



D-DAY

JUNE 6, 1944

THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM

Remembers the anniversary of
THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM D-DAY
JUNE 6, 1944

Since Nazi Germany forced the Allies out of France to Great Britain in the spring of 1940, the Allies had been planning a cross-Channel assault to retake the continent and defeat Hitler's Third Reich. By the spring of 1944 an elaborate plan—code-named Operation Overlord—was secretly in place. The Allies, led by American General Dwight Eisenhower, faced an enemy determined to keep them from landing anywhere along the western European coastline.

175,000 men, a fleet of 5,000 ships and landing craft, 50,000 vehicles, and 11,000 planes sat in southern England, poised to attack secretly across the English Channel along a 50-mile stretch of the Normandy coast of France.

In the early morning darkness of June 6, thousands of Allied paratroopers and glider troops landed silently behind enemy lines, securing targets on the flanks of the invasion zone. At dawn, the Allies began their amphibious landings. They assaulted five beaches, code-named Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword.

By nightfall, nearly all the Allied soldiers were ashore at a cost of 10,000 casualties. The beaches were secure, but it would take many weeks before the Allies could fight their way out of the heavily defended Normandy countryside.

Operation Overlord was not just another great battle, but the true turning point of WWII in Western Europe. While the Allies had earlier engaged the Axis powers on the periphery of the Europe, it was not until the invasion at Normandy that they brought on the beginning of the end for Hitler and his Nazis.

www.nationalww2museum.org



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