**Battle of Berlin**

The Battle of Berlin was the last major battle in [Europe](http://www.ducksters.com/history/world_war_ii/ww2_in_europe.php) during World War II. It resulted in the surrender of the German army and an end to Adolf Hitler's rule.

**When did the Battle of Berlin take place?**
The battle began on April 16, 1945 and lasted until May 2, 1945.

**Who fought in the Battle of Berlin?**
The battle was primarily fought between the German Army and the Soviet Army. The Soviet army vastly outnumbered the Germans. The Soviets had over 2,500,000 soldiers, 7,500 aircraft, and 6,250 tanks. The Germans had around 1,000,000 soldiers, 2,200 aircraft, and 1,500 tanks.
What was left of the German army was ill-equipped for the battle. Many of the German soldiers were sick, wounded, or starving. Desperate for soldiers, the German army included young boys and old men.

**Who were the commanders?**
The supreme commander of the Soviet army was Georgy Zhukov. Commanders under him included Vasily Chuikov and Ivan Konev. On the [German](http://www.ducksters.com/geography/country/germany_history_timeline.php) side was Adolf Hitler, who remained in Berlin to help command and lead the defense of the city, as well as military commanders Gotthard Heinrici and Helmuth Reymann.

**The Soviets Attack**
The battle began on April 16 when the Soviets attacked along the Oder River near Berlin. They quickly defeated the German forces outside Berlin and advanced on the city.

**The Battle**
By April 20th the Soviets began bombing Berlin. They worked their way around the city and had it completely surrounded in a few days. At this point, Hitler began to realize that he was going to lose the battle. He desperately tried to move a German army from western Germany to Berlin in order to save the city.
Once the Soviets entered the city, the fighting became fierce. With the city in ruins and the streets full of rubble, tanks were of little use and much of the fighting was hand-to-hand and building-to-building. By April 30, the Soviets were approaching the center of the city and the Germans were running out of ammunition. At this point, Hitler admitted defeat and committed suicide along with his new wife, Eva Braun.

**The Germans Surrender**
On the night of May 1st, most of the remaining German soldiers attempted to break out of the city and escape to the western front. Few of them made it out. The next day, May 2nd, the German generals inside Berlin surrendered to the Soviet army. Only a few days later, on May 7, 1945 the remaining leaders of Nazi Germany signed an unconditional surrender to the Allies and the war in Europe was over.

**Results**

The Battle of Berlin resulted in the surrender of the German army and the death of Adolf Hitler (by suicide). It was a resounding victory for the Soviet Union and the Allies. The battle took its toll on both sides, however. Around 81,000 Soviet Union soldiers were killed and another 280,000 were wounded. Around 92,000 German soldiers were killed with another 220,000 wounded. The city of Berlin was reduced to rubble and around 22,000 German civilians were killed.

Battle for Berlin questions:

1. What was the result of the Battle for Berlin?
2. When did the battle begin?
3. When did the battle end?
4. Who was the battle mainly between?
5. How many more soldiers did the Soviets have than the Germans?
6. Look at the paragraph beginning *The battle was primarily…*
	1. What word or words show that the Germans were not ready for a big battle.
7. Who were the commanders in charge of each side?
8. Which words or phrases suggest that this fighting was particularly nasty? (3)
9. Using evidence from the text, why did Hitler finally admit defeat? (3)
10. What evidence is there to show that this battle cost the lives of many people? (2)
11. Create your own two or three mark questions.