



# First Battle of the Marne

The First Battle of the Marne took place between September 5<sup>th</sup> and September 12<sup>th</sup> in 1914 between Germany and the Allied powers of France and Britain. The Germans outnumbered the Allies by some 400,000 troops. Leading up to the First Battle of the Marne, German had been winning most of its engagements. They had crossed Belgium and were moving through France. This rapid movement was part of their war strategy known as the Schlieffen Plan. They hoped to conquer France and Western Europe before the Russians could come to their Allies' aid from the East. If this strategy was successful, then German would only have to fight on one front at a time.

As the Germans advanced through France, gaps began to grow between the armies, which were moving at different speeds. Taking advantage of these gaps, the Allies were able to split the German forces, attacking simultaneously from all sides. The Germans became confused, and they were forced to retreat after several days. They retrenched at the Aisne River in northern France, a position they would hold for the next four years.

Although both sides suffered massive casualties, the Allies considered the battle their victory. As the Russians moved in from the east, the Allies had forced the Germans into having to do what they were hoping to avoid: fighting a battle on two fronts.

1. What were the Germans hoping to avoid with the Schlieffen Plan, and how did the First Battle of the Marne relate to the plan?

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