

World War I Timeline

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June 28, 1914	Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophia are killed by Serbian nationalists.
July 26, 1914	Austria declares war on Serbia. Russia, an ally of Serbia, prepares to enter the war.
July 29, 1914	Austria invades Serbia.
August 1, 1914	Germany declares war on Russia.
August 3, 1914	Germany declares war on France.
August 4, 1914	German army invades neutral Belgium on its way to attack France. Great Britain declares war on Germany. As a colony of Britain, Canada is now at war. Prime Minister Robert Borden calls for a supreme national effort to support Britain, and offers assistance. Canadians rush to enlist in the military.
August 6, 1914	Austria declares war on Russia.
August 12, 1914	France and Britain declare war on Austria.
October 1, 1914	The first Canadian troops leave to be trained in Britain.
October - November 1914	First Battle of Ypres, France. Germany fails to reach the English Channel.
1914 - 1917 Deadlock and growing death tolls	The two huge armies are deadlocked along a 600-mile front of trenches in Belgium and France. For four years, there is little change. Attack after attack fails to cross enemy lines, and the toll in human lives grows rapidly. Both sides seek help from other allies. By 1917, every continent and all the oceans of the world are involved in this war.
February 1915	The first Canadian soldiers land in France to fight alongside British troops.
April - May 1915	The Second Battle of Ypres. Germans use poison gas and break a hole through the long line of Allied trenches. Death tolls are rising steadily into the millions.
May 1915	Italy declares war on Austria.
August 1915	Italy declares war on Germany.
July - November 1916 Battle of the Somme	Allied forces move forward only six miles, and suffer 600,000 deaths, of which 24,029 are Canadians. 236,000 Germans are killed; they refer to this battle as <i>das Blutbad</i> — the blood bath. In this battle, Canadians become known as a strong force in the war.
February 1917	Germany begins all-out submarine warfare to control the North Atlantic.

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April 1917	The United States declares war on Germany.
June 1917	American troops begin landing in France.
July - November 1917	Third Battle of Ypres
August 1917	Robert Borden is re-elected and conscription takes effect in Canada.
December 1917	Americans declare war on Austria.
April 1917 Vimy Ridge	<p>Canadian troops succeed in taking control of Vimy Ridge, a very strong German position in France with a high slope and a system of trenches and tunnels heavily protected by barbed wire and German artillery. No one had been able to take this from the Germans in two years.</p> <p>At dawn on Easter Monday, April 9, all four divisions of the Canadian Corps move forward together up the ridge in the midst of driving wind, snow, and sleet, following a barrage of artillery. By mid-afternoon the Canadian Divisions are in command of most of the ridge.</p> <p>Canada loses 10,000 soldiers in this battle, and Vimy Ridge is later chosen as the site of Canada's National Memorial. For the first time, Canadians attack together and triumph together. Four Canadians win the Victoria Cross and Major-General Arthur Currie, commander of the 1st Division, is knighted on the battlefield by King George V.</p>
August 4, 1918 to November 11, 1918	The Allied forces advance steadily on the Western Front. This period has come to be known as "The Last Hundred Days," in which Canadian troops played an important role.
November 3, 1918	Austria signs an armistice (peace agreement).
November 11, 1918	Germany signs an armistice agreement. When peace finally came, there was an underlying sadness to the celebrations. In the end, Belgium had been freed but at the cost of wiping out an entire generation of young men.
June 1919	Canada signs the Treaty of Versailles as an independent country.

