

# The Blitz in London

## What Was the Blitz?

The Blitz was a quick and surprise attack during the Second World War. 'Blitz' is the German word for lightning. On 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940, the blitz began in London in an attack that lasted 12 hours. London was bombed every day and night (except for one) for 11 weeks.

## Why Was London Bombed?

The Germans wanted to damage industrial areas, like factories and ports, to make it harder for the British to move weapons to fight them.

London was bombed because it was the capital of England, the largest city and home to the docklands. The docklands were important to the war effort because materials to make weapons and bombs were moved through here. This made them a target for German planes.

London was also a target because the Germans wanted to break the 'spirit' of the British and thought attacking England in its capital would do that.

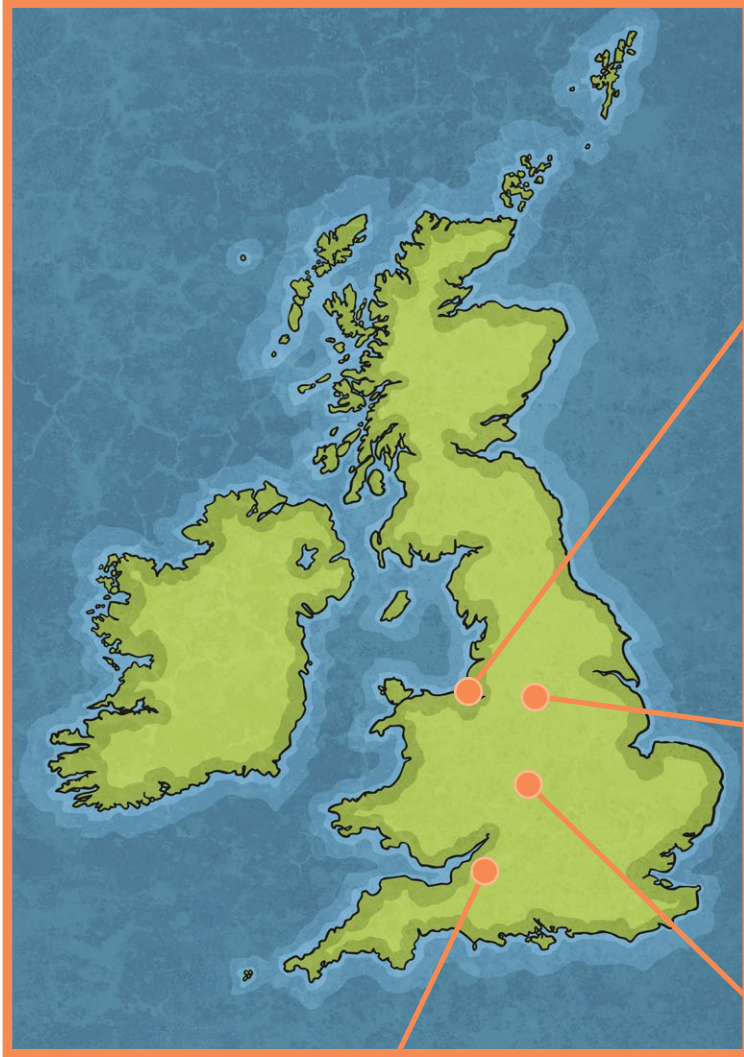
## Places in England bombed during the Second World War:

Although London was bombed more often than anywhere else in England, the whole country was under attack during the Blitz.

### Did You Know...?

Buckingham Palace was hit by a bomb on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1940.





### Liverpool

Liverpool was one of the most heavily bombed areas outside of London. This was because its port was important to Britain – most of the material used to make weapons was brought through Liverpool's dock.

### Sheffield

Sheffield was an important city during the war as the Steelworks there made parts for aircrafts, tanks and weapons. It was bombed many times, but attacks on 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December alone killed 750 people.

### Coventry

One of the worst single attacks was in Coventry, where 4,330 homes were destroyed and 554 people were killed in one night. Much of Coventry was destroyed by the 509 bombers that attacked here.

### Bristol

The Germans targeted Bristol to attack their docks and aircraft factories. Many of the city's historic buildings were destroyed and 175 unexploded bombs were left behind.

# Questions

1. What was the Blitz? Tick **one**.

- a German plane
- a surprise attack from the Second World War
- a British plane
- a German bomb

2. When did the Blitz begin in London?

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3. Where did the Germans want to damage? Tick **two**.

- factories
- rivers
- ports
- countryside

4. Which English city was bombed the most? Tick **one**.

- Liverpool
- London
- Coventry
- Sheffield

5. Tick the boxes to say whether the sentences are **true** or **false**.

Sentence	True	False
Sheffield dock was important to the war.		
Most of the material used to make weapons was brought through the dock in Liverpool.		
175 unexploded bombs were left in Bristol.		
554 homes were destroyed in Coventry.		

6. When was Buckingham Palace hit by a bomb?

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7. Explain in your own words why the Germans wanted to bomb London.

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# Answers

1. What was the Blitz? Tick **one**.

- a German plane
- a surprise attack from the Second World War**
- a British plane
- a German bomb

2. When did the Blitz begin in London?

**The Blitz began in London on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940.**

3. Where did the Germans want to damage? Tick **two**.

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4. Which English city was bombed the most? Tick **one**.

- Liverpool
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5. Tick the boxes to say whether the sentences are **true** or **false**.

Sentence	True	False
Sheffield dock was important to the war.		✓
Most of the material used to make weapons was brought through the dock in Liverpool.	✓	
175 unexploded bombs were left in Bristol.	✓	
554 homes were destroyed in Coventry.		✓

6. When was Buckingham Palace hit by a bomb?

**Buckingham Palace was hit by a bomb on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1940.**

7. Explain in your own words why the Germans wanted to bomb London.

**Pupil's own response that refer to the following:**

- **London was the capital and would break the spirit of the British;**
- **The importance of the London Docklands to the war effort – without it, it would have been difficult to move weapons and bombs.**

# The Blitz in London

## What Was the Blitz?

The Blitz was a sudden and quick attack during the Second World War. 'Blitzkrieg' is a German word meaning 'lightning war'. The Blitz began in London on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940 in an attack that lasted 12 hours. London was bombed every day and night (except for one) for 11 weeks, but the Blitz attack on Britain didn't end until May 1941.

## Why Was London Bombed?

The German air force, called the Luftwaffe, dropped bombs to damage industrial areas, like factories and ports, to make it harder for the British to move weapons to fight them.

### Did You Know...?

Over 180 000 Londoners regularly sheltered from the bombs in the London underground.

London was bombed because it was the largest English city and home to the docklands. The docklands were important to the war effort because materials to make weapons and bombs were moved through there.

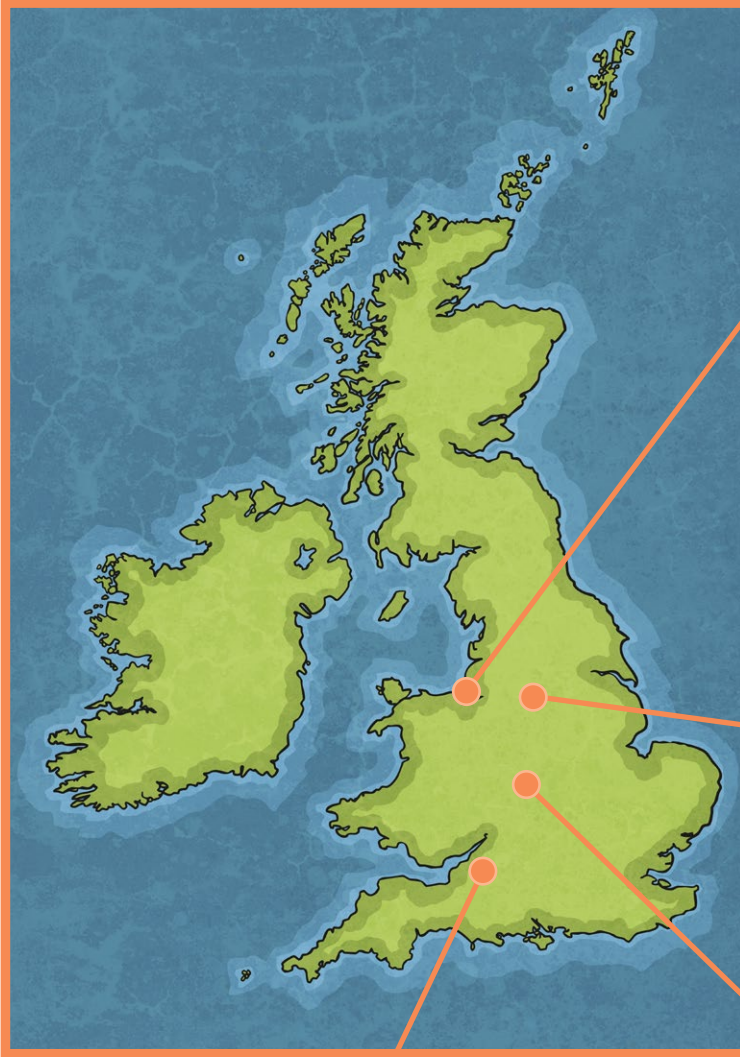


The Luftwaffe also wanted to attack civilian areas - a civilian is a person who is not in the armed forces. This also made London a target because

the Germans wanted to break the 'spirit' of the British by destroying its capital. Thousands of homes were destroyed and many people were left homeless.

## Places in England bombed during the Second World War:

Although London was bombed more often than anywhere else in England, the whole country was under attack during the Blitz.



### Liverpool

Liverpool was one of the most heavily bombed areas outside of London. This was because its port was important to Britain – most of the material used to make weapons was brought through Liverpool's dock.

### Sheffield

Sheffield was an important city during the war as the Steelworks there made parts for aircrafts, tanks and weapons. The 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December were the worst attacks, killing 750 people.

### Coventry

One of the worst single attacks was in Coventry where 4,330 homes were destroyed and 554 people were killed in one night. Much of Coventry was destroyed by the 509 bombers that attacked here.

### Bristol

The Germans targeted Bristol to attack their docks and aircraft factories. Many of the city's historic buildings were destroyed and 175 unexploded bombs were left behind.



# Questions

1. What was the Blitz?

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2. When did the Blitz begin? Tick **one**.

- 8<sup>th</sup> September 1940
- 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940
- 5<sup>th</sup> September 1941
- 8<sup>th</sup> September 1941

3. How long did the first Blitz attack last? Tick **one**.

- 3 hours
- 11 weeks
- 12 hours
- 120 minutes

4. Complete the sentence below:

The German air force called the \_\_\_\_\_, dropped bombs to damage industrial areas, like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, to make it harder for the British to move \_\_\_\_\_ to fight them.

5. What is a civilian?

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6. Where did Londoners shelter from the bombs?

- Buckingham Palace
- under Tower Bridge
- in the London Underground
- Trafalgar Square

7. Why did the Germans want to bomb industrial areas? Explain in your own words.

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8. Based on what you know about the other cities that were bombed by the Germans, can you guess why Coventry might have been targeted?

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# Answers

1. What was the Blitz?

**The Blitz was a sudden and quick attack during the second world war where bombs were dropped on places in the UK.**

2. When did the Blitz begin? Tick **one**.

- 8<sup>th</sup> September 1940
- 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940**
- 5<sup>th</sup> September 1941
- 8<sup>th</sup> September 1941

3. How long did the first Blitz attack last? Tick **one**.

- 3 hours
- 11 weeks
- 12 hours**
- 120 minutes

4. Complete the sentence below:

The German air force called the **Luftwaffe**, dropped bombs to damage industrial areas, like **factories** and **ports**, to make it harder for the British to move **weapons** to fight them.

5. What is a civilian?

**A civilian is a person who is not in the armed forces.**

6. Where did Londoners shelter from the bombs?

- Buckingham Palace
- under Tower Bridge
- in the London Underground**
- Trafalgar Square

7. Why did the Germans want to bomb industrial areas? Explain in your own words.  
**The Germans wanted to bomb industrial areas in Britain so they could damage ports or factories. They wanted to damage them because factories were vital to the war effort as they were used to make weapons, and ports were used to transport materials to make weapons, without them, it would have been much more difficult to make weapons and fight the war.**
8. Based on what you know about the other cities that were bombed by the Germans, can you guess why Coventry might have been targeted?  
**Pupil's own response, but answers should refer to Coventry having factories or an industry used in the war as the text says these places were targeted.**

# The Blitz in London

## What Was the Blitz?

The Blitz was a sudden and quick attack during the Second World War. 'Blitzkrieg' is a German word meaning 'lightning war'. The Blitz began in London on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940 in an attack that lasted 12 hours. London was bombed every day and night (except for one) for 11 weeks, but the Blitz attack on Britain didn't end until May 1941.

## Why Was London Bombed?

The German air force, called the Luftwaffe, dropped bombs to damage industrial areas, like factories and ports, to make it harder for the British to move weapons to fight them.

London was bombed because it is England's largest city and home to the docklands. The docklands were located on the East-End of London and were vital to the war effort because this was where materials to make weapons were moved around England.

### Did You Know...?

When Buckingham Palace was bombed on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1940, Queen Elizabeth (wife of King George) famously said 'I am glad we have been bombed. It makes me feel I can look the East-End in the face.'

The Luftwaffe also wanted to attack civilian areas - a civilian is a person who is not in the armed forces. Thousands of homes were destroyed in London and many people were left homeless. The Blitz was terrifying - Hitler wanted it to affect the morale of British citizens and make them believe they could not win the war.

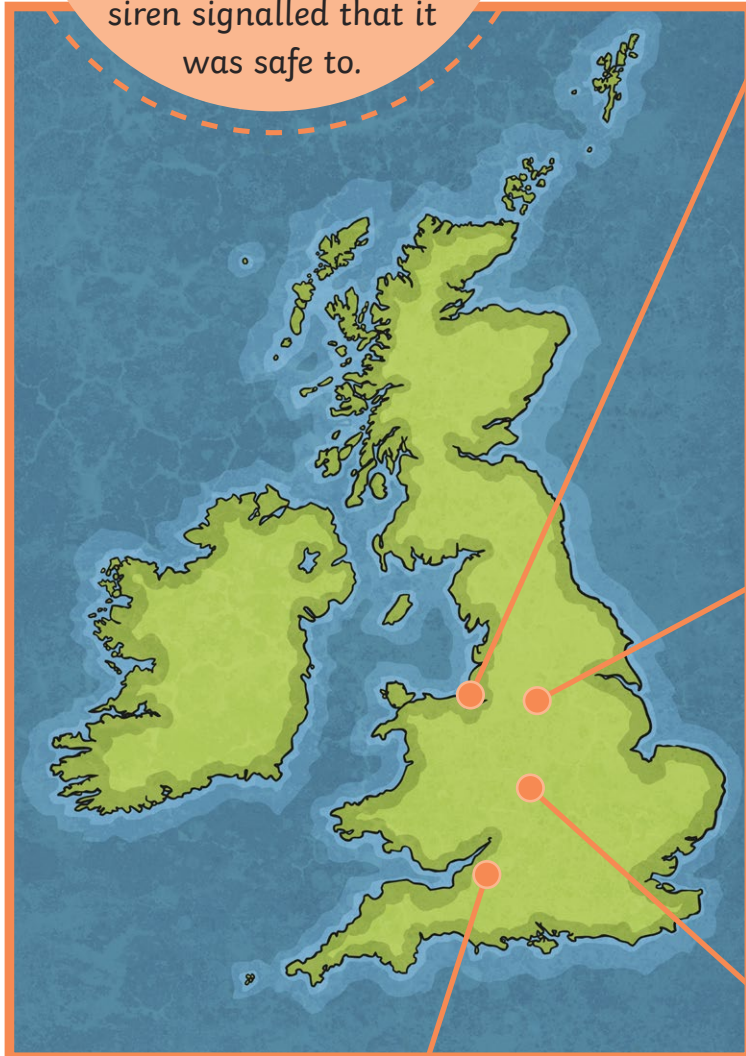
### Places in England bombed during the Second World War:

Although London was a primary target for the Luftwaffe, the whole country was under attack during the Blitz.



### Did You Know...?

In an attempt to stay alive, 180 000 people would regularly shelter in the London underground, emerging only when the siren signalled that it was safe to.



### Liverpool

Liverpool was one of the most heavily bombed cities outside of London. This was because its port was vital to Britain – most of the material used to make weapons was brought through Liverpool's dock.

### Sheffield

Sheffield was an important city during the war as the Steelworks there made parts for aircrafts, tanks and weapons. On the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December, the city centre was bombed, killing 750 people in total (most of whom were civilians). It is not known whether the Germans deliberately attacked the town centre or missed their original target.

### Coventry

One of the most destructive single attacks was in Coventry where 4,330 homes were destroyed and 554 people were killed in one night. Much of Coventry was devastated by the 509 bombers that attacked here.

### Bristol

The Germans targeted Bristol to attack their docks and aircraft factories. Many of the city's historic buildings were destroyed and 175 unexploded bombs were left behind.

# Questions

1. When did the Blitz attack on Britain end?

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2. "...Hitler wanted it to affect the morale of British citizens..."

Which is closest in meaning to the word morale? Tick **one**.

- Morse Code
- spirit or attitude
- weapons
- soldiers

3. Why do you think the Blitz is named after 'Blitzkrieg'?

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4. What is the 'Luftwaffe'?

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5. Why do you think civilian areas were also attacked?

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6. Tick the boxes to say whether the sentences are **true** or **false**.

Sentence	True	False
The Germans deliberately attacked Sheffield town centre.		
Many of Bristol's historic buildings were destroyed by the Blitz.		
London was a primary target of the Luftwaffe.		
Liverpool was the most bombed city in England.		

7. What did Queen Elizabeth say when Buckingham Palace was bombed?

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8. Explain in your own words what you think Queen Elizabeth meant when she said this.

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# Answers

1. When did the Blitz attack on Britain end?

**The Blitz ended in May 1941.**

2. "...Hitler wanted it to affect the morale of British citizens..."

Which is closest in meaning to the word morale? Tick **one**.

Morse Code

**spirit or attitude**

weapons

soldiers

3. Why do you think the Blitz is named after 'Blitzkrieg'?

**'The Blitz' got its name from the German word 'Blitzkrieg' which means 'lightning war'. It is called this because the Blitz was a sudden and surprising attack that came for the sky and was powerful – like lightning.**

4. What is the 'Luftwaffe'?

**The Luftwaffe is the German Air Force.**

5. Why do you think civilian areas were also attacked?

**Pupil's own response, such as: I believe that civilians were attacked too because the Germans wanted to hurt the British people. Also, the text says that Hitler wanted to affect the morale of the citizens and scaring them and ruining their homes would be a good way to do that.**

6. Tick the boxes to say whether the sentences are **true** or **false**.

Sentence	True	False
The Germans deliberately attacked Sheffield town centre.		✓
Many of Bristol's historic buildings were destroyed by the Blitz.	✓	
London was a primary target of the Luftwaffe.	✓	
Liverpool was the most bombed city in England.		✓

7. What did Queen Elizabeth say when Buckingham Palace was bombed?

**When Buckingham Palace was bombed, Queen Elizabeth said "I am glad we have been bombed. It makes me feel I can look the East-End in the face."**

8. Explain in your own words what you think Queen Elizabeth meant when she said this.

**Pupil's own response, such as: I think that when Queen Elizabeth said she was pleased and could look the East-End in the face, she meant that she could understand how the people in the East-End of London felt when their homes were bombed because her home had also been bombed.**