

# Lenin

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# About Lenin



Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, alias Lenin (22 April 1870 – 21 January 1924) Vladimir Lenin was founder of the Russian Communist Party, leader of the Bolshevik Revolution and architect and first head of the Soviet state.

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5. Decline & Death



# 1. Early Years

## Years

# Early Years

- born Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov on April 22, 1870, in the city of Simbirsk, the Russian Empire
- Simbirsk was later renamed Ulyanovsk in his honor.
- Raised in a devout Russian *Orthodox* Christian household.
- His parents were both educated and highly cultured.
- In 1901, he adopted the last name Lenin while doing underground party work.



**Lenin aged four  
four**



**Lenin, circa  
1887 aged 17**

# Early Years

- In January 1886, Lenin's father, Ilya Ulyanov, died of a brain haemorrhage. Lenin was 16 at the time. Lenin renounces Christianity.
- Lenin's older brother, Aleksandr, was arrested and executed for being a part of a group planning to assassinate Emperor Alexander III.
- Lenin excelled at school and went on to study law at Kazan University in 1887.
- Lenin became influenced by the writings of Nikolai Chernyshevsky and Karl Marx.

# Early Years

- Karl Marx, the German philosopher whose famous book *Das Kapital* would have a huge impact on Lenin's thinking. In January 1889 Lenin declared himself a Marxist.
- Lenin received his law degree, obtaining the equivalent of a first-class degree with honours at the University of Petersburg.
- Following graduation, Lenin was employed as a legal assistant for a regional court, before gaining a job with a local lawyer.





## **2. Young Revolutionary Revolutionary**

# ★ Young Revolutionary

- Lenin moved to St. Petersburg and became a professional revolutionary.
- In December 1895, Lenin and several other Marxist leaders were arrested. Lenin was exiled to Siberia for three years.
- Lenin's wife Nadya Krupskaya also joins him
- Lenin's wife Nadya Krupskaya also joins him in exile.



Lenin in a police  
Lenin in a police  
photograph  
from December  
1895 with his  
wife

# Young Revolutionary

- Following his release from exile, Lenin and others co-founded a newspaper, *Iskra* (*The Spark*), to unify Russian and European Marxists.
- *Iskra* was launched from Munich, Germany
- *Iskra* became the new organ of the Russian Marxist movement, now calling itself (RSDLP).
- the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP).
- *Iskra* was smuggled into Russia illegally, becoming the most successful underground



The first issue of *Iskra* ("Spark"), official organ of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party.

# Young Revolutionary

- On Sunday January 22, 1905 , Unarmed demonstrators led by Father Georgy Gapon were fired upon by soldiers of the Imperial Guard as they marched towards the Imperial Guard as they marched towards the Winter Palace.
- The event became known as *“Bloody Sunday.”*
- The event became known as *“Bloody Sunday.”*
- The Bloody Sunday massacre sparked the 1905 Revolution.
- Lenin urged Bolsheviks to take a greater role in the unrest, encouraging armed insurrection or mass terror.

# Young Revolutionary

- The First World War began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918.
- The war pitted the Triple Entente (the United Kingdom, the French Third Republic, and the Russian Empire) against the Central Powers (the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria).
- Lenin was arrested and briefly imprisoned.
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- Lenin was hoping that the German army would weaken the Tsarist regime in Russia, thereby allowing the proletariat revolution to

# Young Revolutionary

- Lenin wrote a Marxist text *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*.
- In the text Lenin argues that imperialism was a product of monopoly capitalism. Lenin prophesied that those third world countries used merely as capitalist labour would have no choice but to join the Communist revolution in Russia.
- Lenin devoted much time to reading the works of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Aristotle, all of whom had been key influences on Karl Marx.

# Young Revolutionary



- Lenin moved back to neutral Switzerland where he joined the Zimmerwald Conference, an anti-war socialist conference group. This was in order to get away from the war chaos during WWI.





# 3. Consolidating Power

# The February Revolution

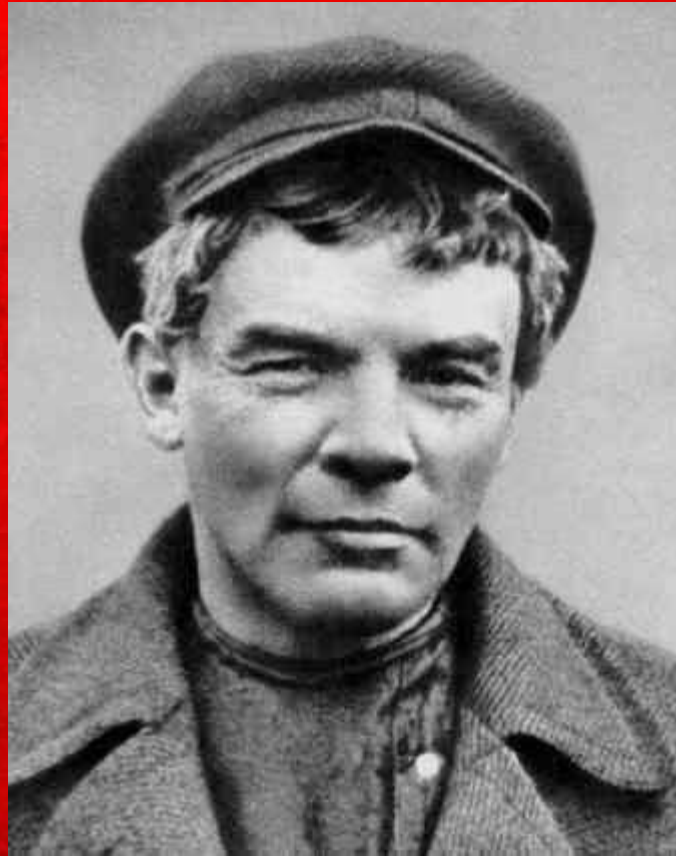
- The February Revolution of 1917 begins in Russia. Tsar Nicholas II later abdicates his throne.
- Lenin was in Zurich, Switzerland at the time.
- Russia was officially declared a republic with a new provisional government which replaced the institution of the Council of Ministers of Russia.

# The April Theses

- On April 16, 1917, Lenin returned to Petrograd, Russia and was welcomed by an overwhelming crowd.
- Lenin addressed the crowd on the significance of the impending Russian Revolution. *'Hail to the Global Socialist Revolution!'*, he stated.
- Lenin called for a new socialist revolution.
- He was met with fierce opposition, with the help of his supporters he spread anarchy all over Russia.

# The Failed The Failed Coup

- In July 1917, the Provisional Government, after discovering German funding for the Bolsheviks, outlawed the party and issued an arrest warrant for Lenin.
- After a failed coup against the government in August 1917, fearing imprisonment Lenin fled to Finland with his followers.



*Vilén*, Lenin bewigged and clean  
clean shaven, Finland, 11  
August 1917

# The October Revolution (a.k.a the Bolshevik Revolution)

- Faith in the Provisional Government had been severely shaken.
- Lenin's slogan since the April Theses was – "All power to the Soviets!"
- In October Lenin returned from Finland.
- Lenin lead the second Russian Revolution directing the Provisional Government's overthrow (6–8 November 1917, 24-26 October O.S.), and the storming (7–8 November) of the Winter Palace.
- Lenin consolidates the Bolshevik Party's initial hold on power.



# 4. The Bolshevik Takeover

## Takeover

# Creation of a Government

*"We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order!"* Lenin before the Congress

- Lenin proposed to the Soviet Congress a *Decree on Peace*, calling on "all the belligerent peoples and to their Governments to begin immediately negotiations for a just and democratic peace."
- Lenin also proposed a *Decree on Land*, transferring ownership of all "land-owners' estates, and all lands belonging to the Crown [and] to monasteries" to the





**Lenin and Sverdlov looking over Marx and Engels monument, 1918**



**Lenin working in the Kremlin, 1918**

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# Creation of a Government

- The Congress of Soviets elected the Bolsheviks into power as the Council of People's Commissars by a majority.
- In 1920, Lenin declared that "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the entire country" in modernising Russia into a 20th-century nation.

# Assassination Attempts

- Lenin survived two assassination attempts.
- The first attempt on Lenin's life was on 14 January 1918 in Petrograd, when assassins ambushed Lenin in his automobile after a speech. assassins began shooting while Lenin and Fritz Platten were in the back seat and Platten grabbed Lenin by the head and pushed him down... Platten's hand was covered in blood, having been grazed by a bullet as he was shielding Lenin.

# Assassination Attempts

- The second attempt on Lenin's life was on 30 August 1918, when the Socialist Revolutionary Fanya Kaplan approached Lenin at his automobile after a speech.
- Kaplan called to Lenin, and when he turned to face her she shot at him three times. The first bullet struck his arm, the second bullet his jaw and neck, and the third missed him, wounding the woman with whom he was speaking.
- Kaplan called Lenin "a traitor to the Revolution"
- Kaplan called Lenin "a traitor to the Revolution" for outlawing the leftist parties.

# The First Red Terror

- *Red Terror* was a campaign of mass killings, torture, and systematic oppression conducted by the Bolsheviks after they seized power in Petrograd and Moscow in 1917.
- The Red Terror was officially announced on September 1918 by Yakov Sverdlov and ending about October 1918.

# The First Red The First Red Terror Terror

- The Red Terror was frequently applied to political repression during the period of the Russian Civil War of 1918–1922, The Cheka (the Bolshevik secret police).
- It is estimated that the total number of people killed in the Red Terror range from 50,000 to over a million.

# The Russian Civil War

- The Russian Civil War tore Russia apart for three years – between 1918 and 1921.
- The civil war occurred because after November 1917, many groups had formed that opposed Lenin's Bolsheviks.
- These groups included monarchists, militarists, and, for a short time, foreign nations. They were known as the Whites while the Bolsheviks were known as the Reds.
- In 1919 Lenin set up the Third International, or Communist International (Comintern) in Moscow.



# The New Economic Policy

- After the hardship of civil war, the Russian economy was stagnating.
- On 21 March 1921, Lenin signed a decree introducing the liberal New Economic Policy (NEP)–abolishing war communism
- The NEP allowed private enterprise – small businesses to once again operate in the Soviet Union, and to seek to profit from their work.



# 5. Decline & Death

## Death

# Health Decline

- Lenin suffered the first of his three strokes on 26 May 1922.
- The stroke prevented him from speaking for several weeks.
- Four months later, in December 1922, a second stroke forced him to effectively retire from politics,
- In March 1923, he suffered his third stroke, which left him mute and confined to his bed.



**Lenin in 1923**

# Lenin's Lenin's Death Death

- After almost a year bedridden, Lenin died of a heart attack on 21 January 1924.
- After a brief power struggle, Stalin replaced him as the leader of the Soviet Union.
- the city of Petrograd (previously known as St Petersburg) was renamed Leningrad to honour the Soviet Union's first leader.
- Lenin's body was preserved by being embalmed and, since 27 January 1924, has been on display at the Lenin Mausoleum, just outside the Kremlin walls in Red Square, Moscow.