The **Battle of Midway** was a decisive naval battle in the [Pacific Theater](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Ocean_theater_of_World_War_II) of [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) which occurred between 4 and 7 June 1942, only six months after [Japan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empire_of_Japan)'s [attack on Pearl Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor) and one month after the

[Battle of the Coral Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Coral_Sea).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway#cite_note-NavalHistory2015-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway#cite_note-7)[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway#cite_note-Midway_Decisive-8) The [United States Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy) under Admirals [Chester Nimitz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chester_Nimitz), [Frank Jack Fletcher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Jack_Fletcher), and [Raymond A. Spruance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_A._Spruance) defeated an attacking fleet of the [Imperial Japanese Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperial_Japanese_Navy) under Admirals [Isoroku Yamamoto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isoroku_Yamamoto), [Chuichi Nagumo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chuichi_Nagumo), and [Nobutake Kondo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobutake_Kondo) near [Midway Atoll](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midway_Atoll), inflicting devastating damage on the Japanese fleet that proved irreparable. Military historian [John Keegan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Keegan) called it "the most stunning and decisive blow in the history of naval warfare."[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway#cite_note-9)

The Japanese operation, like the earlier attack on Pearl Harbor, sought to eliminate the United States as a strategic power in the Pacific, thereby giving Japan a free hand in establishing its [Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_East_Asia_Co-Prosperity_Sphere). The Japanese hoped another demoralizing defeat would force the U.S. to capitulate in the [Pacific War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_War) and thus ensure Japanese dominance in the Pacific. Luring the American [aircraft carriers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft_carrier) into a trap and occupying Midway was part of an overall "barrier" strategy to extend Japan's defensive perimeter, in response to the [Doolittle air raid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doolittle_Raid) on Tokyo. This operation was also considered preparatory for further attacks against [Fiji](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiji), [Samoa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoa), and [Hawaii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) itself.

The plan was handicapped by faulty Japanese assumptions of the American reaction and poor initial dispositions. Most significantly, [American cryptographers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Station_HYPO) were able to determine the date and location of the planned attack, enabling the forewarned U.S. Navy to prepare its own ambush. There were seven aircraft carriers involved in the battle and all four of Japan's large fleet carriers—*[Akagi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_aircraft_carrier_Akagi" \o "Japanese aircraft carrier Akagi)*, [*Kaga*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_aircraft_carrier_Kaga), [*Soryu*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_aircraft_carrier_Soryu) and [*Hiryu*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_aircraft_carrier_Hiryu), part of the [six-carrier force that had attacked Pearl Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_battle_of_the_Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor) six months earlier—and a [heavy cruiser](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_cruiser_Mikuma) were sunk, while the U.S. lost only the carrier [*Yorktown*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Yorktown_(CV-5)) and a [destroyer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Hammann_(DD-412)).

After Midway and the exhausting attrition of the [Solomon Islands campaign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon_Islands_campaign), Japan's capacity to replace its losses in [materiel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Materiel) (particularly aircraft carriers) and men (especially well-trained pilots and maintenance crewmen) rapidly became insufficient to cope with mounting casualties, while the United States' massive industrial and training capabilities made losses far easier to replace. The Battle of Midway, along with the [Guadalcanal Campaign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guadalcanal_Campaign), is widely considered a turning point in the Pacific War.