1. Strategy of Island Hopping:

Island Hopping is the phrase given to the strategy used by the United States to gain military bases and secure the many small islands in the Pacific. The attack was led by American General Douglas MacArthur, Commander of the Allied forces in the South west Pacific, and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander-in-chief of the Pacific fleet. The US troops targeted the islands that were not as strongly defended by the Japanese. They took control of those islands, and quickly constructed landing strips and small military bases. Then they proceeded to attack other islands from the bases they had established. Slowly the US army moved closer to Japan, taking control of many of the surrounding islands.

2. Battle of the Coral Sea, (May 4–8, 1942)

This four-day World War II battle in May 1942 marked the first air-sea battle in history. The Japanese were seeking to control the Coral Sea with an invasion of Port Moresby in southeast New Guinea, but their plans were intercepted by Allied forces. When the Japanese landed in the area, they came under attack from the aircraft carrier planes of the American task force. Although both sides suffered damages to their carriers, the battle left the Japanese without enough planes to cover the ground attack of Port Moresby, resulting in a strategic Allied victory.

The battle, fought primarily between opposing aircraft and naval vessels, predicted the kind of carrier warfare that later marked fighting in the Pacific War.
3. Battle of Midway Island, (June 3–6, 1942),

World War II naval battle, fought almost entirely with aircraft, in which the United States destroyed Japan’s first-line carrier strength and most of its best trained naval pilots. The the Battle of Midway ended the threat of further Japanese invasion in the Pacific.

The battle began on June 3, 1942, when U.S. bombers from Midway Island struck at the Japanese carrier strike force about 220 mi southwest of the U.S. fleet. Early the next morning Japanese planes from the strike force attacked and bombed Midway heavily, while the Japanese carriers again escaped damage from U.S. land-based planes.

A wave of U.S. torpedo bombers was almost completely destroyed during their attack on the Japanese carriers at 9:20 AM, but at about 10:30 AM 36 carrier-launched U.S. dive-bombers caught the Japanese carriers while their decks were cluttered with armed aircraft and fuel. The U.S. planes quickly sank three of the heavy Japanese carriers and one heavy cruiser. In the late afternoon U.S. planes disabled the fourth heavy carrier (scuttled the next morning), but its aircraft had badly damaged the U.S. carrier *Yorktown*.

On June 6, a Japanese submarine fatally torpedoed the *Yorktown* and an escorting American destroyer; that day a Japanese heavy cruiser was sunk. The Japanese, however, shocked by the loss of their carriers, had already begun a general retirement on the night of June 4–5 without attempting to land on Midway.

The Battle of Midway brought the Pacific naval forces of Japan and the United States to near equality and marked a turning point of the military struggle between the two countries. The U.S and Allied Powers were victorious and Japan would no longer make its way towards the U.S.

Series of World War II land and sea clashes between Allied and Japanese forces on and around Guadalcanal, one of the southern Solomon Islands, in the South Pacific.

Japanese troops had landed on Guadalcanal on July 6, 1942, and had begun constructing an airfield there. On August 7, in the Allies' first major offensive (Allies first major attack) in the Pacific, 6,000 U.S. Marines landed on Guadalcanal and seized the airfield, surprising the island's 2,000 Japanese defenders.

Both sides then began landing reinforcements by sea, and bitter fighting ensued in the island’s jungles. The Japanese forces on the island reached peak strength of 36,000 troops by October, but they were unable to overwhelm the Americans’ defensive perimeter and retake the airfield.

By November, the U.S. Navy was able to land reinforcements on Guadalcanal faster than were the Japanese, and by January 44,000 U.S. troops were on the island. By February 1943 the Japanese, badly outnumbered, were forced to evacuate 12,000 of their remaining troops from Guadalcanal.

The Japanese lost a total of 24,000 men killed in the Battle of Guadalcanal, while the Americans sustained 1,600 killed, 4,200 wounded, and several thousand dead from malaria and other tropical diseases.

The Battle of Guadalcanal was the first piece of Japanese territory the Allies would take.
5. Battle of Iwo Jima (February 1945-March 1945)

Iwo Jima was under Japanese control until early in 1945, when it became the scene of a fierce battle between Japanese and invading U.S. troops during the last phases of World War II.

The island was strategically important because, if captured, it could serve as a base for U.S. fighter planes to escort U.S. heavy bombers flying to.

Two U.S. Marine divisions landed on Iwo Jima Feb. 19–21, 1945, and were followed by a third later in the month. The island’s Japanese defenders had placed themselves so effectively in caves during the weeks of opening naval and air bombardment, that the initial bombing failed to weaken the Japanese.

The struggle for possession of the island continued for almost a month before it was officially pronounced captured by the United States.

The raising of the American flag over Mount Suribachi (February 23), which was photographed by Joe Rosenthal of the Associated Press, resulted in one of the best-known photographic images of the Pacific war. This picture was widely reprinted, and statues, paintings, and a U.S. postage stamp were based on it. (The photograph actually depicts the second flag rising over Mount Suribachi, after a first flag raised an hour or two earlier had proved too small to be visible to other U.S. troops on the island.)

About 21,000 Japanese troops were killed and some 1,000 captured in the main battle and subsequent operations. U.S. casualties totaled about 28,000, including about 6,800 killed. Iwo Jima and the other Volcano Islands were administered by the United States from 1945 until they were returned to Japan in 1968.
6. Battle of Okinawa (April 1 1945-June 22, 1945)

Last and biggest of the Pacific island battles of World War II, the Okinawa campaign (April 1—June 22, 1945) involved the 287,000 troops of the U.S. Tenth Army against 130,000 soldiers of the Japanese Thirty-second Army. At stake were air bases vital to the likely invasion of Japan. By the end of the 82-day campaign, Japan had lost more than 77,000 soldiers and the Allies had suffered more than 65,000 casualties—including 14,000 dead.

Japanese forces changed their typical tactics of resisting at the water’s edge to a defense in depth, designed to gain time. The Japanese navy and army mounted mass air attacks by planes on one-way “suicide” missions; the Japanese also sent their last big battleship, the Yamato, on a similar mission with a few escorts. The “special attack” kamikaze tactics the Japanese used on these missions, although not especially sophisticated, were so determined that Allied forces perhaps faced their most difficult Pacific campaign. Okinawa a mass bloodletting both on land and at sea, and among both the island’s civilian population and the military.

A series of defense lines across the island, both north and south of the American landing beaches, enabled the Japanese to conduct a fierce defense of Okinawa over many weeks. Using pillboxes and strongpoints, caves, and even some ancient castles, the Japanese defense positions supported one another and often resisted even the most determined artillery fire or air strikes. Mounting few attacks themselves, the Japanese conserved their strength for this defense. Caves or pillboxes often had to be destroyed individually with dynamite charges. This battle took place in an environment much more heavily populated than most Pacific islands, with civilian casualties of almost 100,000 and equally heavy losses for the Japanese army. “It was a scene straight out of hell. There is no other way to describe it,” recalls Higa Tomiko, then a seven-year-old girl, who survived the battle.

The commanding generals on both sides died in the course of this battle: American general Simon B. Buckner by artillery fire, Japanese general Ushijima Mitsuru by suicide. The U.S. however, was now only about 350 miles from Tokyo, Japan.