1915

Military events
Naval events
Aviation events
Political events
Social events

JANUARY

4 — London Stock Exchange reopens for the first time since the outbreak of war

19 — German airships raid Britain for the first time, attacking Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. Five people are killed.

24 — Action of the Dogger Bank. Encounter between British and German battlecruisers in the North Sea.

31 — On the Eastern Front, Germans use asphyxiating gas in artillery shells for the first time at the Battle of Bolimov

FEBRUARY

3 — Turkish forces cross the Sinai Desert and assault the Suez Canal. The attack is strongly defeated.

4 — Germany announces its first sustained U-boat (submarine) campaign against merchant and passenger ships approaching Britain. Ships will be sunk without warning, including neutral vessels. Continues until September.

8 — Winter Battle of Masuria. In East Prussia, Germans defeat the Russians who begin to retreat. Battle continues until 22 February.

19 — Royal Navy ships begin shelling the forts guarding the entrance to the Dardanelles in Turkey. The aim is for the ships to force their way through the Dardanelles and capture the Turkish capital, Constantinople (present day Istanbul).

MARCH

10 — Battle of Neuve Chapelle. British and Indian troops undertake their first offensive in France with limited success.

11 — Royal Navy warships begin a concerted blockade of Germany and its ports

12 — Britain forms the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force under General Sir Ian Hamilton to carry out military operations at the Dardanelles

18 — British and French warships at the Dardanelles try to force their way through the Narrows. Three ships are sunk; three are badly damaged. Naval operations are suspended.

21 — German airships raid Paris for the first time

22 — Russians capture the Austro-Hungarian city of Przemyśl

APRIL

22 — Second Battle of Ypres. Germans launch major assault on French, British and Canadian troops around Ypres and use poison gas extensively for the first time. Fighting continues until 27 May.

25 — First landing at Gallipoli. British, French, Australian and New Zealand troops land on and around the Gallipoli peninsula in support of the naval attack on the Dardanelles. Fighting continues until January 1916.

26 — Italy signs the Pact of London, effectively joining the war on the Allied side. In 1914, Italy had been a member of the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary.

MAY

2 — Battle of Gorlice–Tarnow. German and Austro-Hungarian armies defeat the Russians in the centre of their line and begin to drive them back. After weeks of retreat, the Russians lose most of their territory in Poland.

7 — German submarine *U-20* sinks the luxury passenger liner *Lusitania* off the west coast of Ireland. 1,198 people are killed, including 128 US citizens.

9 — Second Battle of Artois. French launch attack for limited gains. Battle lasts until 18 June.

Battle of Aubers Ridge. To support French operations in Artois, British troops attack in French Flanders but achieve no real gains. Battle continues until 10 May.

First units of Kitchener's New Armies, forming the 9th (Scottish) Division, leave Britain for overseas service

15 — Battle of Festubert. British troops undertake another attack in French Flanders only a short distance from Aubers Ridge. Battle carries on until 25 May.

19 — Defence of Anzac. At Gallipoli, Australian and New Zealand troops fight off a very heavy Turkish attack. After weeks of effort on both sides, it is clear stalemate has been reached.

23 — Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary and moves to secure strategically important points along their shared border

25 — Coalition government formed by the British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith as tensions rise over his handling of the war. David Lloyd George, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, appointed Minister of Munitions to increase the production of weapons and ammunition.

31 — First German airship raid on London. 7 people are killed and 35 injured.

JUNE

1 — Increasing numbers of women start to be employed in British munitions factories

22 — Austro-Hungarian forces recapture the city of Lemberg (Lvov) from the Russians

23 — First Battle of the Isonzo. Italian troops attack Austro-Hungarians in north-eastern Italy, aiming to reach Trieste. Disappointing results but operations continue until 7 July.

JULY

9 — German South-West Africa surrenders to South African forces led by General Louis Botha

13 — Germans and Austro-Hungarians launch a major offensive against the Russians

15 — National Registration Act introduced in Britain, obliging all eligible men to register for military service

18 — Second Battle of the Isonzo. Second in a series of eleven battles launched along the Isonzo river in north-eastern Italy. Fighting on the Isonzo continues until October 1917.

28 — Pope Benedict XV issues call for peace to all those fighting

AUGUST

6 — Second landing at Gallipoli. After all attempts to move inland have been defeated, a new British landing is made at Suvla Bay, linked to an assault on the hills beyond the Australian and New Zealand position. The operations fail.

16 — Whitehaven in Cumberland, on Britain's west coast, shelled by a German U-boat

25 — German and Austro-Hungarian forces capture the fortress of Brest-Litovsk in Russian Poland

SEPTEMBER

25 — Co-ordinated Allied offensive in France, with French attacks in the Second Battle of Champagne and Third Battle of Artois, and British attacks at the Battle of Loos. The fighting at Loos carries on until 4 November.

OCTOBER

1 — German Fokker aircraft deployed in numbers along the Western Front. Able to fire directly forward by shooting through the propeller arc, the Fokker establishes German air superiority until Spring 1916.

5 — British and French troops land in the Greek city of Salonika to support Serbia, by threatening the southern flank of Bulgaria

6 — Austria-Hungary launches its third invasion of Serbia

9 — Belgrade captured by the Austro-Hungarians

12 — In Brussels the Germans execute the British nurse, Edith Cavell, for espionage and aiding escaped prisoners

14 — Bulgaria declares war on Serbia and enters the war on the side of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey

15 — General Sir Ian Hamilton is replaced in command at Gallipoli by General Sir Charles Monro

NOVEMBER

10 — Indian infantry begins to leave France in order to transfer to Mesopotamia

22 — Serbia defeated by combined armies of Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. Serbian troops forced to retreat through Albania to the Adriatic coast.

Battle of Ctesiphon. In Mesopotamia, Turkish forces stop the Anglo-Indian advance on Baghdad only 40km (25 miles) south of the city.

27 — No-Conscription Fellowship holds its first national meeting in London to resist forcible conscription into the army and support conscientious objectors

30 — Britain, France, Russia, Japan and Italy jointly renew the Pact of London

DECEMBER

7 — Siege of Kut begins. After their defeat at Ctesiphon, Anglo-Indian troops fall back on Kut al Amara where they are surrounded by Turkish forces. They eventually surrender on 29 April 1916.

19 — General Sir Douglas Haig replaces Field Marshal Sir John French as Commander in Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France and Belgium

20 — Troops evacuated from the Suvla and Anzac beachheads at Gallipoli