

## INFANTRY DRILL COMMANDS

1. <b>Command types:</b> a. <u>Cautionary</u> (warning given 3-4 paces before the executive command) b. <u>Executive</u> (given when the right foot is on the ground)	2. <b>Pace Length:</b> a. Quick/slow time 30 inches b. Double time 40 inches	3. <b>Marching Cadence:</b> a. Quick time 120/minute b. Slow time 60/minute c. Double time 180/minute
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Latin Command	English Translation	Details
<b>INITIAL COMMANDS</b>		
Ad signa	Fall in (literally toward the standards)	Grab your shield and pilum and fall-in to the left of the <i>vexillum</i> in a single rank (shoulder-to-shoulder) facing the CO/OC. <i>Ad arma</i> (was used by Caesar). <sup>i</sup>
Silentium	Silence [M]	Cease talking in the ranks.
Mandata captate	Attention or Observe orders [M]	Stand at attention (shoulders back, eyes front). Hold your shield by its grip in your left hand and your pilum vertically in the right (just below the square block).
<b>DRESSING THE RANKS</b>		
Frontem dirigite	Dress the ranks (literally direct the front) [M]	The man holding the standard on the right holds fast while those to his left maintain their shoulders squared to the front & turn their heads right 45°. Extend your right elbow to the man to your right (this will establish [muster/inspection order] spacing of roughly 2' between files on centre). Ensure that the rank forms a straight line with shield bosses facing left, legs together and caligae aligned. If there are two ranks, then 'uno' will dress the first rank and 'duo' the second with 6' spacing between the ranks.
Spatium Date	Close order	Extend your right arm, fist closed, to the shoulder of the man to your right (this increases the lateral spacing to 3' between each soldier).
Laxate	At ease (literally rest)	Set your shield down on edge, rest your pilum butt spike on the ground, and stand at ease with feet apart, shoulders squared and facing the front. Maintain silence.
Intrāte	Transforms one rank into two	Upon hearing the <i>intrate</i> command, the men sound-off from the right (starting with the man beside the signifer) using cardinal numbers <i>unus</i> and <i>duo</i> [not ordinals i.e., first (primus) and second (secundus)]. When the <i>nunc</i> executive command is given, all soldiers numbered duo will take one step back and then shift to the right directly behind the man who had been to his immediate right.
Iungite	Close ranks (literally join) [M]	This tightens up the two ranks created by an intra command. [This provides 3' spacing similar to that achieved by the " <i>spatium date</i> " order.]
Exite	Transforms two ranks into one	Following a " <i>spatium date</i> " order, the rear rank takes one step to the left and then advances to the front creating a single rank.
<b>TURNING AND INCLINING FROM THE HALT</b>		
Ad gladios cline	Right Face	Turn 90° to the right (towards your gladius). With knees braced, pivot using your right heel and left toe ending with your weight on the right foot. Bring your left foot forward and assume attention position.
Ad scuta cline	Left Face	Turn 90° to the left (towards your scutum). This is the reverse of the ad gladius cline.
Transformate	About face (literally change) [M]	Turn to your right 180° (unless you hear "ad scutum, <i>transformate</i> "). Brace your legs and lock your thighs to maintain your balance. Pivot using your right heel and left toe ending with your weight on the right foot. Bring your left foot forward and assume attention position.
<b>MARCHING</b>		
Agmen formate	Form marching column	Form a single (or double) file column. This is the marching formation employed when not in battle.
Ad gladios rotate	Right wheel	While marching, the soldier on the far right stops moving forward, marches in place and starts to rotate slowly clockwise. This soldier, and all others in the rank (except for the one on the far left) looks to his left to make sure he is even with the men to his left. The soldier on the far left looks to his right, along the length of the line, and controls the wheel speed.
Ad scuta rotate	Left Wheel	This counterclockwise left wheel is a reverse of ad gladius rotate.
Movete	March [M]	March to the front. Start with your left foot & a first step of 15" followed by regular 30" paces. The heel touches the ground first.

		If preceded by a command, such as “ <i>ad gladios cline - movete!</i> ” then face the indicated direction and step off to the front. Step can be maintained by calling out “ <i>sin, dex...</i> ”
Accelerate	Speed up	
Tardate	Slow down	
Tarde	Slowly	This is an adverb that can be attached to a command.
State	Halt	The command is issued when the right foot is extended and on the ground. Stop on your left foot, bring your right foot alongside and stand at attention.
COMBAT FORMATION COMMANDS		
Aciem formate	Form battleline	Legions adopted an open formation for advance in battle. The rank(s) face the enemy with shields to the front and pilum ready to volley. File fronts are 3’ (on centre) and ranks are 6’ apart (to allow throwing room for pila). [This provides spacing similar to that achieved by the “ <i>spatium date</i> ” order.]
Cuneum formate	Form wedge	For this manoeuvre some re-enactment groups place their Centurio at the centre of the first rank leading a charge. The men trail off to his left and right which leaves him exposed as a candidate to become the first casualty. The precise Roman formation is unknown.
Orbem formate	Form a circle	When surrounded, legionaries formed a defensive circle with archers and officers in the centre.
Quadratum Formate	Form a square	
Testudinem formate	Form testudo	This formation can be created using as few as six men in three files of two ranks. The front rank is arranged with shields before them and drawn blades projecting between their shields. The second rank raises its shields horizontally and holds them over their heads and the heads of those of the first rank. The formation contracts to form a turtle-like shell. Everyone advances maintaining a uniform step. Cohesion can be assisted with a chant such as Ro-ma, Dex-Sin, etc. The testudo protects men engaged in siege mining or advancing under heavy missile fire.
PILA COMMANDS		
Pila deponite	Lay down your pilum	
Pila tollite	Pick up pilum	
Pila infigite	Plant your pilum	Stick the butt spike into the earth.
Extendite	Move out to both sides	Extend your left and right arms laterally (this increases spacing to 6’ between files on centre and enables a unit to march in formation over rough terrain more easily and discharge their pila without endangering their comrades).
Pila parate	Prepare to throw your pilum	Advance one pace with your right foot, grip your pila and hold at shoulder level parallel to the ground. (NOTE: some re-enactment groups place the left foot forward followed by the commands to grip and raise your pila and cock your arm for throwing).
Pila iacite	Throw your pilum	Advance three steps (left, right, left), thrust off the ground with your back (right) foot and throw. Immediately following the discharge you land on your right foot, draw your sword with your right hand and extend it past your shield, bring your left foot forward, and halt to await orders to charge or receive a charge.
GLADIUS COMMANDS		
Gladios stringite	Draw swords	
Gladios recondite	Sheath swords	
ATTACK COMMANDS		
Ordinem servate	Keep your position [M] (literally preserve the order)	Hold fast.
Exspectate	Wait for it	
Parate	Prepare	While facing the enemy (typically the spectators) with swords drawn, prepare to attack.
Parati	Ready [M]	
Porro	Attack (literally forward)	Maintain the ranks and advance at double pace with your sword drawn.
Clamate	Battle-Cry (literally cry-out)	Barbarians (i.e. Germans) relied upon their battle cries (barites) to bolster the courage of their troops; however, the Romans recognized that noise contributes to confusion and command loss. Whereas early Roman armies (i.e. Republican

		period) banged their shields and yelled as they advanced, in the Principate they were silent until the pila discharge. Goldsworthy (in his book <i><b>The Complete Roman Army</b></i> ) provides the following sequence of events - at 30-50'pila were discharged, a <i><b>shout</b></i> was given, the cornu was sounded and the men charged. The combined pila volley and "last minute scream" unnerved the enemy. If their opponents did not flee then the lines clashed. Silence reigned at all other times.
OTHER		
Sinistro	Left	Often precedes a marching command.
Tacete	Be silent	Verb
Tacite	Quietly	This is an adverb that can be attached to a command.
Nunc	Now	Execute the preceding command. (i.e., ad gladios cline – nunc)
Vos Dimitto	I dismiss you	

## ARTILLERY DRILL COMMANDS

Ballistam/Catapultam Parate	Prepare the Piece for Firing
Catapultam Torquete	Wind the Piece
Sagittam Ponite	Load the Piece
Catapultam Dirigite	Aim the Piece
Parate	Prepare to Fire
Dimittite	Fire
Tutam Reddite	Secure the Piece

## Command Verbs Present Imperative Active

Conjugation	Verb	Meaning	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	Accelerō, āre	Speed up	Accelerā	Accelerāte
	Capt-ō, āre	To try, strive, allure	Captā	Captāte
	Clin-ō, āre	To incline, bend, sink	Clinā	Clināte
	Clamō, āre	Battle-cry	Clamā	Clamāte
	Dō, āre	Give	Dā	Date
	Exspecto, āre	Exspect	Exspectā	Exspectāte
	Form-ō, āre	To form	Formā	Formāte
	Intr-ō, āre	To penetrate	Intrā	Intrāte
	Lax-ō, āre	To relax, extend, widen	Laxā	Laxāte
	Parō, āre	Prepare	Parā	Parāte
	Rot-ō, āre	To wheel, to turn	Rotā	Rotāte
	Servō, āre	Watch, guard	Servā	Servāte
	Sto, āre	Stand still	Stā	Stāte
	Tard-ō, āre	Slow down	Tarde	Tardāte
	Transform-ō, āre	To change in shape	Transformā	Transformāte
	Voc-ō, āre	To call out	Vocā	Vocāte
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mov ēō, ēre	To move	Movē	Movēte
	Tac eō, ēre	Be silent	Tacē	Tacēte
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Dīmītto, ēre	Release	Dīmītte	Dīmīttite
	Dē-pō-nō, ēre	To lay down	Dēpōne	Dēpōnite
	Dī-rīgō, ēre	Line up	Dīrige	Dīrigite
	Extendō, ēre	To extend	Extendē	Extendite
	Iacio-ēre	Throw	Iace	Iacite
	Infigo, ēre	Plant	Infige	Infigite
	Iungō, ēre	Join together, unite	Iunge	Iungite
	Recondo, ēre	Sheath	Reconde	Recondite
4 <sup>th</sup>	Stringō, ēre	Draw	Stringe	Stringite
	Tollō, ēre	Lift up	Tolle	Tollite
	Part-iō, ire	To share or distribute	Parti	Partīte
	Irregular	Ex-ēō, ire	Come, sail, march, emerge	Exīte

Note that long vowels become short before M, R, T, etc.

<sup>i</sup> The Roman Army by Pat Southern, p 335. Ad signa was later the term reserved for the “deduction from military pay to the burial club”.