

‘A Roman soldier always has to be ready to
fight....’

How can we make sure a Roman soldier is
ready for battle?

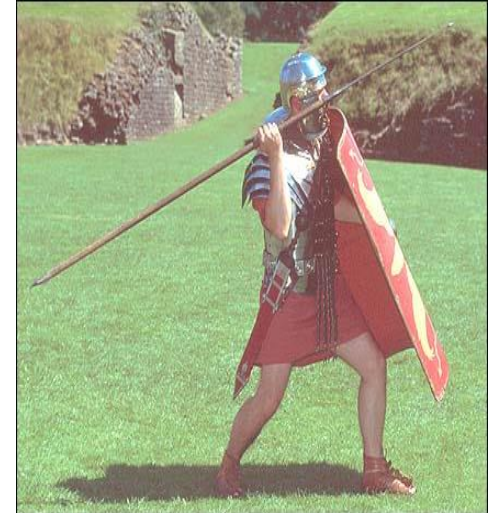


Qualities of a successful Roman soldier
would include ...



What do you think you would need to be a Roman Soldier?

- You must be 1.6m tall
- You must be physically fit
- You had to be a Roman citizen
- You had to stay in the Army 25 Years



SOURCE: From a Roman Army Handbook 24 AD

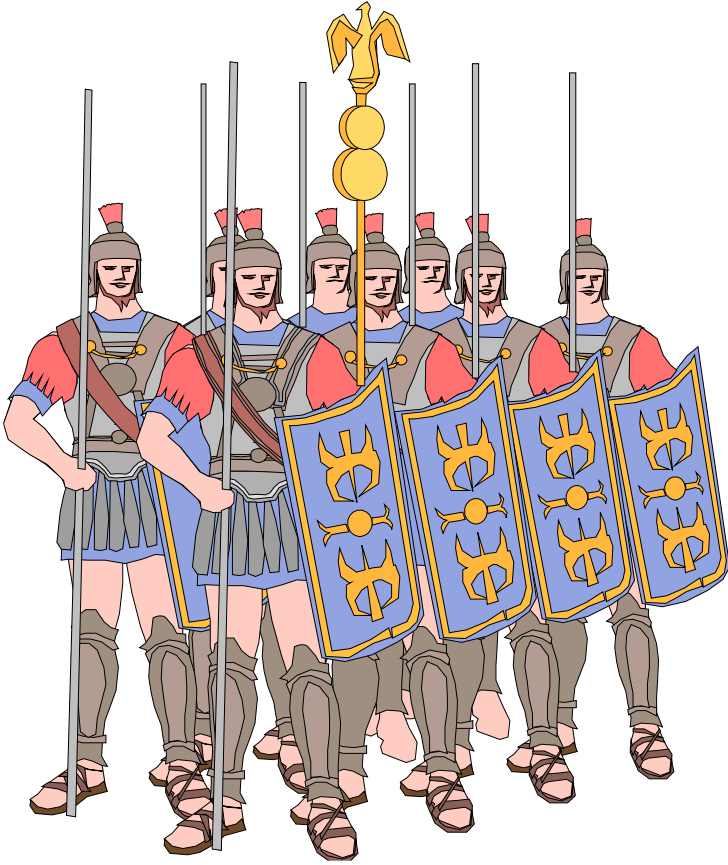
“A young man should have alert eyes and should hold his head upright. He should be broad chested with powerful shoulders and arms. He should not be pot bellied or have a fat bottom! His calves should not be flabby.”



How was the Roman Army organised?

- Main part of the army was the **LEGION**
- This was made up of around 5000 men under the command of the **LEGATE**





- The legion was divided into ten cohorts
- Each cohort was made up of six centuries
- The centuries were commanded by a centurion
- Centuries had 80 - 100 men



- The centurions were very important men
- They were responsible for training the soldiers under their command and making sure everyone obeyed orders.
- Some were very cruel.

Know your uniforms?

Soldier

Centurion

Legate



Legion made up of around– 4800 men

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graph TD; A[Legion made up of around– 4800 men] --> B[Divided into 10 cohorts  
Or around 480 men in each section]; B --> C[One cohort was made up of  
six centuries]; C --> D1[80]; C --> D2[80]; C --> D3[80]; C --> D4[80]; C --> D5[80]; C --> D6[80]; D1 --- E[Each Century had 80 men]; D2 --- E; D3 --- E; D4 --- E; D5 --- E; D6 --- E;
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Divided into 10 cohorts
Or around 480 men in each section

One cohort was made up of
six centuries

80

80

80

80

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Each Century
had 80 men

Standard Bearers

- Each century had its own emblem or standard.
- This was carried by the standard bearer, a very experienced and trusted soldier.
- To lose your standard was a great disgrace.

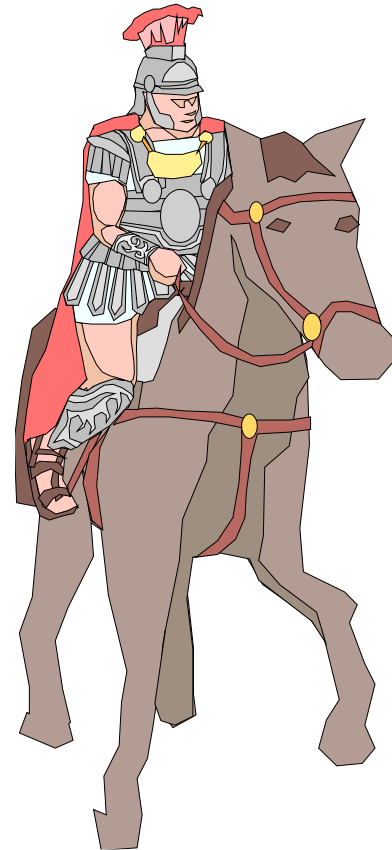




Note
the
animal
skin

Who else was in the Army?

- Auxiliaries- These were doctors, clerks, engineers, scribes, map makers and even soldiers from lands conquered by the Romans who volunteered to fight for the Romans.
- Many of these had special skills- like cavalry soldiers, stone shot slingers or archers.



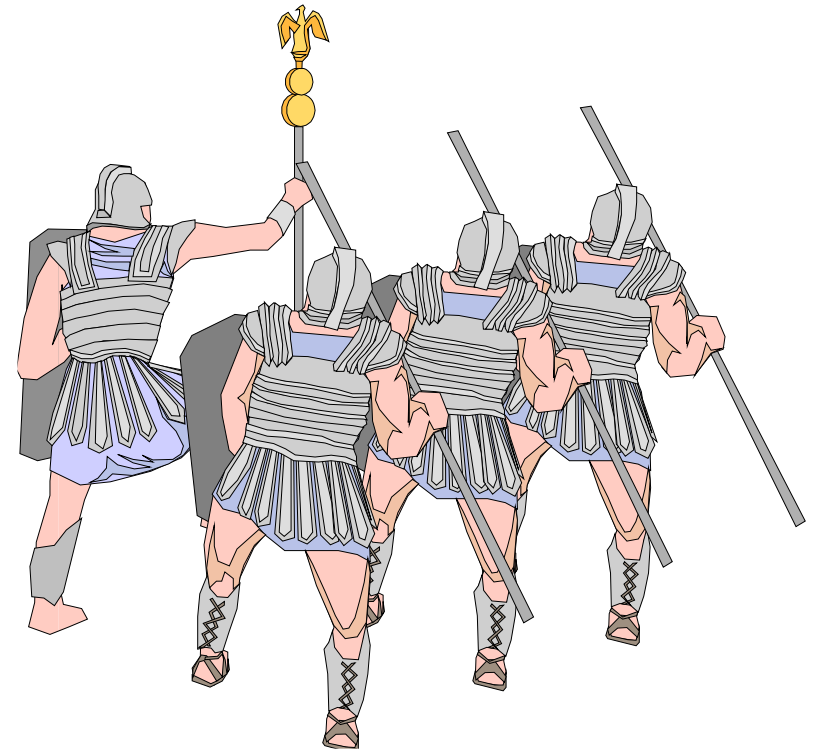
Auxiliaries

Thought of by Romans as second class soldiers, paid less and not trained as rigorously

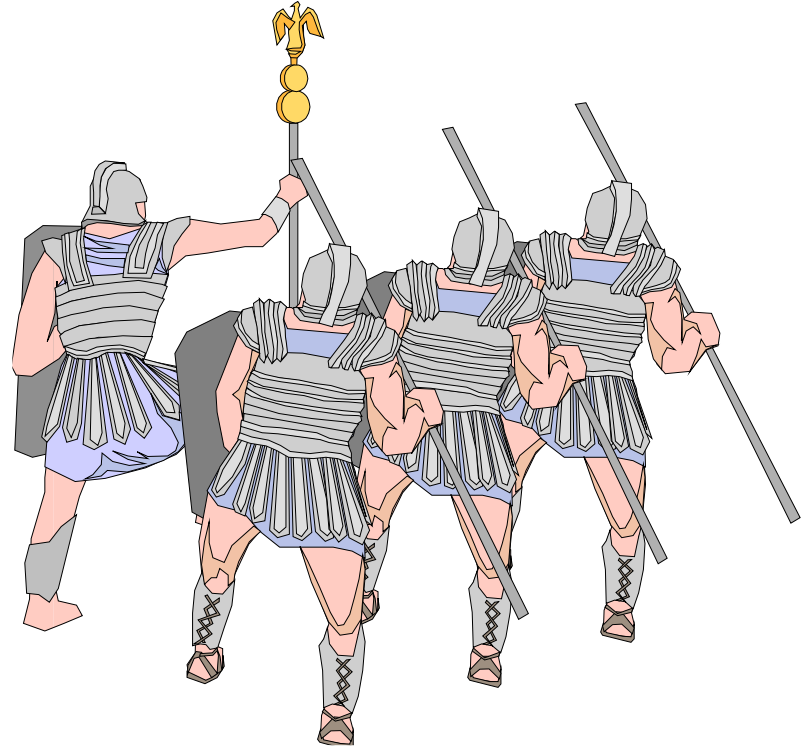
After 25 years- they became Citizens (and their children too!)

Training

- Most soldiers joined between 18-20 years old.
- There were three 30km marches each month.
- On each march the legionary would carry 25 kilos of equipment.



- Legionaries would also learn drill, or marching.
- This was important for learning manoeuvres in battle.
- New recruits were given shields and swords twice as heavy as the real thing!



Why become a Roman Soldier?

You could earn
a good reliable
wage



If you were brave, you
were rewarded with a
laurel crown!

Uniform,
weapons and
equipment all
provided

Travel the
world

While you are in the
Army part of your
wages were saved so
you could retire in
comfort

You would be fit, strong
and brave – impress all
the women!

You could earn extra
money from robbing
those you defeated

Equipment



www.dk.

www.dk.com

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Javelin: Made out of wood with a metal tip. About two metres long.

Source B

A modern painting of a Roman legionary in full uniform, with his equipment.

Helmet: Made of iron to protect the head.

Metal jacket: Very heavy. Made of strips of metal held together by leather straps.

Sword: About 50 cm long. It had a wooden handle and was worn in a **scabbard**.

Belt: This held the sword and dagger.

Tunic: Made of rough wool.

Shield: Made of wood with metal in the middle. About 1.6 metres tall.

Equipment: Each soldier had to carry his weapons, tools and blankets.

Sandals: Made of leather. They had hob nails in the sole for marching.

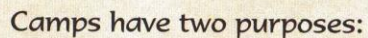
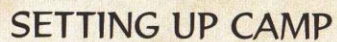




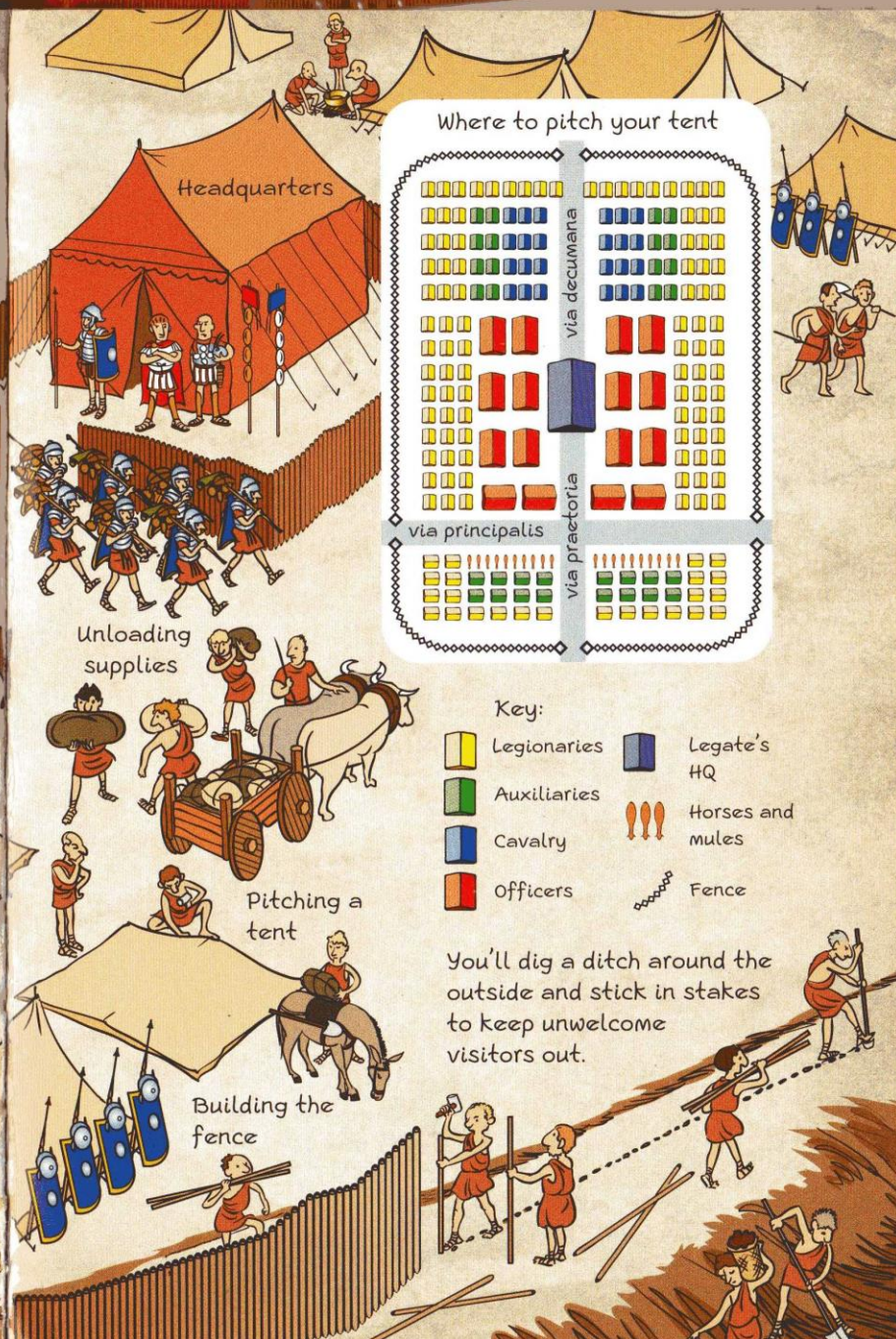
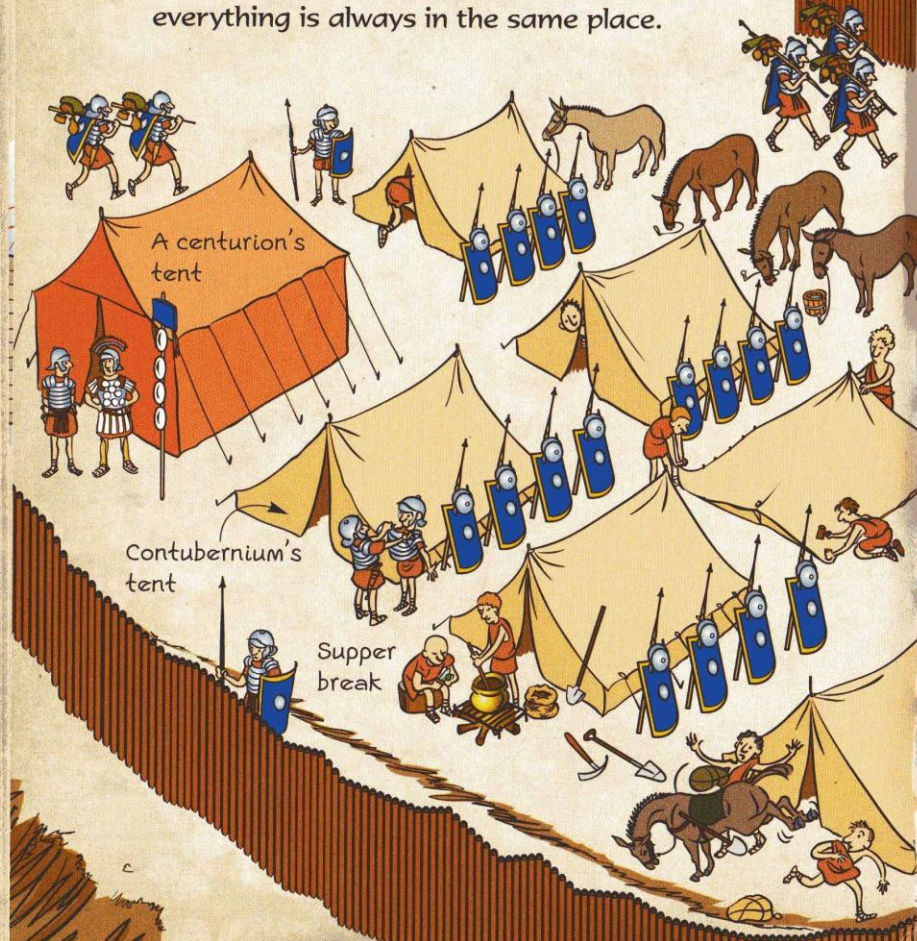
Tactics

The first thing the Romans tried to do when they were conquering another country was to choose the time and place of the battle. The Romans would arrive, set up camp and then send a letter to the local ruler asking him to submit to Roman rule – the Romans never fought unless they had to.

This gave the Romans time to rest and to decide how and when they would attack. They researched the strengths and weaknesses of their opponents and chose strategies to suit the occasion.



- (I) to keep you safe,
(II) to impress the enemy. Seeing an entire tent village go up in next to no time is enough to unnerve anyone. It helps that everything is always in the same place.



**A favourite
Roman
battle
formation**

COMMANDERS

CAVALRY

RESERVES

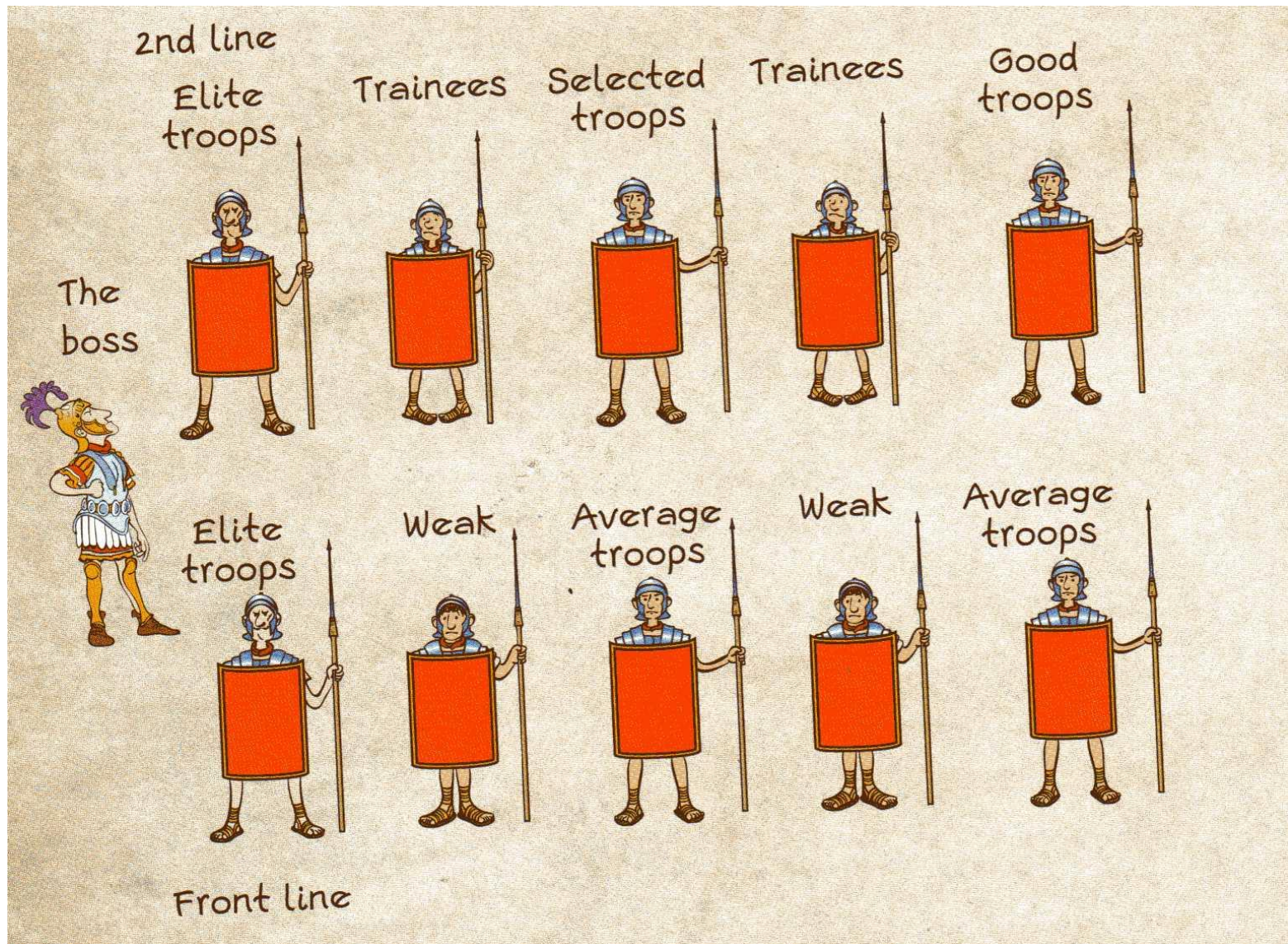
INFANTRY

CAVALRY

AUXILIARIES

AUXILIARIES

ENEMY



Why do you think this was a favourite troop formation?

Let's make the 'Orb'



Type: DEFENSIVE

When used:

- If part of the army had been split off from the main group or encircled by the enemy.

How it works:

- The legionaries form a circle around the officers and the archers (these were the most important people!) using their shields as protection.
- Seen as a 'desperate last stand'.

Let's make the 'Repel-Cavalry'

Type: DEFENSIVE

When used:

- To combat a cavalry charge.

How it works:

- The soldiers form a line, with the men at the front crouching down with their shields in front of them and their spears stick out of the gaps. The men behind put their shields over the top of the men in front, and have their spears ready to throw.
- The spears would stop horses from running at the soldiers, often causing them to retreat. Those retreating would then knock into the cavalry behind them, causing a domino effect and making themselves easy targets for archers.



The 'Tortoise'

Type: DEFENSIVE

When used:

- To advance but remain protected from spears, arrows, etc.

How it works:

- The Tortoise is square. The men at the front hold their shields in front of them. The men at the sides hold their shields to the sides. The men in the middle hold their shields above them.
- The men had to move in close formation to ensure that the shields were touching so that no missiles could get in and injure any soldiers.



The Wedge



Type: ATTACKING

When used:

- Used aggressively to divide the enemy.

How it works:

- The centurion is at the front of the 'V' and the legionaries form the sides of the 'V'. They have to stay close together to stop the enemy from breaking the line.
- As the wedge advances, more soldiers join on at the ends to divide the enemy even further.
- Breaking the enemy formation was key to winning on the Roman battlefield!

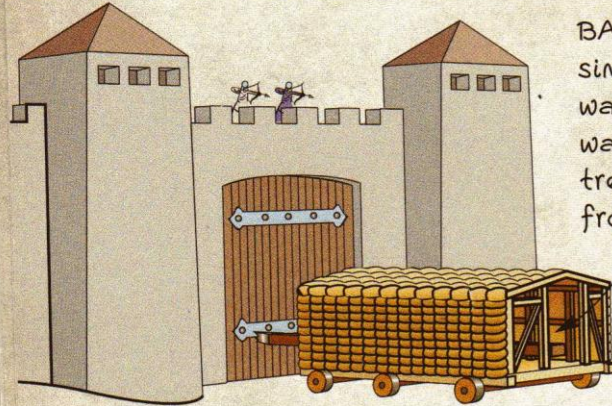
Sieges



SIEGES



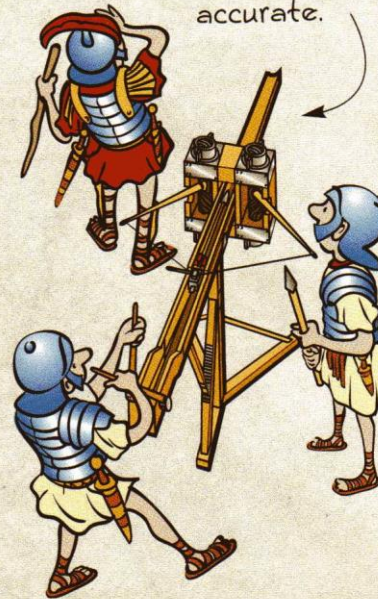
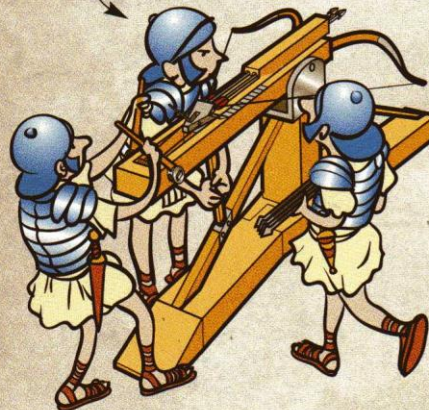
Of course, you won't always face your enemy on the battlefield. Sometimes they hole up in town and refuse to leave. Luckily, starving them out is a thing of the past, thanks to useful technology invented by the Ancient Greeks.

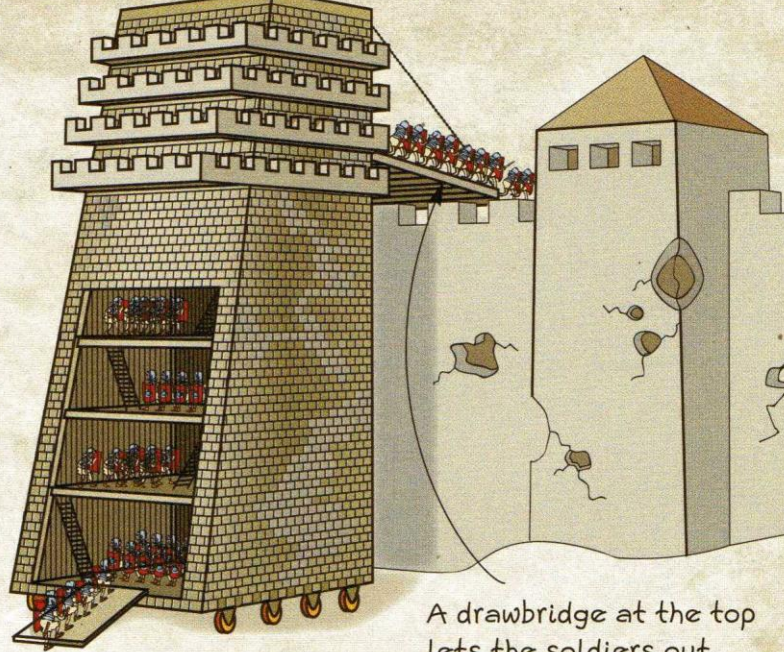


BATTERING RAM: a simple but effective way to break through walls, inside there's a tree trunk suspended from ropes.

"SCORPION" CATAPULT: used to fire bolts and deadly accurate.

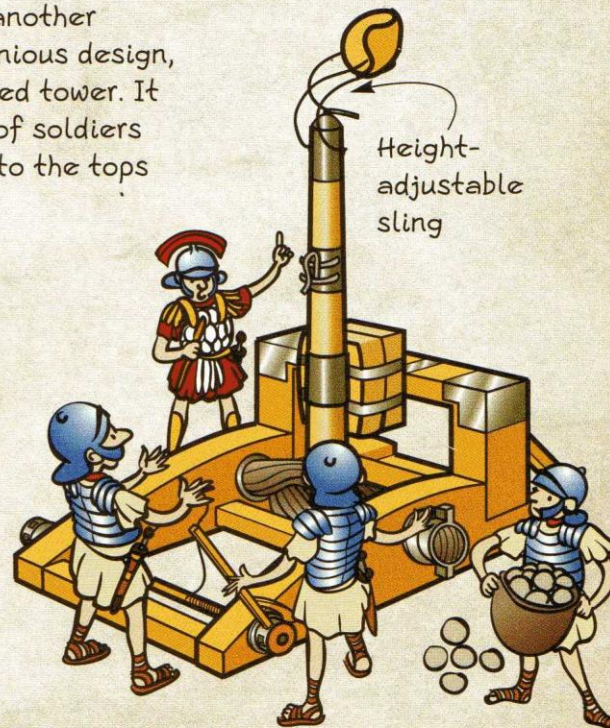
MECHANICAL CROSSBOW: large and stationary but can fire two bolts at once.





A drawbridge at the top lets the soldiers out.

SIEGE TOWER: another simple yet ingenious design, of a tall enclosed tower. It carries dozens of soldiers under cover up to the tops of the walls.



THE ONAGER
(or "Wild Ass")
CATAPULT:
too large to use on a battlefield, this throws massive rocks over 300m (900ft).

Height-adjustable sling

