How did the Allies defeat the Axis Powers?

It took years of hard fighting to reverse Axis advances and move toward victory.

A new weapon finally ended the war, changing both warfare and global politics forever.

In 1943, Allied leaders agreed to open a second front in the war in Europe.

American and British troops would cross the English Channel and invade France.

The secret operation was code-named Operation Overlord.

General Dwight Eisenhower was the mission’s commander.

Operation Overlord was a massive operation.

It required careful planning and involved an elaborate hoax to fool the enemy about where troops would land.

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, the Allies landed at Normandy

The Allies seized the momentum.

The Americans and British advanced from the west, liberating Paris.
The Soviets advanced from the east, liberating Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary.
Hitler launched a counterattack, creating a bulge in the American lines.

The Americans pushed back, forcing a German retreat.
Allied Bombing

Allied Bombing would have a tremendous effect.
In 1944, 10 days of bombing killed at least 40,000 civilians and left a million homeless.
In 1945, Dresden was firebombed and over 100,000 people were killed.
Germany is Surrounded

Germany is Defeated

By 1945, the Allied Armies were in Berlin
American and Russian soldiers met at the Elbe River.
Mussolini is captured and executed.
Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.
May 8, 1945 is V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day)
Berlin falls to the Red Army.

The Allies soon surrounded Berlin, preparing for an all-out assault on Hitler’s capital
Hitler had fallen into madness, giving orders that were not obeyed and planning attacks
that were not carried out.

In April 1945, Hitler committed suicide. Germany surrendered.

Why did Germany Lose?
Germany had to fight on different fronts at one time.
Hitler made all decisions and some were bad.
Hitler invaded the Soviet Union.
The United States was producing twice as much as the Axis powers combined by 1944.
Allied bombing was destroying German industry and resources.

With the German surrender, the Allies celebrated V-E Day, hailing their hard-fought victory in Europe.
FDR did not live to join the celebrations. He died a few weeks earlier.
The new President was Harry S. Truman.
War still raged in the Pacific, where the Allies were fighting their way toward Japan.

Battles during the island-hopping campaign were fierce, with high casualties on both sides.


Japan Battles Fiercely
The Battles of Okinawa and Iwo Jima showed that the Japanese would rather die than surrender.
Beginning in 1944, many Japanese pilots became Kamikaze pilots, who crashed planes filled with explosives into American forces.
The United States was working on a new weapon.

The Potsdam Conference
President Roosevelt has died.
President Truman of the United States warns Japan that it faces “complete destruction and utter devastation” if they do not surrender.

Early in the war, FDR had authorized scientists to develop an atomic bomb.

The top secret program was code-named the Manhattan Project.
The bomb was successfully tested in July 1945.

The Atomic Bomb
On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, Japan.
70,000 people die instantly. Thousands more die soon after.
Two days later, a bomb is dropped on Nagasaki.
Finally, Japan surrenders at the Emperor’s request.