

Key Events of the Korean War

Event	Date	Significance
Korea divided between North and South	Sep-45	Following Japanese surrender, Soviets maintained military presence in the North with American troops in the South. Temporary border at 38th parallel established
Soviets & Americans withdraw military	1949	A pro-Soviet puppet government is left in charge of North Korea with a vastly superior army to U.S.-supported South
North Korea invades South Korea	24-Jun-50	Whether North Koreans acted with Stalin's approval is still debated
Truman orders air and naval support for South Korea & calls for UN intervention	27-Jun-50	With the Soviet Union absent from the Security Council, the U.S. was able to win agreement from UN to support South Korea. MacArthur appointed to command UN operations
U.S. troops invade at Inchon	15-Sep-50	In surprise landing behind enemy lines, US forces push North Korean army back north of the 38th parallel
Pyongyang falls to UN forces	19-Oct-50	North Korean capital now in UN control
Chinese divisions enter fighting	4-Nov-50	With increased opposition, UN offensive stalls and then collapses. Chinese troops push UN forces back across 38th parallel and capture Southern capital of Seoul
MacArthur declares "There is no substitute for victory"	Mar-51	In message to House Republican leader Martin, MacArthur expresses his frustration with the limited war U.S. is fighting against communists
Truman relieves MacArthur of command	11-Apr-51	Following several warnings about insubordination, Truman angers public (69% support MacArthur) by firing the US commander
MacArthur addresses Congress after being away from the U.S. since 1935	19-Apr-51	In emotional speech, MacArthur declares "Old soldiers never die, they merely fade away".
Negotiations begin at Panmunjon	Jul-51	Talks drag on until 1953 and war is settled with the establishment of a DMZ (demilitarized zone) on each side of the 38th parallel

Korea becomes campaign issue in 1952 presidential election	Summer 1952	Eisenhower pledges to go to Korea to end the war. VP candidate Nixon contends Democrats had caved in to communists in Korea and that Democrat presidential candidate Stevenson should be called "Adlai the Appeaser"
Armistice formally re-established the division of Korea	Mar-53	Formal peace treaty never signed. Over 1,000,000 Koreans and 54,000 Americans killed in conflict plus thousands who die as prisoners of war