

4-3.3 What effects resulted from the key battles of the Revolutionary War?

Some events and battles of the **American Revolutionary War** were so significant that historians refer to them as **key battles**. The key battles were the **turning points** in the fighting of the American Revolution. It is important to know the **chronological order** and **geographic location** of each of these battles and events.

Battle of Lexington and Concord: April 19, 1775

Lexington and **Concord** are towns located outside of Boston, **Massachusetts**. The **first shots** of the Revolutionary War were fired there. The **British** marched out of the city of Boston to **capture** suspected troublemakers (members of the Sons of Liberty on their way to the Continental Congress) at **Lexington**. Then, the British planned to **destroy** the **military supplies** that were stored by the colonists at **Concord**. However, **Minutemen** were ready when the British **Redcoats** arrived at **Lexington**. This event is sometimes referred to as the “**shot heard round the world**” because of the global impact of the American revolutionary ideals on other nations. As a result of this battle, the **Second Continental Congress** met and named **George Washington** the **Commander-in-Chief** of the **Continental Army**.



Ready to fight at a moment's notice, minutemen began fighting early in the American Revolution. Their efforts at Lexington and Concord inspired many patriots to take up arms against Britain.

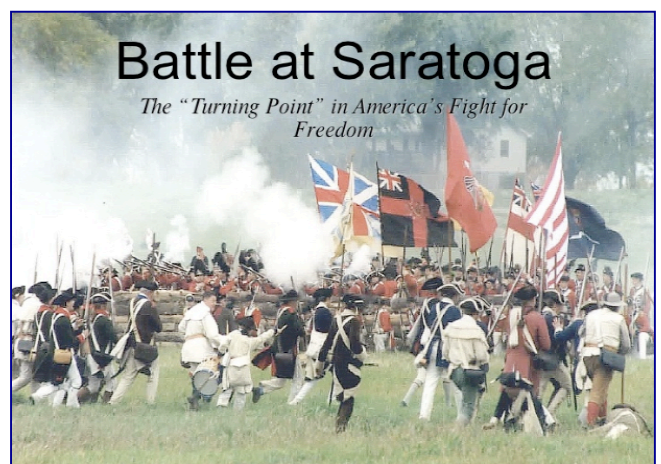
Battle Bunker (Breed's) Hill: June 16, 1775

The **Battle of Bunker (Breed's) Hill** occurred in Charlestown, **Massachusetts**. This battle was significant because of what the **American colonists' learned**. Although the **untrained** American troops were forced to **surrender** when they **ran out of gunpowder**, they caused many **casualties** on the **British** army – 226 British soldiers were killed and 828 were wounded. This battle showed that the American colonists were **powerful** as they were **fighting** from **behind rocks** and **trees** on the British troops. Back then, the American colonists called this type of fighting “**Indian Style**.” Today it is known as **guerrilla warfare**. The battle of Bunker Hill also showed that American colonists would need **allies** to **supply ammunition**. The British soon **evacuated** Boston and sailed to **New York** where they hoped to find American colonists who were still **loyal** to the King.



Battle of Saratoga: October 7, 1777

The **Battle of Saratoga** occurred in New York. This battle is considered the **turning point** of the war for the American colonists (**Patriots**). American forces **defeated** the British in their attempt to split the colonies at the Hudson River. Because of this **Patriot victory** the French were willing to enter into an **alliance** with the Americans. This alliance provided **aid** from the French in the form of **ships, soldiers, supplies, and financial assistance**. In return, the French wanted opportunities to **settle** old **rivalries** with the British as well as benefit economically by continuing to **trade** with the new nation.



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Siege of Charleston: March 29, 1780

Soon after their defeat in New York, the **British** turned their attention to **South Carolina** where they hoped to find a large number of **Loyalists** – American colonists who were still loyal to the King. The first attempt by the British to **capture Charleston** was unsuccessful because of bad weather and the toughness of Fort Moultrie.



However, the British were successful the second time around. The port of **Charleston, South Carolina** was under **attack** by the **British** for many days. The British attacked the port by **blockading the harbor** and **cutting off supply lines** to the American colonists. Eventually the Patriots fell to the British. Soon Patriot supporters were fighting the British and Loyalists troops using **hit and run** tactics.

Battle of Cowpens: January 17, 1781

The battle of **Cowpens** occurred in upstate **South Carolina**. Cowpens was an important battle because it showed the **cooperation** of the **Continental Army** and the **supporting American forces**. The supporters led the attack and then **fled** the field, **tricking** the **British** into thinking that the Americans were **retreating**. Instead the supporters lured the British forces into range of the American army. The British were badly **defeated** by the Americans. The British then left South Carolina and **retreated** northward toward **Virginia**.

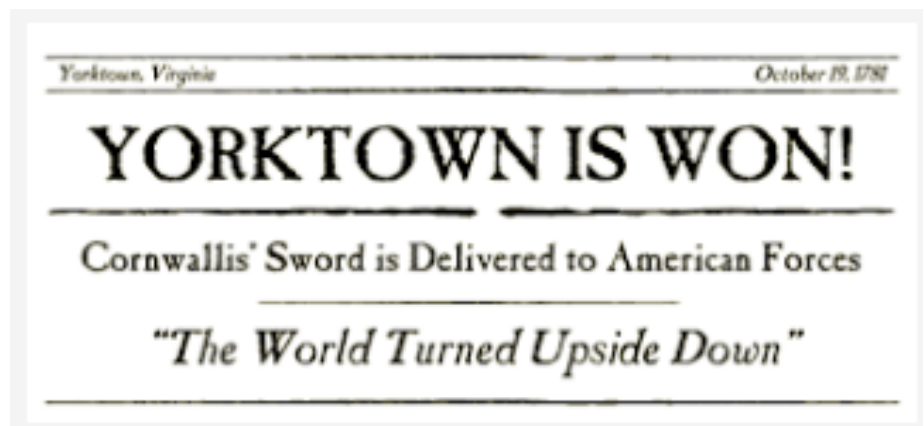


Battle of Yorktown: October 9, 1781

The battle of **Yorktown** occurred in on a peninsula in **Virginia**. This was the **final battle** of the war. The French navy helped General **George Washington** and his army by **blockading** the harbor. The blockade **prevented British ships** from entering the harbor. It also **prevented** the **British army** to **escape** the American troops on land. Surrounded by American and French forces on land and sea, the **British** were out-numbered, defeated and therefore **surrendered**. The **Americans won** the **Revolutionary War** and gained their **independence** from **England**. A peace treaty between American and England was finally agreed upon two years later. This was called the Peace of Paris (1783).



The French navy and the Continental Army conceived a daring plan to entrap Cornwallis in Yorktown. The plan worked: Cornwallis surrendered Yorktown, and three weeks later the war was over.



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Key Battles of the American Revolution



Battle	What happened?	Outcome	Why was it a key battle?
Lexington and Concord			
Bunker (Breed's) Hill			
Saratoga			
Charleston			
Cowpens			
Yorktown			