

# The History and Legacy of Naval Tactics and Operation

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# Synopsis

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World War I, also known in its time as the Great War or the "war to end all wars", was an unprecedented holocaust in terms of its sheer scale. Fought by men who hailed from all corners of the globe, it saw millions of soldiers do battle in brutal assaults of attrition which dragged on for months with little to no respite. Tens of millions of artillery shells and untold hundreds of millions of rifle and machine gun bullets were fired in a conflict that demonstrated man's capacity to kill each other on a heretofore unprecedented scale, and as always, such a war brought about technological innovation at a rate that made the boom of the Industrial Revolution seem stagnant.

As a result, World War I was the first truly industrial war, and it created a paradigm which reached its zenith with World War II and towards which virtually all equipment, innovation, and training were dedicated throughout the Cold War and the remainder of the 20th century. To this day, modern warfare remains synonymous with tanks and mass infantry battles, although a confrontation of this nature has not occurred (except briefly during Operation Desert Storm) since World War II.

The most iconic images of the First World War are of the war on land. They depict the trench lines, the shell holes, and the barbed wire. They show a generation of young men in uniform, living in holes dug from the dirt, rifle in hand, waiting for the next devastating artillery bombardment. But part of that same generation faced a very different war, one that was just as important in deciding the fate of Europe, but which is often forgotten in popular histories. This was the war at sea. It was vital to the economic side of the war, as the Allies cut off Germany's supply lines from the outside world and so placed a squeeze on their opponents' military industries. Here, events took place that would draw America into the war, providing the Allies with a new pool of manpower and so ensuring that the scales of the conflict tipped in their favor.

The war at sea saw innovations tested. Some, such as Germany's submarine fleet, were a huge

success that defined the future for warfare. Some, such as seaborne planes, played only a small part but acted as a prelude to bigger changes to come. Some, such as battlecruisers, were costly failures. At sea just as much as on land, this was a war that would shape the future of the world.

*World War I at Sea: The History and Legacy of Naval Tactics and Operations During the Great War* examines how the war revolutionized naval operations. You will learn about World War I at sea like never before.

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