



## Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Aktion	“Action” in German and used to refer to the largest mass murder of Lithuanian Jews.
Anti-Semitism	Hostility toward or hatred of Jews as a religious or ethnic group, often accompanied by social, economic, or political discrimination.
Aryan	Term used in Nazi Germany to refer to non-Jewish and non-Gypsy Caucasians.
Bar Mitzvah	A Jewish male of at least 13 years of age, considered an adult and responsible for observing religious law.
Barter	To exchange (goods or services) for other goods or services without using money.
Border	A dividing line separating two political or geographical areas, especially countries.
Bunker	A reinforced underground shelter, typically for use in wartime.
Chancellor	The highest government official in Germany.
Children’s Home	An orphanage; a place where children without parents live and are cared for.
Concentration Camp	Throughout German-occupied Europe, the Nazis established camps to detain and, if necessary, kill so-called enemies of the state, including Jews, Gypsies, political and religious opponents, members of national resistance movements, homosexuals, and others. In addition to concentration camps, the Nazi regime ran several other kinds of camps including labor camps, transit camps, prisoner-of-war camps, and killing centers.
Dachau concentration camp	The first of the Nazi concentration camps opened in Germany, intended to hold political prisoners. It was enlarged to include the imprisonment of Jews. It was finally liberated in 1945.
Death March	A forced march of prisoners of war or other captives or deportees with the intent to kill, brutalize, weaken and/or demoralize as many of the captives as possible along the way.
Documents (also called Papers)	Refers to passports, visas and other identification needed to travel between two countries.
Fatherland	A term referring to Germany.
“Final Solution”	The Nazi plan to annihilate the European Jews.
German mark	Paper currency in Germany comparable to the US dollar.



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Term	Definition
Gestapo	The German Secret State Police, which was under SS control. It was responsible for investigating political crimes and opposition activities.
Ghetto	A confined area of a city in which members of a minority group are compelled to live.
Holocaust	The Holocaust was the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims. Six million were murdered.
Ice cellar	Before refrigerators, an underground room where foods and drinks are kept cool by ice.
Industrial City	Dortmund, <i>e.g.</i> , was a coal and steel mining city.
Kindertransport	The Kindertransport was an organized rescue effort that took place during the nine months prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. The United Kingdom took in nearly 10,000 predominantly Jewish children from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Free City of Danzig. The children were placed in British foster homes, hostels, schools and farms. Often they were the only members of their families who survived the Holocaust.
Kommandant	Commander of a military prison or prison camp, including Nazi concentration camps and prisoner of war camps.
Kovno Ghetto	A ghetto established by Nazi Germany to hold Lithuanian Jews during the Holocaust. At its peak, the Ghetto held 40,000 people, most of whom were later sent to concentration and extermination camps. Of the 40,000, only 2,000 remained at the end of the war.
Kristallnacht	A series of coordinated attacks against Jews throughout Nazi Germany and Austria on November 9-10, 1938, carried out by SA paramilitary forces and non-Jewish civilians. German authorities looked on without intervening. The name <i>Kristallnacht</i> comes from the shards of broken glass that littered the streets after Jewish-owned stores, buildings, and synagogues had their windows smashed.
Nazi	A member of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, the National Socialist German Workers' Party, of which Adolf Hitler was the leader. Party members subscribed to theories of racial hierarchy, asserted the superiority of an Aryan master race.



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Term	Definition
Nazi Germany	The country of Germany while under Nazi dictatorship led by Adolf Hitler (1933-1945).
Nuremburg Laws	Anti-Semitic laws in Nazi Germany. After the takeover of power in 1933 by Hitler, Nazism became an official ideology incorporating anti-Semitism as a form of scientific racism. These laws “defined” who was Jewish, by classifying them by their grandparents. These laws deprived Jews and other non-Aryans of German citizenship and prohibited racially mixed marriages between Germans and Jews. They ultimately prevented Jews from participating in German civic life and provided for a boycott of Jewish-owned businesses.
Propaganda Minister	Joseph Goebbels headed the Reichs Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, which was founded in 1933 upon the takeover of the German government by Adolph Hitler. The ministry was responsible for controlling the German news media, literature, visual arts, filmmaking, theatre, music, and broadcasting. As the central office of Nazi propaganda, it comprehensively supervised and regulated the culture and mass media of Nazi Germany.
Protective Custody	"Protective custody" prisoners were not confined within the normal prison system but in concentration camps under the exclusive authority of the SS.
Quota	A strict quota system limited the immigration of German and Austrian nationals to the United States. The quota set specific limits on the number of people who could emigrate in any given year from any foreign country.
Secretary of German Embassy	Ernst vom Rath was the third secretary of the Germany embassy in Paris; he was shot on November 7, 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan, a young Jew from Germany who was living in Paris, to avenge the persecuted German Jews and his parents, who had been deported from Germany. This event is said to have precipitated <i>Kristallnacht</i> .
Smuggler	A person who transports people across borders in violation of the law.
Sponsor	The United States required that a person immigrating to the U.S. during World War II have two sponsors, preferably close relatives of the prospective immigrant, who were American citizens or had permanent resident status.



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Term	Definition
SA/Brown Shirts	The Sturmabteilung (literally, Storm Detachment) functioned in the 1920's and '30s as the original paramilitary wing of the Nazi Party. Their primary purposes were providing protection for Nazi rallies and assemblies, disrupting the meetings of opposing parties, and fighting against the paramilitary units of the opposing parties. It was eventually replaced by the Schutzstaffel (SS).
SS	German abbreviation for Schutzstaffel (literally, protection squads). A paramilitary formation of the Nazi party initially created to serve as bodyguards to Hitler and other Nazi leaders. It later took charge of political intelligence gathering, the German police and the central security apparatus, the concentration camps, and the systematic mass murder of Jews and other victims.
Stuthoff	A German Nazi concentration camp completed on September 2, 1939. It was the first camp built outside of pre-Nazi German borders (those set in 1937) and the last camp liberated by the Allies, on May 9, 1945.
Synagogue	In Judaism, a house of worship and learning.
Swastika	Adopted by the Nazi Party of Germany in 1920, a symbol of the Aryan race.
U.S. Consulate	A permanent diplomatic mission of the United States located in a large city of another country, which handles minor diplomatic issues like issuing visas, aiding in trade relationships, and taking care of United States migrants, tourists, and expatriates.
Versailles Treaty	One of the peace treaties enacted at the end of World War I. It ended the state of war between the Allied Powers in 1919.
Visa	A document issued by a country's government allowing the holder to enter or leave that country.
Yellow Star	A badge featuring the Star of David (a symbol of Judaism) used by the Nazi regime during the Holocaust as a method of visibly identifying Jews.
Yiddish	A language based on German that is written in Hebrew characters and was originally spoken by Jews of central and eastern Europe before the Holocaust.



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