

The effects of the blitz on everyday life in britain

[Life](#)



Although the Blitz did affect military production and industry slightly, it mainly affected the way of life of the people of Britain, testing their resolve, perseverance, and overall morale. The civilians were on the front line, and had to adapt their lives accordingly. London was perhaps the most harshly affected. The first priority was to prevent bombing altogether. A curfew was placed, no one was allowed out after dark in case they were spotted by bombers and targeted.

This may have affected the livelihoods of many Londoners, who would have to look for other work, although this was perhaps the least drastic of measures taken to avoid bombing. A blackout was issued, no lights were to be visible at night. Shops, homes, trains, and cars were all included in this. This would be done by boarding up windows, dulling reflective surfaces, or just turning the lights out. This was designed to prevent enemy aircraft from navigating attacks purely on sight and forced them to use different methods, causing difficulty.

Although, with vehicles, it caused many road accidents. If bombing could not be prevented then the next priority was to minimise casualties. It was paramount that civilians had access to a safe place to protect themselves from attack. Anderson shelters were distributed to many homes in Britain, allowing civilians easy access to protection. Although people were urged to sleep in these at night, they were cold and uncomfortable and sometimes flooded, so people took their chances under the stairs or even in their beds. These were the only sources of shelter.

Brick shelters were set up which would house many people, though these did not provide much protection from bombs and were easily destroyed.

Civilians also used bridges and arches to protect themselves from attack as well as the underground tube and train tunnels. Civilians were ordered to carry gas masks, in case the Germans dropped gas that could get into the shelters. To make sure all air raid precautions were set up and executed properly, 500,000 ARP (Air Raid Precaution) wardens, were employed. These were the people whose responsibility it was to alert the public of air raids and make sure that civilians were sheltered.

They also looked over the precautions to air raids, such as inspecting blackout precautions and shelters to make sure they are adequate. Morale was one of England's most important defenses against the German campaign and keeping morale up meant moving the vulnerable from places that are likely to be bombed to safety. The answer was evacuation. The country was divided into three zones. "Evacuation", these were the places that were likely to be heavily bombed and required evacuation. "Neutral", these were the places that were unlikely to be bombed, but still had a sizeable population with a chance of being attacked.

These were not required to receive or evacuate. "Reception", these were the more rural areas with a less dense population and were the least likely to be bombed. These were the places that evacuees would be taken. London was perhaps the most severe "evacuation" zone. The children of London, sometimes even mothers and the disabled, were put on trains and sent into areas comparatively safe from bombing. Using this program, space for 4.8 million people was found, and camps set up to accommodate a few more

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thousand, and some even evacuated abroad, to other European countries and even America.

Those evacuated stayed with families in rural areas, and those who were evacuated at a young age spent the most influential years of their life in evacuation, becoming very attached to their carers. Although all of these precautions had been taken, bombs still fell, damaging buildings, and however much avoidance was placed, people died. Quick response was required to salvage as much as could be from the damaged parts of London. Many people were drafted into the auxiliary fire service, treating the flames caused by incendiary bombs. Other people were trained as medical staff and nurses, who treated the bombing casualties.

Those who did not do these were able to help in the form of volunteer work, moving rubble and removing casualties from ruined buildings. Some even worked in catering, providing food and drink for those who had lost their homes. The actual effect of the bombs was massive. People, who had lost their homes to the bombs were left to find a safe place for themselves. People often took shelter in the tube and train stations. These had cramped conditions and were cold with little or no sanitation. Some people even turned to looting, taking any valuables they could find from the wreckages of houses so they could get money for food or shelter.

Altogether, the points I have raised prove that the Blitz had an adverse effect on the lives of the people of Britain. People had to live in extremely harsh conditions, eat little, deal with death or the loss of their children to evacuation. Others had to deal with uncontrollable fires and casualty counts,

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while some just dealt with the constant fear of being attacked. All this was to be done while keeping up morale, which truly shows how well the British adapted and persevered, not caving in to the German's demoralisation tactics.