

## Information Cards for Auschwitz – 1941-1942

<p>In autumn 1941, the Germans decided to build a new camp about a mile and a half from the old camp.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>	<p>The new camp was to be capable of holding 100,000 people. It was built in a place the Poles called Brzezinka, and the Germans called Birkenau.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>
<p>Auschwitz-Birkenau would eventually grow to over five times the size of the original Auschwitz concentration camp. It would become central to the Nazi policy of exterminating Jews.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>	<p>Crucially, this vast new camp wasn't designed to hold Jews but Soviet prisoners of war. Its purpose only changed because of events in the war with the Soviet Union.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>
<p>At the beginning of 1942 it was thought that Soviet prisoners would be needed elsewhere as forced labour. Himmler decided Auschwitz-Birkenau was now a place to send the Jews.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>	<p>In 1942, mass deportations of Jews from across Europe began. Over the next two years, a million Jews would be sent to Auschwitz. The majority travelling on cramped freight trains.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>
<p>“It’s a really humiliating feeling when your personality is being taken away. I don’t know whether you can understand it. You suddenly mean nothing. We were treated like animals.”</p> <p>- Silvia Veselá Jewish deportee</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>	<p>In spring 1942, the SS at Auschwitz-Birkenau began killing Jews who arrived and were selected as unfit for work. They chose a remote area of Birkenau to commit the killing.</p> <p>AUSCHWITZ 1941-2</p>

Improvised gas chambers were built in two separate peasant cottages. The SS bricked up the windows, crammed people inside and then inserted Zyklon B in through hatches.

**AUSCHWITZ 1941-2**

As more Jews were gassed in the improvised gas chambers the SS continued to search for a way to kill people more effectively and then completely dispose of the evidence.

**AUSCHWITZ 1941-2**