Infantry Commands of Legio XXI Rapax

General information

Below we present selected Roman commands in Latin, used by Legio XXI Rapax both during drill and during the execution of other camp duties, as well as when carrying out actions in combat and on the ***Campvs Martivs.***

The commands have been grouped by category and may be used in any situation, depending on the commander's decision. For example, an officer may order the soldiers to sing both on the march and in camp, while turns may be performed while standing in formation at assembly, as well as during a march.

> It is worth noting here that, when reconstructing a legion from the 1st century AD, we try to pronounce words as they were pronounced at that time. For this purpose, we use the principles of the pronunciation of so-called restored Latin (*latina restitvta*). Therefore, during our conversations you are more likely to hear: kenturio, salłe, and kajsar... rather than centurio, salwe, and cezar. Learning the rules of pronunciation will make it easier to read the Latin expressions below correctly.

Commands

ASSEMBLY

Milites! Ad arma! - Soldiers! To arms! Alarm!
Signifer veni - Standard-bearer, present yourself
Ad signvm / Ad signa venite - Come to the standard / to the standards; Assembly!
Avdite me - Listen to me
Silentivm! - Silence!
State - Attention
Laxate - Stand at ease
Envmerate - Count off
Ad dvos / tres nvmerate - Count off by twos / threes
Enominate - Give your names
Adsvm - Present
Acies - Line, battle formation

Vnvs ordo - One rank
Dvo / tres ordines formate- Form two / three ranks
Primvs / secvndvs / novissimvs ordo - First / second / last rank
Agmen - Marching column
Dvos / tres agmina formate- Form two / three columns
Vnvs / dvo / tres passvs (gradvs) procedite - Advance one / two / three double steps (single steps)
Qvattvor / qvinqve / sex passvs (gradvs) recidite - Move back four, five, six double steps (single steps)
Salvtate - Salute
Spectate ad frontem - Look straight ahead
Spectate ad dextram / sinistram - Look to the right / left
Dirigite - Align yourselves
Dirigite ad dextram / sinistram - Align to the right / left
Arma (scvta / pila) svrsvm / deorsvm - Weapons (shields / javelins) up / down
Arma (scvta / pila) deponite / svmite - Put down / pick up weapons (shields / javelins)
Abite - Dismiss
Silentivm - silence!

ON THE MARCH AND IN COMBAT

In aeqvatis passibvs / Sine passvs pergite - March in step / march without step
Ad dextram / sinistram vertite - turn right / left
Convertite - Turn around
Dvplicate - Double the formation
In acie ad dextram / sinistram pergite - Move [rotate] in formation to the right / left
In agmine ad dextram / sinistram vertite - Turn the column right / left
Ad signvm ad dextram / sinistram pergite - Follow the standard to the right / left
Ad Optionem / Centvrionem pergite - Follow the Optio / Centvrio
In loco calcate - March in place
Recta - Straight ahead
Consistite - Halt
Conglobate / Densate - Close up
In agmine / ordinibvs laxate - Loosen the column / ranks
In agmine / ordinibvs densate - Close up the column / ranks
Sine principalibvs pergite - March without the officers
Transite - “Pass through each other”;
description of the manoeuvre: the left wing turns 90 degrees to the right, and the right wing turns 90 degrees to the left, and they pass through each other through the gaps between the columns.
Mvta locvm - Change place; *descriptively:* a 180-degree change in the direction of march of the formation; each soldier individually follows his own column,
In duas partes separate - “Divide into two parts”;
description of the manoeuvre: the right and left sides of the formation from the Principales operate separately as two distinct units, each having its own assigned commanders directing their actions in the further part of the demonstration until the centvria is reunited.
Gladios stringite - Draw swords

Gladios recondite - Sheathe swords
Pila praeparate - Prepare javelins [for throwing]
Pila iacite - Throw javelins
Pila infigite - Drive the javelins into the ground
Retro - Repeat; *descriptively:* return to the previous position
Cvrrite - At the run
Accelerate - Speed up
Tardate - Slow down
Pvgna! Praeparate! - To arms! Prepare yourselves!
Porro! - Attack! [charge in formation]!

FORMATIONS

Testvdinem formate / deformate - Form / break the tortoise formation
Cvnevm formate - Form a wedge
Orbem formate - Form a circular formation
Pontem formate - Form a ramp
Ad orbem! - To the circle!
Scvta castrorvm formate - Shield wall

IN CAMP

Adportate aqvam / lignvm - Bring water / firewood
Date aqvam / lignvm - Give water / firewood
Nvntio me! Mvnvs factvm - I report! Task completed
Me volo campvm / latrinam / tentorivm / silvam ire - I would like to go to the field / to the latrine / to the tent / to the forest
Permitto / Non permitto - I permit / I do not permit
Excvbia prima ab secvnda ad qvartam horam - First watch from the second to the fourth hour
Svrgite! - Wake up! [but also: Rise, Stand up, for example from the ground]
Dormite - Go to sleep
Cantate - Sing
Omnes tirones / milites - All recruits / soldiers
Laborate - Work
Sedete - Sit down
Videte - Watch, look
Tentoria stativte / detendite - Pack / pitch the tents
In tentorium / tentoria - Into the tent / tents
Extingvite lvmina - Extinguish the lights
Orate - Pray

Learning all these expressions and performing them correctly does not by any means mark the end of Latin study for a recruit. It is difficult at our meetings to get by without basic knowledge of Roman numerals, both cardinal and ordinal, and in particular of the Latin names of all elements of weaponry and camp equipment.

We invite you to read the next articles **in the Latin language section**.

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