

## War of Independence (1948)

The war broke out due to the opposition of Arab residents of the land and Arab states to the establishment of the State of Israel. Initially, the Jewish settlement fought against local forces, and later Arab armies invaded the young State. The struggle was existential, and during the fighting, State institutions and the IDF were established. At the end of the fighting, Israel succeeded in defending its independence and defining its first borders. Alternatively, at the end of the fighting, Israel managed to survive, establish borders, and become an independent state.

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## Sinai War (1956)

During the war, Israel operated together with France and Britain against Egypt. The objectives: to open shipping routes to Eilat, stop Fedayeen attacks, and deter Egypt. The IDF conquered the Sinai Peninsula but withdrew from it following international pressure.

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## Six-Day War (1967)

Within six days, Israel faced several Arab states simultaneously on three fronts. The victory was swift and decisive: Israel significantly expanded its territory – including East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, Sinai, and Judea and Samaria. The war changed the balance of power in the region and deeply affected relations between Israel and its neighbors.

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## War of Attrition (1967-1970)

A prolonged confrontation along the Suez Canal. Egypt tried to wear down Israel's strength through bombardments and raids, while Israel tried to hold its new positions. The fighting lasted three years, took a heavy toll on both sides, and ended without a clear decision. Alternatively, the war ended in a strategic draw.

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## Yom Kippur War (1973)

On Yom Kippur – when the entire country was in quiet, prayer, and rest – Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel on two fronts simultaneously. Israel was surprised and suffered heavy losses but managed to recover, stop the enemy, and even go on the offensive. The war left a deep scar and led to learning lessons, including fundamental changes in the army, leadership, and Israeli society.

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## **Operation Yonatan (Entebbe, 1976)**

A passenger plane was hijacked by terrorists to Uganda. The IDF launched a daring rescue operation: a special force flew secretly, raided Entebbe Airport, and freed the hostages. The operation is considered one of the most brilliant and brave in military history. The commander, Yoni Netanyahu, was killed during the operation, later named after him.

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## First Lebanon War (1982)

Israel launched a military operation in Lebanon to distance the PLO threat from the northern border. The IDF advanced to Beirut, and the confrontation became a prolonged campaign in the heart of a foreign country. The IDF remained in southern Lebanon for years, and the war sparked a wide public debate about objectives, achievements, and costs.

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## Bus 300 Affair (1984)

Four terrorists hijacked an Israeli passenger bus. Security forces took control of it, killed the hijackers, and freed the hostages (one passenger was killed during the operation). It was later revealed that two terrorists were captured alive – and later eliminated. The affair was exposed through a press leak, caused a public storm, and raised difficult questions about morality, censorship, and governmental responsibility.

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## **First Intifada (1987–1993)**

A widespread Palestinian uprising began in the territories and included demonstrations, stone throwing, strikes, and terrorist acts. Israel responded with military forces, and daily reality changed on both sides. The events changed the security reality and led, for the first time, to the beginning of a political process between Israel and the Palestinians.

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## **Gulf War (1990-1991)**

Iraq fired missiles at Israel during a war with Western countries. Israel did not respond militarily to avoid damaging the international coalition. The Israeli home front experienced missile attacks, gas masks, and staying in shelters.

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## **Kidnapping of Soldiers at Har Dov (2000)**

Hezbollah kidnapped three IDF soldiers – Benny Avraham, Adi Avitan, and Omar Souad – in the Har Dov area on the northern border. Israel launched search and response operations, but it was later revealed that the soldiers were murdered shortly after the kidnapping. The painful event sparked a stormy public debate: how to balance the desire to return soldiers with the price Israel is willing to pay?

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## **Kidnapping of Soldiers on Lebanon Border (2006)**

Hezbollah attacked an IDF patrol on the northern border, seriously wounded 3 soldiers, killed 5 soldiers, and kidnapped soldiers Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev (the assessment was that they were killed on the day of the kidnapping, but the information was finally confirmed only two years later when their bodies were returned in a deal with Hezbollah). The incident ignited the Second Lebanon War, which led to extensive fighting in northern Israel and Lebanon. The kidnapping and its consequences affected Israel's policy toward Hezbollah.

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## **Gilad Shalit's Release (2006–2011)**

Gilad Shalit, an IDF soldier in regular service, was kidnapped near Kerem Shalom in 2006 by Hamas terrorists and other organizations. He was held captive in Gaza for over five years without being allowed to contact the outside world. In 2011, after heavy public pressure, Israel released 1,027 security prisoners in exchange for his return. The deal caused great joy but also a complex debate: how right is it to pay a high price for one soldier?

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## **Operation Defensive Shield (2002)**

At the height of a wave of deadly terrorist attacks, the IDF launched an extensive operation in Judea and Samaria. Forces entered Palestinian cities, arrested terrorists, and destroyed terrorist infrastructure. The operation was a turning point in the Second Intifada, after which terrorist attacks decreased significantly, as did the number of casualties in Israel.

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## **Operation Opera (Attack on Iraq's Reactor, 1981)**

The Israeli Air Force launched a secret operation: an air strike on Iraq's nuclear reactor, built near Baghdad. The goal was to prevent a nuclear threat to Israel in advance. The operation succeeded: the reactor was completely destroyed. Despite criticism worldwide, the operation changed the balance of power and is considered a bold preemptive strike.

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## **Operation Outside the Box (2007)**

The Air Force attacked a nuclear facility in Syria – a secret and precise operation designed to prevent a future threat to Israel. The facility was completely destroyed. Israel did not take official responsibility for years until the operation was revealed and this is considered a prominent example of a quiet preemptive strike without leaving traces.

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## **Operation Cast Lead (2008–2009)**

After heavy rocket fire from the Gaza Strip toward southern settlements, the IDF launched a wide operation against Hamas. The action included air and ground strikes and severely damaged terrorist infrastructure. The operation lasted about three weeks, sparked wide public debate in Israel, and international criticism over civilian casualties.

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## **Operation Pillar of Cloud (2012)**

After a period of rocket fire from Gaza, Israel launched an operation focused on air strikes – against rocket launchers and Hamas officials. The operation lasted eight days, and Israel tried to minimize civilian casualties as much as possible. The confrontation ended with a ceasefire mediated by Egypt. In testing results, the operation succeeded in temporarily strengthening Israel's deterrence against Hamas rule. In the year following the operation, there was a decrease of over 98% in rocket fire from the Gaza Strip.

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## Operation Protective Edge (2014)

Following heavy fire from the Gaza Strip, the IDF launched a prolonged air and ground operation against Hamas and other terrorist organizations in the Strip. The main focus: destroying attack tunnels dug into Israeli territory, alongside hitting terrorist infrastructure. The confrontation lasted 50 days, included heavy fighting and damage to the Israeli home front, and left a deep impression on both sides.

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## Second Lebanon War (2006)

After the kidnapping of soldiers on the northern border, Israel launched a war against Hezbollah that included air strikes and ground operations in southern Lebanon. The IDF encountered operational difficulties and wide public criticism of overall performance. Nevertheless, the war changed the rules of the game and brought prolonged quiet to the northern border.

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## **Swords of Iron War (2023-2025)**

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a surprise mass attack on Gaza envelope settlements. This included civilian massacre, kidnappings, and massive fire. In response, Israel launched a wide military operation in the Gaza Strip that included prolonged fighting, rescue operations, and severe damage to Hamas infrastructure. The war shocked the public, the southern border became a front, and the national security concept changed fundamentally.

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## **Operation Rising Lion (2025)**

A direct confrontation between Israel and Iran that opened with a wide-scale Israeli surprise attack on nuclear facilities and missile sites in Iran. The operation included targeted eliminations, air strikes, and cyberattacks, aimed at disrupting the nuclear program and damaging Iran's military capabilities. The action marked a dramatic change in the regional arena.

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