



# WORLD WAR II: BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

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The Battle of Iwo Jima took place during World War II between the United States and Japan. It was the first major battle of World War II to take place on Japanese homeland. The island of Iwo Jima was a strategic location because the US needed a place for fighter planes and bombers to land and take off when attacking Japan.

**Where is Iwo Jima?** Iwo Jima is a small island located 750 miles south of Tokyo, Japan. The island is only 8 square miles in size. It is mostly flat except for a mountain, called Mount Suribachi, located on the southern end of the island.

**When was the battle?** The Battle of Iwo Jima took place near the end of World War II. US Marines first landed on the island on February 19, 1945. The generals who planned the attack had thought that it would take around a week to take the island. They were wrong. The Japanese had many surprises for the US soldiers and it took over a month (36 days) of furious fighting for the US to finally capture the island.

**The Battle** On the first day of the battle 30,000 US marines landed on the shores of Iwo Jima. The first soldiers that landed weren't attacked by the Japanese. They thought that the bombings from US planes and battleships may have killed the Japanese. They were wrong.

The Japanese had dug all sorts of tunnels and hiding places all over the island. They were waiting quietly for more marines to get on shore. Once a number of marines were on shore they attacked. Many US soldiers were killed. The battle went on for days. The Japanese would move from area to area in their secret tunnels. Sometimes the US soldiers would kill the Japanese in a bunker. They would move on thinking it was safe. However, more Japanese would sneak into the bunker through a tunnel and then attack from behind.

**Raising the United States Flag** After 36 days of brutal fighting, the US had finally secured the island of Iwo Jima. They placed a flag on top of Mount Suribachi. When they raised the flag a picture was taken by photographer Joe Rosenthal. This picture became famous in the United States. Later a statue was made of the picture. It became the US Marine Corps Memorial located just outside Washington, DC.

**To Do: On the back side of this page, write a 5-6 sentence summary of this article. Be sure to write topic and concluding sentences, and use correct grammar and punctuation.**

