

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

March 1917	Tsar Nicholas abdicates and the Provisional Government takes over supported by the Soviet. It now has to deal with all the problems which led to the downfall of the Tsar – the war, food shortages and peasant demands for land....
April 16 th 1917	Lenin arrives in Russia. He makes a speech demanding an end to the war with Germany, land for the peasants and nationalisation of banks. He insists that no support be given to the Provisional Government – instead the Soviets (there are Soviets in other cities) should get together and form a new government. These ideas became known as the April Theses.
June 1917	The Provisional Government orders the armies to attack Austria. This fails and turns into a retreat. Soldiers began to desert in large numbers. Many go to Petrograd and join the Bolsheviks demanding an end to the Provisional Government
July 1917	100000 soldiers and Bolsheviks are out in the streets demanding 'All power to the Soviets'. These three days of rioting in Petrograd are known as the July Days. Kerensky sends loyal troops into the city to deal with the uprising. He claims the Bolsheviks have been paid by Germany to make trouble and Lenin is a German agent. Lenin has to leave Russia to avoid arrest and goes to Finland. Other leading Bolsheviks are arrested. The Bolsheviks have become unpopular and weak.
August 1917	Kerensky become leader of the Provisional Government. He has to deal with a challenge from General Kornilov, Commander in Chief of the army who wants to take control. He has some of Russia's best soldiers under his command. Kerensky has nothing to match this. Kerensky asks the Bolsheviks for help. The Red Guard, 25000 Bolsheviks, turn out. Kornilov's army refuses to fight against their fellow workers / soldiers and the rising fails.
September 1917	The Bolsheviks regain popular support for saving the Provisional Government. They have proved themselves and have emerged as an armed, disciplined fighting force. They win a majority in elections for the Petrograd Soviet and in the Soviets in other cities
October 1917	The Bolsheviks are more powerful than ever. Kerensky and the Provisional Government continue to weaken and lose authority. Peasants in the countryside rebel and take over the land – they have lost patience having waited since March for the government to act. Kerensky cannot find soldiers who will go out and stop this. The trouble in the countryside delays the harvests and leads to further food shortages – people in the cities face famine. In the army discipline is breaking down. The Petrograd Soviet encouraged soldiers to disobey their officers. Thousands were deserting every week to get back to their villages and make sure they got land. Everywhere in the army there is drunkenness, chaos and violence
October 1917	Lenin returns to Russia. In a meeting with Bolshevik leaders, he calls for an immediate revolution. Although some are reluctant, Lenin gets his way and Trotsky (Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet) drew up plans. There was nothing Kerensky could do to stop him. The army has said that it will support the Bolsheviks and has handed over weapons to the Red Guard
November 1917	The Bolshevik revolution begins on the night of 6 th November. They take over key locations such as the main bridges and telegraph stations. On the 7 th the Bolsheviks seize control of government buildings and railways stations. The Provisional Government has its headquarters in the Winter Palace. It is guarded by an army of cadets and the Women's Battalion. The battleship Aurora (captured by the Bolsheviks) fired blank shells at the Winter Palace and the Red Guards move in. The cadets and Women's Battalion give in without a fight. The Provisional Government surrenders and the revolution is over. It has taken one day to overthrow the government; 18 people have been arrested and 2 people killed

