PHASE ONE
From 7 December 1941, until June 1942, the Japanese successfully attacked the Pacific Fleet based at Pearl Harbor, north Borneo and Guett, invaded and conquered the Philippines, Hong Kong, Malaya, and seized the British base of Singapore. They conquered Burma thereby cutting off China from all overland routes to the western allies, and seized the Netherlands East Indies and British Borneo, thereby restoring a much needed source of oil. The Japanese advance came to a halt with the American victories at the Battle of the Coral Sea (May 1942) and the Battle of Midway (June 1942).

PHASE TWO
The second phase was one of a relative stalemate. From June 1942 until late 1943, neither side could master the land, sea or air required to take the offensive and assumed the initiative from the other. The Battle of Guadalcanal is a good example of this stalemate.

PHASE THREE
The third phase, from mid-1943 to September 1944, can be characterized as the period of Allied offensive. Two drives were under American control: General MacArthur's Southwest Pacific campaign and Admiral Nimitz's Central Pacific campaign. MacArthur's drive was a series of army amphibious operations up the Solomon Island chain and along the northern coast of New Guinea, with the ultimate objective of Port Moresby. This drive was designed to move directly towards Japan and draw the Imperial Navy into a decisive fleet engagement as happened at the Battle of the Philippine Sea (June 1944) and Leyte Gulf (October 1944). MacArthur's and Nimitz's campaigns merged into one for the invasion of the Philippines. Meanwhile the Central Pacific campaign continued with the invasions of two Jima and Okinawa.

PHASE FOUR
During the later stages of the war, the army Air Forces, operating from the Marianas Islands and flying B-29 Superfortresses, attacked the cities of Japan. These raids culminated with the dropping of the atomic bombs at Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 and Nagasaki three days later. Japan surrendered to the Allies on 2 September 1945.

TIMELINE
1941
- Japanese invade Philippines, 8 Dec.
- Japanese land in Hong Kong, 18 Dec.
- Bataan-Corregidor surrenders, 9 Apr.

1942
- Battle of Java Sea, 27-28 Feb.
- Netherlands East Indies falls to Japan, U.S. troops on Bataan forced to surrender, 9 Apr.
- Fortitude bombing raid on Tokyo, 18 Apr.
- Battle of Coral Sea, 6-8 May.
- Battle of Midway, 4-6 June.
- Japan surrenders Attu & Kiska in Aleutians, 7 June.

1943
- Buna captured, 22 Jan.
- "Island hopping" in Solomon Islands begins, 19 June.
- New Guinea, 5 Sept.
- Bougainville invaded, 2 Nov.
- New Britain invaded, 29 Dec.
- Operations on Guadalcanal, 9 July-4 Aug.
- Invasion of New Guinea, 14 Aug.
- Buna captured, 6 Sept.
- Buna captured, 19 Nov.
- Guadalcanal invaded, 20 Nov.
- Amphibious assault at Hollandia, 22 April.
- Invasion of New Guinea, 15 June-9 July.
- Battle of the Philippines Sea, 14-18 June.
- Truk raided, 18 July.
- Invasion of Guam, 21 July-8 August.
- Invasion of Morotai & Palau Islands, 21 Sept.
- Battle of Leyte Gulf, 23-26 Oct.
- Allies land on Luzon, 9 Jan.
- Invasion of Iwo Jima, 18 Feb-24 Mar.
- Okinawa invaded, 1 Apr.
- Roosevelt dies, Truman becomes President, 12 Apr.
- Invasion of Mindanao, 27 Apr.
- Okinawa captured, 21 June.
- Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, 6 Aug.
- Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, 9 Aug.
- Japan agrees to surrender, 14 Aug.
- Japan surrender around U.S.S. Missouri, 2 Sept.