehydration. The HT roll takes a -1 penalty for each dose previously taken within the last 24 hours. As each dose expires, the user loses the fatigue it restored plus 2 points. If this drops fatigue below 0, remaining points are taken as hits, instead. If this causes HT to fall to 0, the user suffers a heart attack, blacking out for 1d minutes and taking 3d damage.



Tools & Heavy Gear

Cooking Outfit – This included three nested pots, holding 2 to 2.5 gallons each, a ladle, and 10 sets of plates and utensils. Reasonably, up to 20 men could share its usage. \$4, 29 lbs.

Pillbox, Mobile – This consisted of a hexagonal iron base, about 4' around, welded to a slightly wider headpiece. An axle was inserted through the headpiece and the pillbox was towed upside-down to its intended site. A pit was dug and the lower half of the pillbox dropped within it, leaving only the roughly 3' by 4' headpiece showing. Two men could fit inside and mount an MG to fire through the aperture, with a 45° arc of fire. The headpiece had frontal DR 350, with other sides and the top at DR 140. The lower half had DR 50. The occupants could lower an armored visor over the aperture; otherwise, a shot at -6 could bypass the armor by firing straight through the opening. A foot pump operated a ventilation blower. Using heavy equipment, the mobile pillbox could be easily dug up and moved. \$800, 3.5 tons.

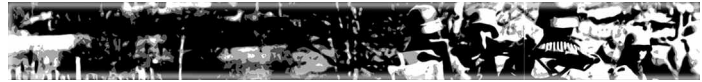
Water Purifier – Issued at company level, this large device consisted of a pump sitting atop a square metal box full of filters, with a rubber hose and filter leading out from the base of the pump. It could filter out solids in suspension in a water supply. Output ranged from 22 to 55 gallons per hour, depending on how contaminated the source water was. This device could not remove unpleasant odors, nor liquid contaminants in suspension, but it made most routinely tainted water safe to drink. \$120, 50 lbs.

Wire Cutters, Large – As per *Wire Cutters*, p. W89, but for cutting through really stout materials. Could quickly remove all but the most expensive padlocks. \$8, 5 lbs.

Melee Weapons

Gravity Knife – This knife's blade slid out of the handle at the push of a button when pointed down, then locked when the button was released. Pushing the button while held skyward dropped the blade again. Fallschirmjäger carried these to cut away gear after bad landings. \$50, 1 lb.

SMALL ARMS



See pp. W91-99 for more information and standard German arms.

Special Ammunition

The Germans experimented with many special loads. **GURPS Modern Firepower** provides general information on these. Specific loads include:

Armor-piercing hardcore (APHC): Introduced in 1940, this special issue 7.92mm Mauser round did 7d (2) damage until tungsten shortages ceased production in early 1943.

Caseless: The Germans realized that caseless ammo would save a lot of resources, but late-war experiments were sobering. An experimental 7.92mm Mauser self-consuming round tended to cook off in a hot chamber or jam (Malf becomes 15). Regular troops never received the ammo.

Duplex: These double-bulleted rounds entered production in 7.92mm Mauser in early 1945, but did not see much service. Intended for machine guns, they lowered Malf to 16, reduced damage to 6d, and halved all ranges, but doubled RoF. See pp. HT17-18 and UTT51 for more information.

Poisoned: German agents and assassins sometimes used handloads in .32 ACP or 9mm Parabellum, filled with wolfsbane (2d damage after one hour; also see p. CII146) or cyanide (4d damage after 1d seconds; p. CII141).

Subsonic: The Germans issued special rounds in 9mm Parabellum, 7.92mm Kurz, and 7.92mm Mauser for suppressed (silenced) weapons. These further reduce the weapon's sound signature by -1. See **WWII: Hand of Steel** for more detail on suppressed weapons.

Ammo Table

Also see p. W91 for the most commonly used ammunition.

<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Modern Name</i>
.22 LR	5.6×16mmR
.25 ACP	6.35×16mmSR
6.5mm Mauser	6.5×55mm
7.65mm Mauser	7.65×53mm
7.92mm Dutch	7.92×57mmR
8mm Mannlicher	8×56mmR
9mm Bergmann-Bayard	9×23mm
9mm Mauser	9×25mm
9mm Steyr	9×23mm
10.55mm Reichsrevolver	10.55×24R
13mm Rheinmetall	13×64mmB
16g 2.5"	16.8×63mmR
20mm Mauser MG151/20	20×82mm
20mm Oerlikon FF	20×80mmRB
23mm Kampfpistole	23×103mmR
26.5mm Leuchtpistole	26.65×103mmR
30mm MK108	30×90mmRB

GERMAN SMALL ARMS TABLE

Semiautomatic Pistols and Revolvers – Use Guns (Pistol) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Hold</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Astra P43, 9mm Parabellum	Crit.	2d+2	10	3	150	1,850	2.3	0.4	3~	8+1	9	-1	-1	\$60
CZ P39(t), .380 ACP	Crit.	2d	10	2	130	1,600	2.2	0.3	3~	8+1	8	-1	-1	\$30
FÉG P37(u), .32 ACP	Crit.	2d-1-	10	2	130	1,600	1.5	0.3	3~	8+1	7	-1	0	\$25
Mauser C34, .32 ACP	Crit.	2d-1-	10	2	130	1,600	1.5	0.3	3~	8+1	7	-1	+2	\$35
Mauser HSc, .32 ACP	Crit.	2d-1-	10	2	130	1,600	1.5	0.3	3~	8+1	7	-1	+1	\$40
Mauser P38k, 9mm Parabellum	Crit.	2d+1	10	2	140	1,800	2.3	0.4	3~	8+1	9	-1	0	\$35
Radom P35(p), 9mm Parabellum	Crit.	2d+2	10	3	150	1,850	2.7	0.4	3~	8+1	9	-1	-1	\$35
Sauer Mod 38(H), .32 ACP	Crit.	2d-1-	10	2	130	1,600	1.9	0.3	3~	8+1	7	-1	+1	\$30
Steyr P12(ö), 9mm Steyr	Crit.	2d+2	10	3	150	1,850	2.3	0.2	3~	8	9	-1	-1	\$35
Walther Mod 8, .25 ACP	Crit.	1d-	9	0	50	1,000	0.9	0.2	3~	8+1	6	-1	+2	\$35
Rev 83, 10.55mm Reichsrevolver	Crit.	2d+	11	2	150	1,700	2.3	0.3	1	6	11	-2	-2	\$10

Flare Pistols – Use Guns (Grenade Launcher) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Hold</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Walther LP28, 26.5mm	Crit.	Special	10	1	–	80	1.9	0.3	1/4	1	10	-1	-3	\$30
Walther KP41, 23mm	Crit.	1d+1 [1d]	10	3	–	100	1.7+	0.3+	1/4	1	10	-1	-3	\$100
Walther StP42, 23mm	Crit.	13d (5)	10	5	80	100	5.4+	1.3	1/4	1	11	-2	-4	\$120

Shotguns – Use Guns (Shotgun) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Hold</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Sauer Fliegerdoppelflinte, 16g	Crit.	3d	12	5	25	150	7.5	0.2	2~	2	11	-2	-6	\$30

Rifles – Use Guns (Rifle) or (Light Auto) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Hold</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Gustloff VG1, 7.92mm Kurz	16	5d+1	12	6	500	3,100	12.2	2	3~	30+1	10	-2	-6	\$20
Haenel StG44 Krumm., 7.92mm K	16	3d+2	15	2	300	2,000	13.3	2	7*	30+1	10	-2	-6	\$175
Mauser StG45, 7.92mm Kurz	Crit.	5d+1	12	8	500	3,100	9.9	2	7*	30+1	10	-2	-6	\$40
Walther KKW, .22 LR	Crit.	1d+2-	14	8	130	1,600	8.6	0.04	1/2	5+1	7	-1	-7	\$60
Walther G41, 7.92mm Mauser	Crit.	7d	14	8	800	3,900	10.7	0.6	3~	10+1	11	-2	-7	\$80
ZB G33/40, 7.92mm Mauser	Crit.	7d	14	8	800	3,900	10.6	0.3	1/2	5+1	11	-3	-6	\$40

Submachine Guns – Use Guns (Light Auto) or (Rifle) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Hold</i>	<i>Cost</i>
ERMA MP, 9mm P	Crit.	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	10.6	1.5	8*	32	10	-1	-5	\$60
Haenel MP28/II, 9mm P	Crit.	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	10.3	1.5	8*	32	10	-1	-5	\$60
Mauser MP3008, 9mm P	Crit.	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	8	1.5	9*	32	10	-1	-5	\$25
Steyr-Solothurn MP34(ö), 9mm P	Crit.	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	11.4	1.5	8*	32	10	-1	-5	\$70
Steyr MP40/II, 9mm P	16	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	12.1	3	8	2×32	10	-1	-4	\$80
Walther MP34/I, 9mm P	Crit.	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	10.9	1.3	6*	32	10	-1	-5	\$70

Machine Guns – Use Guns (Light Auto) on Bipod or Gunner (Machine Gun) on Tripod

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Bergmann MG15 nA, 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d	19	10	1,000	4,000	33.4	5	8	50	15B	-1	\$275
DWM-Maxim MG08, 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d	20	10	1,000	4,000	71/159	20.5	7	250	22T	-1	\$300
Knorr-Bremse MG35, 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d	17	10	1,000	4,000	24.2	2.2	8	25	12B	-1	\$350
Mauser MG81 (Erd) , 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d-1	17	9	800	3,900	21.7	3	28	50	12B	-2	\$450
Rheinmetall-Dreyse MG13, 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d	17	10	1,000	4,000	26.5	2.2	9*	25	12B	-1	\$400
Rheinmetall MG34/41, 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d-1	19	9	800	4,000	29.2/71	3	25	50	13B	-2	\$350
Rheinmetall MG45, 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d	19	10	1,000	4,000	23	3	30	50	13B	-2	\$275
Rheinmetall MG131 (Erd), 13mm	Crit.	9d+	19	10	900	4,000	50.5	24	15	100	14B	-1	\$425
Steyr-Schwarzlose MG07/12(ö), 8mm M	Crit.	7d	20	10	1,000	3,900	69/131	16	8	250	27T	-1	\$275
Steyr-Solothurn MG30(ö), 8mm M	Crit.	7d	17	10	1,000	3,900	19.2	2.3	13*	25	12B	-1	\$375
ZB MG37(t), 7.92mm M	Crit.	7d	19	10	1,000	4,000	49/87.5	7.5	8/11	100	13T	-1	\$400

Grenade Launchers – Use Guns (Grenade Launcher)

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Gustloff GrB 39, 30mm	Crit.	Special	18	4	100	330	23.8	0.9	1/6	1	11B	-1	\$00

Rocket Launchers – Use Guns (LAW) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Cost</i>
HASAG Luftfaust, 22mm	Crit.	6d+(1d-2)	20	6	550	2,200	20	5.5	9	9	12	-3	\$120

Recoilless Rifles – Use Gunner (Recoilless Rifle) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Rheinmetall LG 40, 75mm	crit	10d [6d]	x	x	x	7,200	470	15.4	1/10	1	x	0	\$6,470
Rheinmetall LG 42, 105mm	crit	6d×8 [10d]	x	x	x	8,900	1,095	39.4	1/10	1	x	0	\$13K

Mortars – Use Gunner (Mortar) Skill

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Malf</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>Ind.</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>AWt</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Cost</i>
kzGrW 42, 81mm	Crit.	6d×2 [6d]	20	4	1,200	58.3	7.8	1/4	\$350

Hand Grenades

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>Fuse</i>	<i>Hold</i>
EiHGr 39	3d [1d]	0.8	4-5	0
NbHGr 39	Special	1.1	4-5	-3
Behelfs-HGr	2d+2 [1d]	1.2	4-5	-1
BK 2H	Special	0.8	Impact	-1

Flamethrowers

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Einstoss-FmW 46	30	7.9	1	\$25

Mines and Combat Charges

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>Cost</i>
RMi 42	6d×18	21.1	\$20
Schützenmine 42	7d	1.1	\$2
Panzerhandmine	5d×4 (10)	7	\$35
25kg Hohlladung	6d×12 (10)	28	\$25

Italic cost indicates weapon never mass-produced.



WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

See pp. W94-99 for the most commonly used weapons for German and other forces.

Semiautomatic Pistols

The Wehrmacht never did truly standardize its service pistol, with several substitutes officially accepted for the standard Walther P38 (p. W94).

Astra Pistole 43 (1944): This was a special variant of the Spanish Astra Mod 600, chambered for the German standard round. Some 10,000 were delivered to Germany in 1944.

CZ Pistole 39 (tschechisch) (1939): Apart from the P27(t) (p. W:HS20), the Germans also took another Czechoslovakian design into service, mainly for use with police and rear-area units. Originally designated Automaticky Pistole vz. 38, this gun used non-standard .380 ACP ammo. For that reason, production halted in 1942.

FÉG Pistole 37 (ungarisch) (1937): The standard Hungarian sidearm (designated Pisztoly 37M in that service), this weapon later was also made under German supervision. About 100,000 were issued to German troops.

Mauser Construction 34 (1934): This double-action pocket pistol was intended to compete against the Walther PPK, but never became as popular. It was adopted by German police forces from 1936, as well as military officers. U-boat crews often carried them.

Mauser Hahnpistole, Selbstspanner, Modell c (1939): An advanced double-action pistol, the HSc was widely issued to German army and naval vehicle crews, as well as police forces. It was especially common with U-boat crews.

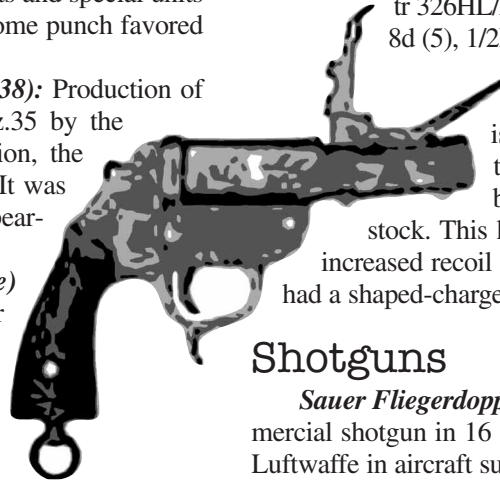
Mauser Pistole 38 kurz (1943): Agents and special units who needed a concealable weapon with some punch favored this shortened version of the Walther P38.

FB Radom Pistole 35 (polnisch) (1938): Production of this Polish pistol (designated Pistolet wz.35 by the Poles) continued under German occupation, the German military issuing almost 400,000. It was similar to the Colt M-1911A1 in both appearance and function.

Sauer Modell 38 (Heerespistole) (1938): Based on the Sauer Modell 30 or Behördenmodell ("authorities' model"), which was widely used by German and Dutch police forces, the Mod 38(H) was a substitute-standard pistol for German troops, and standard issue for the SA.

Steyr Pistole 12 (österreichisch) (1938): The Austrian standard sidearm since before WWI (called M.12 by the Austrians), this was taken into service by the Germans after the annexation of Austria. Several hundred thousand were converted from 9mm Steyr to 9mm Parabellum (same stats). It was loaded from clips, like early Mauser models (p. W94).

Walther Modell 8 (1920): This tiny pocket pistol was made until 1943, and popular with both civilians and soldiers, especially staff officers. Many were decorated; an engraved gun cost \$65, a gold-plated pistol with ivory or mother of pearl grip stocks was \$75, and a gold-plated and engraved gun was \$110.



Revolvers

Reichsrevolver 83 (1883): This obsolete revolver was still around in some numbers, to see service with police and Volkssturm units. It was a clumsy single-action design chambered for a black-powder cartridge. The Rev 83 was slow to reload, as the complete cylinder had to be removed (2 seconds), all spent cases pushed out one at a time (1 second per chamber, but only if a suitable device was at hand — the gun lacked an ejector rod!), the fresh cartridges inserted one-by-one (1 second per round), and the cylinder installed again (2 seconds), for a total reloading time of 16 seconds.

Flare Guns

Walther Leuchtpistole 28 (1928): This single-shot break-open smoothbore fired 26.5mm flares for signaling or illumination. (A white star flare was supposed to identify friendly positions, a red star enemy positions, a violet star a tank assault, or a whistling round a gas attack.) Allied-issue 1" flares also could be fired. The infantry carried the LP28 with a pouch holding 15 shells. Star-shell rounds illuminated a 100-yard radius for 6-8 seconds. Signal flares were visible up to 2 miles away at night. Just about any German vehicle will have one of these aboard. The table lists the lightened wartime model introduced in 1934; the earlier pattern weighed 3.4 lbs.

Walther Kampfpistole 41 (1941): Based on the LP28 but fitted with a 23mm rifled barrel, the KP41 fired the SprGrLP, a HE grenade so puny that several new overcalibered munitions were designed: The WK 361LP used the EiHGr 39 (p. 65) as warhead (Dam 3d [1d], Max 100, AWt 0.7). The WGrPatr 326LP had a much longer range, but a very puny explosive load (Dam 1d-2 [1d], Max 440, AWt 0.3). The WGrPatr 326HL/LP had a shaped-charge warhead (Dam 8d (5), 1/2D 50, Max 330, AWt 0.4).

Walther Sturmpistole 42 (1942):

Since the KP41 proved less than satisfactory against tanks, a new derivative of this was created. The StP42 was basically the KP41 fitted with a folding stock. This helped increase accuracy and kept the increased recoil down. It fired the PzWK 42LP, which had a shaped-charge warhead.

Shotguns

Sauer Fliegerdoppelflinte (1935): A twin-barreled, commercial shotgun in 16 gauge, this was issued by the German Luftwaffe in aircraft survival kits.

Rifles

Gustloff Volkssturmgewehr 1 (1945): Cheaply cobbled together in the last months of the war for the Volkssturm, the VG1 used the magazine of the StG44 (p. W95).

Haenel Sturmgewehr 44 mit Krummlauf J (1944): This bizarre weapon was a standard StG44 (p. W95) fitted with a barrel extension curved downward, allowing the shooter to fire around corners or reach tank crewmen firing through off-angle openings in the armor. The more common (but still quite rare) Infanterie or J-barrel had a 30° bend; the very rare

Panzer or P-barrel a 90° bend. Only single-shot fire was possible, and barrel life was only 300 shots for the J-barrel or 150 for the P-barrel. The gun was aimed using prisms.

Mauser Sturmgewehr 45 (1945): Intended to replace the StG44 (p. W95), the StG45 never reached full production. It was a simplified weapon using an advanced roller-locking action from which the post-war H&K G3 (p. HT115) was developed. The StG44 and StG45 shared the same magazine.

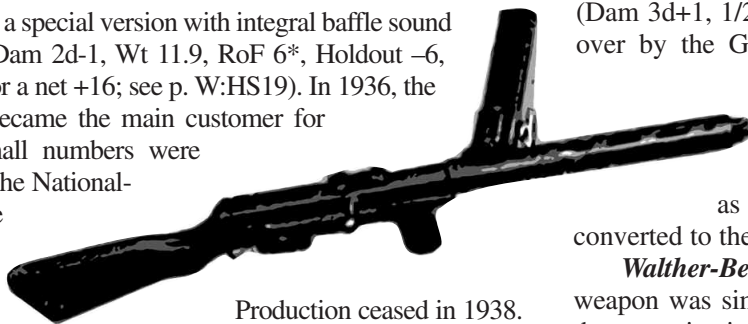
Walther Kleinkaliber-Wehrsportgewehr (1936): Designed for training boys in the Hitlerjugend, the KKW resembled the Mauser Kar 98k (p. W95) as far as possible, but fired .22 LR ammunition.

Walther Gewehr 41 (1942): The Walther G41 was one of two experimental self-loading rifles tested in combat during 1941. Main production did not start until 1942. The G43 (p. W95) replaced it and was made in larger numbers. The rifle used 5-round stripper clips. The other 1941 competitor was the Mauser G41; use the same stats.

ZB Gewehr 33/40 (1940): This carbine was based on the Czech Musketon vz.16/33, a variant of the Mauser Gew 98 (p. HT114), and slightly shorter than the German wartime Kar 98k (p. W95). Being more maneuverable, it was issued to German mountain troops from 1940. Some had a folding stock (Holdout -5), and were in service with paratroops.

Submachine Guns

ERMA Maschinenpistole (1931): This resembled other early German designs, except for the integral wooden foregrip. The EMP was adopted in small numbers by the German police, as well as the French Gendarmerie. The French also acquired a special version with integral baffle sound suppressor (Dam 2d-1, Wt 11.9, RoF 6*, Holdout -6, -4 Hearing for a net +16; see p. W:HS19). In 1936, the Waffen-SS became the main customer for the gun. Small numbers were delivered to the Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War.



Production ceased in 1938.

Later, it was copied in Spain as the La Coruña Mod 41/44 in 9mm Bergmann-Bayard (same stats), and used by police and special units. There was also a model with a slightly longer barrel and bayonet mount, which was adopted by the Yugoslavian army (Dam 3d, Wt 11).

Haenel-Schmeisser Maschinenpistole 28/II (1929): By 1928, Hugo Schmeisser had redesigned the Bergmann-Schmeisser MP18/I (pp. HT115-116). The MP28 differed in featuring a selector and box magazines instead of the unreliable snail drum. The standard magazine took 32 rounds, but 20-rounders (AWt 1) and 50-rounders (AWt 2.3) were also made. The MP28/II was adopted by the German police, the military police of the Waffen-SS, and the Belgian army (captured weapons were later used as the MP740(b) by German occupation troops). The MP28/II was extensively used during the Spanish Civil War, and copied in small numbers in Spain in 9mm Bergmann-Bayard (use same stats).

Mauser Maschinenpistole 3008 (1945): Derived from the British Sten Mk II (p. W96), this gun differed from the Sten primarily in having a bottom mount rather than side mount for the magazine, which was the same one used by the MP40 (p. W96). Only some 10,000 were made by various subcontractors under the code-name “Gerät Neumünster,” and issued from March 1945 to the Wehrmacht and SD.

The Germans also produced a direct copy of the Sten Mk II as the “Gerät Potsdam.” This weapon was indistinguishable from the original British manufacture, down to the markings. The reason for this is unknown – the copies cost \$1,800 each, and there were already many captured Sten guns in use as the MP749(e). Some 25,000 were made in 1944 by Mauser for Werewolf units, but most were used by regular troops.

Steyr Maschinenpistole 40/II (1941): This variant of the ERMA MP40 (p. W96) used two magazines in a special sliding housing, allowing the shooter to quickly switch from one magazine to the next. The gun appeared in response to demands for more firepower in face of the Soviet types using 71-round drums.

It was not a success, since the mechanism was not very reliable, and production soon ceased.

Steyr-Solothurn Maschinenpistole 34 (österreichisch) (1938): Both the Austrian Steyr and the Swiss Solothurn company were controlled by the German Rheinmetall AG, which had designed a submachine gun that was developed to production stage at Solothurn and then put into production at Steyr as the S1-100. In 1932, it was adopted in 9mm Steyr by the Austrian police as the M.32 (same stats). Two years later, the Austrian army took it in 9mm Mauser as the M.34 (Dam 3d+1, 1/2D 180, Max 2,000). Both types were taken over by the Germans in 1938 as the MP34(ö), initially retaining the non-standard calibers. In 1939, production switched to 9mm Parabellum, and all of those were delivered to German security forces and used as the MP34(ö). Many of the older guns were converted to the German standard chambering.

Walther-Bergmann Maschinenpistole 34/I (1934): This weapon was similar in appearance to the MP18/I, but with the magazine inserted from the right side instead of from the left. It had a progressive trigger that offered single shots or full-automatic fire. Since Bergmann had no manufacturing facilities, it was made by Walther. Magazines taking 24 (AWt 1.1) or 32 rounds were available.

The MP34/I was adopted by the German police and exported to Bolivia, but quantities were small, only some 2,000 being made in all. After being modified to the almost identical MP35 configuration (same stats except for Wt 10.7, RoF 8*), it was adopted in 1936 by the Waffen-SS, SD, and German police, and exported in small numbers to Abyssinia and Sweden.

Some 40,000 of the MP35 were made by Junker & Ruh under contract for Bergmann. An early version known as the MK32 had been made in small quantities by Schultz & Larsen of Denmark, and had been adopted by the Danish Army in 9mm Bergmann-Bayard (same stats except for Wt 10.4). After the occupation of Denmark, these were used by German garrison troops as the MP741(d).

Machine Guns

The standard German ammo can weighed 5.3 lbs. empty, and held 250 belted 7.92mm Mauser rounds (300 if packed tight), or 0.23 cf. A VSP of cargo space holds 20 ammo cans.

Bergmann Maschinengewehr 15 neuer Art (1915): A relic of WWI, this LMG was much too heavy for its intended use, like the similar DWM-Maxim MG08/15 (p. HT118). Hopelessly obsolete by the 1930s, it was nevertheless used by the nationalist faction in the Spanish Civil War, and even during WWII, if only by a few German home-defense units.

DWM-Maxim Maschinengewehr 08 (1908): Adopted prior to WWI, this heavy water-cooled Maxim-derivative (pp. HT117-118) was still widely used by rear-area troops. It fed from a cloth belt and was typically mounted on a sled mount (88 lbs.), although a tripod (71 lbs.) was available. The weight includes about a gallon of water and a full ammo can. Almost identical weapons were used by Poland and Yugoslavia; Belgium used it in 7.65mm Mauser (Dam 6d+2).

Knorr-Bremse Maschinengewehr 35 (1936): A Swedish LMG design made by a German company otherwise producing cycle brakes, this used the magazine of the Rheinmetall-Dreyse MG13. Limited numbers were used by the Waffen-SS for training. From 1943, the MG35 was issued to foreign auxiliary troops. A few trial weapons were delivered to Sweden in 1940, chambered for the 6.5mm Mauser (Dam 6d). Finland received some of the German version in 1940.

Mauser Maschinengewehr 81 (Erdeinsatz) (1939): An advanced design originally only used on aircraft (p. W130), the MG81 was fitted with a bipod, stock, and sights for use with Luftwaffe ground troops and the Volkssturm from 1944. The very high rate of fire was a disadvantage in infantry use, as the gun tore through ammunition and quickly overheated.

Rheinmetall-Dreyse Maschinengewehr 13 (1932): The standard German LMG until replaced by the MG34 (p. W97) from the mid-1930s, this was used in numbers until 1945, and many were sold to Portugal and Spain during the war. It fed from a 25-round box magazine or 75-round twin-drum magazine inserted from the left side. The MG13 could also be mounted on the tripod of the MG34 (p. W97).

Rheinmetall Maschinengewehr 34/41 (1942): An improved variant of the MG34 (p. W97), less complicated to produce and with a higher rate of fire, the MG34/41 had a shorter barrel, could only fire full automatic, and was not able to use the 75-round saddle-drum magazine. Combat units in Russia received 300 for trials, but the gun did not enter production, the much better MG42 being selected instead.

Rheinmetall Maschinengewehr 45 (1945): Although the MG42 was considered by many the finest MG ever, the Germans developed a further improved MG to replace it. The MG45 used 50-round belts (optionally in a 2-lb. drum). The war ended before it could enter production.

Rheinmetall Maschinengewehr 131 (Erdeinsatz) (1940): This aircraft MG (p. W130) is modified with shoulder stock and bipod for the infantry, and was used this way from 1944.

Steyr-Schwarzlose Maschinengewehr 07/12 (österreichisch) (1938): This Austrian MMG, originally designated M.07/12, was a heavy water-cooled weapon using a cloth belt, and quite obsolete by the start of WWII. Nevertheless, the

Austrian, Hungarian, and Italian armies still had large numbers in service, and it was also used in great numbers by the German military as war booty. The same weapon chambered for the 7.92mm Mauser round (Dam 7d) was used by Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in 6.5mm Mauser (Dam 6d) by Sweden, and in 7.92mm Dutch (Dam 7d) by Holland.

Steyr-Solothurn Maschinengewehr 30 (österreichisch) (1938): The Austrian-issue LMG from 1930 as the M.30, this was taken over in large numbers by the German army when Austria was annexed. They used it for training and rear-area security. Hungary used the same weapon as the 31M and later adopted a variant called the 43M; this was chambered for 7.92mm Mauser and used the 25-round magazine of the Rheinmetall-Dreyse MG13 (use damage and ranges of that weapon).

ZB Maschinengewehr 37 (tschechisch) (1938): A Czech weapon adopted at home as the Kulomet vz.37 and in Germany as the MG37(t), this was used in great numbers, particularly by the Waffen-SS. It mounted on a 38.5-lb. tripod. The firer could choose RoF 8* or RoF 11*. Some had been exported to Yugoslavia, and Great Britain made the MG under license as the BESA Mk I (p. W130) for use in tanks.

Rifle Grenades

From 1942, every German infantry squad was issued a 30mm Gewehrgranatgerät launcher, commonly called a Schiessbecher (p. W99), which attached to the muzzle of the Kar 98k (p. W95) and most 7.92mm Mauser rifles. The grenadier carried a pouch with the launcher and 15 grenades, usually 10 Gewehrsprenggranaten and five Gewehrpanzergranaten (p. W99). These could be thrown by hand in a pinch.

Gewehrblendgranate 30 (1943): This rifle grenade produced a blinding flash and smoke.

Gewehrpropagandagranate 30 (1943): This rifle grenade was designed to dispense propaganda leaflets after having flown 500 yards. It was produced in huge numbers . . .

Gustloff Granatbüchse 39 (1942): The PzB39 (p. W95) already was too ineffective against armor when the war began. From 1942, those that were not scrapped were converted to the GrB39 by cutting down the barrel and fitting it with a 30mm Schiessbecher. With the bipod, the GrB39 was a bit more accurate than a normal rifle firing grenades, but also heavier and could not serve as a rifle when not required as a launcher. The stats are for firing the grGewPzGr (p. W99).

Rocket Launchers

HASAG Luftfaust (1945): This nine-barreled, shoulder-fired rocket launcher was for use against low-flying aircraft. It was loaded from the rear with a cluster holding nine 22mm rockets. All barrels were fired in one burst. The Luftfaust was adopted in the spring of 1945, but saw no service.

Recoilless Rifles

Rheinmetall Leichtgeschütz 40 (1940): This light recoilless rifle fired a HE or HEAT shell. Its folding tripod had two small wheels for easy movement. A few hundred were made for issue to the Fallschirmjäger. They were dropped disassembled in parachute containers. A trained crew could assemble the gun in 2 minutes. It was first used in 1941 on Crete.

Rheinmetall Leichtgeschütz 42 (1942): This was larger than the LG40 with a more substantial two-wheeled carriage. It used separate projectile and propellant instead of cartridges.

Mortars

Kurzer Granatwerfer 42 (1942): Nicknamed the Stummelmörser, this was basically a shortened 81mm sGrW 34 (p. W97), using the same ammunition. Originally intended for the Fallschirmjäger, it was later also employed by regular and Waffen-SS troops in place of the leGrW 36.

Hand Grenades

Eihandgranate 39 (1940): Though known for their stick grenades, the Germans used almost as many of these more conventional grenades named after their egg shape. The EiHGr 39 had a thin metal casing that developed few fragments. It came in cases of 30. The standard blue fuse could be replaced with a red 1-second fuse to convert the grenade into a booby trap.

Nebelhandgranate 39 (1939): This stick grenade emitted white smoke for about 2 minutes. It came in cases of 16.

Behelfshandgranate (1943): This makeshift stick grenade had its explosive charge cast into a concrete cylinder.

Blendkörper 2H (1943): This glass bottle of chemicals created an irritating acid smoke, intended to overcome tank crews, for 15-20 seconds upon release. It came in cases of four.

Flamethrowers

Einstossflammenwerfer 46 (1944): This disposable flamethrower resembled a fire extinguisher. It shot a single half-second burst of flame. Intended for Fallschirmjäger and other assault troops, it proved popular, if fairly rare.

Mines and Combat Charges

See pp. W93 and W98-99 for generic mines. The Teller-mine 35 (1936) uses the vehicular stats (set at 200 lbs.) and the Schrapnellmine 35 (1935) the bouncing stats. Several wooden mines were also used. Others include:

Tellermine 42 (1942): This was a vehicular mine lightened to 17.2 lbs. and requiring 750 lbs. of pressure to trigger. This ensured that the target was completely over it.

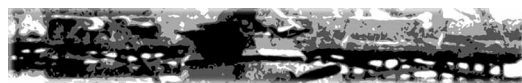
Riegelmine 43 (1943): Copied from the Italian B-2 bar mine, this went off with 440 lbs. of pressure at an end or 880 in the middle. Its shape helped cover a wide area with few mines.

Schützenmine 42 (1942): Often cased in cardboard, this cheap antipersonnel mine became increasingly common.

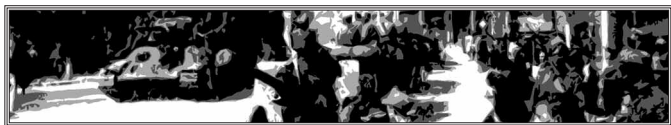
Panzerhandmine: This had magnets strong enough to stick to a vertical steel surface, such as a tank's side. Early fuses gave the user 5 seconds to get clear. Later fuses allowed 8.

12.5kg Hohlladung: The Fallschirmjäger usually carried these as "portable fire support," to punch holes in fortifications or to sneak onto the rear deck of enemy tanks.

VEHICLE DESIGN



In the following content, only the section on electrical motors (p. 66) adds a mandatory new step to vehicle design, and its mandatory aspect applies only to submarines. The remainder simply provides new options for the vehicle-design system in **GURPS WWII**.



NEW CHASSIS OPTIONS

The wheeled chassis on p. W118 primarily represent unarmed transports. Many armored cars were more heavily built. For the Small Wheeled chassis (p. W121), add the option:

Heavy: Weight becomes 4,500 lbs., cost \$250, HPs 500, with the wheels dividing 360 HPs among them.

Also add this new chassis, and an option for it:

Chassis	VSPs	Wt.	Cost	HPs	Armor	SA	Top	Size
Standard Wheeled	45	2,000	\$100	165	25 lbs./\$2.50	220	70	+3
4-8 Wheels				110*	50 lbs./\$5	75		+2

Heavy: Weight becomes 5,700 lbs., cost \$330, HPs 660, with the wheels dividing 450 HPs among them.

Finally, add this option for the Medium Wheeled chassis:

Cheap Wood Armor: As for *Large Wheeled* (p. W121); weighs 94 lbs. and costs \$0.75 per point of DR.

POWERTRAINS

The following new components add to the powertrain design process on pp. W128-129.

Engine Accessories

Methanol-Water Feed: This represents the German MW 50 system. It is a rudimentary pump and feed-line arrangement connecting a fuel tank with an engine's air (rather than fuel) intake. Each engine to be boosted must have a feed.

Instead of gas, the fuel tank is filled with a 50/50 mixture of methanol and *distilled* water (\$0.03 and 7 lbs. per gallon).

When activated, the mist of methanol and water greatly increases fuel consumption, primarily by lowering intake temperatures – providing up to a 25% increase in the engine's kW output (for safety, a given system can be set to provide less boost). Multiply standard fuel usage by 6 during this period.

The methanol-water mix itself also is consumed, of course. Each gallon lasts for 650 kW-minutes; i.e., it provides an extra 650 kW of power for 1 minute or 325 kW for 2 minutes or 65 kW for 10 minutes, etc.

The process is fairly safe, but runs some risk of eroding the spark plug contacts, blowing a fuel injector, etc. During MW-enhanced operation, roll for engine damage as for nitrous (p. 66), but at a base +8 rather than +4. German doctrine prohibited using MW boost for more than 10 minutes at a time; the reason is unclear, though it may have had to do with icing the throttle assembly. Usually, lengthy usage bears no special risk.

Historically, the system was installed only on airplanes (some Allied as well as German). It works perfectly fine on other vehicles, though methanol-water may be difficult to find.

Nitrous Tank: This represents the German GM1 system. It is a 150-lb., 22.5-gallon tank that holds 100 lbs. of pressurized nitrous oxide, with a feed to an engine's air intake. When activated, the nitrous allows the engine to burn *much* more fuel, by providing extra oxygen and cooling the air intake. Multiply standard fuel usage by 10 when using nitrous.

A nitrous system can be set to provide as much as 50% more engine power when activated. During each minute of nitrous-assisted operation, roll vs. vehicle HT+4, at -1 per 5% increase in power. On each failed roll, the engine's base kW output declines by 1% for each point the roll failed by (minimum 1%). On a critical failure, the engine quits working! Fixing this damage consists of simply changing the sparkplugs if total damage was less than 10%, a complete overhaul otherwise. A critically failed engine becomes scrap metal.

Each tank provides 750 kW of extra power for 1 minute (or 75 kW for 10 minutes, or 1,500 kW for 30 seconds, etc.). Nitrous is particularly effective at high altitude – above 10,000 feet, allow it to provide 1,000 kW/minutes per pound.

Historically, the Germans used nitrous for high-altitude “emergency power,” but the system works at low altitude and in any sort of vehicle. PCs could create a super-fast armored car using nitrous, for instance, but the gas was not readily available. British test pilots possessed captured GM1-equipped planes during the war, but no nitrous to fill the tanks.

Refills cost \$50 per tank. Attempting to use methanol-water and nitrous at once would probably stall the engine.

Module Type	VSPs	Wt.	Cost	Power
Methanol-Water Feed	0.1	20	\$10	+650 kW/min./gal.
Nitrous Tank	1	250	\$80	+750 kW/minutes

NEW WEAPONS

The following expands upon *GURPS WWII*'s offerings.

Tank Guns

50mm Medium Tank Gun: This Krupp 50mm KwK38 uses slightly shorter ammo than the 50mm Long Tank Gun (p. W131), which also had an APCR round that did 6d×9 (2).

88mm Long Tank Gun: The 88mm Medium Tank Gun (p. W131) cut down the barrel and ammo casing from the original AA gun's length. This longer version does not, and represents the KwK43. Medium versions of the APCR and HEAT rounds were available; the Medium APCR round does 6d×13 (2) while HEAT damage remains the same.

15cm Very Short Infantry Gun: The 149mm Skoda StH 43 technically was an assault howitzer (*Sturmhaubitze*), but was widely used on armor. Very ineffective HEAT and rocket-assisted HE rounds also were issued. This can also represent the British 152mm (6" 26 cwt) Mk I, Italian 149mm Modello 14 howitzer, or Soviet 152mm Gaubitsa obr. 1910/30g.

128mm Medium Tank Gun: This is the 128mm PzJgK 80, PaK 80, or PaK 44, WWII's most powerful tank gun. It used two-piece ammunition with separate projectile and charge.

Electric Motors

Electric motors provide power just like engines (p. W128). They don't use fuel; batteries or an engine provide their power. Either 3,600 kW of battery power per hour or 1 kW of engine output provides 1 kW of motor output. WWII-era vehicles *cannot* directly use batteries for motive power without motors.

Diesel-engined subs use electric motors when underwater. These motors can use the engine's transmission, up to its maximum kW rating, when the engine isn't running. Transmissions dedicated *solely* to electric motors have *half* the normal weight, volume, and cost (no gearing is needed).

Module Type	Weight	Cost	Power
Electric Motor	8	\$8	1 kW

Weight, cost, and power are per kW of output. Motors take up 1 VSP per 250 lbs., but often add access space (see p. 69).

Any engine dedicated to an electric motor reduces fuel consumption by 25%. (The motor allows for smooth transfer between shifting power demands.) Some locomotives and ships are designed with the engine powering an equal-output electric motor and its smaller transmission, trading greater overall powertrain weight and cost for substantial fuel savings. The late-war German “elecktro boat” subs also did this.

Notes: In *Vehicles*, the transmission is assumed to include any motor needs, which becomes overly generous and imprecise for subs of this era. This rule should be included among the *Vehicles Variance* discussed in the sidebar on p. W142.

Also, in reality, motors of this era were less than 50% efficient in transmitting power. This can be ignored here because the performance formulas already reflect that standard transmission arrangements suffered from similar inefficiencies. Technically, though, adding a motor between an engine and a transmission not designed for it would compound these losses.

Rockets

55mm Rocket: This represents the R4/M rockets. These late-war designs bundled high performance into a small package and mirrored the ballistic traits of the 30mm MK 108, so that aiming aids for the cannons applied to the rockets.

15cm HE Rocket: Represents the 1941-issued 15cm Wurfgranate 41 Spreng, a common support weapon. Usually fired from the 15cm Nebelwerfer 41, a circular six-tube, muzzleloading launcher on a carriage, or if vehicle-mounted, from the 15cm Panzerwerfer 42, a 10-tube breechloading launcher with the tubes stacked in two rows of five. Historically, the vehicle launcher was always placed in an open mount on the vehicle's top. The rocket actually was 158.5mm wide. With the Nebelwerfer 41, RoF declines to 6:8.

21cm HE Rocket: Represents the 21cm Wurfgranate 42 Spreng, an upgrade to the 15cm rocket that reached combat in 1943. Historically, the five-tube muzzleloading launcher was always mounted on a towed carriage. The launcher included conversion rails to enable firing the 15cm HE Rocket. Aircraft also mounted single tubes, but the rocket's flight properties made aim difficult (Acc 5) because it dropped off target.

28cm HE Rocket: The 1940-issue 28cm Wurfkörper Spreng had a rectangular 66-lb. wooden crate (1 VSP, 246 lbs. loaded) used as a disposable launcher. The Germans often put hardpoints on the sides of halftracks to which they attached these crates. Acc improved by 2 (Acc 9) if, instead, the crates were attached to the 114-lb. Schweres Wurfgerät 40, a simple wooden frame. In 1941, 44-lb. metal crates and a 242-lb. metal frame became available as the sWG 41. Acc improved by 4 (Acc 11) if the rockets were removed from the crates and fired from the six-tube, muzzleloading 28/32cm Nebelwerfer 41.

30cm HE Rocket: Represents the 30cm Wurfkörper 42, introduced in late 1942. The exhausts of other German rockets gave a +8 to spot the firing position; this one provides only a +4. Could be fired from any of the modes available to the 28cm HE Rocket, with the same Acc bonuses. For the crates and frame launcher, use the sWG 41 statistics for the 28cm rocket. The six-tube muzzleloading launcher for this rocket was the 30cm Raketenwerfer 56; it had conversion rails to fire 15cm rockets.

32cm Incendiary Rocket: Represents the 32cm Wurfkörper M Fl 50, which used the same rocket motor and launch equipment as the 28cm HE Rocket above, but replaced the HE warhead with a 13.2-gallon drum of flamethrower fuel. Despite the name, the rocket actually was 337mm wide.

380mm HE Rocket: Represents the Rheinmetall Raketenwerfer 61, basically a small depth charge with a rocket attached. The Germans designed this in 1943 to utterly demolish strongpoints. The launcher is a one-tube breechloader, and technically a gun-launcher, since it used a small charge to propel the rocket out the tube before the rocket motor kicked in.

Bombs

2.2-lb. HE Bomb: Represents the 50mm SD1 antipersonnel bomb. Debuted in 1941, up to 96 of these were individually slung under airplanes until canisters were developed!

2.2-lb. Incendiary Bomb: Represents the 50mm B1 incendiary bomblet. This doesn't explode, but can be set to ignite anywhere from impact to 5 minutes later. It does 1d+1 burning damage every second for 40 seconds to anything in contact and ignites any flammable object within 2 yards. In addition, for every 10 points of damage, it reduces DR at that location by 1.

4.4-lb. Butterfly Bomb: Represents the 76mm SD2, which unfolds metal wings and spins to earth without detonating. It then acts as a small, unconcealed mine.

4.4-lb. Incendiary Bomb: Represents the 50mm B2 bursting incendiary bomb. After the initial burst, burn damage is as for the M-15 WP grenade (p. W98).

9-lb. HEAT Bomb: Represents the 90mm SD4HL bomb.

15-lb. HE Bomb: Represents the 76mm SD10C bomb.

22-lb. HE Bomb: Represents the 86mm SD10 bomb, an old and anemic design that began the war as a mainstay bomb and ended it as an expedient submunition for cluster bombs.

550-lb. Cluster Bomb: Represents the AB250, introduced in mid-war, which held 224 SD1s, 144 SD2s, 40 SD4HLs, 28 SD10Cs, 17 SD10s, 184 B1s, or 116 B2s as its *splitterbombe* (submunitions) loadout. Some loads exceeded 550 lbs.

The AB250 is carried and dropped like a standard 550-lb. bomb. As it drops, the submunitions spread out to attack every target within 50 yards of the point at which it lands. Damage will vary *immensely* in this area. For quick play, apply the three

modifiers described below to these base concussion and fragmentation damage values for *each* target:

Loadout	Con	Frag	Loadout	Con	Frag
SD1	1.3	26.6	SD10	1	3.5
SD2	1.7*	26.7*	B1	—	0.025†
SD4HL	1	0.006†	B2	0.7	13.8
SD10C	1.4	5.7			

* Normally, these don't explode on impact, but the GM can use the calculated values to get a feel for how many mines have just landed immediately under the target's feet . . .

† Modify this value normally, but it represents *contact* hits rather than fragmentation damage.

Random: Roll 1d for concussion damage. On a 1-2, halve base damage and roll again, on a 3-4 leave damage alone and quit rolling, or on a 5-6 double base damage and roll again. Repeat for fragmentation damage.

Example: A GM is determining damage from a cluster bomb full of SD1s against an M-4 Sherman. He rolls 5,1,6,5,3 to randomize HE damage so doubles, halves, doubles, and doubles the base value to 5.2d. He rolls a 4 to randomize fragmentation damage, so leaves it at 26.7d.

Distance: Modify both types of damage by distance to the bomb impact point as described below:

0-5	×16	21-25	×1	36-40	×0.125
6-10	×8	26-30	×0.5	41-45	×0.0625
11-15	×4	31-35	×0.25	46-50	×0.0313
16-20	×2				

Example: The tank's center is 15 hexes from the bomb's impact point. The GM multiplies HE and fragmentation damage by 4 each for values of 20.8d and 106.8d, respectively.

Size and Cover: For vehicles, multiply length by width then divide by 9. Multiply both types of damage by this. For cover or prone people, halve damage for *each* -1 provided on p. W201; i.e., a -2 would quarter damage, etc.

Example: The M-4 is 19.2' long by 8.75' wide (p. W102). The GM now multiplies HE and fragmentation damage by (19.2×8.75/9=18.7) for respective values of 389d and 1,997.2d.

Finally, round HE damage down and apply as a single, non-contact attack; vehicles will square their top body DR against it. Divide fragmentation damage by the submunition's normal fragmentation value and round down; the target is hit by this many separate attacks, against top body armor if a vehicle.

Example: The Sherman has top DR 75. The GM calls the HE damage 6d×65, and rolls 1,322 hits, which bounce off a squared DR of 5,625. The SD1 does 4d fragmentation (p. 68), so the tank takes 1,997.2/4=499 attacks, but none of them have any chance of penetrating. All the attacks bounce harmlessly – but a cargo truck would have been shredded!

Contact Weapons: For submunitions that depend on contact for special damage (the SD4HL and B1, here), modify the provided value normally then round down. The result is the number of contacts hits that the target suffers.

Using these rules, two riflemen standing next to each other might suffer *vastly* different damage. This isn't unrealistic.

550-lb. Liquid Incendiary Bomb: This represents the 368mm Flam KC 250 bomb, which basically dumped 16.5 gallons of flamethrower fuel on the target.

WEAPON MODULES TABLE

Tank and Antitank Guns

50mm Medium Tank Gun	3.5	875	\$1.5K
30 rounds of APEX	1	[240]	[\$240]
30 rounds of HE	1	[240]	[\$100]
30 rounds of APCR	1	[240]	[\$240]
88mm Long Tank Gun	20	5K	\$11K
5 rounds of APEX	1	[250]	[\$250]
5 rounds of HE	1	[250]	[\$100]
5 rounds of APCR	1	[250]	[\$250]
5 rounds of HEAT	1	[250]	[\$150]
128mm Medium Tank Gun	29	7.2K	\$15.2K
2 rounds of APEX	1	[240]	[\$240]
2 rounds of HE	1	[240]	[\$100]
15cm Very Short Infantry Gun	11.2	2.8K	\$8.5K
2 rounds of HE	1	[220]	[\$90]

Rockets

3 × 55mm Rocket	0.1	[25]	[\$20]
15cm 6-Tube Launcher	2.6	630	\$2K
15cm 10-Tube Launcher	5.6	1.4K	\$4K
15cm HE Rocket	0.3	[70]	[\$20]

* Plus loadout for total of: SD1 550 lbs./\$1,180, SD2 675 lbs./\$6,500, SD4HL 400 lbs./\$1,240, SD10C 460 lbs./\$1K, SD10 414 lbs./\$910, B1 460 lbs./\$1K, or B2 550 lbs./\$1.2K.

Rockets (Continued)

21cm 5-Tube Launcher	7.2	1.8K	\$5K
21cm Aerial Tube	1	240	\$1.1K
21cm HE Rocket	1	[240]	[\$80]
28/32cm 6-Tube Launcher	6.5	1.6K	\$4.6K
28cm HE Rocket	0.8	[180]	[\$150]
32cm Incendiary Rocket	0.8	[180]	[\$150]
30cm 6-Tube Launcher	10	2.5K	\$6.7K
30cm HE Rocket	1.1	[275]	[\$210]
380mm HE Rocket Launcher	6.8	1.7K	\$4.7K
380mm HE Rocket	3.4	[840]	[\$590]

Bombs

11×2.2-lb. HE or Inc. Bomb	0.1	[25]	[\$50]
5×4.4-lb. Incendiary Bomb	0.1	[22]	[\$44]
5×4.4-lb. Butterfly Bomb	0.1	[22]	[\$220]
5×9-lb. HEAT Bomb	0.2	[45]	[\$135]
5×15-lb. HE Bomb	0.3	[75]	[\$150]
22-lb. HE Bomb	0.1	[22]	[\$44]
550-lb. Liquid Incendiary Bomb	2.2	[550]	[\$1.1K]
550-lb. Cluster Bomb	2.9	[40]*	[\$160]*

VEHICULAR WEAPONS TABLE

Tank and Antitank Guns – Use Gunner (Cannon) Skill

Weapon Type	Malf	Type	Damage	SS	Acc	1/2D	Max	Ind.	RoF	Ldrs
50mm Medium Tank Gun	Crit.	APEX HE APCR	6d×6 (2) + 1d [4d] 3d [4d] 6d×7 (2)	25	14	1,200	5,400	5,700	1/3	0
88mm Long Tank Gun	Crit.	APEX HE APCR HEAT	6d×15 (2) + 4d+2 [6d] 6d×4 [6d] 6d×17 (2) 7d (10)	30	16	2,400	8,300	25,000	1/4	1
128mm Medium Tank Gun	Crit.	APEX HE	6d×17 (2) + 4d×4 [10d] 5d×20 [10d]	30	15	1,900	7,100	13,500	1/6	1
15cm Very Short Inf. Gun	Crit.	HE	6d×22 [10d]	30	14	1,100	5,100	10,000	1/8	2

Rockets – Use Gunner (Rocket Launcher) Skill

Weapon Type	Malf	Type	Damage	SS	Acc	Spd	End	1/2D	Max	Ind.	RoF	Ldrs
55mm Rocket	Crit.	HE HEAT	6d×2 [6d] 5d×2 (10)	20	10	525	3	870	1,575	7,875	n/a	0
15cm Rocket	Crit.	HE	6d×15 [10d]	25	13	370	4	610	1,480	7,400	10:5	0
21cm Rocket	Crit.	HE	6d×53 [12d]	25	13	350	5	580	1,750	8,750	5:11	1
28cm Rocket	Crit.	HE	6d×220	20	7	160	3	260	480	2,400	6:14	1
30cm Rocket	Crit.	HE	6d×200 [12d]	20	8	250	4	420	1,000	5,000	6:15	1
32cm Rocket	Crit.	Special	6d×7 [12d]	20	7	160	3	260	480	2,400	1/17	1
Every object within 8 yards of impact point takes damage as for one shot from a flamethrower (p. W99).												
380mm Rocket	Crit.	HE	6d×550 [12d]	25	12	250	5	400	1,250	6,250	1/13	1

Bombs – Use Gunner (Bombs) Skill

Weapon Type	Malf	Type	Damage	Weapon Type	Malf	Type	Damage
2.2-lb. HE Bomb	Crit.	HE	3d [4d]	9-lb. HEAT Bomb	Crit.	HEAT	5d×2 (10)
2.2-lb. Incendiary Bomb	Crit.	Special	See p. 67.	15-lb. HE Bomb	Crit.	HE	5d×4 [6d]
4.4-lb. Butterfly Bomb	Crit.	HE	6d [6d]	22-lb. HE Bomb	Crit.	HE	6d×4 [6d]
4.4-lb. Incendiary Bomb	Crit.	Special	3d [4d]	550-lb. Liquid Inc. Bomb	Crit.	Special	6d×5*

* Plus single flamethrower attack (p. W99) over 9-yard radius.

NEW COMPONENTS

Bilge: Ships take on water, especially in combat. Bilges store it out of harm's way. Each VSP holds 280 lbs. of water.

A ship never needs more than 7.15 VSPs of bilge per ton of difference between its *empty* weight and flotation rating. Most have far less bilge, but subs often have a large capacity.

Bilge space can be used to store fuel, at 33 gallons per VSP. *All* taken-on water spoils three tons of this fuel per ton of water. This fuel has a +3 fire rating (p. W144) and, of course, makes that bilge space worthless for its usual function.

Bilges do not change a ship's flotation rating; a ship still sinks if loaded weight exceeds flotation rating.

Nahverteidigungswaffe: Most German armor mounted smoke dischargers (p. W140), but many crews removed theirs because of a nasty flaw. Like most such devices, the German discharger lobbed its smoke candle a few yards when triggered as designed, but if the discharger took any sort of fire, the candle would begin burning still inside the discharger. The engines in most armored vehicles suck air through the crew compartment – these accidentally lit dischargers would soon leave the panzer's crew gasping for air in a smoke-filled tank!

The Nahverteidigungswaffe deleted this design flaw and improved upon the generic discharger. The firer could aim the top-mounted device to fire to any side facing. It could be reloaded from within the vehicle. When empty, the device served as a port through which to fire a flare gun (p. 62). Late-war panzer commanders often were issued flare-gun HE rounds with short timed fuzes to disperse infantry attacking their tank's hull. No record exists of this tactic ever actually being used.

The device uses the same smoke-round refills as did its predecessor, including an orange variety for marking purposes.

Zimmerit: A sawdust-laden paste applied to vehicle bodies and subassemblies, Zimmerit prevents magnetic devices from being attached to the structure. Ironically, only the Germans regularly used both Zimmerit and the magnetic antitank mines that it defeats. Zimmerit weighs 0.2 lbs. and costs \$0.01 per square foot of coverage.

Flooding

On ships with no empty bilges, taken-on water floods vital compartments. In general, once taken-on water volume exceeds 5% of nonbilge chassis volume, the engine rooms are flooded. At 20%, the fuel tanks, ammo magazines, and cargo holds are nearly full. At 50%, the ship probably has sunk, but nearly everything is flooding. If flooded compartments aren't sealed off, the remaining compartments flood more quickly. Those left behind drown. Flooded components quit working (flooded fuel is spoiled) and steam turbines in flooded engine rooms may explode; roll vs. ships' HT+2 to avoid a 3d explosion per kW of output. Even if bilge space is available, the GM may rule that some fraction of water taken on from *combat* damage floods vital compartments, anyway.

In routine travel, ships should roll vs. HT -3 daily, and on a failed roll take on (0.25% of loaded weight) tons of water per point by which the roll failed.

PANZERAUTOMATEN

Germany lagged substantially behind U.S. manufacturing and military use of early computing technology, such as described on p. W140. German industry began the war on equal technological footing with the Allies in some venues (radar) and outpaced them in a few (rocketry), but in computing the Nazis relied upon International Business Machines Inc. and its puppet German subsidiary.

Despite this, the Nazis made themselves world leaders in *applying* computational technology in civil pursuits. In an alternate reality, in which they established a more solid economic footing, it would become possible – even probable – that they would pursue automated weaponry as a powerful means for conserving manpower.

In this setting, a late-1940s crew station might be replaced by a prototype 5-VSP, 1,000-lb., \$50,000 computer requiring a 10 kW power supply. Crammed with vacuum tubes (or “valves” among the Europeans) and given orders via punch cards, this unit would have DX 9, IQ 6, and 2 points in a single skill such as Piloting, Driver, Gunner, etc. It would require radar, sound detectors, and so forth to detect and interact with its surroundings.

A realistic computer wouldn't be mounted in a vehicle – they were too fragile – but would resemble the above without the DX, IQ, and skill points. They mostly served as *immense* calculating and recordkeeping aids for the programmer. In real life, they were applied to far more sinister goals than driving a panzer: the roundup of Jews.

New Component Modifiers

The rules for powertrains already provide increased access space for long-occupancy vessels, but items on p. W143 also require access space if they are to be repaired from *inside* the vehicle. This rule can be ignored for smaller items (such as most radios), which can be moved to a common work space for repair. Larger equipment may take the following modifiers:

Limited Access: Allows the crew to just barely reach the equipment. Minor repairs often take extra time (panels and other gear must be removed) and incur a penalty of -2.

Full Access: Allows minor repairs at no penalty.

Module Type	VSPs	Weight	Cost	Power
Bilge	1	280*	–	–
Nahverteidigungswaffe	0.2	40	\$50	–
Module Modifier	VSPs	Weight	Cost	Power
Limited Access	×2	–	–	–
Full Access	×3	–	–	–

* Only when filled with seawater.

Minimal Crew Space

Some cramped designs, such as WWII submarines, don't provide a bunk – and thus, work space – for all the crew members. On vehicles such as this that use “hot bunking,” install at least 4 VSPs of standing room for each crew member who doesn't have a bunk or crew station. This can be contributed toward the mandatory work-space needs for loaders (p. W141).

THE MOTOR POOL



The following pages describe a few of the vehicles commonly encountered in German forces. Additional examples can be found in *GURPS WWII*.

VEHICLES KEY

The military vehicles in this section are presented in the following format:

Descriptive Text

Each vehicle writeup begins with general descriptive text, which usually includes some of the finer details of using the vehicle, such as fuel consumption, turret rotation speeds, etc.

Subassemblies

This lists the chassis and each subassembly, with any options applied to each, followed by the size modifier to see or target that particular structure. Note that the remainder of the writeup will use this structure name or an abbreviation in brackets to indicate the placement of other components. For instance, [OM 1] means the item in question is housed in the subassembly designated Open Mount 1 in this passage. If no placement is described, the item is assumed to be in the body of the vehicle.

Powertrain

This describes the vehicle's engines, transmission, and electric motors (if any), fuel tankage, and batteries carried either as motive power sources or simply to turn over the engine and power accessories such as radios.

Occupancy (Occ)

This describes where and how the vehicle seats its occupants. (Again, unless otherwise designated, all crew stations are assumed to be in the body.) A "CS" is a crew station while a "PS" is a passenger station. An "SR" would indicate standing room used as makeshift passenger space. An "X" prefix means the station is exposed, while an "M" prefix means the station is a motorcycle seat. Long-term accommodations such as bunks will be covered in the descriptive text. Note that many vehicles in this chapter assign a crew station to their gun loaders, even though they don't have to (see p. W141), to give them a place to sit when not actually performing their job.

Cargo

This heading includes *all* empty space except access space and bilges within the vehicle, which almost always will be design "waste" space rather than a true cargo hold of some sort. Unless specific cargo space is assigned under *Equipment* (see below), assume that the largest single item that this space could hold would be just 10% as big as it is. For instance, a vehicle with 27 VSPs of empty space not truly dedicated to a cargo hold could not fit another crew station, because its single largest "nook" would be only 2.7 VSPs in size. The remainder of the space is scattered about the vehicle in other "crannies" of similar size. Unless the vehicle is specifically

designed to haul cargo, the GM should feel free to place these restrictions on any empty space.

Armor

This lists the armor values on each face of each vehicular structure as PD value followed by DR value. (Note that motive subassemblies will always have uniform values on all facings unless the GM is using design rules beyond the scope of this book; that value is still repeated for each facing simply as a convenience.) A "W" following the armor value denotes that it is wooden. An "S" denotes that it includes DR 15 of standoff armor (pp. W140-141). A "C" indicates cloth armor. Any special notes are below the armor values.

Weaponry

This lists each weapon (or set of identical weapons), its placement, and its ammunition stores. Any special notes are below the listings. See pp. W133-135 and pp. 66-68 for weapon statistics.

Equipment

This lists each structure with general equipment installed, followed by the equipment within it. See pp. W136-140 and p. 69 for descriptions of general equipment.

Statistics

Size gives the length, width, and height of the vehicle. *Payload* is the weight of a standard load of fuel, personnel, ammunition, and cargo. *Lwt.* is loaded weight. *Volume* is the amount of space the vehicle would take up if stored within another (presumably larger) vehicle. *Maint.* or *MH* describes either the maintenance interval in hours (p. W144) or the number of men required to keep up maintenance working eight-hour shifts on a long-occupancy vehicle. *Cost* is the vehicle cost, rounded; note that a "retail" price for the vehicle might be much higher; this figure does not include a profit margin, if any.

HT measures how robust the vehicle is; see p. W144. *HPs* measures the hit points of each structure; see p. W156.

gSpeed, etc. provide the vehicle's performance characteristics in each of its routine modes of travel; see pp. W145-149. Special characteristics for each mode are described under the general statistics line.

Design Notes

To facilitate usage of these vehicles as examples for the *GURPS WWII* design process, these notes indicate where components were purchased and then modified to historical values, or where any particularly notable "fudging" of calculated data to historical values had to take place.

Variants

While the description covers the general vehicle type, the statistics are for one particular variant. This section describes some or all of the other subtypes of the vehicle, with appropriate supporting statistics if the variant is much more complex than swapping one component for another.

ARTILLERY

The following describes some of the more famous towed weapons that the Wehrmacht deployed.

88mm FlaK 18

This is the infamous 88. It required a crew of roughly eight, depending on how much of its targeting data came from a centralized command element.

Subassemblies: Small Wheeled chassis +3; full-rotation Small TD turret +3; six heavy wheels +1.

Powertrain: none; towed.

Occ: –

Cargo: 23 Body, 5 OM

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body, Tur:	3/15	3/15	3/15	3/15	3/15
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

Weaponry

88mm Long Tank Gun/FlaK 18 [OM:F] (0 rounds).

Equipment

Body: 2x8-VSP exposed cargo storage (only when in traveling mode). Turret: Universal mount for 88mm gun.

Statistics

Size: 25'x8'x8' Payload: – Lwt: 7.6 tons
Volume: 71 Maint: 49 hours Cost: \$16,800

HT: 7. HPs: 125 Body, 15 each Wheel, 285 Turret.

gSpeed: * gAccel: * gDecel: * gMR: 0.25 gSR: 4
Ground Pressure Very High. 1/8 Off-Road Speed.

* Use towing vehicle's statistics after adding towed weight.

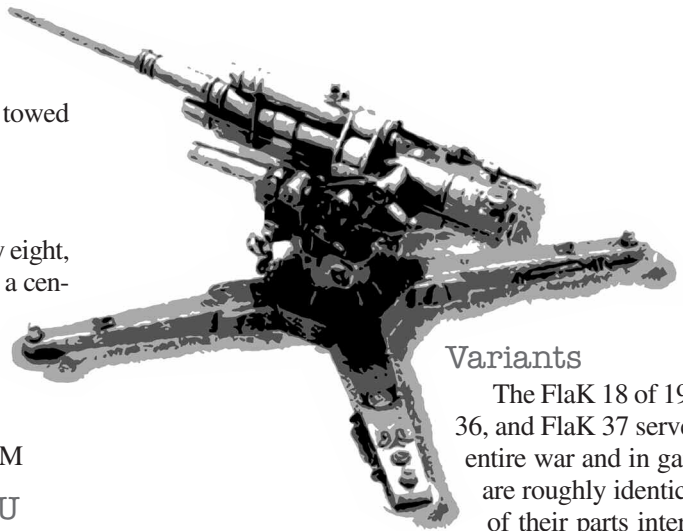
Design Notes

The design mildly breaks the rule that a chassis can't mount subassemblies of greater volume than itself, but then this was an admittedly high and ungainly mounting. In fact, though famous for its ability to fill an antitank role, the FlaK 18 made an extremely vulnerable AT gun. It *had* to kill its target before the target got within its own range.

In addition to that shortcoming, converting from AA to AT duty involved a complicated rearrangement of sighting gear. It could not be performed on the spur of the moment – at least overnight notice would be appropriate. Subtract 6 from Acc if switching roles without this time to adjust the sights.

The "body" in this design is four sturdy legs deployed at right angles in action, or folded together into two long trails on the road. In traveling mode, a great deal of cargo could be stacked atop these, including ammo boxes and crew members. In action, the wheels and axle assemblies were removed, reducing loaded weight to 5.7 tons.

Most artillery pieces are unarmored, but the FlaK 18 was of such sturdy construction that it seems appropriate to increase its armor. Note that *none* of this armor protects the crew! (On unarmored artillery, it would be appropriate to allow a default DR 5 for the body and subassemblies. This does not mean that armor can be purchased up from this default, though; it must be purchased from 0.)



Variants

The FlaK 18 of 1933, FlaK 36, and FlaK 37 served for the entire war and in game terms are roughly identical. Many of their parts interchanged.

A "pure" FlaK 37 might be given a -2 to Acc for independent usage but a +1 if receiving data from a fire-direction center. The 36 and 37 had eight 11-HP wheels on their carriages.

The 1943-issue 8.6-ton FlaK 41 used a larger carriage (use the Standard Wheeled chassis from p. 65) and incorporated hastily engineered "improvements" that gave it an effective HT of 6. This soon restricted it to use for homeland defense, close to its repair facilities. It also used slightly modified ammo that the other 88mm pieces could not fire.

15cm sIG 33

This infantry gun debuted in 1936 to reinforce the 75mm pieces deployed by the Germans (and almost everyone else). The weapon was a *lot* more effective than a 75mm, but the infantry found it a supreme pain to maneuver. They did not really begin to appreciate the weapon until it was mechanized as the Panzer I variant of the same name (p. 77).

A crew of four to eight would serve the sIG 33.

Subassemblies: Very Small Wheeled chassis +2; two heavy wheels +1.

Powertrain: none; towed.

Occ: –

Cargo: 3.8 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/25	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

Weaponry

15cm Very Short Infantry Gun/StH 43 [Body:F] (0 rounds).

Statistics

Size: 10'x4'x5' Payload: – Lwt: 1.9 tons
Volume: 18 Maint: 68 hours Cost: \$8,600

HT: 9 HPs: 85 Body, 28 each Wheel.

gSpeed: * gAccel: * gDecel: * gMR: 1.25 gSR: 2
Ground Pressure High. 1/6 Off-Road Speed.

* Use towing vehicle's statistics after adding towed weight.

Design Notes

Late-war improvements reduced overall weight to 1.7 tons, which was nice, but the infantry still regarded the piece as immobile if a team of horses or tractor was not at hand . . .

SdKfz 2 KLEINES KETTEN-KRAD

This tiny tractor, available from 1940, basically combined the front half of a motorcycle with a miniature tracked body. It served as a handy utility vehicle, particularly among paratroop units. The Ketten-Krad (usually called Kettenrad in English) burns 1.2 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel costs \$1.80.

SdKfz 2 (Ketten-Krad)

Subassemblies: Very Small Halftrack chassis +2; tracks and one wheel +1.

Powertrain: 27-kW standard gas engine with 27-kW tracked transmission and 12-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 XCS, 2 MPS Cargo: 3.6 Body

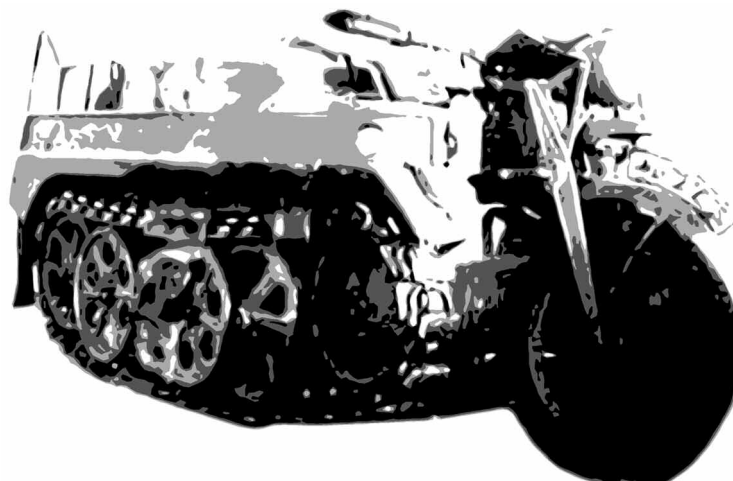
Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3
Tracks:	4/10	4/10	4/10	4/10	4/10

Equipment

Body: 3.6-VSP exposed cargo hold.

Statistics

Size: 9'x3'x3'	Payload: 672 lbs.	Lwt: 1.3 tons
Volume: 14	Maint: 296 hours	Cost: \$460



HT: 10. HPs: 60 Body, 15 each Track.

gSpeed: 54 gAccel: 4 gDecel: 20 gMR: 0.25 gSR: 4
Ground Pressure Low. 1/2 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The passenger seats in the back offer almost no coverage by the vehicle body, so they are modeled as cycle seats. This is a rare exception to the rule on p. W141 that the first cycle seat purchased for a vehicle is always a crew station, since the driver *does* receive partial coverage from the tread assemblies.

VOLKSWAGEN KÜBELWAGEN

One of the first vehicle concepts that Hitler asked for was a Volkswagen – or “people’s car” – that could be churned out by the thousands. The resulting Porsche design, with its rudimentary construction and comforts, perfectly fitted the vision. Beginning in March 1940, the VW Kübelwagen became the German equivalent of the jeep (p. W106) – though to be sure, the U.S. jeep was more rugged, more generally useful, and by the end of the war 11 times more common.

At the beginning of the war, German officers probably will avoid riding in something as lowly as a Kübelwagen, but by the end they’ll be grateful to have one.

The VW Kübelwagen burns 0.8 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel costs \$1.80 for a full load.

Volkswagen Kübel Typ 82

Subassemblies: Very Small Wheeled chassis with civilian option +2; four standard wheels +1.

Powertrain: 18-kW standard gas engine with 18-kW wheeled transmission and 12-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 XCS, 3 XPS Cargo: 4.6 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

Equipment

Body: 4-VSP cargo hold; ragtop for all four seats.

Statistics

Size: 12'x5'x4'	Payload: 0.6 tons	Lwt: 1.4 tons
Volume: 18	Maint: 433 hours	Cost: \$220

HT: 8 HPs: 40 Body, 4 each Wheel.

gSpeed: 58 gAccel: 3 gDecel: 10 gMR: 0.75 gSR: 4
Ground Pressure High. 1/6 Off-Road Speed.

Variants

The Type 82 had dozens of subvariants, most of them minor in game terms. (Add a radio receiver, or remove the rag top, etc.) For instance, the 82 fared very poorly when dispatched to the desert with the Afrika Korps, so the *Tropenfest* variant was developed with sand tires and other modifications. (Despite this attention, some were sent to the desert in their original gray paint schemes, which could give a +1 to spot them in the predominantly tan-under-blue environment!)

The Type 87 had an enclosed body with the VW Beetle’s famous rounded shape rather than the flat lines of the Type 82. Modeling this would require placing a DR 3 Large Weapon superstructure on top of the chassis to represent the top of the cab, and reducing passenger access space. Adds 804 lbs. and \$115; HT 7 and gSpeed 51.

The Schwimmwagen variant floated, with wSpeed 7.

KRUPP-PROTZE “BOXER”

The Germans had serviceworthy light trucks, but not an abundance of them. Every panzer that came off of their limited number of assembly lines meant that a dozen or more trucks did not. At first, the Wehrmacht responded to this shortfall by gratefully accepting the various offerings of German industry, and purchasing or simply taking appropriate materials from occupied or annexed countries. The 6×4 1933-issue Krupp-Protze was one such “substitute standard” truck.

By the beginning of the war, the Wehrmacht tried to standardize its trucks in the Schell program. It was too late; demand far outstripped supply, and all sorts of Polish and French makes would be added to the existing mix.

The 1937 upgrade, the L2H43, burns 2 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel costs \$2.70 for a full load.

Krupp L2H43 Kfz 70

Subassemblies: Medium Wheeled chassis +6; six heavy wheels +3.

Powertrain: 45-kW standard gas engine with 45-kW wheeled transmission and 30-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 XCS, 10 XPS **Cargo:** 96 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

OPEL-BLITZ 4x2

The Wehrmacht tried to make this its standard 3-ton truck, but as mentioned, German industry never produced enough to meet demand. The version described is the ambulance variant.

The 1937-issue Opel burns 2.5 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel costs \$3.15 for a full load.

Opel Blitz Typ 3.6-36S Kfz 31

Subassemblies: Medium Wheeled chassis +6; four heavy wheels +3.

Powertrain: 55-kW standard gas engine with 55-kW wheeled transmission and 21-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 5 CS **Cargo:** 31 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	3/5W	3/5W	3/5W	3/5W	3/5W
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

Equipment

Body: 12-VSP cargo hold; four stretchers with limited access for the two crew members stationed with them in the enclosed bed.

Statistics

Size: 20'×7'×7' **Payload:** 1.6 lbs. **Lwt:** 5.9 tons
Volume: 150 **Maint:** 283 hours **Cost:** \$500

HT: 11 HPs: 330 Body, 55 each Wheel.

Equipment

Body: 80-VSP exposed cargo hold.

Statistics

Size: 16'×6'×6' **Payload:** 1.3 lbs. **Lwt:** 3.9 tons
Volume: 150 **Maint:** 263 hours **Cost:** \$580

HT: 12. HPs: 330 Body, 36 each Wheel.

gSpeed: 54 **gAccel:** 3 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.5 **gSR:** 4
Ground Pressure: Moderate. 1/4 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The 80 VSPs of exposed cargo space represent stacking cargo precariously high. Something like 30 VSPs could be carried safely. Because this truck primarily served to transport an artillery crew of up to 10 and tow their weapon, no cargo is figured into the payload. Assume that gSpeed drops by 3 mph for every half-ton of cargo; HT remains unchanged under reasonable loads.

Variants

The original truck had a 39-kW engine.

The Boxer became a telephone truck in the Kfz 19, and a radio mast truck in the Kfz 68. The Kfz 69 towed a 37mm AT gun, but some mounted the gun on the bed, instead. The Kfz 81 usually towed (sometimes carried) a 20mm AA gun and carried its ammo. The Kfz 83 carried an 8-kW generator and (usually) towed a huge floodlight.

gSpeed: 55 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.5 **gSR:** 4
Ground Pressure: High. 1/6 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

Design gSpeed is 49, but historical value is listed.

On early Blitzes the frame was made with timber and compressed paper to conserve steel; on later models all of the chassis was constructed of these *Ersatz* materials.

Further defining the van-equipped truck's layout: The engine compartment held 12 VSPs, the cab 17, and the standard enclosed van 86 VSPs. This particular truck leaves 7 VSPs empty in the engine compartment (which were typically *very* roomy during this period), 2 in the cab, and 10 underneath the van. The van rode very high over the axles, with the floor almost flush with the tops of the rear tires.

Those who find the vehicle-design process challenging enough already may ignore these additional restrictions.

Variants

The Fliegerkraftfahrspitze was a similar rescue vehicle used on airbases; some of these types included a surgery unit as well. The Kfz 68 fielded radio or telephone gear and operators. The Kfz 305 was a Luftwaffe truck used in 127 subvariants. The TLF 15 replaced the enclosed bed with a 660-gallon water tank and pumping gear. The Kfz 385 and Kesselkraftwagen 2100L were tankers; the latter had a 555-gallon tank. In all of these marks, a few of these trucks featured all-wheel drive.

SdKfz 10 LEICHTER ZUGKRAFTWAGEN 1T

This 1937-issue light tractor usually towed an antitank gun and carried its crew. It also provided the chassis for the SdKfz 250 (p. W108). Some 25,000 were produced.

The SdKfz 10 burns 3.4 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel costs \$3.60 for a full load.

SdKfz 10

Subassemblies: Small Halftrack chassis +3; tracks +2.

Powertrain: 75-kW standard gas engine with 75-kW tracked transmission and 24-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 XCS, 6XCS **Cargo:** 7.4 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5
Tracks:	3/15	3/15	3/15	3/15	3/15

Equipment

Body: Six 1.2-VSP cargo bins.

Statistics

Size: 15'7"×6'×5'4" **Payload:** 0.9 tons **Lwt:** 5.4 tons
Volume: 56 **Maint:** 191 hours **Cost:** \$1,100

HT: 11. **HPs:** 300 Body, 85 each Track.

gSpeed: 45 **gAccel:** 3 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 4
Ground Pressure Moderate. 1/3 Off-Road Speed.

SdKfz 7 MITTLERER ZUGKRAFTWAGEN

This huge tractor debuted in 1937 and first gained fame for hauling the dreaded 88mm antiaircraft gun into combat. It also earned admiration as a weapons platform, to the extent that the British considered copying the SdKfz 7, and the Italians did so as the Breda 61.

The SdKfz 7 burns 4.8 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel costs \$8.10 for a full load. Its ragtop can cover the entirety of the two crew and 10 passenger stations.

mZgKw 8 to (SdKfz 7)

Subassemblies: Large Halftrack chassis +4; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 105-kW standard gas engine with 105-kW tracked transmission and 54-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 XCS, 10XCS **Cargo:** 55 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5
Tracks:	4/25	4/25	4/25	4/25	4/25

Equipment

Body: 25-VSP cargo bin; 10-VSP exposed cargo bin; winch with 3,500-lb. capacity.

Statistics

Size: 20'×8'×9' **Payload:** 3.6 tons **Lwt:** 12.7 tons
Volume: 140 **Maint:** 145 hours **Cost:** \$1,900

Design Notes

The exposed crew and passenger positions have the rag-top option, modeling a canvas folding top.

The six cargo bins are located around the sides of the halftrack; the remainder of the "cargo" space is really waste space, to be treated as described on p. 70.

Variants

In addition to the wholesale transformation into the SdKfz 250, the chassis was used for a host of specialized roles. The SdKfz 10/1 was equipped for chemical reconnaissance – i.e., to detect poison gases. The 10/2 and 10/3 carried decontamination equipment.

From the beginning of the war, the SdKfz 10 also was used as an antiaircraft platform, armed with a 20mm Long Ground Autocannon and roughly 270 rounds of ammunition. This was the SdKfz 10/4 mounting the FlaK 30, or from 1941 onward the 10/5 mounting the FlaK 38. On both, the sides of the rear-compartment were lowered to form an expanded fighting deck for the five-man gun crew (side DR becomes 0). Later versions also had a fully enclosed, armored (DR 22 on front and sides) cab for the two-man vehicle crew and a DR 25 gunshield for the 20mm cannon. The 10/5 weighed 6 tons (gSpeed 42) and cost \$2,200. Both AA conversions often towed a small trailer with extra ammunition.

Crews in the field sometimes mounted forward-facing antitank guns to add to their unit's firepower.

HT: 10 **HPs:** 570 Body, 150 each Track.

gSpeed: 37 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 2
Ground Pressure High. 1/6 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design's gSpeed has been reduced 20% to bring it in line with the historical top speed.

Historically, the mammoth SdKfz 7 was rated to tow as much as 8.8 tons – as a rough measure, subtract 1.5 mph from gSpeed per ton towed, rounding up.

Variants

The primary armed variants were the SdKfz 7/1 and 7/2. The 12.7-ton, \$5,400 7/1 mounted a 20mm Flakvierling 38, which was simply four FlaK 38s (20mm Long Ground Autocannons) on a single mounting. The resulting weapon had RoF 32* and was mounted in a full-rotation Medium Weapon open mount with a DR 25 gun shield, turned by two crew members at 19° per second. Crew capacity was reduced to 10 exposed positions without the ragtop. The vehicle stored 600 rounds of 20mm ammo, but the rest of the space became crew and loader stations for the nine-man gun crew.

The \$3,700 7/2 had similar statistics, except it mounted a single 37cm FlaK 36 (37mm Medium Ground Autocannon) and 120 rounds with a total crew of seven.

Both armed variants also came in a DR 22 armored version with fully enclosed driver's cab.

SdKfz 251 LEICHTER SCHÜTZENPANZERWAGEN

Debuting in 1939, the SdKfz 251 served throughout the war as the Wehrmacht's primary armored personnel carrier. It had a crew of driver and gunner, and carried a 10-man rifle squad, one of whom, presumably, would handle the second MG should it be needed. Often, the rear MG wasn't mounted.

The 251 burns 3.4 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$27.

SdKfz 251/1

Subassemblies: Medium Halftrack chassis +4; two Mini open mounts with full rotation [Body:F,B] +0; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 75-kW standard gas engine with 75-kW tracked transmission and 42-gallon standard tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS, 10 PS

Cargo: 9.7 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/40	4/22	4/22	0/0	4/17
Tracks:	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20
OMs:	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	—

Weaponry

2×Ground LMGs/MG34s [OMs:F] (1,050 rounds each).

Equipment

Body: Six 1.2-VSP cargo bins; medium radio receiver. **OM:** universal mount for MG in rear open mount only.

Statistics

Size: 19'×7'×6' **Payload:** 1.4 tons **Lwt:** 10 tons
Volume: 114 **Maint:** 141 hours **Cost:** \$2,100

HT: 10. **HPs:** 490 **Body,** 135 each **Track,** 30 each **OM.**

gSpeed: 33 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 5
Ground Pressure Moderate. 1/3 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design purchases 2,000 rounds of MG ammo but lists the historical values, instead. Most cargo space is in proper stowage bins, three on each side accessed from *outside*. The remaining cargo space (2.5 VSPs) is in the passenger compartment. Up to three more people could squeeze into it and the existing passengers' access space.

The steering wheel tilted *toward* the driver, not away as is usual nowadays. This odd angle and the lack of power assist meant that the best drivers would possess very high strength.

Variants

The 251 went through at least 22 variants. At first, armament was upgraded, usually to a 37mm antitank gun or later to a short 75mm piece, with some loss in passenger capacity. Later versions carried even better arms, but completely transformed their role from personnel carriers to reconnaissance vehicles, intended to improve upon the disappointing cross-country performance of the existing wheeled scout cars.

LEICHTER PANZERSPÄHWAGEN SdKfz 222

This small but sturdy armored car scouted ahead of the panzers' advances throughout the war.

The 222's turret is crowded, with both the commander (who loads the guns) and gunner partially stationed in it. The driver sits in the body. The 222 burns 2.7 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel and ammo cost \$75. The gunner manually cranks the turret at roughly 10° per turn.

SdKfz 222

Subassemblies: Small Wheeled chassis with heavy option +3; full-rotation Medium Weapon turret [Body:T] +1; four off-road wheels +1.

Powertrain: 60-kW standard gas engine with 60-kW all-wheel transmission and 27-gallon standard fuel tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 CS Body, 2 CS Both

Cargo: 11 Body, 0.5 Tur

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/33	4/22	4/22	4/14	4/14
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5
Turret:	4/40	4/22	4/22	4/15S*	—

* Open frame armor *only* – see p. W156.

Weaponry

20mm Long Ground AC/KwK 38 [Tur:F] (180 rounds).*

7.62mm Ground MG/MG34 [Tur:F] (1,050 rounds).*

* Linked.

Equipment

Turret: Medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 15'×6'4"×6'6" **Payload:** 0.5 tons **Lwt:** 5.3 tons
Volume: 41 **Maint:** 140 hours **Cost:** \$2,100

HT: 12 **HPs:** 500 **Body,** 90 each **Wheel,** 75 **Turret.**

gSpeed: 54 **gAccel:** 3 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.75 **gSR:** 4
Ground Pressure High. 1/4 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design only purchases 1,000 rounds of MG ammo although the historical 1,050 rounds is listed.

The turret's top armor is a wire-grid arrangement that folds out of the way for proper access. It was intended to keep hand grenades from being thrown down the open top, but did not quite cover the entire opening. For that reason, it simply reduces the size modifier for such an attack from +1 to -5.

Variants

Early 222s used the 20mm KwK 30 (RoF 5* rather than RoF 8*). Late ones had a universal mount for the weapons and sometimes a turret-front upgrade to DR 80. The SdKfz 221 was basically the same vehicle in game terms with only the MG.

The SdKfz 223 also deleted the 20mm cannon, but upgraded to a large radio receiver and transmitter, and mounted a large grid aerial that arched over the turret for the radio.

SCHWERER PANZERSPÄHWAGEN SdKfz 231 (8-Rad)

The Wehrmacht began its 1930s expansion with a six-wheeled heavy armored car, the SdKfz 231. While the original 231 looked wolfishly good in newsreel footage, it proved a markedly bad design in field usage. The long expanse between its front and rear wheels gave it a marked tendency to become “high-centered” on modest off-road obstacles. This led the generals to request an 8x8 car with a robust engine to match, and by 1937 they received this new SdKfz 231, which they suffixed (8-Rad) to distinguish it from its predecessor.

The SdKfz 231 (8-Rad) possessed a remarkably large and complex chassis, but for a wheeled design (particularly one of its weight) performed well in off-road functions. Evolutions of the design would serve throughout the war.

The 231 (8-Rad) carries a crew of four. The commander doubles as gunner and is partially stationed in the turret with the radio operator. Two drivers sit in the body – one facing forward for standard operations and one facing to the rear to take over in split-second getaways. In later variants, the fourth crew member helps with the gunnery duties, while the rear driver’s station is left empty to be occupied by any crew member when needed.

The 231 burns 5 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel and ammo cost \$90. The turret is manually cranked by the commander at roughly 8° per turn.

SdKfz 231 (8-Rad)

Subassemblies: Standard Wheeled chassis with Heavy option +3; full-rotation Medium Weapon turret [Body:T] +1; eight off-road wheels +2.

Powertrain: 112-kW standard gas engine with 112-kW all-wheel transmission and 39-gallon standard fuel tanks; 8,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS Body, 2 CS Both **Cargo:** 17 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/90S	4/25	4/30	4/20	4/15
Wheels:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5
Turret:	4/65	4/30	4/30	0/0	–

Weaponry

20mm Long Ground AC/KwK 38 [Tur:F] (180 rounds).*

7.62mm Ground MG/MG34 [Tur:F] (2,100 rounds).*

* Linked.

Equipment

Body: Backup driver option; 4 VSPs of cargo space. **Turret:** Medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 19’x7’2”x7’8” **Payload:** 0.8 tons **Lwt:** 9.1 tons
Volume: 59 **Maint:** 121 hours **Cost:** \$3K

HT: 12. **HPs:** 660 Body, 56 each Wheel, 75 Turret.

gSpeed: 56 **gAccel:** 3 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 4
Ground Pressure: High. 1/4 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design purchases 2,500 rounds of MG ammo, but the historical load of 2,100 rounds is listed.

The 231 (8-Rad)’s body incorporated a bewildering number of angles that might have offered some mild improvement to DR from sloping effects, though the many protuberances such as visor slits would have rapidly eroded this benefit. For this reason – and because the design runs light – DR has been very slightly improved from a strict interpretation of historical thicknesses by simply adding more armor. Even with this measure, the historical weight given is 17% heavier than the weight as designed.



The armored car’s cargo bin consisted of the empty space between the chassis proper and an strange bumperlike arrangement on the front end. This cargo area has no top DR. The bumper (more of a push plate, really) also provides the car with the benefits of standoff armor (p. W140-141), though almost certainly this was entirely by happenstance.

As designed, the vehicle should have Very High ground pressure. This has been improved to a functional High – and the vehicle price increased by an arbitrary \$300 – to reflect the sophistication of the car’s all-wheel drive and steering.

Variants

Early SdKfz 231 (8-Rad)s mounted the 20mm KwK 30 (RoF 5* rather than RoF 8*). As with the SdKfz 222, some later versions of the car were fitted with a turret front-armor upgrade to DR 80.

Debuting throughout 1943 and 1944, the SdKfz 234 series improved upon the original 231 (8-Rad) design. The 234/1 mounted the 20mm cannon. The 234/2 – popularly known as the “Puma” – mounted an enclosed turret with a 50mm KwK 39 (50mm Long Tank Gun) and 156 rounds. The 234/3 and 234/4 mounted open superstructures with various versions of the 75mm Short Tank Gun with 50 rounds and 75mm PAK 40 (75mm Long Tank Gun) with 12 rounds, respectively. Each also had an MG42 (all but the 234/4) or MG34 for close defense, with 1,050 rounds in the first two marks and 1,950 in the last two.

Though structurally much different, the 234 body bore passing resemblance to the 231 (8-Rad) and could be treated the same in game terms. The engine was upgraded to a 164-kW diesel and fuel tankage increased. The cargo bin/bumper was deleted, but the rear-facing driver’s station was not.

The 234/1 mounted a turret identical to that on the SdKfz 222 (p. 75) in game terms. The 234/2’s Small AFV turret had been designed for a “light Panther” tank concept, and had PD 4, DR 65 on front and PD 4, DR 35 on the sides, back, and top. The 234/3 and 234/4 Small AFV superstructures had PD 4, DR 50 on all four sides.

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN I

When the Germans developed their first post-Great War tank in the early 1930s, they knew it wouldn't be robust enough to engage in front-line fighting. The Panzer I was intended as a training vehicle, to prepare tank crews for the larger vehicles that the Wehrmacht would unveil with time.

As it was, time ran out rather more quickly than the military planners had anticipated. The Panzer I was thrust into usage as a main battle tank in Poland, providing a rank-and-file mount behind the handful of state-of-the-art Panzers III and IV. Again, in France, 523 Panzer Is were still filling the shortfall of heavier tanks in the Wehrmacht's ranks.

The Germans knew that they already were pushing their luck in sending tankers to face heavy French armor in what amounted to an armored car on treads, but Panzer Is still lingered on the rolls of fighting divisions during the opening stages of Operation Barbarossa and Rommel's African campaign. By the beginning of 1942, they were rarely found in combat units.

Roughly 1,500 Ausf Bs were built, the majority of them before the war. Conversions of the Panzer I chassis into more specialized vehicles would continue throughout the war. The Panzer I also continued to serve as a training vehicle, so encountering it during the 1945 drive through Germany would not have been remarkable.

The Panzer I Ausf B has a crew of two, a commander (who sits in the turret and fires the twin MG 13s) and driver. It burns 3.5 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. The turret is manually operated by the commander and rotates at roughly 11° per second. Fuel and ammo cost \$30.

Panzer I Ausf B

Subassemblies: Very Small Tank chassis +2; full-rotation

Small Weapon turret [Body:T] +0; tracks +2.

Powertrain: 75-kW standard gas engine with 75-kW tracked transmission and 39-gallon standard fuel tanks; 4,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 CS Body, 1 CS Both

Cargo: 1 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/50	4/50	4/50	4/23	4/23
Tracks:	4/30	4/30	4/30	4/30	4/30
Turret:	4/50	4/50	4/50	4/30	—

Weaponry

2×Ground LMGs/MG 13s [Tur:F] (1,125 rounds each).*

* Linked.

Equipment

Turret: Medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 14'6"×6'9"×5'8" Payload: 0.38 tons Lwt: 6.4 tons

Volume: 34 Maint: 101 hours Cost: \$3,900

HT: 12. HPs: 800 Body, 270 each Track, 45 Turret.

gSpeed: 31 gAccel: 3 gDecel: 20 gMR: 0.25 gSR: 4
Ground Pressure Very Low. 4/5 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design purchased 2,500 rounds of ammo, but the historical figure has been used.

The historical Panzer I had a major design flaw – a very poor top speed given its power-to-weight ratio – so the design's gAccel of 34 has been reduced to 31. This represents the historical top speed of 25 mph being used as the **GURPS WWII** cruising speed, as explained on p. W106.

The Ausf A, of which about 300 were built beginning in 1934, had only a 43-kW engine: gSpeed 26 and gAccel 2.

Just before the war, some 200 Ausf Bs were converted into Kleiner Panzerbefehlswagen SdKfz 265s. These were 6.5-ton command vehicles – the turret became a larger fixed superstructure with DR 40 on all four sides. One machine gun and the medium radio equipment were replaced with a large radio receiver and transmitter. A third crew member also was added.

In 1941, the Leichte 5th Division of the Afrika Korp replaced one of the machine guns in some of their Ausf As with a flamethrower (p. W99).

In 1941 the Wehrmacht debuted its first AA tank, the Flakpanzer I, or SdKfz 101. It used the Ausf A chassis to open-mount a FlaK 38 complete with gunshield and folding sides and 180 rounds. It carried two internal and six exposed crew members in *extremely* cramped conditions. Only 24 were made.

The Panzer I chassis was converted into two very distinct self-propelled guns: The Panzerjäger I mounted a 47mm anti-tank gun appropriated from the Czechs (treat as the 50mm Medium Tank Gun introduced on p. 66) and the sIG 33 mounted the 149mm Skoda StH 43 (150mm Very Short Infantry Gun). Both replaced the turret with a large, three-sided superstructure (open in the rear and on top). The driver remained stationed in the body while the rest of the fighting crew worked within this superstructure.

The 7-ton Panzerjäger I carried a crew of three and 86 rounds for its antitank gun, with both MGs removed. The Small AFV superstructure had DR 60 on the front, right, and left sides. Cost is \$5,800.

The 12.6-ton, \$12,500 sIG 33 mounted a far larger fighting package than was prudent in real life or this design system. Even though it was upengined to a 112-kW powerplant, the sIG 33 saved weight by only wrapping the DR 40 superstructure's side armor around the front half of the box, where the gun, its 15 rounds of ammo, and gunner were located. To model this, the commander and loader are given exposed crew positions, vulnerable to fire from the sides of the vehicle.

This still does not provide enough room to fit all of this equipment with anything smaller than a Large AFV superstructure, which is one size larger than allowed for on p. W127. In real life, this oversized superstructure left the sIG 33 top-heavy and overloaded, so in exchange for breaking the usual limits on subassemblies we'll lower its performance statistics from the calculated values to gSpeed 28, gSR 2, HT 9, maintenance interval 44.

GMs may want to follow a similar course for any other vehicle designs with overly large subassemblies.

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN II

The Panzer II was a stopgap design, put on the drawing boards in 1934 after delays in getting heavier models into production. Its armor was just tough enough, and 20mm autocannon just potent enough, to compare favorably to other nations' interwar armor.

By the beginning of the war in 1939, the Germans knew that the Panzer II was slipping behind the times. As with the Panzer I, they were forced to deploy their 1,226 Panzer IIs as main battle tanks, because too few heavier tanks were available. In France, the 950 Panzer IIs deployed represented far and away the most common mark in service.

Unlike the Mark I, which had no means of disabling a first-rate tank, the Panzer II could win a fight against bigger foes, but only if its 20mm rounds found vulnerable spots or thin rear armor. The German tank crews so outfought their French adversaries that the Panzer II gave a good accounting for itself, leading the Nazi high command to increase production. This didn't change the fact that the Panzer II was a liability in the front lines. Heavy losses in Russia led the Germans to transfer their 870 remaining Panzer IIs to reconnaissance duties by mid-1942.

The Panzer II Ausf C has a crew of three: the commander and gunner in the turret, and a driver in the body. It burns 5 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. The turret is manually operated by the gunner and rotates at roughly 5° per second. Fuel and ammo cost \$95.



Panzer II Ausf C

Subassemblies: Small Tank chassis +3; full-rotation Medium Weapon turret [Body:T] +1; tracks +2.

Powertrain: 105-kW standard gas engine with 105-kW tracked transmission and 45-gallon standard fuel tanks; 8,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 CS Body, 1 CS Tur, 1 CS Both **Cargo:** 4.4 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/60	4/60	4/60	4/40	4/20
Tracks:	4/35	4/35	4/35	4/35	4/35
Turret:	4/60	4/60	4/60	4/40	—

Weaponry

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Tur:F] (2,250 rounds).*

20mm Long Ground AC/KwK 30 [Tur:F] (180 rounds).*

* Linked.

Equipment

Turret: Medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 15'9"×7'3"×6'6" **Payload:** 0.5 tons **Lwt:** 9.8 tons

Volume: 53 **Maint:** 77 hours **Cost:** \$6,650

HT: 12. **HPs:** 1,000 **Body,** 400 each **Track,** 75 **Turret.**

gSpeed: 33 **gAccel:** 3 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 5

Ground Pressure Very Low. **4/5 Off-Road Speed.**

Design Notes

The design purchased 2,500 rounds of MG ammo, but the historical figure has been used.

The first 100 prototype Panzer IIs began entering service in 1935 as the Ausf a1, a2, and a3 with 97-kW engines. These had less armor (reduce all DR 60 values to DR 55) and weighed 7 tons; gSpeed would be 37.

Full-scale production began in 1937, beginning with the Ausf A. Ausfs A, B, and C are identical in game terms.

The Panzer IIs built after the invasion of France were of a new, upgraded mark, the Ausf F. These had improved armor (DR 135 on the body's front and DR 115 on the turret front) and some carried KwK 38 autocannons (RoF 8* instead of 5*). Weight increased to 10.5 tons, lowering gSpeed to 32.

The Panzer II Ausf L was an alternate design for which production was delayed until 1943. Also called the Luchs (Lynx), it had thicker armor (DR 120 on the body and turret fronts, DR 80 on their sides and rear, the body had DR 40 top and underside, and the turret DR 50 on its top). A larger 135-kW engine was installed with 2.5 VSPs of fuel tankage. The KwK 38 main-gun ammo stowage was 330 rounds. The Lynx's components precisely fill up available internal space – Cargo is 0 – but the wide decking over the tracks allowed crews to install large, external stowage boxes; these could hold another 1-6 VSPs of cargo, but it would be protected only by the boxes' minimal DR, not the Lynx's armor. The Lynx costs \$8,500 and with a typical stowage loadout weighed some 14.3 tons in combat; gSpeed is 31 and gAccel 2.

After the Panzer II was transferred to second-line duties, the chassis was used for many conversion vehicles. One of the most important was the Wespe (Wasp), a self-propelled artillery gun issued to the artillery arms of panzer units. It had improved frontal armor (DR 115) on the body. The turret was replaced by a fixed Small TD superstructure, with a frontal 45 DR, 40 DR on the sides, and 30 DR on the back. (The top was open.) This superstructure carried four of the five crew members and an le FH 18/2 (105mm Medium DP Gun) with 32 rounds. An open mount on top of the superstructure held an MG 34 with 600 rounds for close defense. The Wespe cost \$18,500 with a payload (fuel and ammo) cost of \$820, and weighed 12.1 tons in combat; gSpeed was 29 and gAccel 2.

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN III

In 1935, the Germans finally got their vision of a main battle tank into production. The design that would become the Panzer III featured three important innovations: It made allowances to fit a high-velocity gun, it provided space for a seemingly luxurious crew of five, and it provided an intercom system for the commander, radio operator, and driver. (The gunner, apparently, was close enough to the commander to receive his orders via voice over the roar of combat; if not, he did have an old-fashioned speaking tube.)

As it was, the Germans did not have enough of the 50mm guns originally planned for the tank, so early marks mounted a version of their 37mm antitank cannon or a shorter 50mm piece. The 37mm served well enough in Poland, but its shortcomings became obvious against the heavier French armor. Conversions to the 50mm weapons would take place for an extended period thereafter, but by the end of 1942 even this upgunned version had become obsolete. Future Panzer IIIs would sport the short 75mm guns salvaged from early Panzer IVs (p. W103), which were themselves being upgunned to larger 75mm weapons. This last generation of IIIs would support infantry divisions – armored units held a monopoly on all first-rate tanks – and fill out Tiger units, the idea being that the IIIs would tackle soft targets unworthy of the Tigers' attention while the Tigers dispatched more formidable opposition.

The Panzer III Ausf J has a crew of five: the commander, loader, and main gunner in the turret, with a driver and radio operator (who also fires the hull MG 34) in the body. It burns 10 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage.

The one state-of-the-art feature that the Panzer III lacked was powered turret traverse. The gunner and loader cranked the turret using small handwheels at roughly 3° per second. Fuel and ammo cost \$875.

Panzer III Ausf J

Subassemblies: Medium Tank chassis +3; full-rotation Small AFV turret [Body:T] +2; Medium Weapon superstructure [Tur:B] +1; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 224-kW standard gas engine with 224-kW tracked transmission and 84-gallon standard fuel tanks; 12,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS Body, 3 CS Both Cargo: 2.4 Body, 3.6 Tur, 5 Sup

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/200	4/120	4/200	4/65	4/60
Tracks:	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40
Turret:	4/190	4/120	4/120	4/40	–
Sup:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

Weaponry

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Body:F] (1,350 rounds).

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Tur:F] (1,350 rounds).*

50mm Long Tank Gun/KwK 38 [Tur:F] (99 rounds).*

* Linked.

Equipment

Body: Medium radio receiver and transmitter; five smoke dischargers [B].

Statistics

Size: 18'3"×9'8"×8'2" Payload: 1.3 tons Lwt: 23.7 tons
Volume: 108 Maint: 44 hours Cost: \$20,400

HT: 11. HPs: 1,500 Body, 540 each Track, 150 Turret, 75 Sup.

gSpeed: 31 gAccel: 2 gDecel: 20 gMR: 0.25 gSR: 5
Ground Pressure Low. 2/3 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design purchased 3,000 rounds of MG ammo and 120 of 50mm ammo, but the historical figures have been used.

The superstructure is a cargo bin for personal belongings, mounted to the back of the turret. Panzer III crews were known to salvage the cargo bin from a wrecked tank and carry it on the back of their own tank, giving them two bins. Because the 570-lb. bin detaches in this fashion, it has been given frontal armor, even though normally it would not need any.

Variants

The first major version of the Panzer III was the Ausf F. Body and turret front DR was 120 and back body DR was 80. It mounted a 37mm KwK 36 (37mm Medium Tank Gun), usually with 131 rounds, rather than the 50mm cannon. MG ammo usually was 4,500 rounds. The Ausf F weighed 21.5 tons (gSpeed becomes 32 and gAccel 3) and cost \$13,100. The handful of Ausfs D and E that served in Poland were identical to it in game terms. Forty Ausf Fs were fitted with 50mm Medium Tank Guns late in the French campaign, but too late to have any impact.

Debuting in October 1940, the 21.5-ton Ausf G almost always featured the smaller 50mm Medium Tank Gun. (Shortages led to a handful of early Gs being fitted with the 37mm.) Body front and back DR was 120 and turret front DR 145. Cost was \$16,100.

The 23.8-ton, \$18,700 Ausf H used bolt-on armor to increase frontal and rear body DR to 230 from the Ausf G's statistics while retaining the 50mm Medium Tank Gun. It appeared toward the end of 1940. The Afrika Korps sometimes field-converted the G into the H.

Heavy Soviet tanks were beginning to demonstrate the weaknesses of the shorter 50mm tank gun. An angry Hitler finally motivated German armsmakers to find a steady supply of the 50mm Long Tank Gun that he had originally requested for the III. This gun was fitted in the Ausf J along with several other improvements, beginning in late 1941. This would become the longest production run of a Panzer III mark, with more than 1,500 built.

The \$20,400 Ausf L improved its body and turret frontal armor to a spaced DR 270 (see pp. W140-141 for spaced-armor rules). The Ausf M was identical in game terms.

Finally, the 25.3-ton, \$20,400 Ausf N replaced the main gun with a 75mm KwK L24 (75mm Short Tank Gun) and 64 rounds of ammo. It retained the spaced body armor from the Ausf L, but turret frontal DR became an unspaced 220.

Some sources say some early Panzer IIIs mounted two MGs in the turret. Probably most 37mm-armed IIIs had provisions for the second gun. It was less often actually installed.

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN IV VARIANTS

The only panzer produced throughout the war, the IV is described on p. W103. The following vehicles illustrate two common German armored concepts: the tank killer (jagd-) and assault-gun (StuG) variants of a panzer type.

The Germans intended jagdpanzers as specialty vehicles for killing other armor. They replaced the turret on an existing chassis with a larger superstructure, which in turn allowed mounting a larger gun. Usually, extra armor was applied as well – the tank-killer concept traded both mobility and general utility for improved performance in its assigned role.

Assault guns were a similar concept – ripping off the turret and replacing it with a superstructure – but here the idea was to be cheaper, rather than more effective. Thus, assault guns usually mounted the same weapon as their base panzer and roughly the same armor. During the early war years, the artillery arm rather than armor arm commanded assault guns, defining them as mobile artillery simply to justify this command structure.

Both sorts of vehicle usually had crews of only four – the panzers' radio operator/hull gunner was removed in order to conserve ever-dwindling manpower. Both concepts were applied, in some form, to just about every panzer chassis.

PzKpfw IV/70 Zwischenlösung

The IV/70 was a jagdpanzer, named unconventionally to avoid confusion with the actual Jagdpanzer IV. It had a crew of four. The commander, 75mm PaK 42 gunner, and loader work in the superstructure; the driver is in the body.

The IV/70 burns 10 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel and ammo cost \$1,550.

Subassemblies: Medium Tank chassis +3; Small TD superstructure with mild slope [Body:T] +3; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 224-kW standard gas engine with 224-kW tracked transmission and 124-gallon standard fuel tanks; 20,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS Body, 3 CS Sup **Cargo:** 8.2 Body, 3.7 Sup

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/310	4/120	4/80	4/40	4/40
Tracks:	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40
Sup:	5/465	4/155	4/80	4/80	–
OM:	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	–

Weaponry

75mm Very Long TG/KwK PaK 42 [Sup:F] (55 rounds).

Ground LMG/MG 42 [Sup:F] (600 rounds).

Equipment

Body: Fire extinguisher; Nahverteidigungswaffe; medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 28'×10'5"×6' **Payload:** 1.8 tons **Lwt:** 28.4 tons
Volume: 124 **Maint:** 36 hours **Cost:** \$30.5K

HT: 10. **HPs:** 1,500 Body, 540 each Track, 285 Sup, 30 OM.

gSpeed: 28 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 5
Ground Pressure Low. 2/3 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design purchases 1,000 rounds of MG and 56 rounds of 75mm ammo, but the historical values are used. Other sources state 60 75mm rounds were carried; certainly, there was room.

Technically, only four crew stations are installed – the loader is given the old radio position within his working space that's twice as large as usual, to facilitate rapid handling of the long 75mm shells. This also left him to fire the MG, should it be called upon. A fifth crew member, handling the MG, could easily be added without placing undue strain on the loader.

The original Jagdpanzer IV was a different design, mounting only the 75mm StuK 40 L48 because Panthers claimed all of the longer guns. Hitler demanded that they be upgunned, which took too much time to suit him, so the more rudimentary IV/70 conversion was introduced.

StuG IV

Like the IV/70, this has a crew of four. It burns 10 gallons of gas per hour. Fuel and ammo cost \$1,300.

Subassemblies: Medium Tank chassis +3; Small AFV superstructure [Body:T] +2; limited-rotation Mini open mount [Sup:T] +0; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 224-kW standard gas engine with 224-kW tracked transmission and 114-gallon standard fuel tanks; 20,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 CS Body, 3 CS Both **Cargo:** 4.2 Body, 4 Sup

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/310	4/120	4/80	4/40	4/40
Tracks:	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40
Sup:	4/310	4/120	4/120	4/45	–
OM:	4/25	0/0	0/0	0/0	–

Weaponry

75mm Long TG/StuK 40 L48 [Sup:F] (63 rounds).

Ground LMG/MG 34 [OM:F] (600 rounds).

Equipment

Body: Fire extinguisher; medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 22'×9'8"×7'2" **Payload:** 1.6 tons **Lwt:** 25.3 tons
Volume: 109 **Maint:** 42 hours **Cost:** \$22,400

HT: 11. **HPs:** 1,500 Body, 540 each Track, 150 Sup, 30 OM.

gSpeed: 30 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 5
Ground Pressure Low. 2/3 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design purchases 1,000 rounds of MG and 70 rounds of 75mm ammo, but the historical values are listed, instead.

Though more than 1,100 were built, the StuG IV was far less common than the very successful StuG III series, loosely based on the Panzer III. The StuG III would look very similar to the above writeup. It often carried a fifth crew member riding *atop* the superstructure and firing the MG. Being so vulnerable, he probably would be *very* eager to do his job . . .

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN V PANTHER

The Soviets' rugged T-34 (p. W105) startled and impressed the invading Germans. The panzers of the period simply couldn't stand up to it, toe to toe, though they were managing to make do by luring the Soviets into ambushes and attacking from behind, en masse, with assistance from 88mm guns, or preferably all three.

The Wehrmacht high command was so impressed that they threw away their principles of tank design and resolved to simply copy the T-34. This proved difficult – German industry struggled to replicate the alloys in the engine and armor, and its factories were not set up to emulate the crude but effective Soviet mass-production techniques. Instead, the Germans used the T-34's basic design principles to create the Panther, which cost far more than the T-34 (and had many, many more parts) but – turret for turret – probably was the best general-purpose tank of the war.

The Panther entered production in December 1942 and reached the troops a few months later. At first, breakdowns plagued the panzer; the engine often caught on fire and the transmission had been designed for a much lighter vehicle. Despite later improvements, the Panther never enjoyed a reputation for hardiness. Its engine usually required overhaul after no more than 1,000 miles.

The Germans made the Panther their mainstay medium tank, and by the end of the war produced more than 6,000 – second only to the Panzer IV in total production run. These superior weapons often went to waste in the hands of inexperienced troops. Rather than withdraw experienced units to refit with Panthers – a move which Hitler feared would create opportunity for their morale to crumble – the Panthers were assigned to new units while the older units often kept fighting in IVs.

The Panther has the standard German tank crew of five. It burns 24 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel and ammo cost \$2,300. The hydraulically powered turret rotates at roughly 20° per turn, or 1° per turn if manually rotated by two crewmen.

PzKbpfw Panther Ausf G

Subassemblies: Immense Tank chassis with medium slope +4; full-rotation Small TD turret with advanced slope [Body:T] +3; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 522-kW standard gas engine with 522-kW tracked transmission and 192-gallon standard fuel tanks; 12,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS Body, 3 CS Both **Cargo:** 0

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	6/540	4/190S	4/160	4/60	4/120
Tracks:	4/55	4/55	4/55	4/55	4/55
Turret:	5/600	5/260	5/260	4/60	–

Standoff armor on both sides protects tracks 50% of time.

Weaponry

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Body:F] (2,400 rounds).

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Tur:F] (2,400 rounds).

75mm Very Long TG/KwK 42 L70 [Tur:F] (79 rounds).

Equipment

Body: Fire extinguisher; medium radio receiver and transmitter; 160-kW traversing gear for turret; Zimmerit. **Turret:** Nahverteidigungswaffe; Zimmerit.

Statistics

Size: 22'×11'3"×9'4" **Payload:** 2.5 tons **Lwt:** 50 tons

Volume: 227 **Maint:** 28 hours **Cost:** \$53K

HT: 10. **HPs:** 2,600 **Body,** 900 each **Track,** 285 **Turret.**

gSpeed: 36 **gAccel:** 3 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 6
Ground Pressure Low. 2/3 Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

The design buys 77 rounds of 75mm and 5,000 rounds of MG ammo, but the historical values are listed, instead.

The Panther was credited with being particularly fast for its power-to-weight ratio, so the design's gSpeed of 32 has been increased to be in line with the gSpeeds for other tanks.

In order to best model the turret's advanced slope, 30° of slope has been removed from the front and applied to the back facing, instead. Swapping slope around in this fashion, in 30° increments, is perfectly legal. As usual, the highly sloped hull is very cramped; some access space had to be stolen from the crew stations to make all components fit.

Variants

Several experimental models culminated in the Ausf D, which debuted at Kursk (p. W27). The Ausf D still suffered many teething problems, giving it an effective HT of 8. Its underpowered traverse system turned the turret at only 6° per second. Body side DR was 175.

Returning to the beginning of the alphabet, the first production model was the Ausf A, entering service late in 1943 and continuing through 1,768 vehicles. The Ausf A carried 82 75mm rounds and had body side DR of 175.

In 1944, further improvements were made to create the Ausf G, which was the most common Panther mark, with some 3,740 units built. Officially, the "V" was dropped from the Panther's name with the Ausf G.

Panthers produced from September 1943 to September 1944 had the Zimmerit paste applied to them.

The Sperber-variant Ausf G mounted a Nachtsichtgerät IR searchlight on a mini open-mount atop the turret. They worked in tandem with SdKfz 251/20 Uhus that mounted a longer-ranged IR spotlight in the passenger compartment. (Technically, the IR spotlight module on p. W139 can't be broken up like fuel tanks or bundled together like radar, but to precisely model the Uhu devices the Panther would carry a 0.3 VSP, 75-lb., \$150 IR device with a 220-yard range and 2 kW of power usage. The 251's \$350 version would be 0.8 VSPs and 200 lbs., with a 770-yard range and 6 kW of power usage.)

The Germans liked to use the Panther's turret as a pillbox in stationary defenses, either dismounted from a damaged panzer (statistics as for the Ausf G) or designed for the purpose with thickened armor (DR 150 on top and DR 400 on the sides). These usually were traversed by hand.

PANZERKAMPFWAGEN VI KÖNIGSTIGER

The Germans decided to combine the sheer brutal size of the Panzer VI Tiger (p. W104) with the graceful lines that the Panther copied from the T-34. The result – known to the Allies as the Royal or King Tiger – could lay claim to being the most powerful tank of the war.

Debuting in early 1944, the Königstiger could dominate everything within its considerable gun range, but not a complete battlefield, because the tank never entered a fight in very large numbers. Only 484 were ever built.

Though the Tiger II design did get rid of the Tiger's troublesome overlapping road wheels, it shared some of its predecessor's other ailments. It weighed more than most bridges could hold, it proved cumbersome and fuel-hungry on the road, and its width required one set of tracks for combat and a narrower one for loading onto rail cars. It's possible that the Wehrmacht had to abandon more Tiger IIs during retreats than they lost in combat proper.

The Tiger II has the standard German tank crew of five: commander, gunner, loader, radio operator, and driver.

The powered turret rotates at 5° per second, or two crewmen can manually turn it at 0.6° per second. It burns 24 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$3,700.

Panzer VI Ausf B Tiger II

Subassemblies: Immense Tank chassis with mild slope +4; full-rotation Small TD turret [Body:T] +3; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 522-kW standard gas engine with 522-kW tracked transmission and 228-gallon standard fuel tanks; 12,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS Body, 3 CS Both **Cargo:** 8 Body, 4.4 Tur

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	5/850	4/310	4/310	4/155	4/100
Tracks:	4/55	4/55	4/55	4/55	4/55
Turret:	5/700	5/310	5/310	4/170	–

Weaponry

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Body:F] (2,925 rounds).

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Tur:F] (2,925 rounds).

88mm Very Long TG/KwK 43 L71 [Tur:F] (84 rounds).

Equipment

Body: Fire extinguisher; medium radio receiver and transmitter; 70-kW traversing gear for turret; Zimmerit. **Turret:** Nahverteidigungswaffe; Zimmerit.

Statistics

Size: 34'×12'4"×10' **Payload:** 3.5 tons **Lwt:** 77 tons
Volume: 227 **Maint:** 23 hours **Cost:** \$79,000

HT: 8. **HPs:** 2,600 Body, 900 each Track, 285 Turret.

gSpeed: 26 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 6
Ground Pressure Moderate. 1/2 Off-Road Speed.



Design Notes

The design buys 6,000 rounds of MG and 85 rounds of 88mm ammo, but the historical values are listed, instead.

The Germans originally wanted to use a gas-electric drive of the sort described on p. 66 in the Königstiger. Electric motors require abundant amounts of copper, however, and the nation already faced a critical shortage of the metal.

Variants

The first 50 Tiger IIs mounted a Porsche-designed turret that reduced overall 88mm ammo stowage to 78 rounds and had less armor than the production Henschel turret.

The *Panzerbefehlswagen* command variant of the Tiger II simply reduced ammo loadout to install additional radios. Few were produced.

The usual Wehrmacht policy of building an upgunned tank destroyer on each tank chassis was followed with the Jagdtiger, which entered combat late in 1944. The heaviest armored vehicle of WWII at 83.5 tons fully loaded, the Jagdtiger replaced the turret with a superstructure, identical in game terms except that frontal DR was 1,000! The six-man crew filled the standard panzer roles, but added an extra loader. Due to redesign constraints, only a very small radio operator could squeeze back into the Jagdtiger's fighting compartment to escape should his overhead hatch be jammed; however, he was provided a belly hatch for this purpose. The Jagdtiger mounted a single MG34 and the 128mm PaK80 (128mm Medium Tank Gun), though some of the only 70 Jagdtigers ever made had to make do with the 88mm KwK43 L71 from the Königstiger or a shorter 128mm gun. The extra weight reduced gSpeed to 25 and increased ground pressure to High for 1/3 off-road speed. The Jagdtiger would cost \$84,900 with a payload cost of \$3,400.

When the war ended, the Wehrmacht was experimenting with using the chassis to carry a complete 170mm or 210mm howitzer in such a fashion that it could be used as mechanized artillery or dismounted completely. A large, boxy superstructure toward the rear of the body replaced the turret on the prototype. This was along the same lines as the very small family of *Waffenträger* (weapons carriers) built on the Panzer IV chassis or a hybrid III/IV chassis that carried removable 105mm or 150mm artillery pieces into action.

HETZER

While Hitler himself enthusiastically endorsed the bigger-is-better school of tank design, more pragmatic Wehrmacht leaders were fielding far more cost-effective armor. Packing more punch per pound than any other WWII AFV, the tiny Hetzer exemplified the breed.

When Germany occupied Czechoslovakia, the Wehrmacht inherited a thriving arms industry that produced the 35(t) and 38(t) tanks. These primitive but well-designed Czech models filled out a good portion of the early panzer-division rolls, but had become obsolete by mid-war. The Wehrmacht high command hated to discontinue a proven chassis design, so the hastily engineered Marder III tank destroyer was built on the 38(t) chassis. This proved to be a high, poorly armored, and ultimately vulnerable vehicle in action.

Returning to the drawing board in 1943, army engineers conceived the Hetzer, a truly diminutive AFV that barely stood higher than a man. The Hetzer first appeared on battlefields in mid-1944 – or rather, failed to appear, given how easy it was to conceal – and its effectiveness soon led it to become a priority production item. Despite that, the Reich only managed to produce some 1,600 to 2,600 by war's end.

Armor crews may have appreciated the Hetzer's survival instincts, but they weren't all particularly fond of manning the vehicle. It redefined cramped; a big man probably would find it impossible to climb into the Hetzer. Even worse, the main gun was offset to the vehicle's right side though the breech opened to the right. This caused the loader to have to reach across it to perform his job – an invitation to a nasty burn – and the vehicle's poor ammo placement already threatened to slow him down intolerably.

The commander also had a particularly poor view when buttoned down, sufficient to impose an additional -2 over the standard penalties described on p. W144.

The Hetzer squeezed in a crew of four: driver, main gunner, loader, and commander. The commander operated the MG, which could be fired normally when standing up in his hatch or remotely from within the vehicle at -4 to Gunner skill.

The tank destroyer burns 5 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel and ammo cost \$700.

Jagdpanzer 38(t) für 7.5cm PaK 39 Hetzer

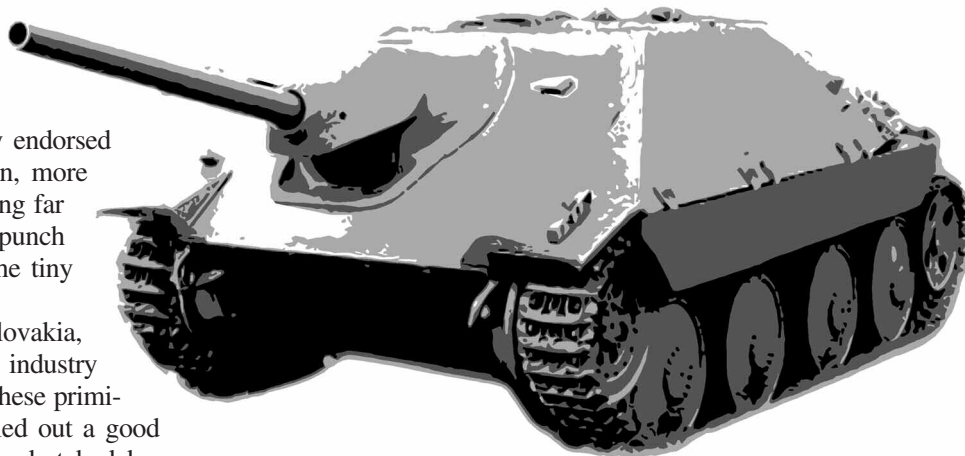
Subassemblies: Medium Tank chassis with medium slope +3; full-rotation Mini turret [Body:T] +0; tracks +3.

Powertrain: 112-kW standard gas engine with 112-kW tracked transmission and 84-gallon standard fuel tanks; 12,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 4 CS

Cargo: 0

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	5/350	5/120	4/60	4/30	4/30
Tracks:	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40	4/40
Turret:	4/25	4/25	0/0	0/0	–



Weaponry

Ground LMG/MG 34 [Tur:F] (600 rounds).

75mm Long TG/PaK 39 [Body:F] (41 rounds).

Equipment

Body: Medium radio receiver and transmitter.

Statistics

Size: 16'x8'x7'

Payload: 1.2 tons

Lwt: 16 tons

Volume: 89

Maint: 52 hours

Cost: \$15,000

HT: 12. **HPs:** 1,500 **Body,** 540 each **Track,** 30 **Turret.**

gSpeed: 26 **gAccel:** 2 **gDecel:** 20 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 5

Ground Pressure Very Low. **4/5 Off-Road Speed.**

Design Notes

The design buys 1,000 rounds of MG and 40 rounds of 75mm ammo, but the historical values are listed, instead.

Technically, the Hetzer is a smallish superstructure stretched across a Medium Tank chassis, but its lines are so clean that it's more intuitive to simply treat it as a chassis without superstructure (other than the tiny MG mounting). This makes the design come up 1.5 VSPs short, but the crew stations include 4 VSPs of access space; stealing some of this is entirely in line with the vehicle's layout.

The historical vehicle mounted very narrow standoff armor, covering only the line at which the upper tracks and hull met. This would come into play too rarely to be modeled in game terms.

Interestingly, the Hetzer had its most radical slope on its rear facing. Since it had little actual armor there, it's easier (and conserves already crucial VSPs) to simply double the DR from what the historical 8mm armor thickness would justify, emulating the effects of an advanced slope, rather than repeat the slope-swapping tactics used on the Panther.

The design defects mentioned earlier could justify lowering the main gun's rate of fire considerably. If this is done, increase the rear armor PD to 6 as a counterbalancing special feature of the vehicle that also completes the faux sloping.

Variants

The Flammpanzer 38(t) replaced the main gun with a Medium Tank Flamethrower and 154 gallons of fuel (77 shots). The flame projector's barrel was disguised to resemble the usual 75mm piece.

The Bergepanzer 38(t) replaced the main gun with a crane and winch for recovering other vehicles.

Ar 196

The Ar 196 served the Kriegsmarine as its primary naval reconnaissance plane. It was specifically designed to be launched from a naval catapult, often mounted high in the superstructure of a battleship. It then would roam ahead of the ship, spotting prey and correcting its mother ship's gunnery. After completing its duties, the Ar 196 would land on the ocean, glide next to its mother ship, and be hoisted back up to its high perch by a crane.

This reconnaissance system worked well for the early commerce raiders, though it had drawbacks. The mother ship usually had to change course into the wind to launch its planes, then slow down to a near stop and engage in the time-consuming task of recovering them. Under pursuit, these could prove deadly delays, which is the reason cited for Capt. Langsdorff's decision not to deploy the *Graf Spee*'s plane (which was destroyed along with its catapult by the first British salvo to hit the German raider). Nevertheless, the plane played important roles in many early sea duels. *Bismarck* launched her four ready Ar 196s to hunt down and kill the Catalina (p. W116) that was tailing her every move. They failed, with famous consequences for their mother ship . . .

For most of the war, the Ar 196 served from coastal bases around Europe. It took a large part in the Battle of Britain, where it proved vulnerable to enemy fighters despite its own heavy armament. This firepower allowed the Ar 196 to take on some non-reconnaissance roles; the crews of two planes forced the mine-damaged British submarine HMS *Seal* to surrender on May 5, 1940.

Note that launching an Ar 196 from a catapult still requires a runway unless the combination of ship's speed and headwind equals at least 36 mph. For instance, the *Bismarck*, with no runway but capable of 33 mph, would need to steam into at least a 3 mph headwind to launch its planes. Conversely, the Ar 196 isn't really designed to take off from the water, but usually can do so – it would need a 9 mph headwind.

The Ar 196 carries a crew of two: a pilot who fires the forward-facing arms and releases the bombs, and a rear-facing gunner who fires the open-mounted MGs. Frequently, the gunner would be a trained forward observer, whose primary job was to relay fire-correction orders to naval gunners on the mother ship.

The plane burns 31 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. Fuel and ammo cost \$470.

Arado Ar 196A-5

Subassemblies: Medium Fighter chassis +3; folding Medium Fighter wings with STOL option +2; two sealed Large AFV superstructures used as pontoons [Body:U] +3; limited-rotation Mini open mount [Body:T] +0; two fixed skids +0.

Powertrain: 686-kW aerial turbo/supercharged gas engine with 686-kW prop and 156-gallon light tanks [Pontoons].

Occ: 2 CS **Cargo:** 1.7 Body, 3.4 Wings, 1 Pontoons

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
All:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3

Weaponry

Aircraft LMG/MG17 [Body:F] (500 rounds).

2×20mm Short Aircraft AC/MG-FF [Wings:F] (60 each).*

2×Aircraft LMG/MG81Z [OM:B] (1,000 rounds each).*

2×100-lb. HE Bombs [Wings:U].*

* Weapons in each pair linked to one another.

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; 1 VSP cargo hold; medium radio receiver and transmitter; navigation instruments. *Each wing:* 100-lb. hardpoint. *Each pontoon:* Discharger; 0.5-VSP cargo hold.

Statistics

<i>Size:</i> 36'×41'×15'	<i>Payload:</i> 0.9 tons	<i>Lwt:</i> 3.7 tons
<i>Volume:</i> 100	<i>Maint:</i> 45 hours	<i>Cost:</i> \$19,600

HT: 8. **HPs:** 120 Body, 105 each Wing, 225 each Pontoon, 30 OM, 18 each Skid.

aSpeed: 193 *aAccel:* 6 *aDecel:* 20 *aMR:* 5 *aSR:* 2
Stall Speed 56. -3 *aSpeed* with loaded hardpoints.

wSpeed: 26 *wAccel:* 5.5 *wDecel:* 0.7 (3.5) *wMR:* 0.1 *wSR:* 2
Draft 1.3'. Flotation Rating 4.6 tons.

Design Notes

Both crew stations have particularly Good vision.

The historical *aSpeed* and weight have been used; design *aSpeed* is 216 and the weight had to be reduced 18%. The historical wing area of 304 sf was used for calculations.

The historical plane used a combination of metal and fabric body covering. The cloth armor did not cover any vital components, so is ignored here, though perhaps its presence can be felt in the need to dramatically lighten design weight.

As is usually the case, the skids represent nothing more than a reinforcement of the pontoon bottoms. Destroying the skid HPs would make the pontoon's bottom too chewed up for a smooth landing, but not affect flotation. Reducing the pontoon's HPs would not impair the plane's landing characteristics unless the pontoon was completely destroyed, but the pontoon would immediately begin leaking upon landing . . .

The pontoon rules on p. W138 call for using empty superstructures, for simplicity. In real life, a few designs, such as this one, install a few components. Realistically, the only reason to keep pontoons mostly empty – other than the obvious one of keeping overall vehicle weight below flotation rating – is that pontoons tend to be the first thing to get banged up or torn off during routine wear and tear. Note that the pontoon mechanics conceal a 25% reduction in volume; that is, a nominally 10-VSP pontoon actually can hold no more than 7.5 VSPs of gear (or water, if punctured).

Variants

The Ar 196A-5 was the final production model, debuting in mid-1943. Earlier Ar 196s had a single rear-firing MG15 with seven 75-round drums, and modestly inferior radio equipment that remains identical in game terms.

A few Ar 196B-0s used a single larger body pontoon in combination with wing pontoons as described on p. W138.

Fw 190

Early on, engineer Kurt Tank realized the Luftwaffe should develop a replacement for the workmanlike Bf 109 (p. W111). The Luftwaffe high command didn't particularly see the need itself, so didn't emphasize production of his Fw 190.

Priorities changed once the plane arrived in the war, however. Debuting against the Spitfire Mk V, the Fw 190 filled British pilots with a sense of dread similar to that inflicted by the Zero on early U.S. pilots. Like the Americans, the British scrambled to obtain a working Fw 190, convinced it had to have an Achilles' heel that they could uncover. Fortune provided their plane – an Fw 190 pilot joined the long list of Germans who got turned around over the channel at night, and mistakenly landed on English airfields.

Here the British experience diverged from the American, because they discovered that the Fw 190 had no real weakness. It couldn't turn very tightly compared to the Spitfire, but in all else it performed smartly.

The Germans fielded more than 20,000 Fw 190s by war's end. The plane burns 65 gallons of aviation gas per hour at routine usage. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$180.

Fw 190A-8

Subassemblies: Heavy Fighter chassis +3; Medium Fighter wings +2; three retractable wheels +0.

Powertrain: 1,272-kW turbo/supercharged HP gas engine with MW feed and 1,566-kW prop; 168-gallon self-sealing fuel tanks and 6-gallon MW tank; 8,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 1 CS

Cargo: 3.1 Body, 0.3 Wings

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
<i>All:</i>	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3
<i>Cockpit:</i>	0/+0	0/+10	0/+20	0/+10	0/+10

Weaponry

2×Medium Air MG/MG131 [Body:F] (400 rounds each).*

2×20mm Medium Air AC/MG151/20 [Wings:F] (125 each).*

2×20mm Medium Air AC/MG151/20 [Wings:F] (250 each).*

* Each pair linked, fourth link all 20mm guns, fifth link all six.

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; 550-lb. hardpoint; IFF; medium radio and transmitter. **Wings:** 550-lb. hardpoint on each.

Statistics

Size: 29'×34'×13' *Payload:* 0.8 tons *Lwt:* 4.7 tons
Volume: 324 *Maint:* 47 hours *Cost:* \$18,400

HT: 11. **HPs:** 260 Body, 80 each Wing, 24 each Wheel.

aSpeed: 402 *aAccel:* 8 *aDecel:* 12 *aMR:* 3 *aSR:* 2
Stall Speed 92. -5 aSpeed per loaded hardpoint and see below.
gSpeed: 267 *gAccel:* 11 *gDecel:* 10 *gMR:* 0.5 *gSR:* 2
Ground Pressure Extremely High. No Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

As designed, aSpeed is 392 and the plane carries 750 rounds of MG ammo and 780 rounds of 20mm ammo. Historical figures were used for these values and wing area (197 sf).

With the MW 50 system engaged, the engine produces 1,544 kW (aAccel 10 but aSpeed of only 406 – the Fw 190A series apparently suffered a *wicked* power curve at high speeds). The 6-gallon MW tanks lasts 14 minutes, 20 seconds.

The plane also could be fitted with a GM1 nitrous-oxide tank. This increased output to 1,566 kW (aAccel 10, aSpeed 408) for 3 minutes, 24 seconds above 10,000 feet. Standard GM1 installation requires removing a 1-VSP auxiliary gas tank, reducing fuel tankage to 138 gallons.

The hardpoints served a variety of purposes. Standard load for the wings was a 21cm rocket (p. 66) or drop fuel tank under each, for the chassis a 550-lb. bomb.

Variants

The Fw 190 began flying in June 1939 as the V-1 and V-2. The original production A-1 entered combat in mid-1941 with a 1,140-kW engine and four 7.92mm MG17s (Aircraft LMGs), two in the body and two in the wings. Some also had a pair of MG131s in the wings. In game terms, it had no cockpit armor.

The A-2 added a pair of 20mm MG-FFs (20mm Short Aircraft Autocannons) in the wings from the A-1 configuration, but often omitted the wing-mounted LMGs.

The late-1941 A-3 upgraded to the 1,272-kW engine and mounted two MG17s in the body, and a pair each of the 20mm MG-FFs and MG151/20s in the wings.

The mid-1942 A-4 added the wing hardpoints. A few debuted the MW 50 system, but availability was limited. Some variants reduced main arms to just the pair of MG151/20s.

The early-1943A-5 slightly lengthened the original chassis. It had several subvariants adding hardpoints, fuel capacity, or weapons for special roles. The A-5/U12 mounted six 30mm guns. The A-5/U14 and 15 could carry torpedoes.

The mid-1943 A-6 and A-7 upgraded to four MG151/20s in the wings, retaining the MG17s in the body.

The A-8 added the cockpit armor and MW 50 system along with the heavier MGs. Some just mounted the outer pair of 20mm guns (those with only 125 rounds apiece). Some A-8s used for nightfighting upgraded a pair of 20mm guns to 30mm MK 108s. A subvariant (the A-8/U1) was a two-seat trainer.

The A-9 with a 1,470-kW engine didn't enter production.

Substantially redesigned, the late-1944 Fw 190D-9 Dora boasted a 1,324-kW bomber engine capable of 1,670-kW with methanol boosting, two 20mm MG151/20s, two MG131s, and a 1,100-lb. body hardpoint. It had aSpeed 404, aAccel 9 (aSpeed 426, aAccel 11 boosted) and is regarded as Germany's best piston-engine fighter of the war.

The modified D called the Ta 152H-1 was essentially a completely new design, with larger wings, a lengthened body, new weaponry, life support for high-altitude flight, a 0.6-VSP methanol-water tank good for 40 minutes of boosted power and a GM1 system providing aSpeed 472. Very few of this late-war design saw active service.

From early 1943, the Fw 190F series specialized in ground attack and G series in long-range fighter-bomber roles. These were essentially identical to the A series, except they almost always had hardpoints (up to 4,000 lbs.) for a wide variety of weapons. The S series were two-seat trainers.

Ju 52

Ugly and ungainly, the Ju 52 didn't make too many pilots fall in love with its looks upon debuting in 1936, but much of the Wehrmacht loved the "Auntie Ju" for its dependable service as the primary German cargo and personnel transport. Hitler liked to boast that Franco owed his victory in the Spanish Civil War to the Ju 52. That's debatable, but Hitler's own success owed much to the transport's ability to keep troops supplied where land lines and sea lanes had collapsed.

Many WWII-era pilots would find the Ju 52 a challenge to fly, given little or no familiarity. Several routine functions that had become automated in the cockpit of an Fw 190 (or Mustang) required manual operation in the transport. Despite this 1930s-era lack of sophistication, the Ju 52 cockpit was filled with instruments, switches, levers – all of them laid out in less than logical fashion. Apply a -4 to Piloting skill should an escaped-POW pilot sneak his way into a Ju 52 without first acquiring some knowledge of the craft's peculiarities!

Allied fighter pilots loved to encounter the Ju 52 – even fully armed, it was a flying victim.

In war zones, the plane can use a crew of six: pilot and co-pilot, a radio operator who also fires the forward open-mounted MG81, and three gunners for the MG81s mounted in a rear open mount and both beams of the aircraft. Usually, a gunnerless crew of three is standard.

The plane burns 66 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$140. The open-mount gunners manually swing their weapons at 33° per turn.

Weaponry

2×Aircraft LMG/MG81s [OMs:F] (1,000 rounds each).
2×Aircraft LMG/MG81s [Body:L, R] (1,000 rounds each).

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; backup driver controls; 80-VSP cargo hold; environmental control for 25; medium radio receiver and transmitter; toilet.

Statistics

Size: 62'×96'×18' *Payload:* 6.7 tons *Lwt:* 13.8 tons
Volume: 1,080 *Maint:* 27 hours *Cost:* \$53,400

HT: 8. HPs: 375 Body, 410 each Wing, 120 each Pod, 30 each Open Mount, 35 each Wheel.

aSpeed: 178 *aAccel:* 3 *aDecel:* 22 *aMR:* 5.5 *aSR:* 2
Stall Speed 66.

gSpeed: 150 *gAccel:* 7 *gDecel:* 10 *gMR:* 0.25 *gSR:* 3
Ground Pressure Extremely High. No Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

As designed, aSpeed is 192, but the historical value was used for this and wing area (1,190 sf). Because the transport was built more lightly than most planes its size, the design halves the usual wing weight, HPs, and cost. This reduces design loaded weight to 2% over the historical weight (which is listed) and (more importantly) drops aMR into the proper range. Any of the wings listed in the corebook can be treated in this fashion; *both* weight and HPs must be halved.

The toilet is treated as simply a double-sized crew station dedicated to this alternate function. This sort of facility already is assumed on vehicles with long-term crew quarters. The environmental control only serves to heat the plane's interior, but then cooling rarely is an issue for an aircraft's complement in flight.

The cargo hold has long, canvas flip-down seating on each side, capable of holding up to 20 (extremely crowded) people. No more than 15 equipment-heavy paratroops could reasonably fit in the space, and 10 would be far more workable. A dedicated transport might install up to 15 more-traditional (and comfortable) crew stations in this space. The standard loadout for the hold was listed at 1.4 tons, but there's space to fit up to 4 tons, which is the figure included in the plane's overall payload.

A 13mm MG131 (Medium Aircraft HMG) often was installed in the front open mount. Even more often, only the front open mount was armed, or the plane carried no weapons.

Variants

The g3e had a "dustbin" belly gun position (which opened up like a laundry chute), best treated as simply an MG81 mounted in the underside with a crew station attached. The g4e had a similar underside-facing crew position, but this was for a bombardier – 6.6 VSPs of cargo space were converted into a bomb bay holding 1,100 lbs. of ordnance.

The g7e of 1941 introduced the autopilot and also featured a larger starboard loading door.



Ju 52/3m g7e

Subassemblies: Light Bomber chassis +4; Heavy Bomber wings +4; three Large Weapon pods [2 Wings:F and 1 Body:F] +2; two Mini open mounts [Body:T]; three fixed wheels +2.

Powertrain: Three 492-kW aerial turbo/supercharged gas engines with three 492-kW props [Pods] and 654-gallon light tanks [Wings]; 8,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 6 CS **Cargo:** 92.4 Body, 32.2 Wings, 3.1 Pods

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
All*:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3

* Except open mounts, which are completely unarmored.

Ju 88

A late-1930s design, the Junkers Ju 88 served as the German's "go to" plane throughout the war, evolving through a bewildering variety of configurations as needs shifted, and serving well in most of them. Some aviation experts rate it as the Luftwaffe's second-best airplane, after the Fw 190.

Conceived as a light level/dive bomber, the plane possessed both remarkable speed and payload. It filled German needs for a level bomber throughout the war.

Though the Ju 88 *could* dive-bomb, most pilots were very wary of nosing down in a plane of this size. (The Ju 87 Stuka, meanwhile, felt completely stable pointing straight at the earth.) It needed to pull out of a full-speed dive at 500 yards or higher – about the same height as the Stuka – but if the automated climb-and-dive system failed to function, a Ju 88 pilot was in a *great* deal more trouble than a Ju 87 pilot. Instead, in 1942 the Germans began experimenting with the plane as a level ground-attack craft, mounting heavier guns and increased armor. This experimentation eventually led the plane further afield into nightfighting and intruder variants.

The Ju 88A-4 below serves to represent the original light bombers, the backbone of the force that took part in the Battle of Britain. It has a crew of four. The pilot sat high and to port (left) with the flight engineer facing backward behind him. The bombardier was stationed lower and to the right – looking out through the glass nose – with the radio operator behind him. The pilot fired a forward-firing MG81 that could either be swiveled or locked into place as a fixed weapon, the flight engineer an MG81 firing through the top of the cockpit, the bombardier an MG131 firing through the nose, and the radio operator a pair of twin MG81s firing through the cockpit floor.

The plane burns 90 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$7,220.

Ju 88A-4

Subassemblies: Heavy Fighter-Bomber chassis +4; Medium Fighter-Bomber wings with high-agility option +3; two Medium AFV pods [Wings:F] +2; 3 retractable wheels +1.

Powertrain: Two 1,000-kW aerial turbo/supercharged gas engines with two 1,000-kW props [Pods] and 552-gallon self-sealing tanks [Body] plus 219-gallon self-sealing tanks [Wings]; 8,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 4 CS **Cargo:** 12.7 Body, 3.4 Wings, 3.8 Pods

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	3/8	3/8	3/8	3/15	4/20
Wings:	3/8	3/8	3/8	3/8	3/8
Pods:	3/8	3/8	–	3/8	3/8
Pilot:	0/+0	0/+10	0/+20	0/+10	0/+10

Weaponry

12.7mm Medium Air MG/MG131 [Body:F] (450 rounds).

2×Aircraft LMG/MG81s [Body:U] (1,000 rounds each).*

Aircraft LMG/MG81 [Body:T] (1,000 rounds).

Aircraft LMG/MG81 [Body:F] (1,000 rounds).

10×132-lb. bombs [Body:U].

4×550-lb. bombs [Wings:U].

* Linked.

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; 4,500-lb. bomb bay; bombsight; medium radio receiver and transmitter. **Wings:** Two 1,100-lb. hardpoints each.

Statistics

Size: 47'×66'×16' **Payload:** 4.6 tons **Lwt:** 15.5 tons

Volume: 640 **Maint:** 28 hours **Cost:** \$49,900

HT: 8. **HPs:** 525 **Body,** 440 each **Wing,** 200 each **Pod,** 50 each **Wheel.**

aSpeed: 280 **aAccel:** 4 **aDecel:** 23 **aMR:** 6 **aSR:** 2
Stall Speed 93. -1 aSpeed per loaded hardpoint.

gSpeed: 176 **gAccel:** 8 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.25 **gSR:** 3
Ground Pressure Extremely High. No Off-Road Speed.

Design Notes

As designed, aSpeed is 274, but the historical value was used for this and wing area (587 sf).

Part of the reason for the Ju 88's continued popularity is that it was built tough, with some general hull armor backed up by specific armor for most of its vital components. To reflect this, the design has been given an overall high DR.

On most missions, the Ju 88 did not carry a full bomb bay; a historical bomb loadout is shown. For the right targets, the craft was rated to carry as much as 4 tons of bombs.

As usual with planes, most of the waste space is in the tail. Some Ju 88 crews would throw several cement blocks in this space, probably to improve handling during landings; an enterprising GM might lower gDecel to 8 without the blocks.

Variants

Space doesn't permit a fully detailed history of the Ju 88. Briefly, the V1 experimental plane first flew Dec. 21, 1936, with 746-kW engines, three-man cockpit, and standard wing.

The A series began production in 1939, introducing the high-agility wing and four 550-lb. wing hardpoints, and remained level bombers throughout the series. The hardpoints would eventually upgrade to 1,100-lb. hardpoints, with some subvariants capable of carrying as much as a 4-ton torpedo on a body hardpoint. The main armament also upgunned throughout the series; with MG131s replacing MG81s or up to three more MG81s being added.

The C and G series of heavy and night fighters usually deleted the bomb bay, increased armor, added one or more radar sets, and mounted 20mm or 37mm cannons in a pod slung underneath the body, or in the body proper firing upward as an "oblique music" (*schräge Musik*) installation. (The idea was that the night fighter would creep up from below and behind a bomber, then rip out its belly at point-blank range. For the most part, it worked.) These often deleted one or two crew stations, but provided an armored station for everyone aboard rather than just the pilot.

Both methanol-water and nitrous injection systems (pp. 65-66) were mounted on some Ju 88s. The Ju88G-7b could reach 402 mph and stay there for an hour using its MW 50 system to boost engine output 22%.

Bf 110

The Bf or Me 110 earned a reputation as an unqualified failure over the skies of Britain in 1940, when 40% of the fighters that crossed the Channel in the first few weeks didn't make the return flight. Despite that ignoble outing, the plane would soldier on and still be leaving assembly lines when the European war ended.

Designed to fill a *Zerstörer* (destroyer) or strategic-fighter role, the early Bf 110 suffered from too many compromises. It could range farther than a pure fighter, but could not fight one on equal terms when it got there. This lesson learned in front of many a Spitfire's guns, the Luftwaffe transformed the 110 into primarily a nightfighter and fighter-bomber. It would serve admirably enough in both roles, and despite its lingering reputation German air crews were fond of the plane – usually, fonder than they were of the replacements that purported to fix what ailed the Bf 110.

Ultimately, the Bf 110 would carry the responsibility of being Germany's primary nightfighter, though the Luftwaffe high command preferred the Ju 88 for the role. Regardless, the Bf 110 never took the night skies in overwhelming numbers, because it kept getting called up to meet day-fighter shortages, where its previously discovered weaknesses could be preyed upon yet again.

The Bf 110G-4b/R3 carries a crew of pilot and radar operator. The latter – who originally was simply a rear gunner – sits in a swivel seat in the rear of the cockpit, deafeningly close to the *schräge Musik* guns, and, as seen in the design notes, might have been the busier of the crew members. The plane burns 99 gallons of gas per hour at routine usage. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$330.

Bf 110G-4b/R3

Subassemblies: Heavy Fighter chassis +3; Medium Fighter-Bomber wings +3; two Medium AFV pods [Wings:F] +2; three retractable wheels +0.

Powertrain: Two 1,100-kW aerial turbo/supercharged gas engines with two 1,100-kW props [Pods] and 336-gallon self-sealing tanks [Wings]; 8,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS **Cargo:** 11.4 Body, 1 Wings, 0.2 Pods

ARMOR	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	2/4	2/4	2/4	2/4	3/10
Wings:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3
Pods:	2/3	2/3	–	2/3	2/3
Crew:	0/+0	0/+10	0/+20	0/+10	0/+10

Weaponry

2×30mm Short Air AC/MK 108 [Body:F] (135 rounds each).*

2×30mm Short Air AC/MK 108 [Body:T] (65 rounds each).*

20mm Medium Air AC/MG151/20 [Body:F] (300 rounds).*

20mm Medium Air AC/MG151/20 [Body:F] (350 rounds).*

* MG151s and 30mm pairs linked; four forward guns linked.

Equipment

Body: Four-mile and 2-mile radars [both F]; radar detector; medium radio receiver and transmitter; small radio direction finder; recon camera. **Wings:** 550-lb. hardpoint each.

Statistics

Size: 42'×53'×13' **Payload:** 1.6 tons **Lwt:** 7.3 tons
Volume: 200 **Maint:** 31 hours **Cost:** \$41,600

HT: 9. **HPs:** 260 **Body,** 165 each **Wing,** 200 each **Pod,** 24 each **Wheel.**

aSpeed: 342 **aAccel:** 9 **aDecel:** 16 **aMR:** 4 **aSR:** 2
Stall Speed 81. -2 aSpeed per loaded hardpoint.
gSpeed: 253 **gAccel:** 12 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.5 **gSR:** 2
Ground Pressure Extremely High. **No Off-Road Speed.**

Design Notes

The design purchases 660 rounds of 20mm ammo, but the historical value was used for this and wing area (413 sf).

As with the Ju 52 (p. 86), this is an odd design with far more wing area than usual for the loading. Therefore, this design uses the trick there and halves the wing HPs, weight, and cost, bringing both design weight and aMR closer in line with the historical.

The two radar sets – the 4-mile FuG 220b Lichtenstein SN-2 and 2-mile FuG 212 Lichtenstein C-1 – reflect that the first Allied chaff – called Window and debuting in July 1943 – could blind the February 1942-vintage C-1 radar. The SN-2 of October 1943 ignored Window. In September 1944, the Allies began using Window 2, a chaff that could blind the SN-2. The SN-2 is the radar that required the famous “stag's horns” aerials on the noses of German nightfighters.

In March 1943, British night bombers began using “Monica,” a 1-mile rear-facing radar, to warn them when another plane was on their tail. In November 1943, Bf 110 forward-maintenance crews began retrofitting a radar detector – the FuG 227/1 Flensburg – to both warn the 110 crew of an alert victim and to help home in on it. The radar detector is listed here, though it wasn't an “official” piece of equipment in many units.

The small radio direction finder is a FuB1 2F unit used to assist in landing on a darkened runway at night. Many of these planes would also carry IFF gear.

Variants

The Bf 110 described here is a mid- to late-war nightfighter, with the optional *schräge Musik* installation of upward-firing 30mm guns. Those without this conversion would instead have an MG81Z twin gun facing rearward for the radar operator to defend against pure fighters. The plane also could mount an underbody pod, the Waffenanlage 151Z, with two more forward-facing 20mm MG151/20s.

As with the Ju 88, the Bf 110 went through countless variants. The first prototype first flew on May 12, 1936. Production began with the B heavy-fighter series in 1938. The C series of 1939 did most of the early-war fighting, armed with four forward-firing 7.92mm MG17s and two 20mm MG-FFs, and a 7.92mm MG15 for the rear crewman.

The D series of 1940 was the first to begin conversion into nightfighters. The E and F series were begun with the introduction of different engines.

Probably more Bf 110s mounted 20mm MG-FFs or MG151/20s as their *schräge Musik* installations than did the 30mm guns. Usually, the hardpoints carried drop fuel tanks.

Me 262

Incorporating streamlined elements years ahead of any Allied aircraft, the Me 262 strongly resembled a winged shark. Even the best Allied fighter pilots quickly learned to treat it like that formidable predator.

The best of Germany's jet designs, the Me 262 enjoyed decisive advantages in technology and weight of arms upon appearing over Europe in the summer of 1944. Despite that, it probably could not lay claim to being the best fighter of its time. While it could outrun anything it faced and excelled at killing bombers, the Me 262 featured substantially less agility and endurance than the best prop-driven fighters. Given its lengthy and delicate takeoff and landing procedures, it could not get into action rapidly. Worse yet, after consuming most of their ammo and fuel, the Me 262s in a flight would end up circling their airfield waiting for each plane to land. Anglo-American pilots learned to ambush them while in this holding pattern. Most of these problems related to the jet's troublesome engines; the Germans did not have the raw materials to make them better.

The Luftwaffe only received 1,433 Me 262s – of which 300 saw combat – too few to make a real impact on the war.

Most Me 262s carry only the pilot. The plane burns 400 gallons of jet fuel per hour. Fuel and ammo cost \$540.

Me 262A-1b Schwalbe (Swallow)

Subassemblies: Light Fighter-Bomber chassis with very good streamlining +3; Medium Fighter wings +2; two Medium Weapon pods [Wings:U] +1; three retractable wheels +1.

Powertrain: Twin 2,000-lb. turbojets [Pods] and 678-gallon self-sealing tanks.

Occ: 1 CS **Cargo:** 2.6 Body, 2.9 Wings, 1.2 Pods

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
All:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5
Cockpit:	0/+5	0/+10	0/+15	0/+10	0/+10

Weaponry

2×30mm Short Aircraft AC/MK 108 [Body:F] (100 each).*

2×30mm Short Aircraft AC/MK 108 [Body:F] (80 each).*

24×55mm Rockets/R4M [Wings:F].†

* Each pair linked, and both pairs linked to one another.

† Fired in two 12-round groups, or one 24-round group.

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; IFF; medium radio receiver and transmitter; navigation instruments. **Wings:** 100-lb. hardpoint each.

Statistics

Size: 35'×41'×13'	Payload: 2.6 tons	Lwt: 7 tons
Volume: 312	Maint: 10 hours	Cost: \$27,800

HT: 7. **HPs:** 165 **Body,** 80 each **Wing,** 15 each **Wheel,** 75 each **Pod.**

aSpeed: 541 **aAccel:** 6 **aDecel:** 8 **aMR:** 2 **aSR:** 2
Stall Speed 114. -11 aSpeed per loaded hardpoint.

gSpeed: 210 **gAccel:** 10 **gDecel:** 10 **gMR:** 0.5 **gSR:** 2
Ground Pressure Extremely High. **No Off-Road Speed.**

Design Notes

The design has aSpeed 520, but this has been increased to the historical aSpeed. The design purchases 400 rounds of 30mm ammo, but the historical allotment is listed.

The design has a maintenance interval of 38 hours, but turbojets are new and experimental technology – the Junkers Jumo 004B series engines on the Me 262 required overhaul after 10 hours of flight and had a total service life of 25 hours! They were temperamental enough when well-serviced to make Germany's jet pilots *very* wary of flying on worn-out turbines . . .

Variants

The V1 through V12 were prototypes, not all mounting jet engines. Many of them crashed in test flights.

Thirteen of 23 A-0s entered service trials by April 1944 and began combat that summer. Use the A-1b without the rocket hardpoints for it and the A-1a. The A-1a/U1 variant (three built) mounted a pair of bigger 30mm cannons (not described in the game system yet). A single A-1a/U2 installed the FuG 220 radar (p. 88); reduce aSpeed to 510. At least one A-1a/U4 variant replaced the autocannons with a single 50mm Long Tank Gun/BK-5 with 22 rounds.

The A-2a Sturmvogel (Stormbird) was the standard fighter-bomber; upgrade the hardpoints to 1,100 lbs. each to hold bombs (often AB250s). It had no bombsight. It weighed 8.1 tons with a 3.6-ton payload, with aSpeed 470 and aAccel 5. The two A-2a/U1s built replaced two MK 108s with an improved bombsight; a single A-2a/U2 also placed a prone bombardier in a transparent nose.

The A-3a ground-attack version was never produced. It would have increased crew-station DR to 20 on most facings.

The A-5a and A-1a/U3 replaced two MK 108s with a pair of recon cameras, and the A-5a installed two 770-lb. hardpoints for 79-gallon drop tanks.

Fifteen B-1a two-seat trainers were built. It deleted 7.9 VSPs of body fuel tankage to make room for a second crew station but added the A-5a's hardpoints. The B-1a/U1 night fighter is treated as a B-1a with the addition of a 4-mile FuG 218 Neptun V targeting radar and FuG 350 Zc Naxos radar detector operated by the second crew station. Reduce aSpeed to 475 due to the drag from the antennas.

The B-2a night fighter was essentially a new aircraft on a Medium Fighter-Bomber chassis with a 765-gallon fuel tank. It could use the same drop tanks as the A-5a and had a special 3,200-lb. body hardpoint for towing an unmanned light fighter filled with more fuel. Early experiments along these lines ended in disaster, but this system's effectiveness is unknown. It added two linked MK 108s in an upward-firing mount with 100 rounds each. The plane weighed 7 tons with a 3-ton payload, and had aSpeed 475, aAccel 5. Cost was \$30,160. A planned upgrade to the "Berlin" radar system would have removed the external antennas and increased aSpeed to 495. With the flying drop tank, use aSpeed 200 and aMR 0.5.

The C-1a and C-2b interceptors (one each produced) were A-1as with liquid-fuel rockets for very rapid climb or takeoff. Both would have about 35 seconds of endurance at gAccel 14 or aAccel 13 with aSpeed 650.

S-Boot

After the Royal Navy proved that the Kriegsmarine's great commerce raiders would lead short, troubled lives if they dared enter open water, most of the German surface navy spent the war in harbor letting the U-boats do the dirty work.

The S-boots served as notable exceptions. Much like large PT boats, these coastal craft would sneak out of port (often at night), raise some quick havoc, and flit back to safety. British forces operating in the English Channel particularly respected these fast and deadly crafts, which they came to refer to as E-boats.

The boat could carry up to 21 sailors, though far fewer would be required to operate the craft. Conversely, reloading the torpedo tubes would require most of the full complement as brute labor. It has one cabin, for the captain, which features a hidden safe. The rest of the crew makes do with 15 bunks and six hammocks. A dinghy usually was carried on deck; treat as a Large Raft from p. W125.

The S-boat burns 201 gallons of diesel per hour in standard usage. A full normal fuel load costs \$615. Ammo and provisions cost \$31,500.



Schnellboot S26 Class

Subassemblies: Heavy Cutter chassis +6; waterproofed Medium TD superstructure [Body:T] +3; four full-rotation Mini open mounts [Body:F,B and Sup:R,L] +0.

Powertrain: Three 1,492-kW HP diesels with three 1,492-kW screw transmissions and 5,112-gallon standard fuel tanks; 20,000-kWs batteries.

Occ: 2 CS, 1 XCS Body, 5 CS Sup Cargo: 52 Body, 24 Sup

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/18W	4/18W	4/18W	3/12W	4/18W
Sup:	4/35	4/40	4/35	3/10	—
All OMs:	—	—	—	—	—

Weaponry

Ground MG/MG34 [OM at Sup:R] (3,000 rounds).

Ground MG/MG34 [OM at Sup:L] (3,000 rounds).

20mm Long Ground AC/FlaK 38 [OM at Body:F] (3,000).

20mm Long Ground AC/FlaK 38 [OM at Body:B] (3,000).

2×533mm Torpedo Tubes [Body:F] (4 torpedoes total).

4×110-lb. Depth Charges [Body:R].

4×110-lb. Depth Charges [Body:L].

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; backup driver controls; 100 bilge; five bilge pumps†; six smoke dischargers [B]; three fire extinguishers; two 440-lb. hardpoints for depth charges; 440 man-days of provisions. **Sup:** backup driver option; navigation instruments; large radio transmitter and receiver.

† Includes limited access space; see p. 69.

Statistics

Size: 115'×17'×15' **Payload:** 29.4 tons **Lwt:** 119.6 tons
Volume: 2,134 **Maint:** 21 **Cost:** \$91,400

HT: 12. **HPs:** 9,000 **Body,** 360 **Sup,** 30 each **OM.**

wSpeed: 45 **wAccel:** 6 **wDecel:** 0.3 (3.1) **wMR:** 0.05 **wSR:** 3
Draft 5.4. **Flotation Rating** 192 tons.

Design Notes

Design wSpeed is 38, but this has been increased to the historical figure. The historical boat had a metal frame but wooden armor – expensive oak, mahogany, and cedar layered to provided maximum protection. Though we could model this armor using the conversion formula for aircraft frames found on p. W121, the design tends to run heavy anyway, so it is simply modeled as metal. The armor has been given a W classification in the writeup, though, to represent its vulnerability to fire.

The 110-lb. depth charges do 6d×170 and cost \$220 each. They would take up 0.5 VSPs apiece if stored as cargo.

Two of the torpedoes are stored in the tubes themselves, and two in the body. The remaining space in the body should almost all be treated as work space for the loaders required to manhandle these.

The smoke dischargers aren't of the usual grenade sort, but rather consist of two small generators burning 12 gallons of fuel (probably used oil) apiece; each three-discharger grouping represents one of these generators. For greater realism, each generator should be modeled as streaming behind the boat a 2-yard-wide smoke cloud up to 200 yards long. They can be turned on and off to preserve fuel for later usage. Larger ships achieve much the same effect simply by pouring excess fuel into the engines.

Variants

The first boats in the class – the S1 of 1930 and S2 through S5 of 1931 – had to use gas engines while the diesels were developed. The first diesel boats used smaller engines capable of only wSpeed 40. They also had a lower and unenclosed forecastle – the two body crew stations (for the torpedo-tube gunners) would become exposed, while the exposed crew station (which is for the forward 20mm gunner) would become no crew station at all – the gunner would simply stand on deck when in action.

From the S26 on, the higher, enclosed forecastle made the boat particularly dry for its size.

In 1943, many S-boots replaced the rear 20mm with a 40mm Bofors FlaK 28 (40mm Medium Ground Autocannon) with 2,000 rounds. Later boats deployed engines with more power and less reliability to attain top speeds of up to 48 mph.

U-Boot Typ VII

The design roots for the Typ VII U-boat extended all the way back to the Kaiser's submarines of the late Great War. Though technologically conservative, the class would serve as the backbone of Germany's U-boat fleet.

The VIIC normally put to sea with 44-52 men. The captain had a cabin; the crew shared 24 bunks. (Given the minimum crew space required on p. 69, standing room for five crewmen has been added so that, with those 24 bunks and another 23 crew stations, a full complement of 52 may be put into action.) A minimum crew of one engineer, a helmsman, and two men to operate the dive controls could run the boat in a pinch.

The ship's locker usually included three MGs with 6,000 rounds each, five SMGs with 384 rounds each, five pistols with 56 rounds each, and usually five rifles with 90 rounds each.

The VIIC burns 83.6 gallons of diesel per hour in standard usage – that is, a surface speed of 14 mph and range of 6,700 miles with full fuel tanks. Dropping to 11.5 mph (10 knots) decreases consumption to 47 gallons per hour, for a range of 9,785 miles. The batteries will power submerged propulsion at full speed for 3 hours, 47 minutes, for a range of 32 miles. At a routine underwater speed of 4.6 mph (4 knots), battery life became just under 25 hours, for a range of 114 miles.

A full normal fuel load costs \$4,800. Ammo and provisions cost \$105,000. All of the open mounts are manually traversed, at 5° per turn by two crew members for the deck gun, 8° per turn by the gunner for the heavy AA gun, and 13° per turn by the gunner for the light AA guns.

Each day at sea frees up 2.5 VSPs of provision-storage space. The first 134 VSPs should be treated as “makeshift,” but the last 100 VSPs can be treated as proper cargo holds.

U-Boot Typ VIIC

Subassemblies: Medium Corvette chassis with sub option +8; sealed Large TD superstructure [Body:T] +4; limited-rotation Small AFV open mount 1 [Body:T] +2; limited-rotation Medium Weapon open mount 2 [Sup:T] +1; two limited-rotation Mini open mounts 3-4 [Sup:T] +0.

Powertrain: Two 1,045-kW marine diesels with two 1,045-kW screw transmissions and 39,990-gallon standard fuel tanks; 559-kW electric motors with 7.6 million-kWs batteries with limited access.

Occ: 15 CS 5 SR Body, 8 CS Sup **Cargo:** 20 Body, 5 Sup

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/60	4/60	4/60	4/60	4/60
Sup:	4/60	4/60	4/60	4/60	–
All OMs:	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	–

Weaponry

2×20mm Long Ground AC/FlaK 38 [OM3,4:F] (900 rounds each).
37mm Med. Ground AC/FlaK 36 [OM2:F] (400 rounds).
88mm Medium Tank Gun/SK35 [OM1:F] (220 rounds).
4×533mm Torpedo Tubes [Body:F].*

533mm Torpedo Tube [Body:B].*

* 14 533mm Torpedoes/G7e total for all tubes.

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; 2,498 bilge; 10 bilge pumps†; fire direction center; 10 fire extinguishers†; 20 cargo; 75 man-days of life support†; navigation instruments; 4,680 man-days of provisions; large radio direction finder; very large radio receiver; large and very large radio transmitters. **Sup:** back-up driver option for three crew stations; five cargo; navigation instruments; two 30' 15× periscopes; two searchlights.

† Includes limited access space; see p. 69.

Statistics

Size: 218'×20'×30' **Payload:** 154 tons **Lwt:** 800 tons
Volume: 10,475 **MH:** 9 **Cost:** \$349K

HT: 11. **HPs:** 51,000 **Body,** 450 **Sup,** 150 **OM 1,** 75 **OM 2,** 30 **OMs 3-4.**

wSpeed: 20 **wAccel:** 0.4 **wDecel:** 0.3 (0.5) **wMR:** 0.05 **wSR:** 4
Draft 10. **Flotation Rating** 1,011 tons.**

uSpeed: 8 **uAccel:** 0.1 **uDecel:** 0.3 (0.5) **uMR:** 0.05 **uSR:** 4
uDraft 30. **Crush Depth** 210 yards.

** As an elaboration to the flotation-rating calculation on p. W147, ships with the Sub option also add in the VSPs of any sealed subassemblies.

Design Notes

The historical Type VIIC was slightly smaller than this chassis – flotation rating 958 tons – but this statistic should be kept at design values. The calculated underwater draft is 38.5' but the value is capped at the actual height of the vehicle.

The large bilge capacity represents that this design system is more than a bit generous to submarine volumes, but it also can portray that some of these boats were very hard to drown. (The movie *Das Boot* portrays the real-life exploits of U-96, which was a VIIC that endured legendary abuse.)

In real design terms, much of the fuel tankage and bilge space on submarines usually was integrated with the submer-sion equipment, to the extent that – in this boat – fuel and sea-water were intended to coexist in carefully settled layers within the same tanks. In game terms, ignore this design style, treating fuel tankage and bilge space normally; that is, fuel in proper tanks does not spoil unless flooding injects (additional) water, while fuel in bilges follows the normal rules.

Variants

The Type VIIA was a smaller 1930s boat, essentially a similar design with smaller engines on the Light Corvette hull.

Lengthened from the VIIA hull, the Types VIIB and VIIC underwent many changes. As the war progressed, the deck guns tended to disappear while AA armament increased. Those that survived into the late war often had snorkels added. Five VIICs had only two bow torpedo tubes and six had no stern tube.

In game terms, the further-lengthened Type VIID would simply replace bilge space with stowage for 15 mines. Similarly, the Type VIIF increased torpedo stowage to 25. (The experimental Type VIIE was never built.)

U-Boot Typ XXIII

Given the realities of the U-boat war, the Germans quit concentrating on submarines to range the open ocean, and instead began building smaller boats that could lurk around English ports, strike quickly, escape, and dash the short distance home. (Ironically, many of the 1939 U-boats were smaller, stopgap designs – the Kriegsmarine equivalents of the Panzer I – that were belittled by naval planners but scored some of the most notable early successes . . .)

The Type XXIII was one of the best of these late-war boats – only aircraft ever killed any of them historically – and was the last U-boat to claim a victim on May 7, 1945, when the U-2336 sank two British merchantmen deep inside the Firth of Forth. Its snorkel allowed it to remain submerged for days at a time, and its diesel-electric drive would have been nefariously quiet. (Diesel-electric systems remain stealthier than the nuclear reactors used in modern submarines.) Its state-of-the-art electronics suite allowed it to fire its torpedoes based only on sonar contact.

The XXIII normally had a crew of 14. The captain has a cabin; everyone else shares seven bunks. Utilizing its electric-drive efficiency, it burns 13 gallons of diesel per hour cruising at 8.4 mph for a range of 3,000 standard (or 2,600 nautical) miles on the surface or lurking just beneath the water using its snorkel. Pushing full speed on the surface, the fuel lasts 119 hours for a range of 1,428 miles. On batteries underwater, it can push at full speed for 1.5 hours and 21 miles, or cruise at 4.6 mph for 42 hours, 15 minutes and 194 miles.

A full normal fuel load costs \$560. Ammo and provisions cost \$14,000.

U-Boot Typ XXIII

Subassemblies: Heavy Cutter chassis with sub option +6; sealed Medium TD superstructure 1 [Body:T] +3; two sealed Large Secondary superstructures 2-3 [Body:R,L] +4.

Powertrain: 433-kW marine diesel with snorkel coupled to 447-kW electric motor and 447-kW electric screw transmission; 26-kW “creeping” motor; 4,650-gallon standard fuel tanks [Sups 2, 3]; 2,412 million-kWs batteries with full access.

Occ: 8 CS Body, 5 CS Sup 1 **Cargo:** See below.

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
All:	4/80	4/80	4/80	4/80	4/80

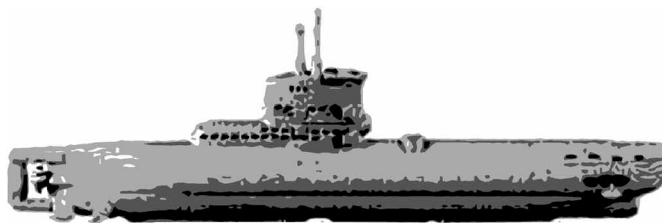
Weaponry

2×533mm Torpedo Tubes [Body:F]. (1 round each.)

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; 207 bilge; five bilge pumps*; 10 cargo; microframe targeting computer*; fire direction center; three fire extinguishers*; IFF; 28 man-days of life support*; navigation instruments; 560 man-days of provisions; large radio receiver and transmitter; 2-mile active/passive sonar. *Sup 1:* backup driver option for 3 crew stations; 5 cargo; navigation instruments; two 30' 15× periscopes; 5-mile radar; radar detector; searchlight.

* Includes full access space; see p. 69.



Statistics

<i>Size:</i> 112'×10'×23'	<i>Payload:</i> 20 tons	<i>Lwt:</i> 255 tons
<i>Volume:</i> 2,530	<i>MH:</i> 5.7	<i>Cost:</i> \$144K

HT: 9. **HPs:** 9,000 **Body,** 360 **Sup 1,** 900 each **Sups 2, 3.**

wSpeed: 12 *wAccel:* 0.3 *wDecel:* 0.3 (0.5) *wMR:* 0.05 *wSR:* 3
Draft 6.9. **Flotation Rating** 270 tons.

uSpeed: 14 *uAccel:* 0.4 *uDecel:* 0.3 (0.5) *uMR:* 0.05 *uSR:* 3
uDraft 23. **Crush Depth** 180 yards. **uSpeed** 2 on creeping motor.

Design Notes

As described for the Type VIIC, the flotation rating includes the VSPs of all sealed subassemblies. In fact, the two superstructures representing the ballast-tank bulges to the right and left of the submarine's hull are used only to bring total flotation close to the historical value.

Despite that, the Type XXIII – and late-war diesel-electric U-boats in general – are the exceptions that prove the rule that no design system can fully encompass the diversity of real-life engineering. This design suffers from the fact that late TL6 submarines used an early version of the “submarine lines” described on p. 11 of *GURPS Vehicles*. These lines trade surface hydrodynamics for underwater performance – as evidenced by the fact that the XXIII travels more quickly underwater with but a slight increase in power. The design *wSpeed* is 15 and *uSpeed* is 11, so using the historical values represents a drastic but not revisionary adjustment. In general, these boats could be given a special “late submarine” hull with the same general characteristics as the Sub option, but with final *wSpeed* decreased 25% and *uSpeed* increased 15% to get them in roughly the proper range across all types.

Less easily dismissed is the space left over in this design, which in real life was simply of inefficient size and proportions. The design has 26% of its volume – 455 VSPs – left open, but the historical Type XXIII was famously cramped, so cramped that it couldn't even unload its torpedo tubes at sea for the weekly fuse and guidance-system checkups that any prudent submarine crew conducts on its weapons. The GM should be prepared to assess huge volume penalties to poorly rendered PC U-boat designs (see pp. 121-122 for details) to keep them comparable to the historical.

The small electric motor does not represent a failsafe feature. It would have been used because, in real life, a 26-kW electric motor uses a lot less juice to output 26-kW than a 447-kW electric motor running at a fraction of its capacity. Also, the smaller motor would have been *exceedingly* quiet.

Variants

The Type XXIII had no known major variants – though with a weapon this stealthy and potent perhaps the important word here is *known* . . .

KMS BISMARCK

The KMS *Bismarck* met a spectacular end at British hands in May 1941 (p. W20). Her sister ship, *Tirpitz*, worried the British until they finally destroyed her in November 1944. Neither had any significant impact on the war, but the *Bismarck* has come to represent what the Kriegsmarine could have done . . . and what the Royal Navy prevented it from accomplishing.

The *Bismarck* normally carries a crew of 2,192 officers and men. Overall, 286 crew stations are scattered around the ship to represent bridge spaces and gunner's stations, but the vast majority of the crew does not need crew stations. They load the weapons, tend the engines, or repair battle damage, instead.

Seaman of all nations coveted posting to a battleship, not only for the prestige, but because the ships were far and away the most spacious and comfortable warships in any navy. The *Bismarck* is no different. A full 55 VSPs per crewmen of access space has been added to this design, which transforms the environment from the elbow-in-stomach coziness of a submarine to something equivalent to a modern office building – not truly private, but far from oppressive. This access space is assumed to include full access (p. 69) for any ship's components that might need it, which amounts to a small percentage of the extra crew-space investment.

This still leaves 5,000 VSPs in the body and superstructure to carry cargo – and all battleships carried a lot of cargo – but it was exclusively working materials. Lockers containing fire hoses, life jackets, plumbing supplies, first-aid kits, etc. will be scattered throughout the ship.

Bismarck carried six Ar 196s (p. 84) – three in hangars, two as cargo, and one ready to launch – and four ship's launches.

The main turrets hydraulically traverse at 1° per second, or 12 crew members manually rotate one at 0.2° per second. The 150mm-gun turrets traverse at 3° per second, or 12 crew members manually rotate one at 1.5° per second. The 105mm-gun turrets traverse at 5° per second, or eight crew members manually rotate one at 1.7° per second. Two crew members manually rotate each 37mm open mount at 13° per second. The gunner manually rotates each 20mm open mount at 18° per second.

The *Bismarck* burns 6,200 gallons of diesel (fuel oil) per hour at routine usage. Fuel, ammo, and food cost \$2.7 million.

KMS Bismarck

Subassemblies: Medium Battleship chassis +11; waterproofed Small Capital superstructure [Body:T] +8; four waterproofed limited-rotation Small Naval turrets with mild slope [Body:T] +5; six waterproofed limited-rotation Large Secondary turrets with mild slope [Body:T] +4; eight waterproofed limited-rotation Medium Secondary turrets [Sup:T] +4; eight limited-rotation Medium Weapon open mounts [Sup:T] +1; six limited-rotation Small Weapon open mounts [Sup:T] +0.

Powertrain: Three 34,300-kW steam turbines with three 34,300-kW screws and 2.73 million-gallon standard fuel tanks. Eight 500-kW and 10 690-kW diesel engines used as electrical plants to power turret traversing gear, lights, etc. Also carries 9,000 gallons of gas for seaplanes.

Occ: See above.

Cargo: See above.



Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/1,030	4/1,030	4/1,030	4/275	4/500
Super:	4/485	4/485	4/485	4/165	–
Bridge*:	0/+645	0/+645	0/+645	0/+545	0/+200
SN Turs:	5/1,730	4/600	4/1,030	4/500	–
LS Turs:	5/280	4/200	4/200	4/150	–
MS Turs:	4/200	4/150	4/150	4/120	–
MW, SW OMs:	4/40	0/0	0/0	0/0	–

* Armored station for 15 crew members.

Weaponry

8×15" Naval Guns/SK-C/34 [SN Turs:F] (100).*

12×150mm Med. DP Guns/SK-C/28 [LS Turs:F] (200).*

16×105mm Med. DP Guns/SK-C/33 [MS Turs:F] (500).*

16×37mm Med. Gr. ACs/SK-C/33 [MW OMs:F] (1,875).*

12×20mm Long Gr. ACs/SK-C/30 [SW OMs:F] (4,875).*

* Linked in pairs at one pair per turret or open mount; in all cases ammo allotment in parentheses is *per gun*.

Equipment

Body: 89,000 bilge; 200 bilge pumps; brigs and restraints for 10 crew bunks; 2,000 bunks; 200 cabins; two 10-ton cranes; 88 environmental control; four 15-ton external cradles for ship's launches; 30 fire extinguishers; 20 halls; 132,000 man-days of provisions; three surgeries; two 60-ton winches; 10 workshops; four 225-kW traversing gears for Small Naval turrets; four 95-kW traversing gears for Large Secondary turrets. **Super:** Autopilot; 25 cabins; five luxury cabins; 15 fire extinguishers; three fire direction centers; three 100-VSP hangar bays; two launch catapults; three sets of navigation instruments; 17-mile targeting radar; large radio direction finder; very large radio receiver; large radio transmitter; very large radio transmitter; six searchlights; sound detector; mainframe targeting computer dedicated to main guns; eight 95-kW traversing gears for Medium Secondary turrets.

Statistics

Size: 824'×118'×180' **Payload:** 10K tons **Lwt:** 49K tons

Volume: 574K **MH:** 62 **Cost:** \$16.7M

HT: 7. HPs: 720K Body, 12,000 Superstructure, 1,900 each SN Turret, 900 each LS Turret, 750 each MS Turret, 75 each MW OM, 45 each SW OM.

wSpeed: 33 **wAccel:** 0.3 **wDecel:** 0.1 (0.25) **wMR:** 0.02 **wSR:** 6 **Draft** 31'. Flotation Rating 51,600 tons.

Design Notes

The design's wSpeed was 29 mph; this has been increased to the historical figure. The design's draft was 40' – this has been reduced substantially to the historical figure.

Bismarck carries a huge amount of fuel – even by battleship standards – as a sleight of hand to circumvent treaty limitations. Much of the tankage was counted as bilges (p. 69) in the original plans, reducing loaded weight considerably on paper.

5. INSIDE THE THIRD REICH

A black and white photograph of a large crowd of people in a city square. The crowd is dense, with many people standing and some walking. In the background, there is a large, multi-story building with many windows. The scene appears to be a public gathering or a demonstration.

**Hitler created
a society that
waged war
on every level.**

From bedroom to boardroom, the Nazis introduced strife and competition to every aspect of German culture. This dark influence and its besieged position thrust the Third Reich into as much drama and turmoil as found on any other war front.

Other **GURPS WWII** nation books will describe major campaigns in which that nation's army most defined itself – the Western Front for the United States, the Eastern for the Soviets, the Pacific for the Japanese, and Africa for the British. The

wide-ranging Germans are not so easily defined by any single one of their foreign adventures. For that reason, and because the sinister puzzle that is the Third Reich continues to fascinate so many people, this chapter will illustrate the Wehrmacht's Fatherland rather than its front lines.

The following content can be used to more fully flesh out both characters (see Chapter 2) and campaigns (see Chapter 6). Much of it will be of use to Allies-based campaigns, as well.

GERMANY AT A GLANCE



Though the Nazis added many of their conquered lands to the Reich's borders, few save the Saar, Rhineland, and Austria entered with any degree of willingness. Germany proper remained the heart and soul of the Third Reich.

THE PEOPLE

Racially Germanic people formed the great majority of the nation's 66 million citizens when the Nazis took power. One in 135 of them displayed a *von* in front of their surname, indicating noble birth. One in 77 belonged to the National Socialist party. At its height, Greater Germany minus Poland would number 80 million people, with 8 million party members. Of those party members, about 1 million would be party *officials*, actively employed by the NSDAP. In game terms, party members may only have Administrative Rank 0, while party officials may buy additional Rank.

Before the Nazi era, Germany's 566,000 Jews probably rated as the most thriving Jewish community in the world. Those native to Germany tended to dress and behave like mainstream Germans, while recent arrivals from Poland predominated among those who maintained orthodox ways. The population also included a fair number of Czech and Polish immigrants – neither racially German nor Jewish – seeking better lives. Protestants, primarily in the north, modestly outnumbered Catholics, primarily in the south.

In line with its relatively recent and abrupt modernization, Germany boasted of some of Europe's most advanced industry while remaining an agricultural state overall. Some 17 million citizens tilled the soil on 3.4 million farms – more than 60% of them on smallholdings under 12 acres – at productivity rates averaging 25% of those in the contemporary United States. Those farmers often led lives identical in all significant ways to those of their ancestors who supported Teutonic Knights rather than panzer grenadiers. Among urban workers, four plied the blue-collar trades for every white-collar employee.

Food had cost a great deal before the war and became a grave concern during it. Germans filled out their diets with far more bread than other westerners, and even this staple would become rationed where other countries did not have to worry about such a basic commodity. Potatoes and cabbage also provided key dietary components, but the fierce wartime winters would create a few potato shortages. Germans had eaten about 80% as much meat as other westerners before the fighting. This would decline, until the Wehrmacht began retreating and drove stolen livestock back into Germany with it. Pork made up more than half of German meat supplies.

THE LAND

Germany proper roughly consists of three geographic zones. The south is mountainous and includes the central Alps. The midlands are forested hill country that would qualify as nearly mountainous in many American eyes. A wide coastal fringe in the north is plains, some of which are reclaimed from the sea.

The 9,721'-tall *Zugspitze* towers over the southern alpine country, which included small agricultural plots among its thick forests and resort areas. A skiing haven then and now, the region had spartan recreational facilities at the time. Skiers crowded together in simple huts overnight. Hiking also enjoyed great popularity. Not all trails were marked, and a wrong turn might lead a hiker off a cliff or to a week's detour.

The midlands included the stuff of German postcards – steep gorges and picturesque castles – and the principal industrial regions of the Saar and, most importantly, the Ruhr. These sat atop huge deposits of coal; a vast web of mines branched out directly beneath the factories and fed its yields directly into their furnaces. As the Allied bombing intensified, the handful of *Schlotbarone* (smokestack barons) who owned the industries above relocated some of them into the inactive mines, and used forced labor from concentration camps to endure the working conditions. The woods themselves proved the most ideal location for the fugitive population that would grow throughout the war years. Evergreens were the most common trees, with beech prevailing among the non-coniferous sorts.

The nation's agriculture concentrated in the north, despite much of the soil being salty or thin. In East Prussia, some 13,000 Junkers grew rye and horses on huge holdings. The government protected their domestic rye market with stiff tariffs on imports, which would have been much cheaper. The Wehrmacht, in turn, provided an insatiable market for horses. Small farmers struggled to make a living growing rye, barley, oats, wheat, potatoes, and beets. The Nazis also encouraged them to grow hemp (marijuana) to make rope. In mid-war, the government relocated residents of the areas targeted by Allied bombs to these relatively peaceful removes, and those hungry transplants thought that the struggling farmers ate very well, indeed. (In their turn, the farmers with their 80-hour or longer work weeks didn't think much of the loafers that the state had imposed upon them.)

Germany's climate is mild in summer and, save in the northwest, quite cold in winter, particularly during the war.

The nation's only two metropolises were Berlin (4.3 million residents) and Hamburg (1.7 million).

NATIONAL SOCIALISM



At the core of the Nazi state stood, of course, the National Socialist party. Technically, it wasn't *the* state, but Hitler desired that it should take over that role, so he inextricably intermingled Nazi and German functions. Usually – as in the case of the civil service, local government, and school systems – this took the simple form of filling the jobs with faithful Nazis and/or requiring those already in place to join the party. In a few cases, the Führer also set up mirror-image party organizations; for instance, the Waffen-SS and von Ribbentrop's office (p. 54) respectively filled much the same role as the Wehrmacht and foreign office.

Ultimately, other than its racist violence, the party's over-riding characteristic became hypocrisy. It incorporated left-wing policies into rabid right-wing politics, then reviled the Jews as strange vanguards of both Communism and capitalism. The Nazis preached order while sowing chaos, demanded virtue while turning a blind eye toward corruption, and always favored the easy lie over the hard truth. The party's self-contradictions and artifice showed little sign of unraveling before its military fortunes did.

Party Ranks and Political Map

See p. 43 for a list of party ranks. Major “breakpoints” were blockleiter, kreisleiter, and gauleiter (block, district, and regional leader, respectively). Block leaders inserted themselves into their neighbors' daily lives, a wonderful job for the insatiably nosy. District leaders held a great deal of effective power given their rank. Regional leaders enjoyed satrapies from which fortunes could be easily milked. The Reich held 43 *gaue* (regions) at its height, with five to 39 *kreise* (districts) in each.

The party's obsession with its eagle standard caused Germans to mockingly call lower party officials “birds of death,” because they often brought notice of a soldier son's demise, and higher officials “golden pheasants,” for their fine uniforms and plump lifestyles.

OLD SOLDIERS AND MARCH VIOLETS

In March 1933, 51% of Germans voted for the Nazis and their nationalist allies, but only 850,000 of them belonged to the party. From that point on, a flood of Germans saw the way of things and joined the NSDAP, with whole professional associations joining en masse. The veterans sarcastically referred to these newcomers as “March violets,” or “party comrades” if forced to be polite. The veterans themselves numbered a minority of “old soldiers” who had joined before September 1930, and a middle tier who enrolled between those two dates. In game terms, even party members with Administrative Rank 0 should take Reputation +1 among party faithful if in the middle tier, or +2 if an “old soldier.”

The Nazis actually closed their membership from mid-1933 to 1937, but after that actively increased the ranks.

Party membership lapsed for those in the Wehrmacht.

The Social Order Upended

The old soldiers, and thus most powerful Nazi officials, came from the lower classes. The March violets brought the party in line with the general public's education – perhaps even slightly ahead, given that fearful civil servants and teachers sprinted more rapidly to the recruiting office than the average steelworker. Still, education and party rank usually stood upside down, with the least educated holding the highest rank.

In the early Wehrmacht, 50% of officers came from military families; in the Waffen-SS, 5%. (Wartime expansion and casualty replacements would rapidly dilute the Wehrmacht figure, which suited Hitler just fine.)

This all fit with the Nazis' professed plans to strip class consciousness from German society, a goal they never fully achieved. Hitler often became nervous in the presence of his former social superiors, and etiquette courses continued to teach some of the old manners that the party had disavowed.

Peer-Pressure Politics

Not every newcomer brought devotion to the party – a few joined expressly to subvert it – but most rapidly fell into line. The Nazis advertised that Germany would be run *by Nazis for Nazis* – the faithful would have the best jobs and contracts. Few Germans found this unfair. Up to that point, their society had offered very little opportunity for upward mobility, so any sort of fast track seemed generous and exciting.

Making one's way up these newly erected social ladders required proving that one embraced Nazism more than the others clutching at the rung. The primary method of doing this simply consisted of having a lower party number than the next guy – the numbers were assigned in the order in which newcomers joined – representing that one had seen the light before him. A majority of Germans accepted the rules of this game and wasted no time in obtaining their little ceramic swastika pin, which some derisively called the *Angstbrotsche*, or brooch of fear.

Any holdout brave enough to risk economic deprivation faced additional risks. The party encouraged members to apply peer pressure to neighbors and family; one didn't want to have such a negative association spoiling one's own reputation, after all. Social cuttings, even lynch mobs, might greet anyone who seriously broke the party rules. If the dissident dared some sort of active protest against the party, the Gestapo might even come calling, first to threaten, then to make the rebel disappear.

Usually, the dissident first came to the secret police's attention because someone close by voluntarily informed on him. Neighbors gleefully snitched on neighbors, and sons solemnly brought damning testimony against fathers, as many Germans embraced the dog-eat-dog precedents of the new order with a shocking lack of reservations.

As it was, the Gestapo did not have to subdue errant Germans nearly as much as Hitler had anticipated. Most Germans opposing Nazism masqueraded among the faithful, walking a fine moral line between doing what survival required and tacitly approving of the regime through failing to defy it. Many loathed the cowardice that they perceived as their motivation.

The Völkisch Spirit

The party also demanded that Nazis draw together as a community. (Obviously, a community of only good Nazis, given the peer tactics described above.)

This spirit often took the form of mandatory charitable donations, the largest of which was the Winter Fund. To some extent, these monies purchased coal and food for the poor in winter, but the public knew that Nazi embezzlement siphoned off a large share. From October to March, Germans could expect to be asked for donations *constantly*.

Other *völkisch* programs opened elite positions to commoners, brought officials into factories to provide days off, and half-heartedly attempted to strip formal forms of address from everyday usage of the German language. These measures had little impact in the generally competitive Nazi environment.

KULTUR VS. ZIVILISATION

The Nazis did not simply shun democracy because it meant giving up power; they claimed a moral superiority for opposing it and the capitalism that usually attended it.

In Germany, the argument had formed a primary conservative theme since WWI and before. Much of German Protestantism stressed subjecting oneself to authority, a mindset at odds with the democratic striving to become part of authority. To them, freedom meant a life spared of the upheavals created by a leadership void, more than it did the widest possible array of personal choices.

Also, in German eyes, the French had displayed the foulness of democracy and the materialism that it fostered. Germany mostly perceived the revolution's results from the working end of Napoleon's bayonets, and considered their neighbor's conduct little improved since then. Britain's rampant mercantilism struck them as distasteful. The United States displayed the worst of England's piggishness without any of its manners.

Most of all, capitalism fostered change, and many Germans still sought the comfort of a static, medieval society. Within a traditional German guild – where apprentice often became journeyman, then master, under a single roof – a man could resolve his lifetime role in childhood and focus upon investing his genius in it. In the whimsical whirlwinds of capitalism's employment demands, workers alighted on a job with the longevity and goals of a fly on potato salad. It just didn't seem a fit manner in which to make one's way through life.

Similarly, in the role of citizen, being a good German did not mean casting about among political solutions, but rather accepting the political direction that the state established, and perfecting one's contribution to it.

Overall, conservative Germans perceived themselves as defending a spiritual Western "culture" against the moneygrubbing democratic "civilizations," as described by Thomas Mann. (He later disavowed this argument.) The Nazis began their authoritarian reign among a people largely eager to unquestioningly accept one.

The Hitler Salute

The Hitler salute served as a simple but powerful peer-pressure tool. Any patriotic German was expected to use it, and a brownshirt beating often rewarded the reluctant. The informal version consisted of raising the right arm at the elbow to show the palm, while saying "Heil" or "Heil Hitler." In the formal version, the straightened right arm was extended at eye level.

Hitler allowed the Wehrmacht to keep the traditional military salute until after the September 1944 bombing attempt. Many soldiers continued using the old salute in safe company.

THE FÜHRER MYTH

Goebbels' (p. 52) propaganda quickly built an impressive cultlike image for Hitler. Germans largely left alone his demihuman, monklike image, while routinely mocking his deputies. (Goebbels himself earned at least two distinctions in the popular spoof transforming household names into units of measurement. A *Goeb* was both the amount of energy required to shut off 100,000 radios at once, and the distance a man could open his mouth without ripping his head in two.)

Despite the sexlessness of this iconic Hitler, the passions inspired by the Führer myth often caused German women to act as if he were a pop star. Men, in turn, found that his gaze magnetically compelled them to duty. More than a little hysteria touched both sorts of reaction, as Germans sublimated their increasing anxiety into this hero worship.

The massive spectacles of the annual Nuremberg rallies acted as the mainsprings driving Hitler's larger-than-life image. Though the Nuremberg displays disappeared with the war, Hitler retained his appeal among much of the populace until the end. They blamed his lieutenants for their increasing misery, but not the Führer himself. This unreasoning devotion created great concern among many of those conspiring to kill Hitler. They feared a martyr more powerful than the man had been.

THE WINKING WAY

Hitler often gave large cash gifts to key generals and bureaucrats. Most of his deputies took this corruption much further, with Göring (p. 52) setting the pace by collecting a fortune and hordes of fine goods through shameless influence-peddling and extortion. Party officials selecting those farmers or technicians essential to the war effort could profit nicely from bribes to avoid Wehrmacht service, as could those in position to place men in rear-area duties. (A few select groups, such as film stars and the party officials themselves, already enjoyed exemption.) Others confiscated Jews' passports, then offered to sell them back. Average price: \$100,000.

The Nazis often are called a "gangster state," but gangsters recognize and embrace their lawlessness. The ascetic at the top, Hitler, believed in a principled Nazism, despite occasionally bestowing graft. Many of his lieutenants – from the *hauptmann* picking clean a French wine cellar to the *gauleiter* embezzling millions – told themselves that they believed, too, and their excesses were small comforts for men of their caliber, prepared to sacrifice all for the Fatherland. The postwar reaction to their corruption would baffle many of them, including Göring.

THE POLICE AND COURTS

Like most parties of a primarily conservative bent, the Nazis paid lip service to law and order, though they were none too strenuous in expecting either of themselves. In fact, that very nature allowed the party to advertise a high-instantaneous drop in crime – those attracted toward many forms of felony simply joined the party and began engaging in legally endorsed or ignored versions of their favorite pastime. Assault, even murder, could find approved outlets in the SS Death's Head squads. Though the Nazis scrupulously policed their lower ranks against larceny, higher party officials and many Wehrmacht officers had ample opportunity to feather their nests (p. 97).

Volksschädlinge

The Nazis also did a fine job of intimidating those criminals too foolish to join them, so Germany's crime rates continued to decline during their peacetime years in power. An increase in juvenile delinquency offset this more than a little. The Hitler Youth program (pp. 34 and 47) undermined parental authority without fully replacing it, and got German boys so keyed up with marches, firearms training, and such that they increasingly would not sit still for schoolwork. Like their brownshirted adult counterparts, many Hitlerjugend spent a good deal of time disrupting order.

Once the war began, incidents of violence further declined – most everyone already was getting their fill – but larceny increased with need. A far larger black market than was seen in the previous war established itself, the Holocaust created the bread-and-butter clientele for a formidable forgery industry (p. 99), and looters became a grave concern (p. 103).

The Nazis rarely differentiated between these liberal-democratic definitions of crime and the authoritarian sort. Technically, a German *could* speak out against the state if he reasonably expected that no one else would hear the comment (or read it, in the case of a diary), but in practice anyone caught flirted with the death penalty. So did the many Germans who illegally listened to foreign radio broadcasts, many of them motivated because their state broadcasts could not tell them of their MIA son's fate, but the BBC could and did on a weekly basis. Of course, the high crime of being born Jewish usually began a long, painful road toward a death sentence. All of these "criminals," from child molester to son of Israel, became *Volksschädlinge* – enemies of the people.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR

Created in 1939, the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichs-sicherheitshauptamt*, or RSHA) commanded the byzantine Nazi police network. Himmler (p. 53) controlled all of these functions, though ostensibly some fell under the Interior Ministry. Under the RSHA stood the *Sicherheitspolizei*, or Sipo, which ran the Gestapo (p. 50); the *Kriminalpolizei* (Kripo), which investigated non-political crime; and the *Ordnungspolizei* (order police, or Schupos) that walked uniformed beats. The Gestapo further operated the frontier guards, while the order police often acted as garrison troops in conquered lands.

The SD (see p. W50) under Heydrich also fell under the RSHA. It enjoyed an elite status. The SD colorfully parsed its field resources into: A-men (actual SD agents), V-men (trusted assistance, such as other RSHA units), Z-men (trusted informants), H-men (informants acting from self-interest), and U-men (suspect informants of a proven corrupt or untruthful nature).

The average German did not perceive the police as intrusive. Block leaders, air-raid wardens, and charity collectors *constantly* came by, but not the police. The truth was, the flood of accusations that they fielded (p. 96) overwhelmed Hitler's understaffed police agencies. Criminals ran far more risk of being caught by their neighbors than by law enforcement.

THE VERDICT ASSUMED

Hitler rapidly revised the German criminal code to enforce his will. The Nazi justice minister appointed all judges, and even defense attorneys had to be approved. The Nazis had instructed these judges to enforce the "unwritten *völkisch* law" by the time that the war began. Effectively, that meant passing whatever sentence the party desired.

Through enhanced powers of appeal, the Nazis effectively handed the power of sentencing to prosecutors, and punishment increasingly called for execution. Hitler took over a Germany that punished three types of crime with the death penalty; by 1943, it applied to 46 types. Actual executions increased from 926 in 1940 to 5,336 in 1943, after which statistics dissolve (see below). In response to the rise in juvenile delinquency, the Nazis lowered the minimum age for trial as an adult (i.e., a death sentence) to 14 from 16 in 1941.

Hitler replaced beheading by axe with the guillotine and hanging as the primary execution methods. Nazi hangings killed by strangulation rather than by a drop breaking the neck.

A SAVAGE SEMBLANCE

By mid-1942, the Reich's tenuous grip on the form and function of justice rapidly eroded. Rather than carefully negotiate the appearance of a trial, judges and prosecutors began to confer beforehand to determine the outcome. Later, an increasing case load sometimes forced them to huddle during the proceeding proper. Sometimes, the defendant could hear them.

The dreaded *Volksgeschichtshof*, or People's Court, took this sham to extremes. Created by Hitler, this court specialized in pronouncing accused traitors as guilty with assembly-line regularity and speed. Two judges and five officials from the party, SS, and Wehrmacht passed sentence. A U.S. bomb destroyed it in the middle of a Feb. 3, 1945 trial.

From late 1944, SS vigilante squads began to roam the Reich, identifying crimes and executing perpetrators on the spot. In this environment, the innocent ran considerable risk of being swept up with the guilty. An army courier who misplaced his pass might find himself given time for only a few fear-strangled utterances in his own defense. This bloodthirsty practice reached its apex in the Battle of Berlin (p. 26).

LIFE INSIDE THE REICH



The NSDAP's grand schemes still meant relatively little to the average German. Like most people before and since, they worried about the immediate pressures of making ends meet.

ECONOMIC SQUEEZE

The Führer began his economic program by disbanding the German labor unions, replacing them with the National Labor Front, an ill-defined but immensely powerful agency that mollified the working classes as little as possible. Its director, the former chemist-cum-mad scientist Robert Ley, would become the single most powerful Nazi outside the government mainstream, despite interpersonal skills that managed to sink beneath even the Nazi bar.

The Führer tightly regulated the economy and began ambitious public programs, including the world's first modern highways. As described in *Doing Business*, p. 100, he expanded industry and emplaced restrictions that kept marks in Germany. The nation was near full employment and humming along, but none of this changed the fact that Hitler was spending far more money than Germany was making. The Nazi economy would have come crashing down without the war.

The Impact on the Street

During this process, Hitler could not disregard the common German – the image of him safely ignoring the masses behind a line of SMG-pointing stormtroopers simply does not apply. The Nazis introduced a few high-profile consumer items to give the illusion of increasing prosperity, most importantly radio receivers that the common man could afford. The state even produced a handful of Volkswagens and began taking deposits on this cheap “people’s car,” but the war halted production. It would not resume until the nearly identical postwar version began putting its way into automotive history.

In truth, the common German who had tightened his belt to nearly the last notch in the Weimar years found little reason to loosen it during the Nazi ascendancy. Measured in Reichsmarks, wages remained flat, and in real terms they eroded as working hours increased and unregulated prices skyrocketed.

Rationing and shortages began as soon as the war did. One old-timer reckoned that the Great War had taken three years to reach the level of austerity seen in WWII's first year. Complicated ration-coupon systems covered food and clothing. Most private cars simply weren't allowed on the street – thus needing no gas – and eventually the military confiscated them.

Despite this austerity, early wartime Germany did enjoy some luxuries, because the soldiers pilfered them and sent them home. (Quite a few nominally honest troops “paid” for their acquisitions, but in Nazi currency at state-imposed exchange rates that amounted to legalized banditry.) Norwegian fur, French wine and toiletries, Belgian coffees, Dutch cream – all found their way to grateful relatives.

Particularly after this booty ran out, a thriving black market emerged. Even in Germany's darkest hours, a buyer who knew where to look could find just about anything for the right price. Illicit coffee began the war at \$7 per pound and ended it at \$320. Even gasoline remained available, though at \$60 per gallon in 1944. A complete set of forged papers cost \$32,000.

SALARIES AND COSTS

An average factory worker made \$55 per month as the war began. Skilled workers in high-demand trades (steel-working, most notably) could make up to \$140. A farmhand would receive something like \$10 a month with payment in kind taking care of \$30 in living expenses (p. 45).

Teachers made about \$65 per month, up to \$110 with a university degree. Business managers and entrepreneurs averaged \$180, salesmen and office workers \$95, dentists \$250, lawyers \$360, doctors \$400, and top government officials \$880.

Civil servants with Rank 0-2 made \$60 to start, rising to \$85 after 16 years; Ranks 3-5 made \$130, rising to \$170 after 20 years; Ranks 6-7 made \$160-\$260, and Rank 8 could go much higher. Party officials made a bit more money at the same ranks. High party officials could supplement their pay with graft (p. 97); low ones could, too, but at risk of being made into a (false) example. Most civil servants had been trained and selected to perform their duties honestly.



For other jobs, use the table on p. W67, multiplying pay by 60%. For German women in *any* job, further reduce pay to two-thirds of male wages.

Taxes and mandatory party deductions in Nazi Germany averaged 20% of pay rather than the 40% cited on p. W66.

The typical German lived in a tiny flat (averaging 280 square feet) costing \$15 a month with toilet facilities shared down the hall. Only 75% of these had tap water and 85% electric lighting. A nicer apartment, just suitable for the middle class, would be about \$30 a month.

The average middle-class German might also spend \$32 on food, \$6 on utilities, \$8 on insurance, and \$12 on laundry bills and a cleaning lady. This just about exactly matches up with the \$60 cost of living for a Status 0 German, assuming a childless couple sharing a flat along with its utilities and some food expenses, and one of them assuming the cleaning chores.

University expenses for a year were about \$550 before room and board; sending a child to grammar school would cost \$7-8 monthly.

See p. 44 for conversion rates and military pay. As with soldiers, civilians from 1944 on should be allowed to lower their Wealth advantage one level from that indicated by their pay. This would reflect that real prices have risen sharply and vastly eroded their purchasing power. (In fact, by this time bacon and tobacco formed the real currencies in Germany. Paper marks had a limited utility.) Only party officials may elect to *not* downgrade Wealth, reflecting privileged access to rare goods at reasonable cost.

The average work week increased from 50 hours in 1939 to 65 in 1945.

DOING BUSINESS

Big business paved Hitler's path to power. He personally told Germany's top industrialists that he was going to destroy democracy before the rigged March 1933 election (p. 10). They gave him \$1.2 million to fund the effort, on his assurances that "private enterprise" would thrive.

It would, but not as capitalistic competition. The Nazis told German industry what to make for their \$36 billion peacetime arms buildup, and increasingly favored it with monopoly status and handsome payment. They also enacted laws putting a 6% cap on dividends and restricting currency transfers to foreign owners. This required much of the gains to be reinvested into bigger and better German factories that Hitler needed.

Management had far more reason to play this game than ownership, and the Nazis could more easily persuade one company president than 500 stockholders, so a 1937 law only permitted ownership to express its dissatisfaction by cutting dividends – i.e., their own income. Later, the Nazis would force German industry – including their favored steelmaker Krupp and chemical-giant I.G. Farben – to invest in new concerns. Some of these directly competed with the investing firm.

Despite these limits, early on German industrialists largely remained loyal to the cause. Only the chemist Karl Bosch – whose innovation had allowed Germany to stay in the Great War – spoke out against the regime before his 1940 death. Later, German tycoons realized, if not that they had been played for fools, that they were on the losing end of the game.

Smaller businesses faced a tougher climate from the start. The Nazis' military goals made them addicted to factories, but in their hearts they favored a return to the olden days of guilds and craftsmen. This did not keep them from purging the ranks of guilds producing too many goods; the state needed those workers elsewhere, often as soldiers. Retail operations received even less sympathy, given this Nazi bias toward a guild economy and the retailers' often Jewish origins. The party often led boycotts of department stores, but retail employed too many people for the Nazis to feel secure in much more than this posturing. Besides, those Jews who owned these businesses could be coerced to sell in the "Aryanization" programs for about 10% of value. This often proved so profitable for the Nazi purchaser that the party created special taxes to claim its share.

Nazi philosophy did not really encompass entrepreneurship, but Nazi practicalities did. With its conquests, Germany gained huge numbers of potential workers, and men who could organize this resource could profit nicely. Poland, in particular, offered a prize pool of very cheap employees. Slave labor could be a tricky thing, though. In places where the captives saw worse things as the alternative – as did the Jews in Polish ghettos – then productivity usually kept a solid pace. If not, then slave labor often performed more poorly than even the most overpaid regular citizens. Speer (p. 54) also empowered entrepreneurs to re-engineer the total-war economy. They played a crucial role in keeping industry growing in 1944-45, despite incredible damage from Allied bombs.

Even more than usual in Nazi society, competing business owners informed on competitors, often with false allegations, to further their own chances of gaining lucrative contracts.

KEEPING THE OLD FAITH

Until 1936, Wehrmacht members had to register as a Protestant or Catholic. Increasingly, though, the NSDAP would come to conflict with its primary religions.

This tension had been all but unavoidable. Christian and Nazi worldviews held many fundamental differences, although many Christians of the period did share the party's anti-Semitism to some degree. More essentially, the Führer might concede room for God in his demand for undivided allegiance, but certainly not for the Pope.

One Protestant group deleted the Jewish word "Amen" from its vocabulary as the churches tried to bridge their differences with the state. Hitler himself seemed comfortable with the status quo, but many of his subordinates continued to attack religion in general while finding trumped-up grounds for imprisoning monks, nuns, priests, and finally preachers.

The party established its own religion, the German Faith Movement, which grafted a hodgepodge of pagan rituals onto the philosophical underpinnings of Nazism but stood far less *for* something than *against* Christianity. Himmler most strongly inserted pagan symbolism into the SS culture. Even the favorite German holiday, Christmas, became "Yuletide" in Nazi speech.

The Führer myth (p. 97) had a substantial death-cult aspect attached to it. The Nazis reserved some of their most subtle propaganda for messages that trivialized the trauma of losing a loved one or killing whom you were told. These messages crossed over into realms traditionally reserved to religion.

KINDER, KIRCHE, KÜCHE

As briefly described in *GURPS WWII*, the Nazis possessed family values, inasmuch as they desired to keep German women constantly pregnant with future soldiers. “Children, church, and kitchen” was their goal for their wives.

This did not quite preclude them from expecting women to work. Women already had supplied half of all farm labor before the war started. Their backbreaking share grew along with the Wehrmacht’s conscription. The state began sending youths to help out, particularly at harvest time. It also provided French and Polish adult male farmhands, either prisoners of war or willing immigrant labor. The German women had strict orders to not “defile” the race through intercourse with these men, but the war’s tensions and the lack of German men made some number of liaisons unavoidable. The women and French males risked severe penalties if caught. The Poles risked death.

Women also had made inroads into a wide variety of urban jobs before the war, but the Nazis did not really push women into the factories until mobilizing for “total warfare” in 1943. More often, urban women worked as seamstresses paid by the piece, or similar fare. Medicine became a notable exception: 1 in 8 wartime doctors was female.

By war’s end, women made up 60% of the workforce, and a significantly higher percentage of farmers. Unsurprisingly, given increased independence and stress, many had taken up smoking, though this still carried a taint of scandal. Their sense of sexual restraint also had largely evaporated.

These new “careers” left little time for a home life that was rapidly disintegrating. Along with husbands and fathers away at the front, basic goods rationed in insufficient quantities when available at all, and increasingly lengthy work weeks, German women had to contend with ever more belligerent children. The Nazi youth programs did not reinforce parental authority; they actually downplayed it as a threat to the Führer’s monopoly. A harassed mother trying to rein in her children had to weigh the threat that they could report her to the Gestapo on a fabricated charge, or, worse yet, a valid one.

The Lebensborn

None of this did much to advertise maternity, so the Nazis went to great lengths to present it as the highest duty of the German woman. They urged women to become pregnant out of wedlock if need be, and promised to care for any young whose father left them supportless either through dying in battle or simply not being wed to the mother.

German women usually gave birth without anesthetic, which they perceived as “cheating.” German general medicine of this period used anesthesia sparingly, anyway.

Himmler especially wanted young German women to provide an assembly line of wombs for his SS men in the *Lebensborn* project. He established special maternity homes so that the willing woman had no support obligations – she could even leave the child in SS care if she so desired. The fact that life in these homes as an expectant mother was much softer than anything a single woman could find elsewhere probably played some large role in attracting the many recruits. As it was, still unsatisfied with the birth rates,

Himmler extended *Lebensborn* to occupied Norway and even kidnapped Polish children with the proper appearance, erasing their old identities and falsifying an Aryan background for them. Needless to say, this practice trampled the Nazi ideal in pursuit of the appearance of success.

THE NEXT GENERATION

Most German children had helped out on the farm while they attended school until age 14 or 15. Some boys then learned a trade. Other teens kept working their parents’ fields until marriage. Middle-class children instead attended *Gymnasium*, basically a high school. Some went on to take the *Abitur*, or entrance exam for universities, which had been open to both sexes since 1900. The apprentice system and higher education had been strong, and the overall system competent.

These standards plummeted during the Nazi years. Much of the time spent tramping about in the Hitler Youth or learning party anthems in the Bund Deutscher Mädel came at the expense of reading, writing, and arithmetic. German teachers could strike unsatisfactory pupils with a fist or open hand, but this liberty failed to maintain learning.

In breaking down traditional authority figures, the Nazi youth programs did a poor job of replacing them. This led to a “wild” generation that enjoyed vandalism and petty crimes, broke the rather strict curfews placed upon it, very widely engaged in premarital sex, and generally behaved poorly. (Notably, no one ever accused these same boys of shirking their duty when they entered battle.) Many German teens frequently used tobacco or alcohol, up to a quarter may have had venereal disease, and tellingly up to a third may have possessed diagnosable mental illness. More than any other segment of society, they lived in a chaotic and frightening world, in which no one person could guide them to adulthood, because the Nazi version of that journey had not yet been fully defined.

University

Germany’s universities provided the Reich with some of its most stouthearted supporters. Student radicals leaned toward the right in Weimar and Nazi Germany, and joined the party at roughly twice the general public’s pace. This reflected that 97% of students came from middle- or upper-class origins.

They still came to odds with the party, primarily over the student fraternities, which played a larger role in 1930s and ’40s German student life than in the modern U.S. equivalent. The Nazis distrusted these secretive societies, and attempted to outlaw the members’ dueling, which continued by seeking out loopholes in the Nazi law.

Mostly men of modest educations, Nazi officials delighted in deriding German academics, many of whom famously fled in the years before war. Those who remained showed little shame, competing with one another to display their Nazi patriotism while party officials continued to heap scorn upon them.

The Nazis created a sort of anti-university, the *Ordensburgen* (Castles of the Order). After Wehrmacht and party service, their best men in their mid-20s could enroll. They would be called Junkers, and spend a year at each of four castles in what amounted to very advanced infantry school for officers.

KEEPERS OF THE KEYS

Even before the Weimar era, a proficient civil service had maintained the daily functions of the German state. Groomed to high standards, these civil servants acted very much like a civilian general staff, and wielded enough power to foil at least one conservative putsch (p. 8).

They reacted far more favorably to Hitler than they had to Kapp, however. Many civil servants willingly joined the Nazis when they took power, rather incorrectly envisioning that the party would create a superbureaucratic government. Few objected when the party made them enroll in a special party arm, or when the Nazis began using existing vacancies and creating new offices to reward party faithful.

This corp had a set of Administrative Ranks (p. 43) as elaborate as that of the Wehrmacht. Nazis given an office often had no skills suited to fulfilling its functions.

HIGH SOCIETY

Though the Nazis undermined the German aristocracy, they did not destroy it nor fail to ape it.

The Nazis more frequently diluted nobles' power than supplanted it. They flooded the Wehrmacht officer corps with new recruits of common origins, and, as described above, filled the civil service with the faithful. In the meantime, they continued to place high value on their access to the nobility.

Of high birth himself, Göring usually held the top events in the Nazi social season, spending immense sums on sumptuous galas that most European nobles no longer could afford.

Goebbels attempted to compete, but at his first major soirée in 1936, he lined the walks with page boys in tight pants and invited the Nazi old soldiers. (He couldn't match Göring's social contacts, and wanted to counter them with more party propriety.) The street fighters looked the lads up and down and began dragging them into the bushes for a bit of homosexual rape. The party ended early and badly.

THE ARTS

Weimar Germany enjoyed a huge revival in the arts. Expressionistic filmmakers created masterpieces such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, a thriving theater mounted productions of predominantly satirical masterpieces such as Carl Zuckmayer's *Der Hauptmann von Köpenick*, and German publishing poured out a quantity and quality of new works to shame the rest of the Western world. Magazines openly discussing sex, including lesbian and male homosexuality, first appeared here.

The Nazis put a stop to all that. A large element of the German public already had howled at each avant-garde indecency, and Hitler's regime certainly did not possess a thick enough skin to indulge those few wits who had not fled the country in the late 1930s. The Nazis burned books, banned films, and swept daring troupes from the stage.

Their heavy-handed censorship met only grumblings, but they attracted few audiences with the straightforward propaganda they offered in exchange. A compromise ensued in theaters, which would continue to produce classics by Goethe, Shakespeare, and others such as Bernard Shaw, whose work

avoided the censors because it mocked the British. Nazi writers met a bit more success – and the Nazi bible, *Mein Kampf* (p. 8), sold more than 6 million copies by 1940 – thus leaving little room for dissidents. Filmmakers produced 1,363 features under the Nazis, mostly light fare sprinkled with a few bombastic propaganda and anti-Semitic vehicles. Even before Hitler's ascendancy, the public held a taste for overwrought historical films, particularly the "Fredericus" genre featuring exploits of Frederick the Great, but as time went on audiences dwindled and the propaganda films' initially overbearing tone became more of a pleading for the public to stick with the war.



A MORAL EXHAUSTION

Ultimately, in the midst of all the Nazi hoopla over a folk community, much of the German populace lost all sense of common cause in the scrabbling struggle to survive. Sons abandoned elderly parents, neighbors stood by unblinkingly during rapes, German refugee robbed German refugee. People did what it took to survive – and that including conserving their energy rather than agonizing over those decisions.

The Nazis' mechanisms for enforcing loyalty (see *Peer-Pressure Politics*, p. 96) had started the Germans down this path; the public's eagerness to inform on one another had policed the Reich far more effectively than the Gestapo had. This passion for denunciation kept going at full tilt, even as the whole system of authority came sliding down around the accusations. Just as the Gestapo gave up on gleaning too much truth from the flood of anonymous tips that it fielded, the Allied occupation forces would suffer under an avalanche of accusations that made fact-finding far more complicated than it should have been.

In game terms, the German populace under the Reich could be portrayed as gradually gaining certain mental disadvantages, with Callous (see p. CI86) most common among them. Other cases qualified as Low Empathy (see p. CI91), Odious Personal Behavior, etc. These disadvantages could result from failed rolls on the Fright Check table (see p. W197) when faced with Nazi oppression or encountering appropriate horrors of war.

BERLIN

The rest of Germany had long cast a suspicious eye at Berlin. In the Weimar era, the capital held a rather deserved reputation for decadence. Cabarets featured nude dancing, plenty of hungry Berliner semi-pros would fill any sexual fantasy for a cheap price, and the police had registered 170 homosexual houses of ill repute. In envisioning Berlin as a modern Sodom, most Germans also cited the scandals of Berlin's revolutionary arts scene, huge interest in jazz music, and left-wing politics.

Upon taking power, the Nazis slowly muted this revelry, shutting down brothels, chasing off artists, and conscripting jazz players. They never extinguished the nightlife, though, allowing a few racy acts and jazz clubs to remain open among the more conservative entertainment that they endorsed. Ultimately, the rigors of the war shut down this scene before Goebbels did in August 1944.

In the meantime, the party had consolidated their power in Berlin (and to a far lesser extent in Munich, the party's home city), causing a different sort of disgruntlement to set in amidst the rest of Germany. By the time that the war began, being at the top of one's profession meant being in Berlin, whether factory worker or entrepreneur.

This made for a crowded and not particularly privileged life. With Göring as its patron, the restaurant Horcher's served its exclusive clientele with luxury meals, and asked for no ration cards, until Goebbels had it shut down in mid-1943. The Hotel Adlon and Kaiserhof Hotel offered lesser privileges to middle-class patrons until they exhausted their stores. For most Berliners, though, quality food remained at least as elusive as elsewhere in Germany, bus lines disappeared, and the rare cab driver often wanted trade goods rather than marks for using part of his daily gallon of gas on a fare. Rationed one bar of soap per month, Berliners began to stink. The KaDeWe department store offered only useless, lamentable fare.

Bumping about in the blacked-out evenings, the more soberminded Berliners could be found in night language courses. Swahili and other African tongues enjoyed great favor until the Battle of Britain failed, after which Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian became the prime attractions. Others drank increasingly suspect alcohol at the remaining nightspots, partook of the prostitutes who freely catered to quadrupled demand in the darkened streets, or simply enjoyed being able to see the stars.

Wartime life in Berlin reached its pinnacle in July 1940, when crowds cheered the parading troops from France and the many luxury goods they had brought. For a while in the subways, Paris' perfumes would overwhelm the marked rise in flatulence from increasing rations of bran bread.

From 1940-42, the inaccurate British bombing amounted to a major irritant for Berliners, but little more. The Nazis erected immense overhead covers and facades to conceal the city's contours, and built a towering castlelike flak tower

near the Zoological Gardens, with two slightly smaller versions elsewhere in the city. Despite these measures, from 1943, living in Berlin increasingly meant picking one's way through the rubble. Or rather around it, with the prudent Berliner charting as wide a detour as he could. Looters descended on the homes emptied by air raids in great numbers. In response, the police swept up anyone without an excellent excuse for being in a bombed area, and punished them severely. A shortcut through the wrong neighborhood could lead to rapid arrest, trial, and death.

As the raids grew larger, Berliners jokingly defined cowardice as one of their own volunteering for the front. During the attacks, most Berliners huddled in small shelters with the same neighbors, and each shelter usually manifested its fear in some unique way, so that one might be crowded with hoarded water supplies, while in another everyone sat upright against the walls for fear of the ceiling collapsing. When displaced to a new shelter, it was good form to identify and conform to its particular quirks. Some residents preferred the increased prospect of death in their own bed to the strange odors, grunts, and discomforts of the shelters. The Nazis eventually made staying at home a crime.

Göring had foolishly boasted that Germans could call him Meyer if the British ever bombed Berlin (p. 13). The Reich's reigning good sport, upon taking refuge in a common shelter one night, he introduced himself as Herr Meyer.

In 1940, Berlin still housed 70,000 Jews. Many were deported on Oct. 15, 1941, with Pole prisoners replacing some 5,000 others in vital war industries on Feb. 27, 1943. In all, the Nazis evicted some 50,000 Berlin Jews, sending 70% of them to Auschwitz. The air raids helped a few escape, because a single forged "bomb certificate" could present them as a good German who had lost all their other identification in an attack. Another 5,000 went into hiding; the public called them "U-boats." Most of them depended on a racially German patron risking death to bring them supplies. The Gestapo responded by giving a few Jews their freedom as "grabbers," hunting down a monthly quota of U-boats to save themselves. In the end, some 1,300 Jews emerged from the rubble after the war.

Ultimately, the horror created by the bombing and Holocaust would reach a crescendo in the Battle of Berlin (p. 26). By then, residents negotiated the city in narrow paths through seas of rubble sprinkled with gardens. Many acted without scruples in these last days in hell, getting away with what they could when they could, because the evidence suggested death lurked at hand. The Nazis, of course, set the standard for amorality. Apart from the vigilante squads hunting deserters, they knowingly drowned many Berliners by flooding subway tunnels to keep the Soviets out of them.

Hitler had planned to raze much of Berlin after the war, building in its place a towering capital to be called Germania. As things worked out, he accomplished half of his goals.

THE GREATER REICH



This book uses the term “Reich” to represent Germany and *all* of its conquests, while “Greater Germany” refers to the state the Nazis inherited and those conquests formally grafted into its national government. Some historians would argue that occupied lands that kept their original governments (albeit under German oversight) did not belong to the Reich proper; others (and this book) fail to see the point. The following briefly describes how Germany obtained and maintained these territories, and any special problems that they posed.

As grim as things got in Germany, privation always managed to keep a more rapid pace in most of the Reich’s conquered lands. When initially conquered, many countries faced a crisis in simply feeding themselves. For instance, Belgium had food reserves for 50 days when it finally surrendered in 1940, with much of its agriculture based on livestock that would have to be slaughtered, because it imported nearly all of its feed from overseas and the Allies would blockade it.

To a large extent, Germany allowed its conquests to keep flying their own flags – simply beneath the swastika.

Austria

See p. W11. Unlike Hitler’s previous two coups, Austria had a strong (but not perfect) tradition as an independent state outside German control. The Austrians themselves were sharply divided on joining Greater Germany, with the existing government opposing it. Still, even without the ballot-stuffing that took place, the country’s anti-Semitic conservatives probably would have set a new standard for “a tyranny of the majority” by joining Germany in a fair election. Austria folded almost all of its government functions into those of Germany, which called the land Ostmark.

Sudetenland

See p. W11. At this point, Hitler had run out of peoples relatively eager to join him. The Germans in this part of Czechoslovakia qualified, but they almost certainly could not have pressed the issue on their own. For almost all practical purposes, this region became part of Greater Germany.



The Protectorate

The rest of Czechoslovakia, as discussed on p. W11, consisted of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. In this case, no meaningful German minority could be found to justify Hitler’s avarice. After he forced the issue, he transformed the first two regions into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and folded them into Greater Germany. Slovakia – which had aided Hitler in justifying this move – got to remain nominally independent.

Poland

Hitler had gotten away with one bloodless but outright conquest. From this point on, expansion meant war. After the Polish campaign, the former Polish corridor returned to Greater Germany.

Barbarossa added the rest of Poland, too. The party established a provincial administration called the General Government to oversee central and southern Poland. This was formally part of Greater Germany, but administered far more like the hotly contested occupation zone that it was.

Denmark

Denmark retained its own government. As in most western European holdings, the Germans imprisoned large numbers (15,000 people in this case) that they feared would join the resistance, making them hostages, instead. The resistance mainly sabotaged the rail network; eventually, the Germans posted 40,000 sentries to slow them down.

Saar

France held the title to this valuable region, but racial Germans held most of the ground. Hitler acquired this parcel by legitimate means, given the standards of the time. It became part of Greater Germany.

Rhineland

Circumstances here roughly matched those in the Saar, but France wasn’t going to concede so readily and could justify its stance for reasons of national defense. Instead, Hitler marched in his neophyte army to claim the Rhineland by a hollow force of arms. It became part of Greater Germany.



Norway and the Netherlands

These countries retained their own governments, each under a Nazi-party regime called the *Reichskommissariat*. Each also had its own SS district, called Nord and Northwest respectively. Each also had its own local Fascist party assisting in running the land: Vidkun Quisling's *Nasjonal Samling* (the NS) and Holland's *Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging* (the NSB).

Particularly in the former case, these efforts often aided the Germans less than they stirred up resistance, which could range from boys painting "Long Live Haakon VII" (Norway's king) on unguarded walls to men extensively scouting sites for British commando raids. The Germans tried to rule collaboratively in both lands, but became increasingly fed up and began mass reprisals in Norway and an escalating counter-terrorism campaign in Holland. In particular, Norway endured a huge occupation force – one per 19 Norwegians – where the more usual ratio was roughly one per 90 civilians.

Belgium

Belgium retained its own government and remained under the Wehrmacht rather than the Nazi party. That actually made life more difficult for the resistance. The occupiers arrested 50,000 and killed 230 in keeping very close tabs on this sensitively located conquest. Starting operations from the ground up posed a considerable challenge. (Conversely, the Great War's "Operation Clarence" network reactivated itself prior to occupation and played a very valuable role in Allied intelligence across occupied Europe.)

Occupied France

Belgium's Wehrmacht command included the north, while other commands ruled the south and the Paris region. The large resistance sorely taxed security troops, and just before D-Day some fighters even declared independence for the mountainous Vercors region in which they hid. They badly overestimated Allied aid and underestimated Axis perseverance; the Heer overran them.



Ostland

Combined with the northwestern portion of modern-day Belarus, the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became the Reichskommissariat Ostland. Hitler intended to make four provinces out of his European conquests from the U.S.S.R.: this one, Ukraine (see below), Caucasus, and Moscovia. Eastern Front setbacks meant that the latter two were never formed; Norway and the Netherlands were the only other Reichskommissariate. The rest of the U.S.S.R. holdings remained under Wehrmacht control, in regions named for the original army groups (North, Center, South) plus the Karelia strip running along Finland's eastern border. As an exception to Ostland administration, East Prussia absorbed the Bialystok territory adjacent to it, which became a formal region of Greater Germany.

Ukraine

Once wrested from the U.S.S.R., this region became a Reichskommissariat. Far more than in its three counterparts, though, local control remained in Wehrmacht rather than NSDAP hands. Citizens were actively recruited to help fill out Wehrmacht and SS ranks. In certain contexts, these converts became some of the Reich's staunchest defenders, because Stalin had only a bullet for those who cast their lot with Hitler.

Others

The Wehrmacht administered all other conquests, including northern Greece, Serbia, Crete, and the Demotika region between Turkey and Bulgaria on the Aegean side. Croatia was heavily influenced via the Serbian administration.

Legend has it Luxembourg reported seven wounded and no deaths defending itself when the Germans rolled through in May 1940; Greater Germany absorbed these stouthearted souls. A native Nazi movement spent much of the war demanding the country's return to the Reich – a doubly baffling stance since it already *was* and previously had never *been* . . .

Various English Channel and Aegean islands also fell under Wehrmacht control. As an exception to the general stance on flags, the channel islands had to give up their Union Jack-based emblems, to avoid any confusion.

THE POW CAMPS



WWII was a war of movement on a scale never before seen. This meant that soldiers were as likely to be cut off and forced to surrender as they were to be outright killed. Surrendering troops on both sides faced some odds of being shot on the spot instead of captured, especially if the enemy was mounting an offensive with neither time nor men to spare. Despite that risk, prisoners of war would flood into both Axis and Allied lands, requiring an extensive network of camps to detain them.

By GERMANS

The Nazi state, in total, resembled one large prison camp to some degree. This allowed the Germans to detain some POWs by non-traditional methods: common Poles and Frenchmen were as likely to be put to work as anything else. Polish officers, on the other hand, faced a high risk of being shot.

With the invasion of Russia, the Germans found themselves dealing with hundreds of thousands of Soviet soldiers surrendering en masse. They had not really been prepared for this, but then they had not been overly worried about it, either. They fenced in large empty spaces, built no amenities within them, crowded in as many POWs as possible, and let privation take its course. In a classic example of Nazi thinking, they filmed Soviet POWs resorting to cannibalism under these horrible conditions as “proof” of their subhuman status. Of 5 million Soviet POWs, four-fifths died in German captivity.

With the Allied bombing campaign, British and later U.S. air crews began parachuting out of crashing airplanes into the Reich. The Luftwaffe created a series of prison camps for them, the *stalag* for enlisted men or *oflag* for officers. Later, ground troops would join the POW mix, particularly after the Battle of the Bulge.

The Germans did not demand a lot of work from these western Allied prisoners. Many camps had a segregated compound attached for Soviet POWs, who performed the heavy labor. The Germans usually supplied meager rations, but not nearly as meager as those for the Soviets. At times, the Germans confiscated the Red Cross packages arriving for the prisoners, then sparingly doled out the food from those as their rations.

These camps did not feature the highest security, nor did the Germans foresee the great will to escape that the Anglo-Americans would exhibit. Almost all buildings were wooden, of stem-wall construction with no slab except under heavy objects – i.e., the stove. The typical camp possessed two wire and razor-wire fences, with elevated guardposts along their perimeter equipped with searchlights. The guards – who were never first-rate soldiers to begin with – simply manned the towers at all hours and shot any prisoner approaching the fence.

Early escape attempts usually hinged upon subterfuge – hiding in a crate that was leaving the camp, joining a work party just after its final roll call before leaving the camp, etc. As the Germans caught on to each of these tricks in turn, the methodology became more advanced. Much of Germany’s soil is sandy, and easily tunneled through, with the drawback that any such works absolutely require shoring up with boards. Prisoners at various camps began escape tunnels, but

had to deal with finding enough wood to shore the tunnel and disposing of the excavated soil. They also created fantastic forgeries from the crudest source materials, including complete German uniforms so as to form up their own work details to walk out the gate and scatter.

The German warders rarely lagged more than a step behind in countering these innovations. Limited resources made deterrence difficult for them more than lack of imagination did. They increasingly introduced “ferrets” to snoop about the prisoner compound and sniff out escape activity. They drove armored vehicles around compounds to collapse any tunnels with their weight. They sometimes resorted to splitting up the British and U.S. prisoners. When combined, these two nationalities tended to egg each other on in devising new escape plans.

The Germans perceived that these POWs were treating escape as a game. (They weren’t. Despite a joking bravado, they were dead serious.) Ultimately, Nazi officials tired of this sport and began killing many escapees that they caught.

This increased the stakes for those who made their way outside the wire. The typical escapee had equipped himself with a counterfeit German suit or working clothes, and papers, both of which would endure casual inspection but not rain. He carried 2-3 days of homemade iron rations, often containing more sugar, raisins, etc. than any real German would have any business owning. He had 100 or more miles of Germany to cross before reaching France (where the resistance could smuggle him home), Switzerland (which would intern him for the remainder of the war), or the Hamburg area (where he could stow away on a Swedish cargo ship). He did not speak enough German to make the effort. On-the-spot ingenuity was essential. Modern special forces teach escaping soldiers disguised as laborers to carry a large load – something so heavy that no reasonable man would willingly heft it. Bowing under such a burden also makes it easy to avoid eye contact. The escapee also should avoid children and dogs, who can readily sniff out the incongruities in strangers. The escaping POWs of WWII would have to learn these, and a hundred other tricks, on the fly.

FOR GERMANS

German soldiers also ended up in POW camps, in particularly large numbers after the high-simultaneous surrenders at Stalingrad and in Africa.

The Stalingrad survivors and other Eastern Front POWs faced a harsh existence. The Soviets typically drove them into a wilderness on a march that killed many wounded. (To be fair, several Soviet doctors also died from infections caught treating the Germans marched out of Stalingrad.) They then made the Germans erect their own POW camp and put them into hard labor, often for several years after the war ended.

Those in Africa or the Western Front often ended up in the United States, working the fields and housed under fairly comfortable conditions. In these camps, the hardcore Nazis often kept discipline and Aryan pride high; they had to keep a much lower profile in the Soviet camps.

Germans rarely attempted escape from either sort of camp.

THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS

"When Hitler attacked the Jews I was not a Jew, therefore I was not concerned. And when Hitler attacked the Catholics, I was not a Catholic, and therefore, I was not concerned. And when Hitler attacked the unions and the industrialists, I was not a member of the unions and I was not concerned."

"Then Hitler attacked me and the Protestant church – and there was nobody left to be concerned."
– the Rev. Martin Niemöller

The Holocaust forms such an integral part of the Third Reich's history that a description of the concentration camps appears on p. 16. Some additional information of use:

EATING THEIR OWN

Nazi initiatives toward hiding away, then killing, undesirables initially targeted less-than-able citizens along with those whose ethnicity or politics were out of favor. During the peacetime years, the regime sterilized 375,000 Germans suffering from mental ailments. An initiative to actually kill the mentally ill, to keep them from "wasting" resources, ran into too much public backlash. The Nazis grudgingly discontinued it.

MESSY METHODS

As alluded to in Chapter 1, the Third Reich fumbled its way toward an efficient methodology for genocide in Poland.

Many of the early killings were simply shootings. Even this brute technique had its refined lessons to be learned. Those new to the process were taught to fix their bayonet, and place the point on the victim's spine slightly above the shoulder blades. This kept the rifle barrel aimed at the desired target – the base of the skull – even if the shooter's hands shook with some degree of trepidation. The uninitiated novice invariably aimed for the center of the skull, splattering himself and anyone else nearby with blood, bone, and brains.

Gore or no gore, this system tested the faith of all but the most depraved Nazis. The SS also was experimenting with special panel trucks. These had their exhaust gases routed into their airtight cargo compartments, forming mobile miniature gas chambers. Though a success, the authorities ultimately decided that they operated on too small of a scale. Contributing to this decision may have been the worry that the crews, operating in the field away from supervision, would engage in "race defilement" by raping their victims.

Ultimately, the death camps, with their poison-gas chambers and ovens, would emerge as the "best" combination of dehumanization and high capacity.

MIXED EFFORTS

Jews within the greater Reich faced far different odds of dying in a concentration camp. Germany's own 1933 population lost a relatively small number – 138,000, or 25% – to the Nazis. They had had the most time to flee, and the regime waited until relatively late to scour Germany itself (p. 103).

The 3.3 million Polish Jews suffered most, with their 90% fatalities forming the majority of Holocaust deaths.

Elsewhere, circumstances very roughly depended on whether party or Wehrmacht administered the area. For instance, in party-controlled Holland, 70% of the 140,000 Jews died. In Wehrmacht-administered Belgium, 44% of the 65,700 Jews met their end. Though France generally resisted the Nazi occupier, more than half of its 350,000 Jews died. Conversely, Italy shared Germany's passion for strong leaders, but not for killing its own; some 17% of its 44,500 Jews died after a lackluster roundup. Jews in some countries (Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland) went practically untouched, while in others (Greece, Latvia, Lithuania) they were as nearly annihilated as in Poland.

Today, 92,000 Jews live in Germany, 3,500 in Poland.

WORKED TO THE BONE

Essentially, the Nazis put to work everyone that they weren't actively killing in the camps. In addition to adding factories to many camps, the Nazis often dispatched internees to existing German industries.

These companies usually picked up the responsibility for housing and guarding the slave laborers. Occasionally, this improved living conditions, if by no more than the infrequent kind gesture of a free coworker. All too often, German industry proved an even harsher master than the state itself.

All of this labor force suffered from insufficient rations – the express intent was to eventually starve them to death and replace them. Usually, overnight shelter away from the camps was on the order of a converted pig sty surrounded by razor wire. Often, the slave labor was left to man the assembly lines during air raids. Conditions usually improved during the last days of the war, because many German overseers realized the tables would soon turn.

DESPERATE BIDS

With particularly grim irony, the end of the Final Solution prompted some internees to take the chance of escape.

The hundreds of captives dismantling Treblinka felt sure that they themselves would be killed after finishing the job. (They were right.) They slipped a few small arms out of the armory and began a coup Aug. 2, 1943. Most of the 700 internees charged toward the main gate when this failed, many of them falling to the guards' MG fire, but some 175 reached the woods. Only about a dozen evaded the following pursuit.

For identical reasons, months later on Oct. 14, some 150 internees at Sobibór staged a riot and killed guards in an escape attempt. MG fire drove them away from the front gate, but they took their chances crossing a mine field. About half of the roughly 300 who escaped avoided a fatal recapture.

The Sonderkommandos (p. 16) at Auschwitz blew up some guards in a failed October 1944 bid, and the Jews at Chelmno resisted (mostly without gain) when the fleeing Germans intended to leave no witnesses Jan. 17, 1945.

BATTLEFIELD

GERMANY



In 1944, Germany's own borders became the front lines. Though Allied bombs had been bringing the war home for a long time, the ground fighting that would ensue further savaged a war-weary nation. Ultimately, Germany itself would reap in large measure the suffering that the Third Reich had been sowing for the past dozen years.

THE WEST

Those Wehrmacht units that kept fighting the Anglo-Americans crossing the Rhine increasingly did so with semi-civilian units. A typical town might have been defended by a Volkssturm company, a police company, a platoon of regular Wehrmacht troops, a Luftwaffe flak platoon, and a few engineers charged with blowing any bridge that it might contain. Any actual contact with the enemy could result in mass confusion, with the soldiers trying to move up through the fleeing Volkssturm personnel, the police trying to find safe positions from which to weather the storm, and the AA pieces drawing intense artillery fire to themselves. All the while, on Hitler's orders, the engineers would be waiting until the last possible moment to fulfill their duty.

The public's reaction to the invaders was, at worst, mixed. Some citizens hid Anglo-American wounded rather than turn them into the remaining Wehrmacht or SS authorities. More faithful party members generally satisfied themselves with a standoffish attitude. Anglo-American troops usually would rub this back in their faces after discovering a concentration camp.

The first sight of a white star on olive drab often brought a flood of emotions. It suddenly struck Germans that the long, terrifying war had ended. It suddenly struck them that the long, terrifying list of accusations would begin. The towns filled with invaders, armed to the last man, who may have seemed safe compared to Russians, but didn't always seem so when smacking their gum in one's face. Some mourned Hitler's dream.

If circumstances threatened to unhinge the most stolid German, the slave laborers often reacted to freedom's first taste with unadulterated madness. Their first instinct often led to revenge on local officials or SS men, although their stomach for this "turnabout, fair play" morality did not always last long. They did not wait patiently for the restoration of life's basic stuff – food, alcohol, sex – but took what they could where they could find it, even if it meant drinking methyl alcohol that would kill them where the Nazis had failed. Even if it meant taking the life of a fellow survivor just beginning to believe that he'd made it. Usually, things reached an equilibrium within a few days, by which time the occupiers had put the local Germans to work burying the thousands of concentration-camp dead whose corpses still lay scattered about the compounds.

The Alpenfestung

The Americans greatly feared that the Nazis had built a "National Redoubt" (p. W34) in the Alps of southern Germany, where Hitler and his last troops would retreat after general defeat to hold out until the bitter end. The rumors grew so thick that they got back to the Germans – who had never seriously considered the idea.

Once they discovered that it scared the Americans so, several Wehrmacht and party officials began seriously discussing the concept. Hitler repeatedly vetoed it, though. He wasn't going to waste resources on something of use only in defeat.

THE EAST

The Americans and British didn't look good as much as the Russians looked bad in German eyes. Their opinion had justification. While mainstream Soviet authorities ordered their troops to treat Germans with respect, others with a perch on the Soviet soapbox rallied the soldiers to take their revenge.

By and large, they took it. No one could consider himself safe in front of "Ivan." Coming upon some French laborers on a German farm, Red troops first cut off their fingers to steal their rings, *then* killed them. Many German women suffered a seemingly endless series of sexual assaults, and fared better than some if they did not end their ordeal nailed through the hands to the nearest structure. Not all of the eastern invaders terrorized their former conquerors – many satisfied themselves with stealing *any* wristwatch, as well as anything else that appeared valuable – but enough of them did to render the actual percentage academic.

Mercy manifested itself rarely, but could be well rewarded. At some risk, a Soviet officer saved two German women from rape by enlisted troops not under his command. He was

THE GERMAN TITANIC

Overshadowed among all the other miseries of the Reich's final days, Germany suffered the single greatest maritime disaster in history in the Jan. 30, 1945, sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff*.

The advancing Red Army had cut off the Danzig area. The German populace desperately sought escape. Officially, the 25,000-ton *Wilhelm Gustloff* took on at least 8,000 civilians and 1,500 U-boat trainees, while hundreds more had shamelessly smuggled themselves aboard. Along with three smaller liners, the ship set sail for a Hamburg-area port with a small naval escort. The other ships stayed in shallow water close to shore, to avoid Soviet submarines, but the overloaded *Wilhelm Gustloff* drew too much water to stay with them and steamed 25 miles out to sea with its deck lights burning.

At 9:10 p.m., the first of three rapid explosions rocked the ship. A Soviet sub had spotted the liner.

As the ship listed to port in the freezing Baltic waters, the already frantic passengers stampeded toward the lifeboats.

The rigging to release the boats was iced solid. As sailors chipped away at the davits, the ship settled by the nose and more passengers fled to the rising stern. A barge came to take off passengers, but in the rough seas began crashing against the liner's side, crushing those who had jumped into the water between them.

A few life boats and rafts made it into the water. The occupants listened to the bloodcurdling screams of the hundreds of men, women, and children still aboard the liner as the *Wilhelm Gustloff* rose higher, trembled, slowly rolled, and plunged beneath the surface.

Other German vessels picked up 950 survivors. More than 8,000 had died, far more than the *Titanic* (1,500) and *Lusitania* (1,198) losses combined.

The same Russian submarine would sink another such transport 10 days later, a second Russian sub one more, and British planes yet two more, in total killing up to 30,000 German refugees on five ships.

himself made prisoner a short while later. His Wehrmacht captors discussed his fate. Just as his lifespan was beginning to be measured in minutes, the same women arrived and pleaded his case. His captors spared him.

The general horror, though, caused most of the German population of Poland and eastern Germany to mount a millions-strong exodus to the West. Gauleitler Erich Koch tried to make the East Prussians stand and fight, but like all Nazi officials he was plugging his finger into a dike that was crumbling down around him. The fortunate rode horse-drawn wagons and wore coats in the fierce winter cold. Far more walked and wore potato sacks as insulation.

Usually, these ragged columns stumbled into an advance guard of Soviet tanks hurtling west. The tankers pushed the wagons aside and drove over the screaming horses. The infantry that were usually perched atop them, both men and women, would jump down and begin the looting. Sometimes, the youths among the refugees would be pulled out and shot; sometimes everyone died.

Those who couldn't, or wouldn't, go often took the lives of their families, then themselves, rather than greet the invader.

THE AFTERMATH

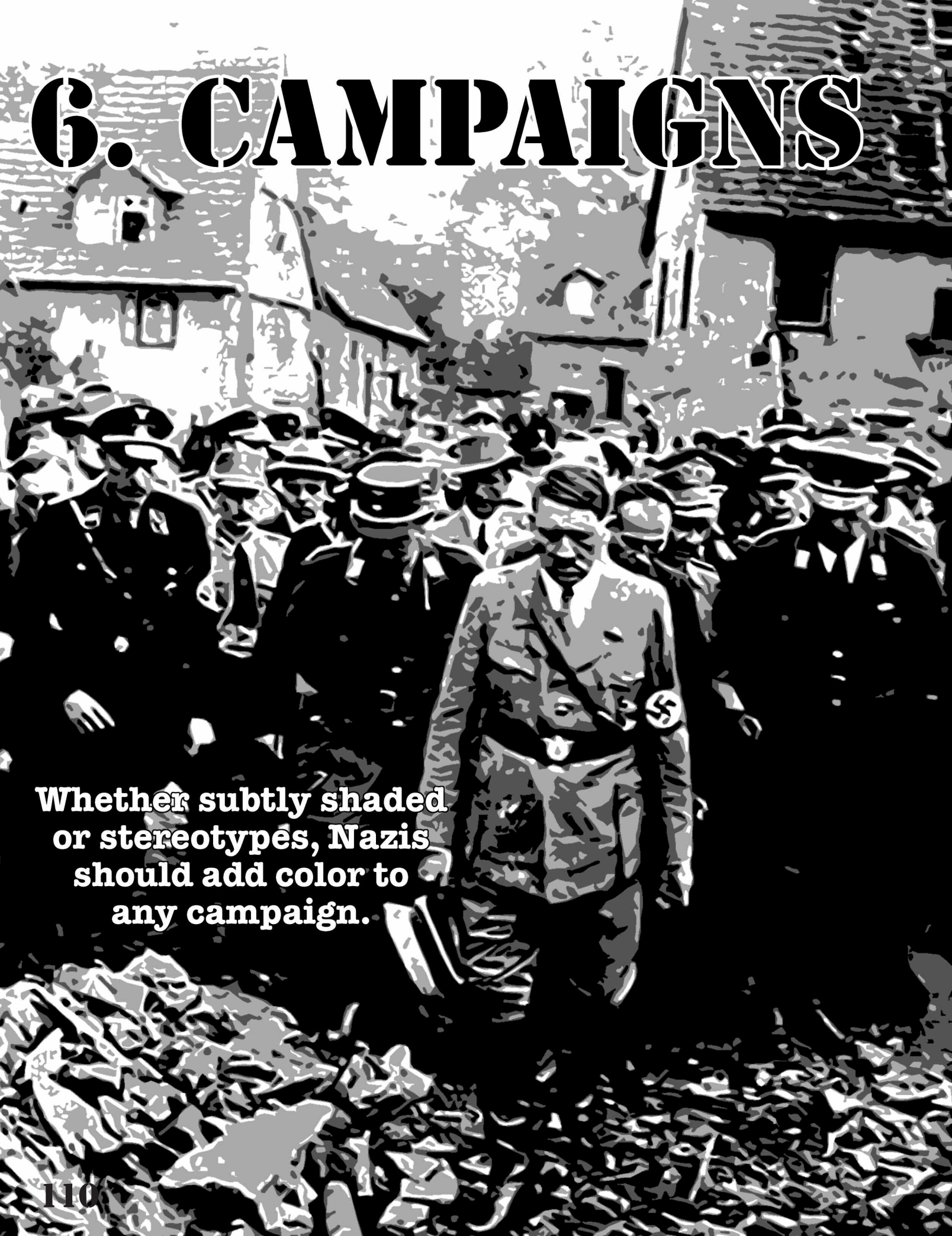
When it was all over – when Berlin smoldered in ruins and all the implications of the Holocaust were beginning to sink into the world's bones – most Germans wandered the rubble homeless and penniless, while a solid minority awaited their fates in Allied prison camps.

Those behind wire, at least in the west, were the lucky ones. With defeat came a long, bitter period of empty stomachs and shattered illusions. Germans, those that were left, had to come to grips with the sheer delusion in which they had wrapped themselves. Some would simply shut themselves off and resolve to keep the faith, even through “denazification” programs. Others would admit to themselves, with horror, that

the Nazis had not forced them into anything, but simply led them. In the meantime, they struggled to survive on the crudest level. Either the physical or mental struggle would have been devastating on its own. The winter of 1945-46 would lack the drama and noise of the previous year's, but it would still ache, still kill many in Germany, and still promise pain to come.



6. CAMPAIGNS

A black and white photograph showing a marching band in a town square. The band leader, a man in a dark uniform with a swastika armband, is in the foreground, walking towards the camera. Behind him, several musicians in similar uniforms are playing brass instruments. The square is filled with people, and buildings are visible in the background.

**Whether subtly shaded
or stereotypes, Nazis
should add color to
any campaign.**

The Third Reich and its soldiers have become a staple of adventure fiction and gaming far beyond their WWII roots, sometimes as cartoon villains, but often as grimly professional adversaries or even morally nebulous antiheroes.

This chapter illustrates the wide variety of ways in which the Germans can be handled, in campaigns based on the war or not. It primarily deals with them as *protagonists*, but also addresses their more conventional role as antagonists.

CAMPAIGN STYLES



As described on pp. W158-162, WWII-based campaigns can take on vastly different tones. The following discusses special features of the German war experience that lend themselves to each campaign style.

THE STUBBORN DEAD

For a campaign centered on German characters, an intensely realistic and gritty style usually serves best. In emphasizing their miserable and hazardous surroundings, the campaign offsets some of the onus of answering to a regime that defied all standards of civilized conduct. In effect, the campaign would position PC Germans as simply more victims of the Third Reich, though they might wear field gray and carry weapons in its service.

Longevity Unlikely

Realistically, death's imminence should hang over this sort of campaign. Wehrmacht veterans divined as quickly as any nation's troops that they probably were not long for this world. German tactical principles consciously traded men for time, by throwing them into the attack under the assumption that the enemy had not had time to turn around and establish a defensive line, or by leaving sacrificial rear guards in retreat. (A methodical strategist who knew when to spend time to save men, such as the American MacArthur or the Brit Montgomery, would have been out of place in OKW.)

This sort of philosophy often could save lives in the long run – by *denying* a defending foe time to form a line, or by letting the rest of a Wehrmacht unit escape untouched – but it meant that German units took stiff casualties even in an overwhelming victory. In Barbarossa, the Wehrmacht lost 10% of its combat effectives during the first two months.

Unlike most medieval armies, the Germans shrugged off decimation, and later in the war kept pushing forward through much worse attrition. This did not take place without some psychological toll on the survivors, however. They saw their training mates fall, their replacements fall, and *their* replacements fall in turn. They saw whole battalions march over the horizon toward a fight and no one come back. In their correspondence home, German veterans did not write about returning home and “after the war” as often as one might expect from other troops. The underlying assumption was that the war would get them, too. Usually, it did.

In game play, GMs should highlight the body count around the PCs, who should have to routinely sacrifice their best NPC subordinates. German doctrine taught officers to lead from the front, which often killed them, so the PCs should suffer the loss of their best NPC leaders, too. The GM should emphasize the sense of mortality, and of losing people not easily replaced.

Bitter Brotherhood

German troops often had closer bonds than their foes, but they also held each other to higher standards. The unit did not cover for each member's weaknesses; it demanded that these be overcome. In many ways, this psychological setting might be better compared to a professional sports team than a family.

In immediate terms, this meant that German soldiers could, and usually would, inform on a “comrade” who failed to live up to Wehrmacht or Nazi expectations. This did have limits; for instance, many troops who refused to follow questionable orders (shooting civilians, etc.) received harsh treatment in return. A few, however, were excused without reproof and even treated with favor afterward, almost as if being honored for showing a courage that their commander and peers lacked.

The troops also could run afoul of a petty-minded system of military justice. In front of the wrong eyes, the slightest infraction could bring a soldier up on charges. This would land most offenders in punishment battalions, which were given extremely hazardous assignments. If the work had little dramatic value – e.g., removing the dead in front of enemy lines – the offender could be expected to keep it up until killed. A more spectacular assignment requiring initiative, such as storming an enemy strongpoint, might receive the promise of full pardon for the survivors. This promise usually was kept.

In more serious cases, the Wehrmacht executed its own, forming more than 10,000 firing squads during the war. Desertion was the most common grounds for death. Many other charges formally carried the death penalty, such as rape, but in practice those convicted joined the punishment battalions.

A German soldier need not have the slightest criminal intent to get into this sort of trouble. Starving troops who take food without authorization, soldiers freezing to death who shift to a warmer locale, men ordered to move to another position but lack proper papers – *all* could run afoul of a bloody-minded *Feldgendarmarie* (military police) unit.

Combat's Charms

All the hazards of everyday existence did not carry a candle to combat, of course. In a straight-up infantry or armor fight, at anything close to comparable numbers, the Germans usually could kill more quickly than they were killed. Straightforward matches of that sort became increasingly infrequent, however, because various support arms failed the riflemen and panzers at the front line.

The first to notably lag behind was their own supply service. The lack of winter clothing in 1941 Russia may have been a conscious (if foolish) decision, but afterward combat units learned to rely on nothing getting through in the quantity needed. Ammunition usually was available, if not plentiful, and food often was meager, but rarely completely missing.

On the other hand, petroleum remained a scarce commodity. The Germans routinely underestimated their needs: Tanks scheduled to burn a pint of oil per 60 miles traveled in Russia burned 40 to 60 times that. Hitler spent the early war attempting to acquire more oil fields, but in the end Germany largely relied on its synthetic-fuel industry. This used various technology to transform coal into gasoline, diesel, propane, fuel oil, or butane. The entire German fuel industry produced 6.5 million tons per year, of which some 3 million would be gasoline. The Western Front Allies alone burned 3 million tons of gas *per month*. By late 1944, armor commanders often were given a mission and ordered to scrounge up the fuel to complete it. Generally, this meant pilfering stores from other German units. Those units, in turn, ended up walking.

Heavy equipment also appeared less and less frequently as the war progressed. Though German production of tanks and guns kept rising, their enemies were fielding them at a much faster rate.

German armor often could fight defensively against superior numbers, but very effective Anglo-American counter-battery practices made the few German field guns of limited utility on the Western Front.

As for the Allies' own artillery, the Soviets tended to field more guns, the Anglo-Americans more ammo. Germans on the Eastern Front suffered through relatively little harassment fire, but when the Red Army launched an assault, the entire earth would erupt for a few hours. The best way to survive this annihilating shellfire was to move out of the area before it started. Those within the impact area should have to make Will rolls to avoid being driven temporarily mad by the noise.

The artillery barrage before an assault in the West usually wasn't quite as vigorous – fewer guns – but the long periods between attacks would be filled with random mortar and cannon rounds – more ammo. American artillery, in particular, routinely left the Wehrmacht gnashing its teeth; see pp. W43-44.

The Western forces also *constantly* pressed home their control of the air. Ground-attack planes and fighters equipped for the role prowled above the German lines in the west. Even a single rifleman could expect attack if spotted. The relatively few Soviet ground-attack air crews usually reserved their munitions for worthier targets. In the west, motorized travel by day ran a very high risk of aerial attack. Routine movement took place only at night. Even so, the Anglo-American *jabos* quickly shot up most of the transport that had fuel. By late 1944, even panzer grenadiers were walking, often carrying immense loads for which a truck had been intended.

A Blind Eye

German troops also would encounter atrocities on a routine basis. In the rear, they might come across special SS units

in action, or the flies buzzing around their recent work. They may even be ordered to join in the killing. Most so ordered did as they were told and denied any empathy for these “enemies.” A few expressed disgust, but followed orders, anyway. A rare few refused, as discussed on p. 111.

Historically, the Wehrmacht's troops often excused their own misdeeds by comparing them to those of the SS, both the Waffen-SS and the special units that roamed the rear.

Also see *War Is Hell!*, p. W158, for general tips on realistic campaigns.



A MEASURE ABOVE

This sort of campaign features exceptional soldiers. It could realistically portray any of the German special forces, or present a “propaganda version” of ordinary Wehrmacht troops. The PC’s troops will routinely overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles – but they will bleed, and sweat, and occasionally lose a few of their own in the process.

This sort of campaigning borders on the heroic, and presenting German troops in that sort of light can pose aesthetic problems. The simplest solution would require the players to portray their characters as defiant romantics refusing to fully bow to the Nazi’s terms. This sort of atmosphere was perfectly illustrated by the novel and film, *The Eagle Has Landed*, in which the German protagonists ended up in a punishment battalion for confronting SS men rounding up Jews. This plot device made it easy for the author to place his troops in a death-defying mission. GMs may want to use the same approach.

Individual players may want to explore the nuances of the heroic model by portraying German soldiers who both embrace Nazism and embody some high ideals. (See *Kultur vs. Zivilisation*, p. 97, for some basic German-fascist concepts that *could* be held up as not fundamentally unsound.) This is tricky ground, and no such character will meet the approval of all players, but each group must define its own tolerance levels.

Special Forces

GURPS WWII: Hand of Steel provides an excellent overview of special operations during the war, including German units. In reality, Göring infused the Luftwaffe

with his own sense of romanticism, much as described above, and the Fallschirmjäger routinely exhibited it. One British soldier observed the paratroops holding their fire when British medics took the field, then jumping up to assist when an errant German mortar round injured one of the medics.

These soldiers could be realistically portrayed as simply elite troops fighting for their country, without endorsing any of its grimmer practices. Historically, the average paratroop did not go so far as to condemn those practices, though, nor did he shun the company of the Waffen-SS. The bonds of high-quality soldiers fighting under the same banner far outweighed any philosophical differences . . .

Guardians of Germany

In their propaganda, the Nazis worked hard to portray rank-and-file soldiers in the sort of light usually reserved for special troops. Historically, most regular Heer units lacked the training and equipment to live up to this image, but some of them put together impressive combat records and, without too much loss of veracity, could be portrayed as the jackbooted, stick-grenade-tossing, towering ubersoldiers seen on posters in Berlin subways. Of course, to properly fill the Nazi image, they also would have to be Russian-massacring, Jew-executing hate-mongers, which should be uncomfortable for many players.

An interesting twist would make the players regular troops of mundane abilities, placed in a superbly equipped unit with a propaganda film crew attached to document their grand exploits. The PCs would be forced to negotiate combat *and* their expectant observers!



THE ARYAN ELITE

Part of the appeal of the German experience in WWII is that a handful of the country's men seemed to rise to every challenge. Arguably, no other country could put forward a soldier to match the exploits of the SS commando Otto Skorzeny, or the tank-killing Luftwaffe ace Hans Rudel, or even the nefarious SD chief Reinhard Heydrich. These men earned their larger-than-life images, and often defied the odds over and over again in the process.

This sort of "real cinematic" campaign presents the aesthetic challenge described for *A Measure Above*, p. 113, only more so. All of the men named above were *devoted* Nazis. The GM should not be surprised if some players balk at a straightforward celebration of this sort of Nazi super-soldier.



He *might* be able to make such a campaign palatable by skillfully inserting a dark, fateful thread into events. For instance, in this campaign, the PCs might engage in ferocious dogfighting over France, and upon landing be congratulated by the Führer because they gave him the luxury of not sending in his panzers to finish the Allied beachhead. Or they might have to singlehandedly overcome a tenacious Soviet strongpoint . . . to clear the way for Sixth Army to take Stalingrad.

Once the campaign is tweaked so that all can stomach it, some other factors to consider include:

Joachims of All Trades

As exemplified by Skorzeny, elite soldiers in Germany often mastered a wide variety of skills. The SS's top commando went from leading airborne raids to commanding the Reich's top underwater commando unit, which was to use pre-SCUBA breathing apparatus while destroying bridges in front of Allied advances. Similarly, German aviators often demonstrated more than a passing ability to fight – or at least effectively flee – on the ground.

GURPS readily models this sort of wide proficiency. The GM should consider allowing German characters in this sort of high-powered campaign to purchase as much DX and IQ as they can afford, then to sink a half-point in several skills without blushing over the rules-lawyer aspect of this practice. This fairly well mirrors the Reich's willingness to barely train willing personnel, and let them figure the rest of it out on their own.

Meisters of Some

Conversely, in real life, this did not prevent Germany's top troops from displaying uncanny ability in the primary skills of their profession. The Tiger ace Michael Wittmann owed much of his success to a gunner – Balthasar "Bobby" Woll – who simply did not miss. German tactics and ethics celebrated the ability to destroy an opponent long before he could effectively

bring his own arms to bear. Crews of the long antitank-mounted 88mm gun sometimes took shots at 3,500 yards – and hit their target.

In game terms, this means that cinematic German characters should be encouraged to balance the above breadth of experience with sizable investments in a few key skills. Furthermore, many GMs actively discourage "sniping tactics," in which players try to end fights before they begin with carefully aimed, long-range shots, often from ambush. Normally, this would be a realistic restriction, because few soldiers in any era possess the Tactics skill to work their way into position for such a shot, nor the iron nerves and weapons skill to pull it off if they should happen across a distant foe. German soldiers of this caliber, however, actively sought out exactly

those circumstances, so GMs who discourage sniping may need to relax their standards. Of course, the player should still have to describe his character's efforts to get in position and make the weapon skill rolls for the attempt to *succeed*.

Reverse Stereotypes

Just as the rest of the world came to perceive Germany's troops in a certain harsh light (see *Faceless Foes*, p. 114), the Germans had their own preconceptions of their foes. A campaign of this sort might even cater to them. Soviet troops would possess almost no training or equipment, rushing forward to the slaughter in half-drunken hordes. U.S. troops, on the other hand, would clatter around encumbered by an embarrassment of military riches, before dropping their gear and running like rabbits at the first sign of bloodshed. British soldiers would follow their preconceived plans at a calm pace no matter how ludicrous those plans became as circumstances changed.

Needless to say, some players would find this offensive. It's only politically correct to portray the Germans themselves in this fashion.

FACELESS FOES

Putting aside the Golden Rule, mocking Nazis is a lot of fun. (In this case, the term “Nazi” is willfully applied to *anyone* in Hitler’s military employ.) Many GMs will gleefully ignore much of this book in painting their Germans as by-the-numbers bad guys. That works perfectly well in many popular genres. In particular, the *Hellboy* roleplaying game, which uses the same rules as the *GURPS WWII* series, takes this art form to untold heights.

For the uninitiated, a few pointers include:

Ve Have Vays of Making You Talk

And we, in turn, have ways of making Nazis talk. They pronounce “w” as “v.” (“Vaitress, ve vill vant vaffles viff our breakfast.”) They phrase most everything as a threat. (“Ve vill have vaffles, vaitress!”) They are always bombastic and often impatient. (“More coffee, schnell!”) Except when they’re gloating. (“Is gooooooot. Now you vill get me non-dairy creamer.”)

Certain catchphrases dominate amidst the fiery stuff: “Sieg Heil!,” “Heil Hitler!,” “Amerikaner Schweine!,” and “Glory of the Reich.” *Everything* – even breakfast waffles – is for the glory of the Reich. In the gloating stages, Nazis might purringly concede that they and their adversaries – the PCs – might have been good comrades, if of course the Nazi wasn’t an Aryan superman and the PCs subhuman worms.

We also have ways of making them walk, the goose step, from which Nazis always come to a heel-clicking stop. (In real life, the Heer specifically forbade most instructors from teaching the goose step during the war. The Wehrmacht only used it on parade, though earlier German armies goose-stepped on the march.)

Ve Have Vays of Making You Die

Making a stereotypical Nazi act like a nincompoop is a lot easier than getting him to die like one. The GM must finely balance that these are supposed to be most worthy adversaries, even though he intends for the PCs to fill the *Queen Mary* with their corpses.

The most simple device bridging this gap is the Aim maneuver (p. W198). In this sort of campaign, Nazis always step out into the open, level their submachine gun, and take a second to Aim. This will give their opponents a leisurely second to obliterate the Nazi with an unaimed shot, all the while holding out the threat that if they miss, they’ll be in a world of hurt. Some subtle phrasing can keep this from becoming too obvious of a ploy: “Out of the corner of your eye you see a Nazi leveling his MP40 at you,” suggests that the Nazi thinks he has time to aim. “Given the range, the Nazi puts his eye to his gun sights,” suggests that he thinks his best bet is to aim for a difficult shot. Conversely, when Nazis really are too far away to hit anything, have them spray unaimed bullets around like madmen.

To further increase the body count, Nazis should always enter combat in single file. (To keep these stormtroopers from appearing to be complete idiots, it’s wise to stage combat in old castles or other environments with lots of long, narrow corridors . . .) This prevents more than one of them from

shooting back at a time. It allows powerful weapons to blow through the first target and injure one or more behind him. (If using the *WWII Lite* rules, simply assume that any damage beyond each target’s HT passes through him. It attacks the next Nazi on a 9 or less, or whatever it would have taken to hit him on purpose, whichever is worse. He probably won’t be able to dodge, because the previous victim will block his line of sight to the attacker.) In this sort of cinematic campaign, the GM might as well allow automatic-weapon users to attack the entire line, en masse, by applying the rules for indirect *Machine-Gun Fire* (see p. W202) to direct-fire bursts.



Nothing Vill Stop Us Now!

Of course, real Nazis don’t actually fight the war; they spend their time looking for shortcuts to bring Germany a guaranteed victory. The shortcut usually represents the adventure’s goal, with the PCs pursuing it for their own use, or simply trying to keep it out of dirty Nazi hands.

These McGuffins may take the form of wonder weapons (pp. 121-122), ancient mystical artifacts of great power, even attempts to assassinate prominent Allied leaders. No matter how badly the PCs may fail in their race against the Nazis, the GM should really, really avoid allowing the stormtroopers to secure their prize and use it without actually obtaining world domination. As silly as it sometimes is, the conventions of this genre assume that when a Nazi proclaims, “With Wendell Willkie dead, the Third Reich will rule the world!” then the threat will carry out as he promises. (For the record, Willkie died in 1944, but the Nazis probably would have wanted to stop him before his 1940 “Miracle at Philadelphia” fatally divided Republican opposition to Roosevelt, or even before his 1942 goodwill tour of the Allied fronts.)

The GM can booby-trap the McGuffin, so that it doesn’t perform as the Nazis expected (see *Raiders of the Lost Ark* for a prime example of the PCs failing miserably but coming out on top), but this effect should be immediate and heavy-handed.

Historically, German propagandists constantly dreamed up these sorts of lurid threats, in the process displaying almost no clue as to their enemy’s priorities. The loudspeaker proclamation that “The Statue of Liberty is kaput!” as an attempt to gut American morale in *Saving Private Ryan* is an excellent example. The above convention, in which fictional heroes have to take almost comical Nazi boasts seriously, may have evolved as a satirical response to this real behavior.

THE LUFTWAFFE ALOFT

Campaigns centered on German aviators provide a great deal more opportunity for roleplaying than first meets the eye. Certainly, pilots based on the Eastern Front can spend all of their time flying and fighting (p. 48) – the GM may need to come up with good excuses if they *don't* – but German aviators on the Western Front spent an awful lot of time watching the war pass overhead. This time could be spent interacting with the locals, scrounging for the fuel they always lacked, or dealing with partisan attacks on their bases.



Fighters

The Western Front had seen some of the Luftwaffe's most glorious days, with the average fighter pilot during the invasion of France recording a kill on 1.3% of missions while getting shot down 0.6% of the time. The Battle of Britain roughed up this ratio, with a kill on 3% of missions but 2% of them resulting in being shot down. Things became far worse in the air war against Allied bombers, with a kill on 3% of missions but 3.6% of them ending in a death spiral. After D-Day, even though the Western Front was the Luftwaffe's primary theater, its pilots usually faced 5-to-1 to 8-to-1 odds. They shot down an opponent 1.6% of the time but lost their own plane 11% of the time.

By this time, the Eastern Front retained only about a quarter of all German fighters and 45% of all planes, the latter category inflated because the Ju-87 Stuka and other obsolete types could only survive there. German pilots in Russia only lost their planes at 13% of the Western Front rate. The average fighter pilot in Russia flew roughly three missions for every one his Western counterpart flew. At the beginning of the campaign, he reckoned himself in a fair fight at 10-to-1 odds. The Soviets improved this ratio, but not by much.

The GM should note that all of these figures represent averages. Real fighter combat doesn't tend to produce "average" pilots, but rather aces and victims. Aces would enjoy substantially better odds of both surviving a mission and shooting an enemy down, while victims (almost invariably novice pilots) would endure somewhat worse odds of survival and considerably worse-than-average odds of killing something.

In the West, the fighters' primary job was killing bombers. By day, the preferred methods of attacking a Flying Fortress involved either screaming at it head-on (to target the pilot and

co-pilot) or diving straight down on it (limiting return fire to only the top turret). Allied fighters were to be avoided – as was dying. Allied pilots reported that their Luftwaffe rivals sometimes bailed out of a plane in a marginally bad spot rather than run the risk of not beating the odds. The plane could be replaced – the pilot could not. When forced into a dogfight, German pilots usually could dive to avoid the nimble Spitfire that they had fought for so long – doing this by reflex against the P-47 Thunderbolt was a *big* mistake. Generally, the Germans used speed tactics (see p. W83). They preferred attacks from above, to prevent the opponent from gaining a speed edge by diving.

In the East, fighter pilots enjoyed more leeway to mix it up with Soviet fighters – themselves prowling for Stukas – but their primary prey was Soviet ground-attack planes. In turn, the Luftwaffe used some fighters to supplement its ground-attack fleet against the Soviets, because planes could range out and slow a Soviet assault where the land reserves could not reach. In dogfights, the Soviets usually flew in a random "snowball" cloud at high speed, to minimize the Germans' chances of sneaking up on them. German fighters had to be wary of jumping a tough Guards

unit rather than the usual novices – one indicator was that the Guards preferred slower, more agile fighters while the novices received speedy planes to get them out of a scrape.

Other Sorts of Sorties

Luftwaffe bombers tended to be the right size for many PC parties – a crew of four – but these aviators usually led perilous lives, and depended on evasion far more than counterfire to survive enemy fighters. This might not satisfy every players' needs. When they captured an intact B-17, the Germans sometimes put it back in the air as a stalking horse. The Luftwaffe crew would join up with straggling U.S. bombers, as if a fellow lost soul, then blast away at point-blank range. This might lead to some interesting campaign developments.

Putting PCs at the sticks of Stukas can provide an endless series of exciting scenarios, particularly when the enemy's fighters make an appearance. A Stuka's best chances in a dogfight usually consisted of weaving low and slow toward the nearest help, until the opportunity presented itself to flee at full throttle. Recon planes pursued similar defensive tactics, forcing fighters with their higher stall speeds to make complicated passes at speed against a constantly turning target.

In all aerial combat, the GM should apply targeting penalties ruthlessly. Historically, U.S. bomber crews fired about 13,000 .50-caliber rounds for every German fighter killed. The Germans' own AA guns fired about 12,000 rounds for every Allied warplane downed. Even at the minimal effective skill of 3, 12,000 rounds would score 56 hits, so the GM should commonly rule that NPC aerial combatants are firing with *no* effective chance of striking their target.

WOLFPACKS AND WOE

The Kriegsmarine suits Wehrmacht-based adventuring for a variety of reasons. Of all his troops, Hitler's sailors least enthusiastically took up Nazism. They often performed their duties as the small crews of coastal boats or short-range submarines, a perfect fit for a PC party and a few expendable NPCs. And the theme of "fighting hard for a lost cause that deserves to be lost" readily permeates German naval operations, since they usually were outgunned and taking a beating.

Black Boats

The GM may want to place a Kriegsmarine campaign in the Black Sea. Historically, the Germans went to great trouble to dismantle and ship some small submarines and coastal boats through their Russian conquests, to set up a small naval force there without violating Turkish neutrality by passing through the Sea of Marmara. There, they sank a great deal of shipping. Soviet naval forces rarely mounted effective counterattacks.

This would place the sailors at the end of an extremely long and fragile supply line, making it easy to center adventures on replacing some broken equipment or finding fuel. The sailors might even need to creep into Istanbul clad in civilian clothes to purchase supplies. The mariners could raid a variety of exotic locales around the Black Sea shoreline, and would have longstanding relationships with locals around their naval base, to provide some more interpersonal opportunities. Some missions might even call for them to navigate up some tricky rivers, to take on Soviet shore defenses in relatively point-blank duels. Even trickier would be an ahistorical escape to the Mediterranean, threading by night the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, both of which are dangerous enough by daylight. Note that this passage is a bit under 200 miles as the crow flies; a submarine usually would have to spend at least one day concealed beneath the Marmara's waves, while a boat would have to be concealed somewhere on its heavily populated shore. A desperate skipper might try to force the issue at flank speed on a long winter's night – but the straits' many turns will punish the careless.

Gray Wolves

As described on p. 33, serving in the U-boats practically amounted to suicide, one that required a great deal of effort and discipline to accomplish. Films and most historical treatments tend to focus on the willing fearlessness of the early crews, who defied those odds to perform an essential act of Germany's war. This is accurate enough, but later crews – made up of hastily trained conscripts – often faced their fates with far less valor. At first opportunity, they boiled out of a wounded boat like ants, plunging into the sea to take their chances on an Allied warship's mercy. One way or another, PC commanders on U-boats will have to deal with avoiding out-and-out panic among their NPC subordinates.

U-boat campaigns probably should reserve actual seafaring exploits as a small, special minority of adventures. Most of the action could take place in a French port, during refittings, at which time the crews would be busy dodging Allied bombs, fitting the latest improved gear to their boats, drinking far too much, and chasing the local girls. The latter activities eventually will land them in trouble with Nazi authorities, but submariners enjoyed a certain ration of latitude. After all, they were already condemned to death.

U-boats faced the most peril just after leaving or before entering their bases, which were right under England's nose. As often as not, a sub-hunting plane jumped them between the open Atlantic and home. The Germans tried to counter this threat in a variety of ways, diving or coming to a stop to blaze away with AA guns, fitting more guns and even sending out special AA-boats to make the pilots think twice. The GM should encourage PCs to find their own innovations.

Once in the Atlantic, a crew well trained to keep a sharp lookout and dive on a moment's notice could counter most aerial attacks. U-boats faced few other perils until they attacked a target and drew destroyers upon themselves. The ensuing depth-charge assault can provide great atmosphere, but should not occur too often. In practice, the U-boat crew had very little power over these attacks' outcome. PCs should not often be placed in position to passively take highly lethal abuse.



A WEHRMACHT TRAVELOG

See pp. W163-164 for a general overview of dealing with various terrain. Some additional detail on travel and survival in different regions is described here by Wehrmacht campaign.

Poland

Befitting its geographical position, Poland fell somewhere between Germany and Russia as a landscape. It had a lot of woods and marshes, with an uneven road network worse than Germany's but better than Russia's. The area was prime horse country; cavalry can't move too far into undeveloped areas (unless it wants to spend most of its time grazing its mounts), but Poland's fairly high population density meant that a village or town usually lay ahead. Trucks could get around the country, but couldn't go everywhere horses could – an important factor for units chasing partisans – and often couldn't move much faster than a mount in the long term.

Units who planned to live off the land by seizing food and grain at villages were well-advised to know which villages were Jewish and which racially Polish. The SS and its underling often left smoking ruins where a Jewish village had stood.

Even more than the woods in Germany, the Polish forests filled with refugees. Most of them either joined the partisans' ranks or fell prey to them.

with its famous bocage (p. 24), offered readymade defensive positions against the Western Allies, but the farmers' earthworks hardly hampered movement whenever a determined opponent didn't hold positions in them.

Africa

Africa, of course, gave the Wehrmacht all the desert that they could stomach. The heat and dehydration rules on p. W205 should routinely come into play here.

North Africa had but one good road – a highway bordering the Mediterranean coast that rapidly crumbled under heavy use and no repair. The Afrika Korps pretty much had to keep its trucks on this road; it didn't have enough of them to spare a few for adventures in the interior like the British did. Conversely, this *greatly* helped the British keep an eye on Rommel; the Long-Range Desert Group (see p. W:HS12) knew exactly where to look to assess the German's supply situation. They camped near the highway and counted traffic coming and going.

The Wehrmacht sometimes was a bit slow in "tropicalizing" its vehicles with special sand filters and the like to keep them running in the desert, but on average they got to it much more quickly than the British. Even tropicalized vehicles need lots of spare parts in the desert, particularly for their brake systems, and the Wehrmacht didn't do a good job of supplying these, so the Afrika Korp ended up abandoning a lot of "worn out" vehicles that a well-supplied army would have kept in serviceable shape.

The early Afrika Korps had been issued pith helmets (p. 54), long pants,

France

This modern, urbane conquest did not present any particular geographical challenge to the invader. Normandy,





and long-sleeved tunic in a heavy material. They scoffed at these garments, and discarded them to fight in shorts and often no shirt as did their British foes. Long clothes retain sweat, thus cooling better in the desert than bare skin, and prevent sunburn. Also, Sahara sandstorms can scour away exposed flesh. The original uniforms might have served them better.

Russia

The invading troops had to walk. And walk. And walk. The Spanish “Blue Division” (see p. W60) probably set the WWII record, marching 620 miles from Aug. 29 to Oct. 8 in 1942. Infantry became *very* wary of being awarded the luxury of halftrack or truck transport – it usually meant they were being rushed into some fight that wasn’t going well. Boot soles and socks rapidly wore out under this relentless use. Whenever a German unit got into a tough spot in Russia, troops started showing up wearing nothing but rubber galoshes or bare foot wrappings, because they had nothing better.

Trains had to carry most of these men’s supplies. The Soviets set their train rails 3.5” farther apart than the German gauge, which meant that the Wehrmacht had to assign a great deal of labor to converting the Russian railroads behind them (see p. W21). Had the Wehrmacht been able to capture a good supply of Russian locomotives – making it more viable to build cars to fit the Soviet tracks rather than rebuild tracks to fit German cars – the campaign might have gone much differently. (A farsighted German planner in the mid-1930s would have captured the Soviet rail-stock market by manufacturing exports, even if it meant doing so at a loss.) German supply trains often did not move much faster than 10 mph, to minimize the aftermath of rolling across some sabotaged track.

Army Group North mostly fought in woodlands. Army Group Center fought in a varied terrain of woodlands, swamp-land, and plains, with the flatlands predominating and allowing the panzers to work their way around unfavorable terrain most of the time. The attacking portion of Army Group South started its campaign in rough woodlands (borderline mountains in *GURPS* terms), before eventually breaking out into unbroken plains in the Donets Basin. Much of Army Group South simply feinted forward from the eastern slopes of the Carpathians.

For a few fall weeks and a bit longer in spring, *all* vehicle movement should apply the *Getting Stuck* rules on p. W153 to represent the Russian mud. This sort of thick, sucking mud halves Move on foot in combat (see p. W194).

Of course, in winter, all of Russia is about the *cold*. Night-time temperatures could reach -60° F, a -12 modifier to the Survival (Arctic) skill! Realistically, this sort of weather doubles food needs; that is, the GM would apply the starvation rules for anyone who doesn’t eat the equivalent of *six* meals per day. Equipment also becomes very troublesome. Metal becomes brittle and breaks under routine stress, seals that already were suspect because of a wartime rubber embargo would crack and fail, batteries and lubricants all but quit working, gauges often would stick and thus give incorrect readings, and static electricity posed a fairly significant fire hazard around fuel or ammo. In game terms, a vehicle’s maintenance interval would be divided by 5 or more in a Russian winter – 10 or more for aircraft!

Regular troops divide move by 2 or more in deep snow. Mountain troops on skis would ignore this rule.

The Greater Reich

See p. 95 for a general description of Germany. Early in the war, traveling through the homeland often meant crowding onto a troop train. In the late-war fighting, most troops were on foot and practically living off the land. At the Falaise Gap and other pockets on the Western Front, the Anglo-Americans could just about block crucial roads with flaming German wreckage and corpses. This would slow down passage considerably, even on foot.

On pass, troops discovered that the few trains not commandeered by the Wehrmacht routinely were jammed to capacity. The movies’ stock portrayal of Gestapo officers strolling down the aisle checking papers does not reflect that the aisles usually were too crowded to pass through. ID checks usually took place at stations. Civilian trains kept running during the late-war fighting, though aerial attacks continually decreased their numbers.

The fighting in Germany itself involved a great number of urban settings, though these were more often densely built villages or towns than the cities themselves.



THE CITY OF BLACKED-OUT LIGHT

Of all the Wehrmacht's conquests, Paris was its most treasured. Rather than try to rein in the city's thriving artistic scene, the Germans encouraged it; more cabarets opened than closed during the Occupation. They treated it much as the next generation of Americans would treat Las Vegas – a place to go and let one's guard down while reveling in all that it meant to be Aryan. Meanwhile, the Gestapo had to keep a close eye on things, because the Resistance was thriving. This complicated interplay of guarded secrets, desperate revelry, and jackbooted authority would make the city during Occupation a fascinating setting for adventures.

Historically, more than 100,000 Wehrmacht troops served in the various occupation garrisons around Paris, and SS commanders much preferred to spend their lengthy refitting periods within driving distance of the city. Many other troops received a 10-day leave in the city as part of a special program.

When the Germans first entered Paris on June 14, 1940, it resembled a ghost town. Those residents who had not fled stayed behind locked doors. They soon emerged, however, and Occupied Paris entered its most heady days, when luxury goods were there for the picking and Luftwaffe pilots shaved with champagne.

Times would get tighter – more so for the Parisians than the Germans – but at no time during the war did the city fail to offer a prize that Germans often have a hard time conjuring up in military-based campaigns: loot. This might be a case of wine, a carton of cigarettes, or an Impressionist masterpiece worth a fortune if one could locate the right Luftwaffe officer acting as agent for his Reichsmarschall. If the item doesn't fit PC desires, the thriving black market offered a place to trade it.

Curfew varied between 6 p.m. and 1 a.m., so a lot of nightlife moved to daylight hours. Important people, and nightspots, could ignore the restriction. On the Left Bank, the jazz scene continued to thrive. Often, more Germans than Frenchmen made up the overflowing audiences. The Belgian Gypsy Django Reinhardt weaved his guitar magic right in front of the SS who were sending his kin to the camps. The Nazis even tolerated American swing, a form of jazz they particularly suppressed, but the French didn't call it what it was. "Swing" instead became their youth's slang for good, as per "cool," "bad," "rad," and "phat" in the U.S.

The hip teens and young adults of Paris began the Zazou movement, the males dressing in distinctive long work coats and the women in turtleneck sweaters and short pleated skirts, creating a style that the U.S. "beat generation" would borrow in the next decade. These defiant young people, and the club scene, in turn attracted the Resistance, who would rub elbows with their enemies in the cabarets while formulating their plans.

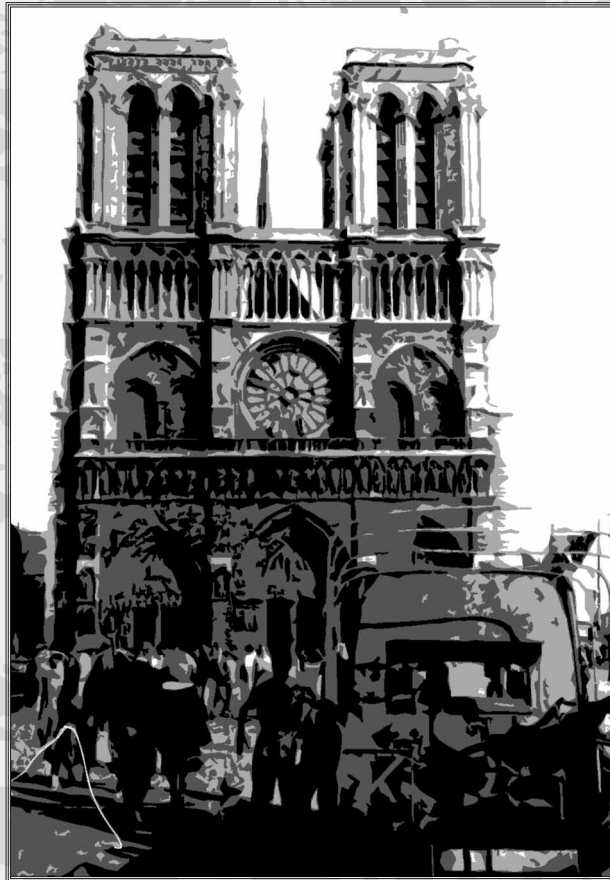
More mainstream Parisian women went to extreme lengths to keep up their reputation for elegant dress. Stockings rapidly disappeared from stores, then the black market

had no more to sell . . . so like American women they took to painting their legs to achieve the same effect, even painting a seam down the back. They cobbled together wardrobes out of the materials at hand, recycling bridal veils into handkerchiefs or cabinet legs into high heels. The German occupiers, in turn, tended to consider Parisian women as available, though the Wehrmacht expected them to be civil in this pursuit. Most Parisian women looked down their noses at these "gray mice."

By 1944, the party was ending. Parisians had lived on scarce resources throughout the Occupation, but at the end they were going seriously hungry and often lacked electricity and gas, making it hard to have a good time in a city of paupers. The Resistance was growing ever more belligerent, as well. In August, the Germans began pulling out, their commander

defying Hitler's order to burn the city or hold it. They continued to hold key assets in small groups, however, so that when the Allies liberated the city, they often had to contend with cheering throngs and snipers at the same time.

Having lost their playground, the Nazis began treating Paris like any other Allied city. It had avoided all but a few German bombs in 1940 and suffered relatively few Allied attacks afterward, but 15 of the block-busting V-2s were aimed at the French capital. In the meantime, former Resistance members busied themselves shaving the heads of Parisian women whom they deemed to have been too friendly with the occupiers. The City of Light would keep its street lamps blacked out with blue paint, keep issuing food-ration coupons, and keep dealing with the social friction of the Occupation years for some time to come.



ALTERNATE CAMPAIGNS



The following section provides some ideas for non-historical campaigns centered on the Third Reich. Most of these concepts are “classics,” well explored in fiction, speculative non-fiction, etc. Especially in alternate history, the GM could pick any of the available books that interest him, have all of his players read it, and begin a campaign using this as a ready-to-go background. All the GM would have to do is carefully point out where the campaign setting diverged from the example. Often, novels of this sort build a detailed background in order to tear it down, so the GM probably would need to decree the campaign setting is “pre-teardown,” and not necessarily subject to all the events in the source material.

WONDER WEAPONS

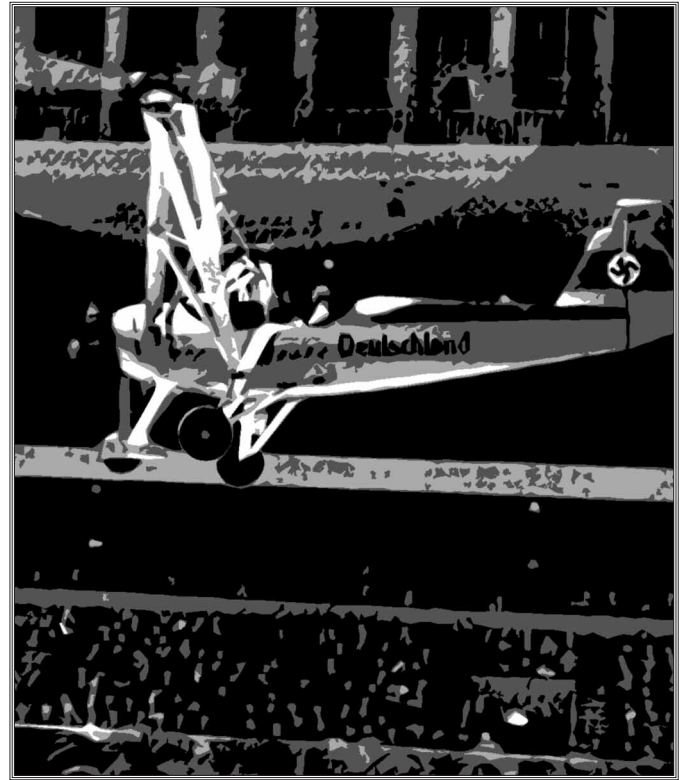
The Germans were serious about their equipment, constantly seeking improvement. For Hitler, this eventually became an obsession with the idea that “wonder weapons” would turn around the war. They didn’t, but the Germans experimented in enough strange fields to leave an immense body of legend about what they had in the works. A gadgeteering campaign could range from the perfectly realistic exploits of test pilots breaking in the first jets and rockets, to a cinematic pseudoscience in which the PCs pilot Nazi flying saucers.

Realistic: The Next Generation

In a realistic setting, PCs engineers and test officers can design the next war-winning weapon platform. To do so, they must first *conceive* the new weapon. This requires a roll vs. Engineering for each inventor involved, at -10 for standard vehicle types or -15 for unusual fare (helicopters, huge submarines, etc.). Add +1 to +3 if the concept relies on existing components (for instance, basing it on an existing tank chassis would be +2), but the GM should restrict the ensuing design accordingly. The GM makes these rolls secretly, with each representing one day of “brainstorming.” If all the inventors fail the roll, he tells the PCs to try again tomorrow. If *any* of them succeed *or* critically fail, they have come up with a concept. The GM should note the margin of success or failure of *each* roll.

At this point, the players design the concept using the modular rules in **WWII**. The GM then modifies one or more of its final statistics based on the above rolls. Each failure subtracts 5% for each point by which it failed, up to -50% for a critical failure or failure by 10 or more. Each success adds 10% for each point by which it succeeded, up to a maximum of +30% for a critical success or success by 3 or more.

Example: Five PCs set out to design the Panther’s replacement. They all roll vs. Engineering -10. The first day, everyone fails the roll, but none critically, so nothing happens. The next day, one inventor critically fails, one fails by 3, one exactly makes his roll, one succeeds by 2, and one rolls a natural 3. The GM tells them they’ve got it! The players design a tank using the core design rules. Their rolls sequentially subtract 50% and 15%, then add 0%, 20%, and 30%, for a net 15% decline from the standard design-system numbers. The GM could simply



subtract 15% from any single statistic, such as top Speed or Maneuver Rating, or spread the loss among several statistics, as in 5% additional weight, 8% fewer HPs, and 2% less Speed.

Even if the net modifier is 0%, the GM should consider moving two or more statistics up or down such that they cancel each other out; for instance, improving Maintenance Interval by 10% but decreasing Stability Rating by the same amount.

The result is that the players won’t *really* know what the concept can do. They must now build a prototype. This takes one week per 1,350 VSPs of vehicle size, rounding up, and costs the vehicle’s base price. Only the inventor with the highest Engineering skill rolls, though up to four assistants may add +1 to his roll each if they have skill 20+. If the engineers aren’t using state-of-the-art facilities (such as a Krupp or Luftwaffe workshop), they subtract -1 or much more from this roll. On a failure, work must continue; spend the base price again and roll in one week, regardless of vehicle size. On a critical failure, an accident occurs; engineers may be injured and the workshop damaged! On a critical success, the engineers have built a working prototype and the GM must tell them what the percentage modification for their concept was! On a normal success, they built a prototype but it has “bugs;” on a success by 0 to 2 points it has 1d minor and 1d/2 (round up) major bugs, while a success by 3 or more yields 1d/2 minor bugs. A minor bug might decrease a vehicle statistic by 5%, or a major bug by 15%, but more often they represent some chance of breakdown not covered normally by the rules. For instance, the historical Panther had a bug that amounted to requiring the crew to roll 3d each turn that the engine was used at full power. On an 18, the engine would catch fire!

Bugs can be fixed in test programs. (Historically, the Panther was rushed to Kursk before testing had finished.) For each week of testing, roll vs. the average of the crew's appropriate vehicle-operation skill -3. A critical success reveals all bugs and 1d performance statistics. A success reveals one bug (roll randomly), or that no bugs remain if such is the case, and one performance statistic. A failure means no minor bugs show up, or a major bug causes an accident that should be played out if a PC crew. A critical failure means one random bug will *never* show up in this test program, or if the vehicle has no bugs left, then an accident occurs, anyway. Failures don't impact the identification of final performance statistics, but getting solid figures for all of them will take time – sometimes more time than an impatient Führer will allow! Combat crews might climb into a new vehicle not really knowing what it can and can't do.

Fixing an identified bug requires one week and an Engineering roll at -3 for minor or -6 for major bugs. It costs 1% of vehicle cost if minor or 5% if major.



Cinematic: War-Winning Weapons

For more cinematic fare, *GURPS Vehicles* should be consulted, with the Germans dabbling in technology well past the WWII standard. Aside from the aforementioned flying saucer, the Germans really did look into several dubious concepts, much of the research led by the Austrian scientist Dr. Zippermeyer. (Honest.) The *Windkanone* was supposed to create aircraft-destroying whirlwinds via the air pressure generated by enclosed explosions; a prototype was even built. The *Luftkanone* was supposed to distort the immense noise from explosions into a high-pitched tone capable of killing at close range or incapacitating within 300 yards. (In some campaigns, of course, both of these would be absolutely viable technologies, and the A-bomb may not be!)

On a smaller level, the Germans actually produced a rifle to shoot around corners (pp. 62-63). The players should be allowed to explore *any* fanciful improvement on infantry gear.

Many historical concepts simply pushed existing technology past any real performance thresholds. The husband-and-wife team of Eugene Sänger and Irene Brandt proposed an orbital bomber that would weigh 110 tons with engines providing 100 tons of thrust only after a special rocket sled generating 650 tons launched the spacecraft (in all but name) at 1,000 mph. The German scientists envisioned the bomber skipping along the top of the atmosphere at 160 miles high, though in real life it would be a bit higher than the average space-shuttle mission, and thus in a low orbit. The bomber would deliver a 6-ton payload to New York or other American cities in mere minutes, according to Sänger and Brandt. Of course, the GM will have to grossly hand-wave real performance to make this work.

Following are one imaginary and two real “wonder weapons” for use in a gadgeteering-based campaign.

PAH Mk I

The Panzerabwehr Hubschrauber I (antitank helicopter I) is a vehicle concept that falls well within the boundaries of realism. Had some aviation equivalent of Guderian foreseen modern ground-attack methods, and convinced Hitler to back his vision, this sort of aircraft could have appeared relatively early in the war. The technology already existed.

This design is assumed to debut in the late-war years, because it deploys the markedly effective antitank cannon from the Il-2 Shturmovik (see p. W115). Presumably, the Wehrmacht would scavenge these from the thousands of Il-2s shot down around their own panzers, renaming it the MK 107 in German service. The rapid-firing MG81Z provides the helicopter an antipersonnel punch. The body incorporates a hardpoint to carry up to 500 lbs. of rockets or bombs.

The helicopter would be deployed mostly in the east. Allied fighters on the Western Front would kill it with ease.

With the hardpoint unloaded, the PAH I can lift one man hanging on to each skid. Though never intended for the role, the PAH I could be used to insert small reconnaissance parties or extract troops in desperate circumstances. Soldiers riding its skids in this fashion *must* be whole and awake enough to hang on; nothing like a stretcher or seat is provided.

The helicopter seats one, the pilot. It burns 30 gallons of aviation gas per hour. A full load of fuel and ammo costs \$440.

Panzerabwehr Hubschrauber I

Subassemblies: Large Helicopter chassis +3; Rotor -1; Skids +0.

Powertrain: 750-kW aerial HP turbo/supercharged engine with 750-kW copter transmission and 60-gallon light fuel tanks; 8,000-kWs battery.

Occ: 1 CS.

Cargo: 0.3 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/45	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20
Rotor:	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20
Skids:	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5

Weaponry

2×Aircraft LMG/MG81Z [Body:F] (1,500 rounds each).*

37mm Long Aircraft AC/MK 107 [Body:F] (150 rounds).*

* MGs automatically linked; MGs and AC linked.

Equipment

Body: 500-lb. hardpoint [U]; medium radio receiver and transmitter; two dischargers [B].

Statistics

Size: 26'x5'x8'3"	Payload: 790 lbs.	Lwt: 3.5 tons
Volume: 184	Maint: 37 hours	Cost: \$28,900

HT: 11. HPs: 210 Body, 60 Rotor, 10 each Skid.

aSpeed: 212 aAccel: 3 aDecel: 6 aMR: 1.5 aSR: 2
Stall 0. aSpeed 209 with hardpoint load; 198 with passengers.

Design Notes

The transmission table on p. W128 neglects to provide the thrust multiplier for helicopter transmissions. It is 1.6.

THE V-1

The V-1 was simply a pilotless jet plane crammed with high explosive. Its crude guidance system essentially amounted to an automatic pilot – once in flight, it could keep the V-1 moving in a straight line until it ran out of fuel and crashed – calculating the crash site was how one “aimed” the bomb!

In game terms, a Piloting -7 roll before launch aims the weapon. The roll takes an additional -1 penalty for every 10 miles away that the target is. Bad weather or other adverse conditions also should impose severe penalties, and the V-1 is never going to fly down a smokestack or perform similar feats of accuracy! Given these modifiers, the effective Piloting roll usually will be a negative number. Simply ignore critical failures and treat misses as for indirect fire on p. W202. The idea is to simply get close, close being measured in miles.

Automatic pilots of the period relied on gyroscopic stabilization. If the bomb banked or pitched sharply, the gyros would tumble and the bomb would crash. Spitfire pilots would fly alongside V-1s and work their wingtip under the bomb’s, then tip it over to send the weapon spinning to earth!

Without a pilot to handle takeoffs, V-1s required launch catapults at fixed installations to get them airborne.

The V-1 burns 275 gallons of jet fuel per hour, for an endurance of 33 minutes. A full load of fuel costs \$45 normally, but much more during this period in Nazi Germany.

FZG-76 (V-1) “Buzz Bomb”

Subassemblies: Light Fighter chassis +3; Recon Plane wings +2; no skid or wheels installed.

Powertrain: 2,750-lb. turbojet; 150-gallon ultralight tanks.

Occ: None (see below). Cargo: 0.2 Body, 2.2 Wings

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
All:	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3

Weaponry

It is a weapon – 6d×3,750 explosion on impact!

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; HE payload (see below).

Statistics

Size: 25'×18'×2'7"	Payload: 0.8 tons	Lwt: 2.4 tons
Volume: 144	Maint: 68 hours	Cost: \$12,500

HT: 7. HPs: 50 Body, 25 each Wing.

aSpeed: 394 aAccel: 11 aDecel: 7 aMR: 1.75 aSR: 1
Stall Speed 80.

Design Notes

Most vehicles carry standard bombs to represent self-destruct devices, which generally have their own casing and can be easily removed. In this case, the V-1 itself is the bomb casing. Instead, it purchases 7.5 VSPs of pure high explosive, at 250 lbs. and \$500 per VSP. Each VSP does 6d×500 damage on detonation. Some or all of this space could be converted to other uses: cargo, passengers, etc. Adding a crew station for a pilot is forbidden, though. The design simply doesn’t include the required control systems.

THE V-2

The V-2 was a completely different beast from the V-1: bigger, badder, and more sophisticated. A true rocket, it could be launched from a mobile platform, making its ground infrastructure much less vulnerable. The missile soared skyward in a ballistic arc, then plummeted toward its target faster than sound. No anti-aircraft defense of the time could intercept it.

An inertial guidance system usually flew the missile, though a ground crew could use *Leitstrahlstellung* radar to guide it remotely. A ground crew would need a radio remote-control host unit (see p. W137), connected to an immense radio transmitter; a radar set capable of tracking the missile; and a second radar able to reach the target.

With inertial guidance, a Gunner (Missile) roll at -10 aims the V-2 at launch; this early guidance system *also* takes half the normal penalty for range to target (p. W201), rounding up. (This is half of -32, or -16, at maximum range!) Under remote control, a Piloting roll is used as for the V-1, at a base -10 to skill but only -1 per 15 miles to the target. As for the V-1, the missile *must* aim at a stationary point; it can’t adjust to a moving target.

The rocket burns about 1 minute, slowly building up to full output. The V-2 then glides to about 60 miles high, before nosing over and falling to earth. It had a maximum range of 234 miles. A full load of fuel costs \$390 normally, but much more during this period in Nazi Germany.

A-4 (V-2) Rocket

Subassemblies: Light Bomber chassis with very good streamlining +4; no skid or wheels installed.

Powertrain: 80-ton liquid rocket; 1,950-gallon ultralight tank.

Occ: None. Cargo: 30 Body

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
All:	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20	4/20

Weaponry

It is a weapon – 6d×4,500 explosion on impact!

Equipment

Body: Autopilot; radio remote-control remote unit; see below.

Statistics

Size: 46'×12'×5'6"	Payload: 1.1 tons	Lwt: 14.2 tons
Volume: 472	Maint: 43 hours	Cost: \$28,600

HT: 8. HPs: 375 Body.

aSpeed: 3,464 aAccel: 113 aDecel: 1 aMR: 0.25 aSR: 2
Stall Speed 367.

Design Notes

Volume is halved to reflect that the missile has no wings. The V-2 purchases 9 VSPs of HE as for the V-1, plus a \$1,000 inertial-guidance package for missiles. Historical price averaged \$48,000; the list price would be realistic for a steady production run uninterrupted by Allied bombs. The weapon as listed adds \$5,000 to price and subtracts 4.4 VSPs from waste space to reflect that *GURPS Vehicles* would require a bit better class of streamlining to exceed 740 mph. This is a rare WWII-era design that deals with this issue.

THE OTHER 988 YEARS

Many alternate-history settings hinge upon Germany winning WWII. Just about everyone has a pet pivotal moment in which the Third Reich could have turned the tide. (For both readers who don't have one, common examples include: conquering the United Kingdom in Operation Sea Lion, maintaining the uneasy alliance with the U.S.S.R. instead of attacking it, capturing Malta and thereby securing the Mediterranean, making allies of all the disgruntled ex-Soviets in conquered lands instead of persecuting them, or getting the best German technology into battle more quickly and in greater numbers.) This section won't dwell on the *how* of Germany winning the war, but rather deal with the question, "What now?"

The Reich-5 setting in *GURPS Alternate Earths* provides one detailed example of what might have been, but its future history doesn't stress what the Nazis themselves planned. This section describes their very real agenda for the Aryan peace after WWII.

The New Order

The Nazis planned a massive integration of a Greater Reich stretching from the French border to the Urals. New autobahns (highways) would have knitted together this far-ranging empire. Berlin (renamed Germania), Hamburg, Nuremberg, Munich, and Vienna would have become *Führerstädte*, or administrative centers, with Trondheim in Norway transformed into the world's premier naval base. Germany proper would have retained all heavy industry with the rest of the Reich supplying raw materials and labor.



The former Soviet lands would have been developed in a spoke-and-hub system. Each town, laid out on a square grid, would have had eight equally spaced roads leading straight toward farming villages. The Russians themselves, those that remained after the SS exterminated everyone on its list, would have been shipped to Siberia, with a garrison line keeping them there. The Nazis often promised their soldiers plots of land in this "Russian colony" once the war ended.

Leveling the Playing Field

The Nazis greatly distrusted the German aristocracy, but in practice noble followers provided them a much needed veneer of legitimacy. Many party leaders, including Hitler himself, struggled to completely rid themselves of the genuflecting reflex.



Goebbels was not one of them. One of his primary goals for the postwar consolidation including a purge of all the Third Reich's aristocracy. He had already issued directives outlining this plan when the war ended.

Any such plan would have depended upon the removal of Göring, who was of high birth and defended aristocratic privileges to the very end.

Party Polygamy

Always obsessed with the birth rate for Aryans, Himmler came up with a novel idea in conjunction with Bormann. They planned to suggest that good Nazis be rewarded with permission to marry two women. They envisioned a wife on each arm becoming a badge of National Socialist distinction.

Given the Nazis' tendencies, undoubtedly someone soon would have been honored with permission for *three* wives. Shortly thereafter, someone would have merited four, and so on, and so on, until the party eventually established a caste system of polygamy.

New or No Gods

As described on p. 100, the party already had formed its own religion, the German Faith Movement, while quarreling with both the Protestant and Catholic churches. Many high officials had plans to escalate this war after victory.

The extent of this conflict probably would have depended largely on whether the Third Reich primarily ended at Europe, or (far less probably) covered most of the world.

In the former case, Hitler might have avoided further embittering the United States and other nations, and simply allowed his lieutenants to edit its Jewish roots from Nazi Christianity. This might have resulted in a blond-haired, blue-eyed Jesus version of Protestantism with a hefty dose of revisionism.

The latter case might have persuaded him to enforce a "New Heathenism," with an invented symbology loosely lifted from historical paganism. While Nordic gods did play some role in wartime Nazi dabblings in religion, most likely the final version of this "faith" would have included no gods per se. They would have competed with the Führer for the public's devotion.

THE POLISH QUESTION

Many historians argue that Nazism could not have existed without anti-Semitism, that Jew-loathing formed the spine of the dark passions that impelled Hitler's megalomaniacal vision. While this theory does justice to the role that the Holocaust played in Nazi goals, it borders upon slighting the millions of others that the Führer's agents killed for their non-Jewish identities. If the Jews were first in Hitler's hate, then the Slavs, Gypsies, and others unwillingly vied to be among their equals.

An intriguing alternate history could be built upon some twist of fate keeping the young Hitler out of Vienna, the cynosure of anti-Semitism, where his bigotry congealed. It would instead deposit him in Warsaw, where the sensitive young man could encounter some measure of bigotry *against* himself rather than be invited to join in applying it to others. His passions likely would have been aroused against Poles to the same degree that they historically latched upon Jews.

Proceeding to the Great War's trenches, Hitler probably encountered Jews bravely serving the Second Reich. Historically, he must have derisively dismissed their sacrifices; in this version of events, their shared suffering might have extinguished any latent anti-Semitism in his personality. Later, this tolerance would provide a useful pretext for dispatching his anti-Semitic *völkisch* rivals.

The emerging Nazi leader probably would have focused his bile on the Poles, arming himself with an alternate icon for his hate. His audience would have listened just as approvingly. Many Germans hated Poles as much as Jews, perhaps more so, in that every German knew a Jew or several who was an "exception." (In real life, party leaders had to hammer at the point that they would allow no preferential treatment of Jews. Otherwise, many would have found Nazi patrons.)

If Hitler had built his career on Pole-bashing, he might even have found an ally in German Jews, some of whom had fled anti-Semitism in *that* state. The world might have ignored his preaching – with most Poles safely out of his reach – where historically it could not entirely ignore his anti-Semitic practices. The war might have started much as it did, except with a more robust Wehrmacht, because the world would not have shunned a Germany not yet implementing its racism.

Once the Nazis entered Poland, and actually got their hands on some Poles, they would be sorely tempted toward the same sadism that earned their real-life infamy. At this point, the GM may decide toward what dark and troubling place this thread next leads. The Nazis might have endured an even greater backlash for genocide in Poland, because historically some of their critics were anti-Semites themselves, questioning the intensity, but not validity, of their abuses. Perhaps they would have faced less, because the Poles lacked a Diaspora to plead their cause. This stronger Wehrmacht might have conquered Britain and closed the Western Front, or perhaps a Reich that hadn't displayed its nasty complexion during years of persecuting Jews would have taken its liberal foes even more by surprise, leaving them unprepared to declare war in Poland's defense. Perhaps some scientist, or several, with the keys to the atomic bomb would have embraced Nazism. Perhaps a successful collaboration between German and Polish Jews to aid the German invaders from within Poland would lead Hitler to consider a similar program in the U.S.S.R., which had not really improved its ways since the czars perfected the anti-Semitic pogrom. (Historically, Germany's southern armies did very well while sidestepping orders in order to recruit disgruntled Soviet subjects to German arms.) An invasion backed by a welcoming minority across Russia might have made it difficult for Stalin to rally his masses.

Needless to say, any version of this scenario flings itself headlong into the most established conventional wisdoms about the Nazis and the Holocaust. Pursue with caution. A much milder attempt to treat the Holocaust in relative terms sparked the *Historikerstreit*, or Historian's War, in 1980s Germany, which generated a great deal of heat but little light among professionals highly trained to know better.

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