

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, salte, and kajzar... rather than centurio, salve, and cesar. 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 / qvinque / 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 / Centvrrio

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! Mvns 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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