



# Top News Stories from 1940

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## World Events

- [Winston Churchill](#) becomes Britain's Prime Minister.
- [Trotsky](#) is assassinated in Mexico.
- [Estonia](#), [Latvia](#), and [Lithuania](#) annexed by U.S.S.R.
- [Hitler](#) invades Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg.
- Lascaux caves with [Cro-Magnon art](#) discovered by French schoolboy.

### World Statistics

Population: 4.378 billion

[population by decade](#)[More World Statistics...](#)

## U.S. Events

- [Selective Service Act](#) signed. Background: [conscription](#)
- The first [Social Security](#) benefit checks are paid out (Jan 30).
- The Pennsylvania [Turnpike](#) opens. It is the first multilane U.S. superhighway. The first Los Angeles freeway opens.
- The first McDonald's hamburger stand opens in Pasadena, Calif.

### U.S. Statistics

President: [Franklin D Roosevelt](#)Vice President: [John N. Garner](#)

Population: 132,122,446

[More U.S. Statistics...](#)

## Economics

Federal spending: \$9.47 billion

Federal debt \$50.7 billion

Consumer Price Index: \$14

Unemployment: 14.6%

Cost of a first-class stamp: \$0.03

[More Economics...](#)

## Sports

### World Series

Cincinnati d. Detroit (4-3)

### Stanley Cup

NY Rangers d. Toronto

### Kentucky Derby Champion

Gallahadion

### NCAA Basketball Championship

Indiana d. Kansas

### NCAA Football Champions

Minnesota (8-0-0)

### Sports Links

[Pro Football Summary](#)

[Pro Basketball Summary](#)

[Pro Baseball Summary](#)

## Entertainment

### Events

- CBS demonstrates color television in New York.
- WNBT, the first regularly operating television station, debuts in New York with an estimated 10,000 viewers.
- It's a bird! It's a plane! It's Superman! The radio show debuts.
- The first Bugs Bunny cartoon.

## Science

- Freeze drying is adapted for [food preservation](#).
- Plasma is discovered to be a substitute for whole [blood](#) in transfusions.
- Karl Landsteiner and Alexander Weiner discover the [Rh factor](#) in [blood](#).

### Nobel Prizes in Science

**Chemistry:** None awarded

[More Nobel Prizes in 1998...](#)

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Year by Year: 1900-2014

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