

# STAGING SERVICES ESCAPE FROM THE BLITZ

The heavy and frequent bombing attacks on London and other cities was known as the 'Blitz'. Night after night, from September 1940 until May 1941, German bombers attacked British cities, ports and industrial areas. London was bombed every day and night, bar one, for 11 weeks. One third of London was destroyed.

- Blitz is a shorten form of the German word 'Blitzkrieg' (lightning war).
- Most air raids happened at night.
- People were warned of a likely air raid by loud sirens, positioned in different parts of towns and cities. During the blitz, they became an almost daily part of life.
- When people heard the siren they would stop what they were doing and make for a shelter.
- One in every ten bombs that fell was a 'dud', which meant that it did not explode on impact. But some bombs had a delayed action fuse, which meant they could go off at any time. This meant that it was almost impossible to tell which bombs were which. People had to be evacuated until the bombs had been made safe.
- Air Raid Shelters were built.
- To help prevent the Germans from seeing where the towns were, a blackout was rigorously enforced after darkness. This meant that all sources of light had to be blacked out.
- During the Blitz food supplies were limited so citizens were given food ration books.
- Barrage balloons were put up to force the German planes to fly higher – so their bombing would be less accurate.
- The Barrage balloons were tethered by steel cables strong enough to destroy any aircraft which flew into them.
- The Blitz ended in mid-May 1941, when much of the German air force was sent east to prepare for the invasion of Russia.



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