

The Battle of Dunkirk

The Start of the War

- 1st September 1939 – The Second World War began.
- 10th May 1940 – Winston Churchill became the British prime minister.

The Germans Advance on France

Nazi Germany moved their army towards France. Allied troops, including the British Expeditionary Forces (BEF), moved to the eastern side of France.



When German troops moved into Belgium, Allied troops did as well.

The Germans Break Through

On 14th May, the German army broke through a weak spot in the allied line and were able to surround the British and French Troops on the coast near Dunkirk. Fortunately, on 24th May Hitler unexpectedly ordered his troops to retreat. This gave the allies time to organise their evacuation.

Operation Dynamo

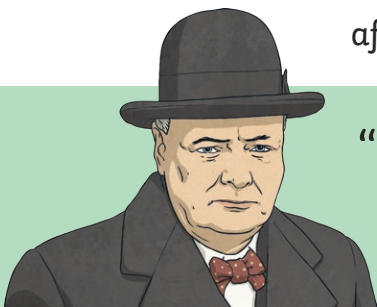
Churchill evacuated all troops stranded at Dunkirk. This was called Operation Dynamo. Over 700 little boats and ships came from England to collect soldiers and bring them home. Over 300,000 soldiers were returned home.

The Dunkirk Spirit

People still use the term 'Dunkirk spirit'. Having Dunkirk spirit means:

- showing determination in the face of difficulty or danger;
- people working together.

Winston Churchill made one of his most famous speeches after the Dunkirk evacuation:



“We shall fight them on the beaches...
we shall never surrender.”

Winston Churchill, 4th June 1940

The Battle of Dunkirk

On 1st September 1939, the Second World War began when Germany invaded Poland. Winston Churchill became the British prime minister during the war, on 10th May 1940.



The Germans Advance on France

Nazi Germany moved their army towards France, along the western side of Germany, bordering France, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands. Allied troops, including the British Expeditionary Forces (BEF), lined up along the eastern side of France. German troops then moved into Belgium, meaning that the Allied troops were clear to move into Belgium too.

The Germans Break Through

On 14th May, the German army broke through a weak spot in the allied line and were able to surround the British and French Troops on the coast near Dunkirk. However, on 24th May Hitler ordered his troops to retreat in an unexpected move. This gave the allies time to organise their evacuation.

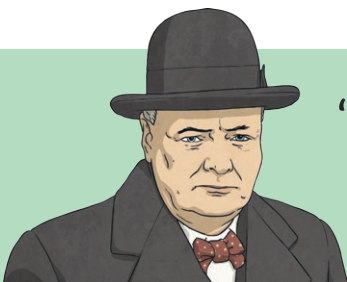
Operation Dynamo

Churchill ordered an evacuation of all troops stranded at Dunkirk. This was called Operation Dynamo. Many army vessels and over 700 little boats and ships came from England to collect soldiers and bring them home. In total, over 300,000 soldiers were returned to Britain.



The Dunkirk Spirit

People still use the term 'Dunkirk spirit'. Having Dunkirk spirit means showing determination in the face of adversity or danger and involves people working together. Winston Churchill made one of his most famous speeches after the Dunkirk evacuation:



“We shall fight them on the beaches...
we shall never surrender.”

Winston Churchill, 4th June 1940

The Battle of Dunkirk

On 1st September 1939, the Second World War began when Germany invaded Poland. The British prime minister at the start of the war was Neville Chamberlain. However, Winston Churchill replaced Chamberlain on 10th May 1940.

The Germans Advance on France

Nazi Germany advanced their army towards France and lined up their troops along the western side of Germany, bordering France, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands. Allied troops, including the British Expeditionary Forces (BEF) commanded by Lord Gort, lined up along the eastern side of France. German troops then advanced into Belgium, meaning that the Allied troops were clear to advance into Belgium too.



The Germans Break Through

On 14th May, the German army broke through a weak spot in the allied line and were able to surround the British and French Troops on the coast near Dunkirk. Fortunately, on 24th May Hitler unexpectedly ordered his troops to retreat. This gave the allies time to organise their evacuation.

Operation Dynamo

Churchill ordered an evacuation via sea of all the British and French troops stranded at Dunkirk. This was called Operation Dynamo. Many army vessels and over 700 little boats and ships came from England to collect soldiers and bring them home. Between 27th May and 4th June, over 300,000 soldiers were returned to Britain, only 22 miles from where they had been in Dunkirk.



The Dunkirk Spirit

People use the term 'Dunkirk spirit' today and the origin of the phrase is in the Dunkirk evacuation. Dunkirk spirit shows determination in the face of adversity or danger and often incorporates people working together. Winston Churchill made one of his most famous speeches after the Dunkirk evacuation, showing determination and sending the message that we will come together to protect our country and never give in.



**"We shall fight them on the beaches...
we shall never surrender."**

Winston Churchill, 4th June 1940