

## Hitler's aims in foreign policy

1. To **rearm Germany**. (To build up Germany's army, navy and air force.)
2. To **get back land** that had been taken off Germany in the Treaty of Versailles (at the end of WWI).
3. To join all German-speaking people together e.g. Austrians.
4. To **take over countries in Eastern Europe** so Germany had more living space (lebensraum).

## Causes of WWII

### Why did Britain let Hitler get away with it?

1. They wanted to **avoid another war** like World War One.
2. They were not ready to fight another war because **they had not rearmed**.
3. They were **more scared of the USSR and communism**. They thought a strong Germany would stop communism spreading.

Because of this, Britain tried to discuss problems with Hitler and not just fight Germany. This was called **Appeasement**.

### Step 1: German Rearmament

Hitler built up his army, navy and air force. This was breaking the Treaty of Versailles. For example, he introduced conscription in 1935. By 1938, there were 1 million soldiers.

### Step 2: The Saar

The Saar had been taken off Germany in the Treaty of Versailles. In 1935, the people of the Saar voted to re-join Germany. This encouraged Hitler to break more terms of the Treaty.

### Step 3: Remilitarisation of the Rhineland

The Rhineland was part of Germany but Germany was not allowed to put soldiers there due to the Treaty of Versailles. In 1936, German soldiers marched into the Rhineland. Britain and France did not stop them. This encouraged Hitler to break more terms of the Treaty.

### Step 4: Joining with Austria (Anschluss)

Germany was forbidden to join with Austria in the Treaty of Versailles. In 1938, Hitler got Nazis in Austria to start riots. He put pressure on the leader by putting German tanks on the border. The leader resigned and the new leader invited the Germans in to take over. Britain did nothing.

### Step 5: Sudetenland (including Munich Conference)

Hitler wanted the Sudetenland (a part of Czechoslovakia) because it had Germans there. He threatened to invade. To avoid a war, a conference was held in Munich in Sept. 1938. Britain, France and Italy said Hitler could have the Sudetenland. This made Germany strong.

### Step 6: Czechoslovakia

In March 1939, Hitler took over the rest of Czechoslovakia. This made Germany strong because they had all of Czechoslovakia's resources, like coal. Hitler had promised Britain he would stop after the Sudetenland. He broke his promise so Britain changed tactics: they started to rearm and promised to help Poland if it was attacked.

### Step 7: Invasion of Poland

In August 1939, Germany and the USSR signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact: this said they would not fight each other and would invade half of Poland each. Germany invaded Poland on 1 Sept. 1939. Britain declared war on Germany on 3 Sept. 1939. This was the start of World War Two.