

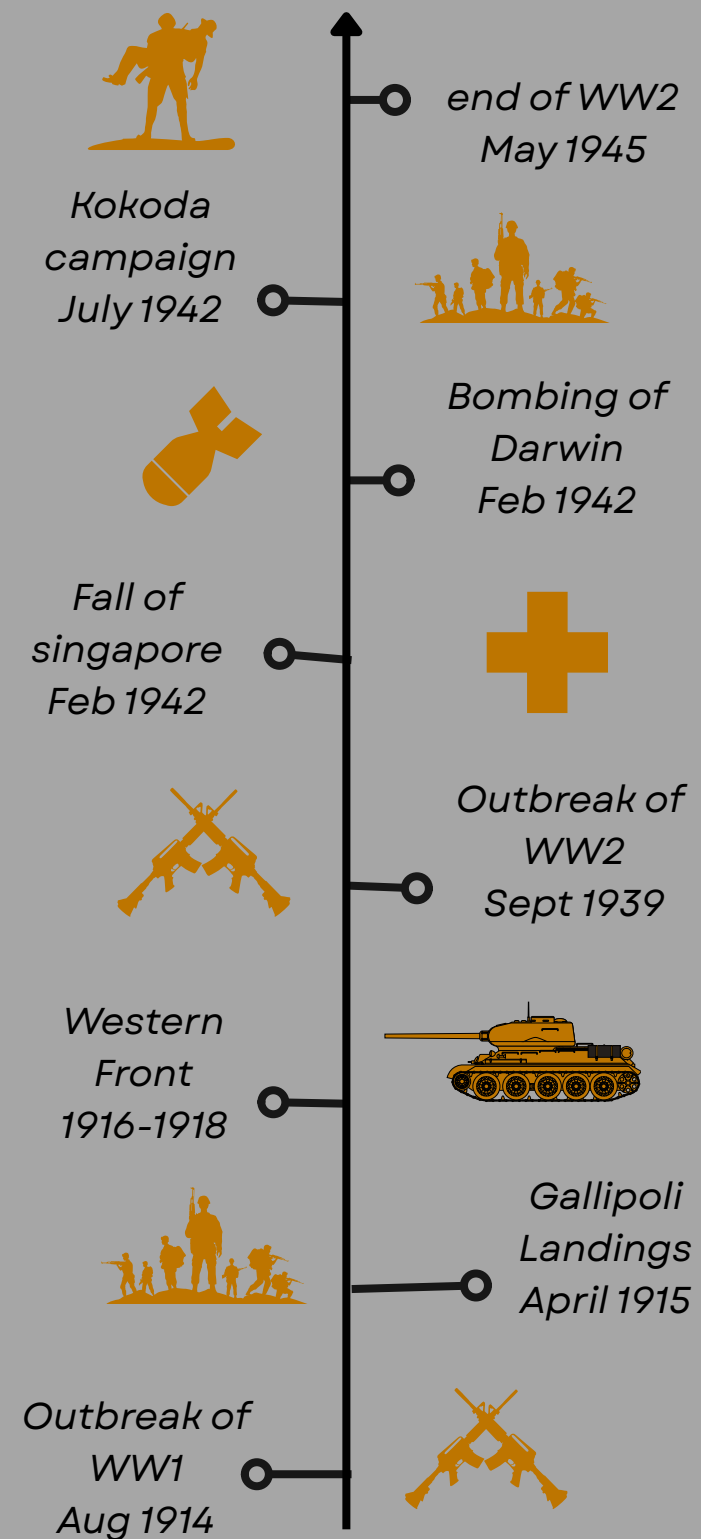
WORLD WAR'S IMPACTS ON THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION

Discover how the legacy of the World Wars continues to shape Australia today, and how Australians honor and embrace this inheritance.

What if war left behind echoes of courage...?



The World Wars were storms that reshaped the world, the first a clash of empires, the second a battle of harsh beliefs and great darkness. Australia answered the call with brave hearts, the ANZAC spirit born on distant shores. In the second war, the nation looked beyond old ties, standing strong alongside new friends in the Pacific's fierce fight. Barely thirteen years after Federation. From a population of fewer than five million, about 416,809 Australians enlisted in the First World War, commonly described as just under 10% of the total population (and nearly 40% of men aged 18–44). Around 62,000 did not return. Such widespread service and loss touched almost every family and helped to shape a distinct national identity for the still-young Commonwealth country. These struggles forged Australia's soul, a story of courage, friendship, and sacrifice, remembered each year as dawn breaks on ANZAC Day, whispered in every memorial...





“Digger”

a simple nickname or a true national symbolism?



The word “digger” became the nickname for

Australian soldiers in World War I. First meaning “miner,” it was widely used for infantry by 1916–17.

The digger symbolised the ANZAC spirit – courage, endurance, humour, resourcefulness, and mateship – and came to represent a new Australian identity.

The bravery shown at Gallipoli and later in France and Belgium gave Australians pride and distinction, apart from Britain.

Over time, the digger was linked with the “bushman” qualities of toughness, independence, and resourcefulness, adapted to modern war.

DID YOU KNOW?

At Gallipoli in 1915, ANZACs were told to “dig, dig, dig, until you are safe.” The name also reflected trench warfare, where soldiers constantly dug to build and defend their positions. Many link this to the nickname “digger,” though the evidence is unclear.



The wars also brought a lost generation of men, new roles for women, and growing recognition of Indigenous service. They also marked the young nation’s first international action on the world stage, not as separate colonies but as Australia itself. Today, Australians continue to remember and honour this legacy through national and local commemorations.

The World Wars deeply shaped Australia. The ANZAC legend, born at Gallipoli, symbolised courage, mateship, and sacrifice, becoming central to national identity and remembered each year on ANZAC Day. Among them were a thousand First Nations people, whose shared service quietly carried the beginnings of a claim to recognition and rights

ANZAC Day (25 April)

Australia’s national day of remembrance. First linked to Gallipoli in 1915, it now honours all who served and died in war, with dawn services and marches across the nation, and pays tribute to all serving personnel.

Armistice Day (11 November)

At 11:11 a.m., Australians pause for a minute’s silence to mark the end of World War I and remember all who lost their lives in conflict.

Memory and Legacy



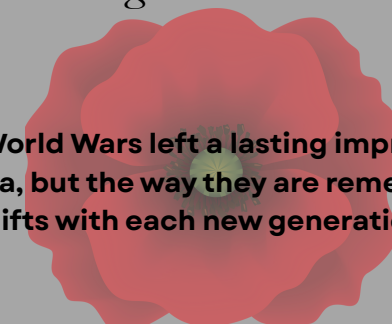
War Memorials

Almost every town and city has a war memorial. These monuments keep remembrance close to communities and part of daily life.

Legacy Week

A national fundraising and awareness week supporting the families of veterans who gave their lives or health in service. It links remembrance to ongoing community support.

Is remembrance a monument carved in stone, or a story still being written?



The World Wars left a lasting imprint on Australia, but the way they are remembered shifts with each new generation.



Many young Australians travel to Gallipoli in Turkey and Villers-Bretonneux in France, seeking a personal connection to the sacrifices of the past. These pilgrimages show that memory is not only about history books, but also about experience and identity.



Veterans are remembered differently across generations. WWI and WWII soldiers are seen as national heroes, while today’s veterans are also widely celebrated, honoured in ceremonies, parades, and remembrance events that recognise their ongoing service and sacrifice.