

9 11: a day full of tragedy



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It was a day just like any other, claimed many Americans, however, it ended like no other. The tragic events of September 11, 2001 will never be forgotten. The effects of what has now become known as the worst terrorist attacks on American soil were life changing in many different ways.

On September 11, 2001, 19 militants associated with an Islamic extremist group known as al-Qaeda hijacked four U. S. airplanes in the effort to target the United States. They targeted domestic flights that had few passengers, flew coast-to-coast with full fuel tanks, and were departing at approximately the same time. (9/11 in Pennsylvania) These militants had plans to target the north and south towers of the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and an unknown destination believed to have been the U. S. Capitol; however the fourth plane was crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. Nearly 3, 000 people died on that day, and as many as 400, 00 people are estimated to be have been affected by diseases, such as cancers, and mental illnesses linked to the the attacks of 9/11. This date will forever be remembered as a day that transformed America as a country. As a result of the terrorist attacks of 2001, security and safety guidelines have been revamped in an effort to avoid the recurrence of such an event.

Like any normal day I arrived at about 7: 15 in the morning. That particular day was more or less flawless weather-beautiful day, blue sky.. I don't recall any extraordinary events that morning until 8: 46 and change. wrote Brian Clark when describing his tragic experience of 9/11. (A Twin Towers' Survivor Story) At 8: 46, a plane known as Flight 11 impacted floors 93 to 99 of the North Tower of the World Trade Center located in New York City. (FAQ) According to History. com, many people thought this was just a freak

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accident until 17 minutes later when the second plane, Flight 175, impacted floors 77 to 85 of the south Tower of the World Trade Center. Of the 16, 400 to 18, 000 people in the towers, the majority got out safely. However as workers ran out of the building to safety, first responders ran into the building in the effort to save people who were still trapped or injured. (FAQ about 9/11) Over 300 firefighters and paramedics, 20 New York police officers, and 30 Port Authority police officers died in the line of duty that day. Including the first responders, 2, 763 people died at the cite of the twin towers. (history)

With the jet fuel, the floors on fire were about 2, 000 degrees Fahrenheit causing the steel beams of the building to weaken. When the planes struck the building, the floors impacted by the plane began to collapse on top of themselves. Less than fifteen minutes after the first attack, the south tower collapsed into a cloud of smoke due to the weight of the collapsed floors and heat of the fire. The collapse of the north tower followed at 10: 30. The collapse of the buildings created a mushroom cloud of smoke and debris. It looked as though a blizzard had hit New York. Everything was silent. You didn't hear the fire or police sirens. You heard nothing. exclaimed a bystander. (CNN Tribute: America Remembers) Out of thousands still in the building, only six survived the collapse of the buildings. (History) Out of the seven buildings of the World Trade Center complex, all were destroyed by the damage sustained when the twin towers fell. Thousands volunteered to help with the rescue, recovery, and clean-up efforts, however the project took over six months. The last piece of World Trade Center steel was ceremonially removed on May 30, 2002. (FAQ about 9/11) The 9/11 museum

now stands where the twin towers once stood in remembrance of the tragic events on September 11, 2001. (Lacayo)

The third plane struck the Pentagon, the headquarters of the U. S. Department of Defense. Flight 77 left Dulles International Airport bound for Los Angeles, California at approximately 8: 20 with a ten minute delay. The last routine radio communication with American Airlines Flight 77 took place at 8: 51am. It is a common belief that the plane was hijacked between 8: 51 and 8: 54 am while flying over eastern Kentucky. The plane turned south immediately following the take over and then turned eastward near the junction of West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky. The transponder of Flight 77 was turned off at 8: 56 am and the hijackers refused to answer the radio, making it very hard to track or contact the plane. (9/11 at the Pentagon)It was not until the plane crossed the path of a ground-based radar that aircraft controllers were able to locate Flight 77.

The plane turned South headed for the Pentagon at 9: 33 am. Immediately, the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport tower passed the word to the Secret Service Operations Center in Washington D. C. that an aircraft is coming at you and not talking with us. The plane then turned south just below Alexandria, Virginia, circled back to the northeast, and flew toward Washington for a second time. At 9: 37 am, American Airlines Flight 77 impacted the west side of the Pentagon. Immediately, the Pentagon's on-site firehouse responded to the crash. Within minutes, firefighters from the nearby Reagan National Airport and Virginia's Arlington County Fire Department arrived to access the situation. Many civilian employees and military personnel began to evacuate building shortly after the impact,

however others rushed into the burning structure in the effort to rescue trapped and injured colleagues. On that day, 184 people died at the Pentagon. The oldest being seventy-one. The youngest being three. The physical damage sustained by the impact of the plane was rebuilt within less than a year, however our nation is still recovering 16 years later. (9/11 at the Pentagon)