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# ROMAN CHALLENGE



 Orpheus



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## Your challenge



**T**HE ROMAN EMPIRE is getting bigger by the day. Its great success in conquering new lands is due mainly to the superb organization and fighting skills of its army, and the leadership abilities of its generals. Rome wants new lands in its Empire to bring in wealth such as food and natural resources – copper, tin, iron and precious metals – as well as slaves, goods and taxes.

**Y**our challenge, as a general in the Roman army, is to conquer a barbarian region and make it part of the Empire. If you are successful, the rewards will be great. Victorious army leaders can become governors of their conquered provinces. As a governor you will be very rich and powerful. But you will be expected to govern wisely, keep the peace, collect fair taxes and build new, civilized towns for people to live in.



**T**his book will guide you in conquering your province. You will meet the different types of soldiers under your command and see how your army is organized. You will be shown how to plan your attack on the barbarians, how to march with your large army, and how to set up camps and forts for your men. Once victory is yours, learn how to build proper roads and towns in your province, and how to deal fairly with the people you have conquered. Finally, if all goes well, you'll see your province prospering and bringing wealth to the glorious Roman Empire.

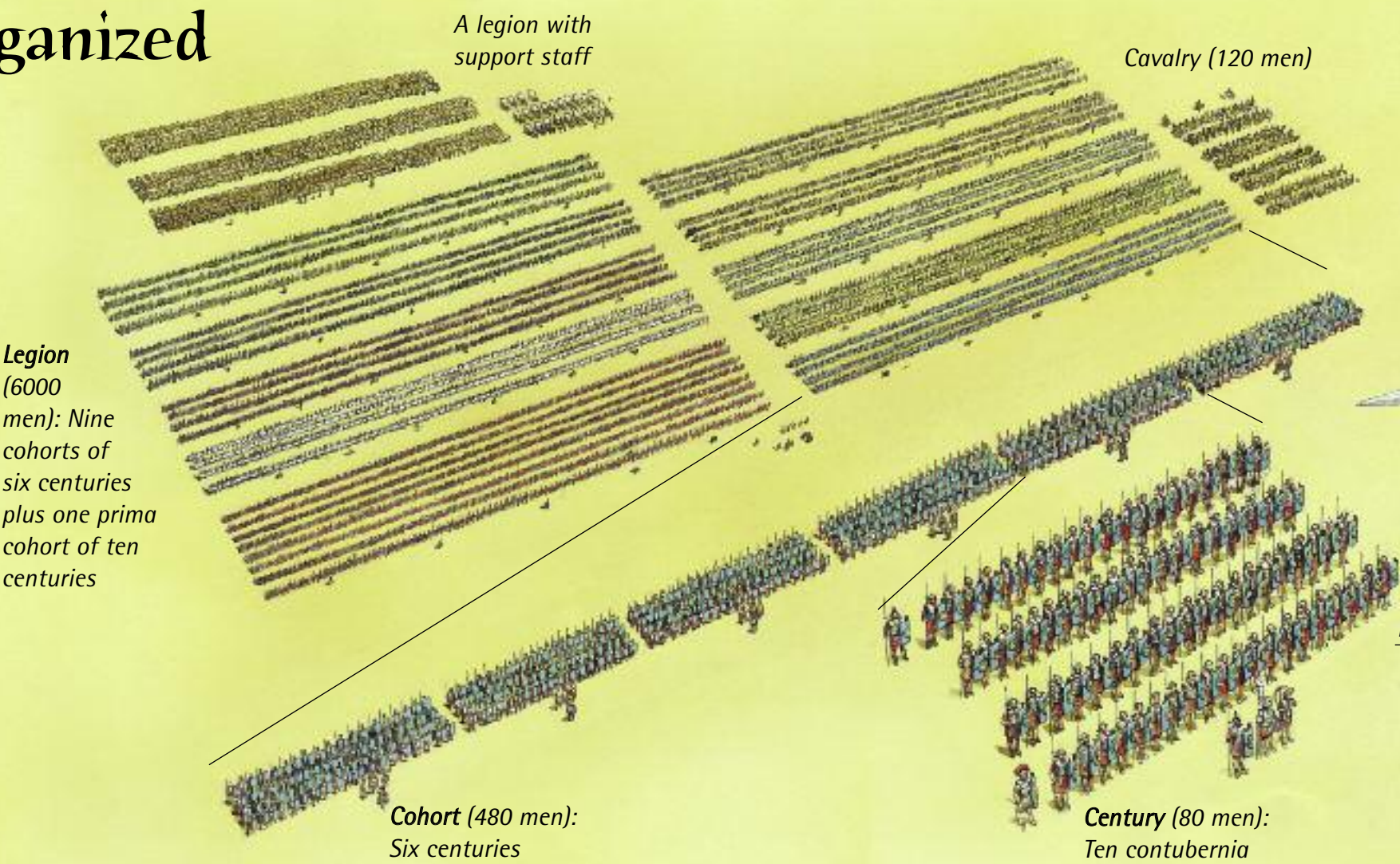




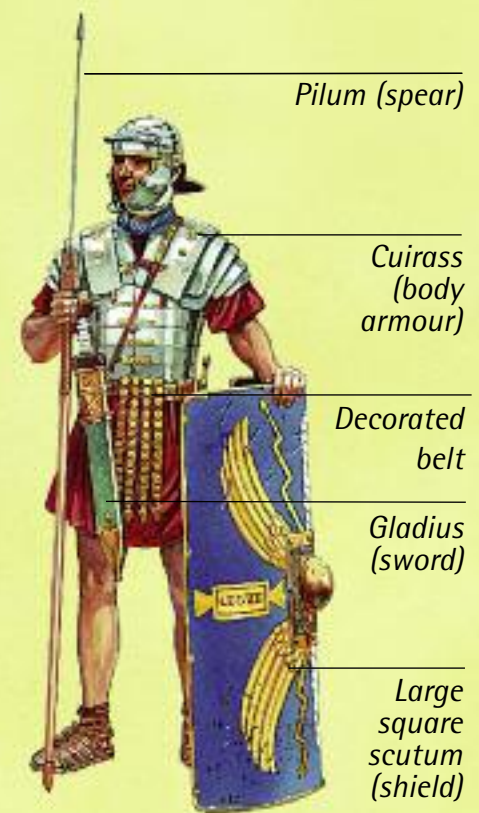
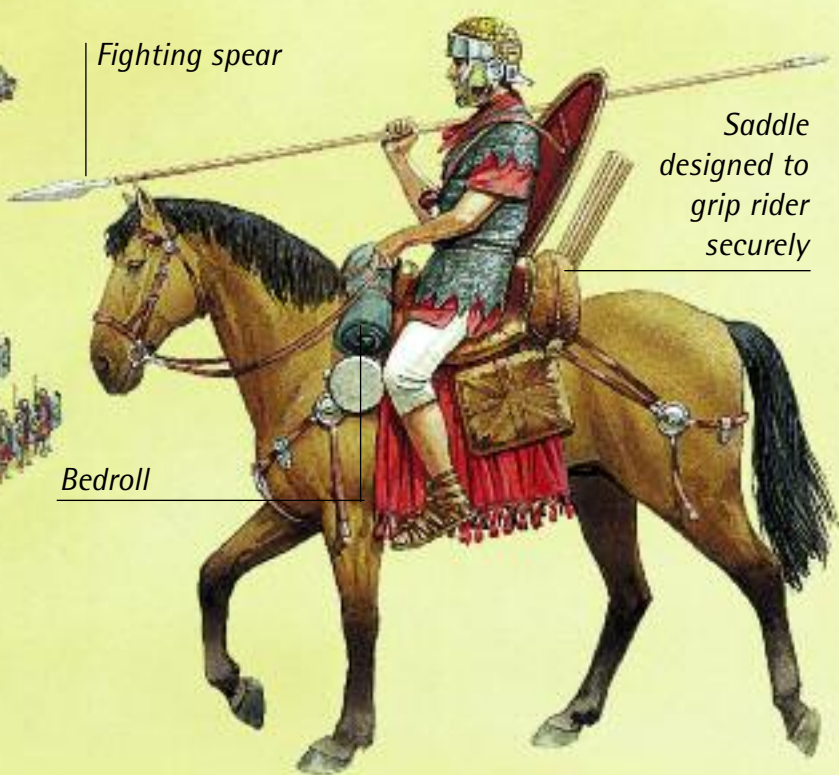
# How the army is organized

The Roman army is the most professional, organized, well-trained and best-equipped fighting force in the western world. It is divided into legions, which are made up of cohorts, centuries and contubernia.

The contubernium is the army's basic unit. It consists of eight soldiers who will live, train and fight together throughout their time as legionaries. Ten contubernia (that's 80 men) make up a century, commanded by a centurion. Six centuries make up a standard cohort. In each legion of 6000 men there are nine standard cohorts plus one special cohort, called the prima cohort, which is made up of 10 centuries, or 800 men.



There are about 120 cavalry soldiers in the legion. They often come from wealthy families. The cavalry soldier carries a sword, a one-handed fighting spear and several smaller spears, called javelins, for throwing.

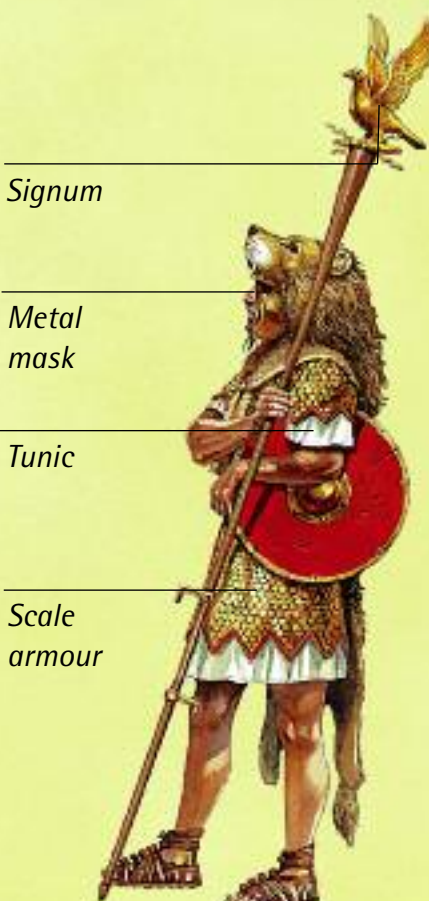


**The legionary is a basic footsoldier. Legionaries are Roman citizens, they must be at least 1.75 m tall, and physically fit with good eyesight. Wages are good, and the army pays for their food, clothing and weapons.**



**The signifer carries the century's standard. He also organizes the soldiers' "burial club". Legionaries pay a small amount of their salary each week into this fund towards the cost of their funeral.**

**The aquilifer carries the standard of the legion – a gold or silver eagle. Standard bearers have a great responsibility not to lose the standard in battle. This would bring disgrace to the whole legion.**



**The centurion is in command of a century. Centurions are paid well and wear silvered armour. Their plumed helmet shows their rank. They carry a crooked stick made of vine to beat disobedient soldiers with.**



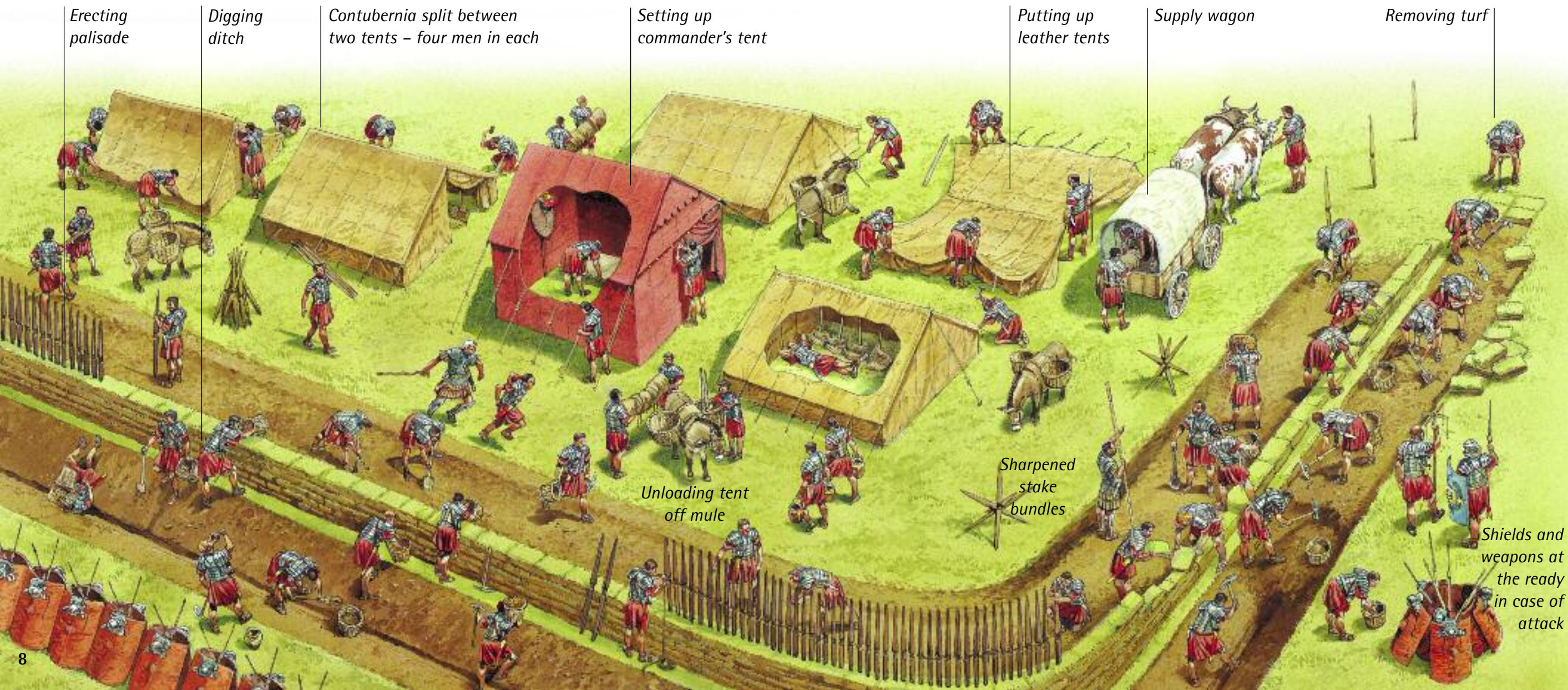
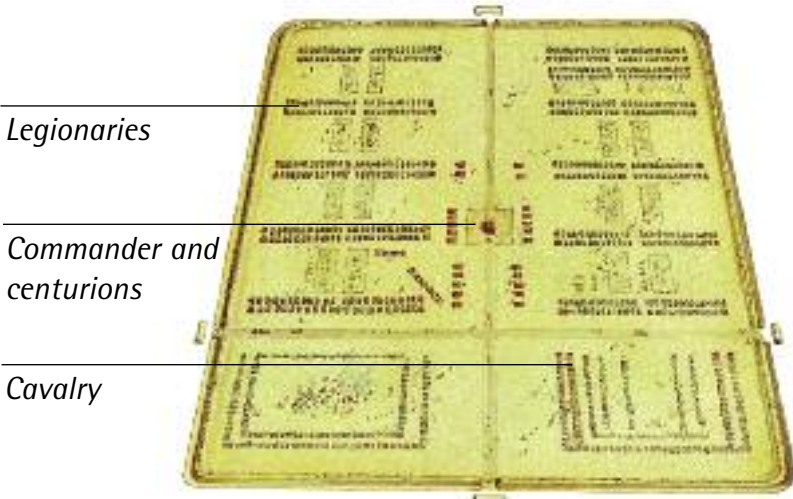


# Marching camp

You should aim to march 30 kilometres a day to get your army to its destination. Any more and you risk over-tiring your men. Each day, as evening approaches, send out scouts to find and mark out a suitable site to make camp. Remember, it will take about two hours to set up camp, and ideally you want to complete this while it is still light. Your men will carry most of the things they need and should be well drilled in what they have to do. For maximum efficiency, ensure the layout of the camp is the same each night. This also means the men will be always able to find their way around after dark.



Legionaries have to carry all their personal supplies and equipment, such as rations, a pick axe, weapons, shield, basket, water bottle, cooking pan, razor and comb. Their heavy leather tents are carried by mules. An army column includes scouts, which go ahead of the main army, standard bearers, camp builders, legionaries, generals, baggage mules, cavalry and auxiliaries – additional soldiers recruited for the campaign.

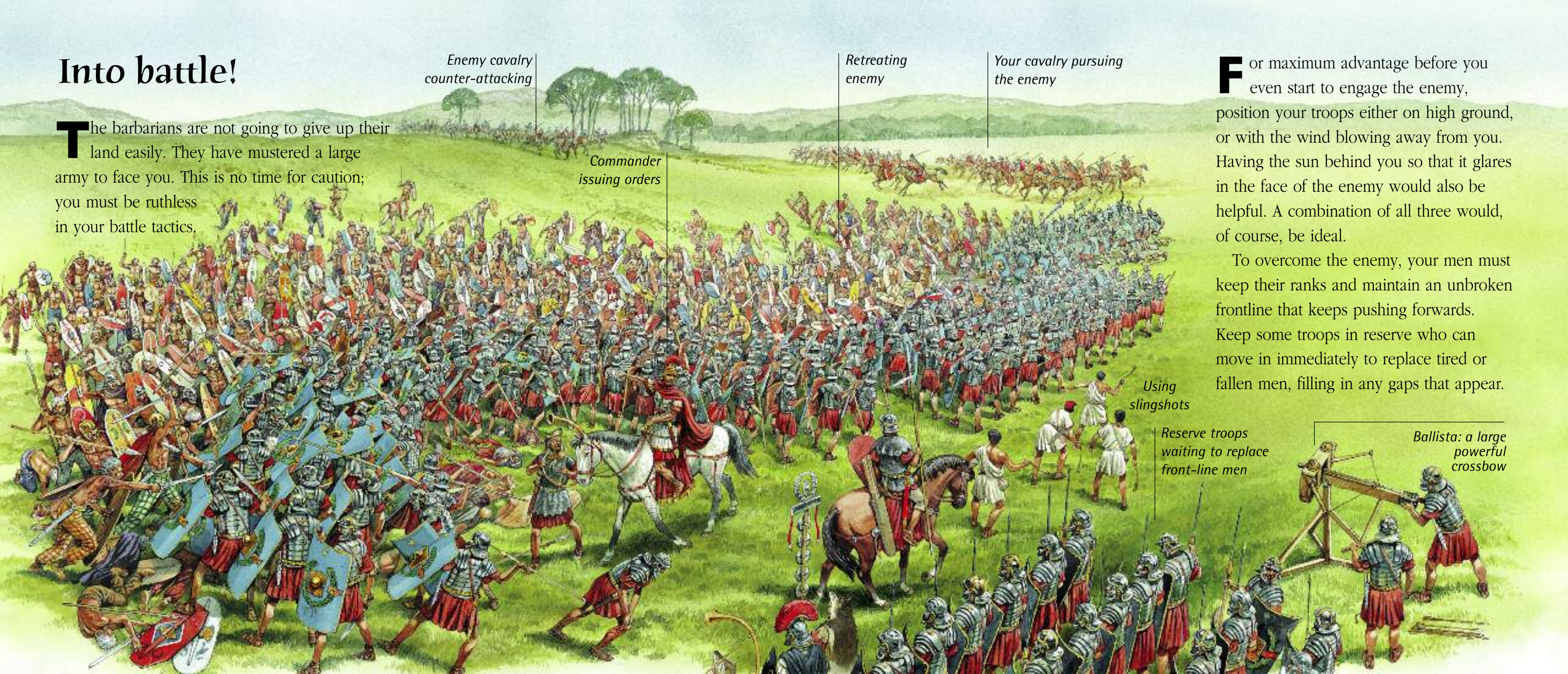


If you plan to camp for several days, make the camp secure by clearing turf and digging a defensive ditch around it. Build ramparts from the turf and set a palisade of sharpened stakes on top. For a temporary defence on overnight camps, create a barrier with bundles of sharpened stakes around the camp edge to deter intruders. Detail one century to stand guard overnight. Check supplies and get the cooks busy – your men need to be well fed to march and fight.



# Into battle!

The barbarians are not going to give up their land easily. They have mustered a large army to face you. This is no time for caution; you must be ruthless in your battle tactics.



Enemy cavalry counter-attacking

Commander issuing orders

Retreating enemy

Your cavalry pursuing the enemy

For maximum advantage before you even start to engage the enemy, position your troops either on high ground, or with the wind blowing away from you. Having the sun behind you so that it glares in the face of the enemy would also be helpful. A combination of all three would, of course, be ideal.

To overcome the enemy, your men must keep their ranks and maintain an unbroken frontline that keeps pushing forwards. Keep some troops in reserve who can move in immediately to replace tired or fallen men, filling in any gaps that appear.

Using slingshots

Reserve troops waiting to replace front-line men

Ballista: a large powerful crossbow



Pilum (throwing spear)

Scutum (shield)

Gladius (sword)

Belt with apron of studded leather strips

Dagger

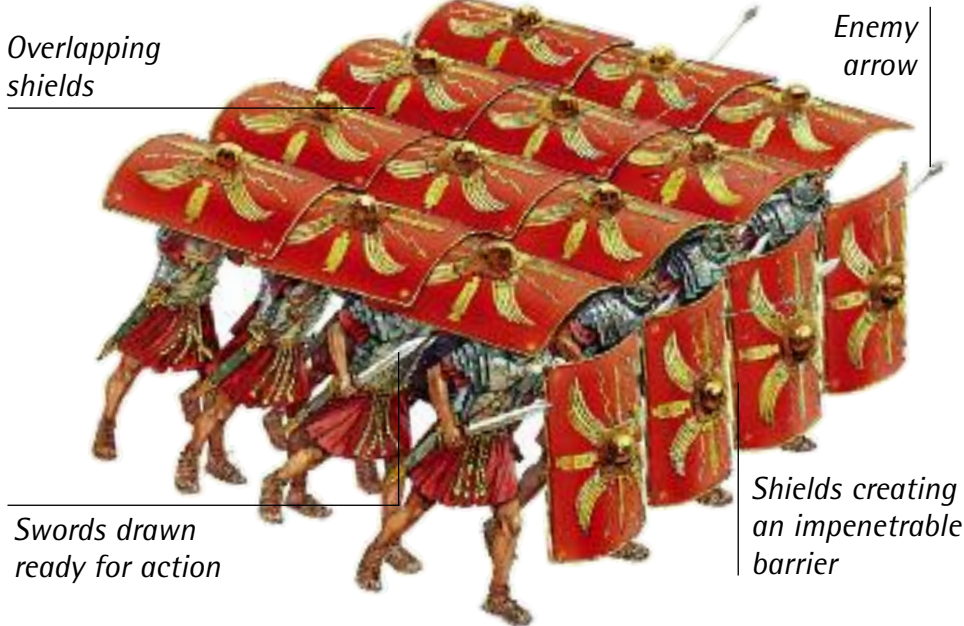
All men use their weapons in their right hand and their shield in their left. There isn't room in tight fighting formations to have some the other way round. Javelins can be launched at the enemy over the heads of your own men. Sword fighting is for combat at close quarters. The shield protects the body so that only the fighting arm is exposed.



Cuirass (body armour)

Tunic

Sandals



Overlapping shields

Swords drawn ready for action

Enemy arrow

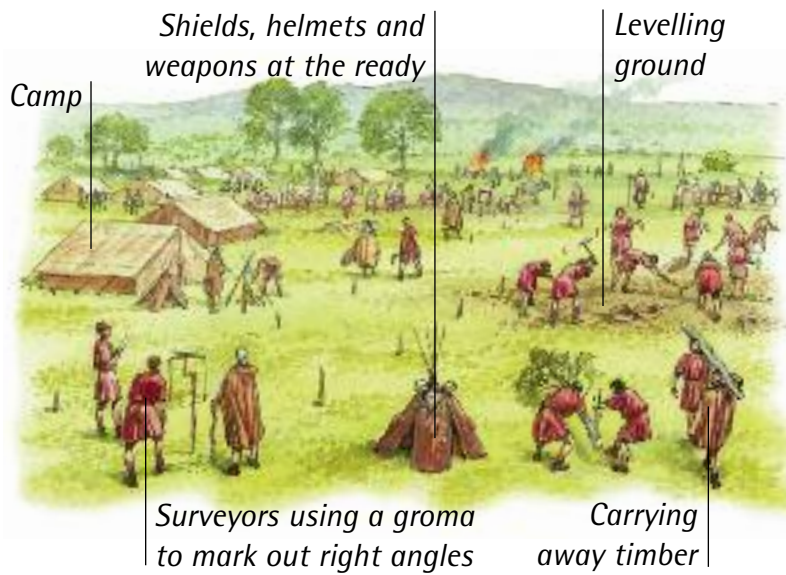
Shields creating an impenetrable barrier

This is the testudo, which means tortoise. Your men march in close formation, overlapping their shields both over their heads and in front of them. This forms an almost impenetrable barrier, protecting the men from arrows and spears as they advance towards the enemy. The testudo is very useful during a siege to get close to the target.



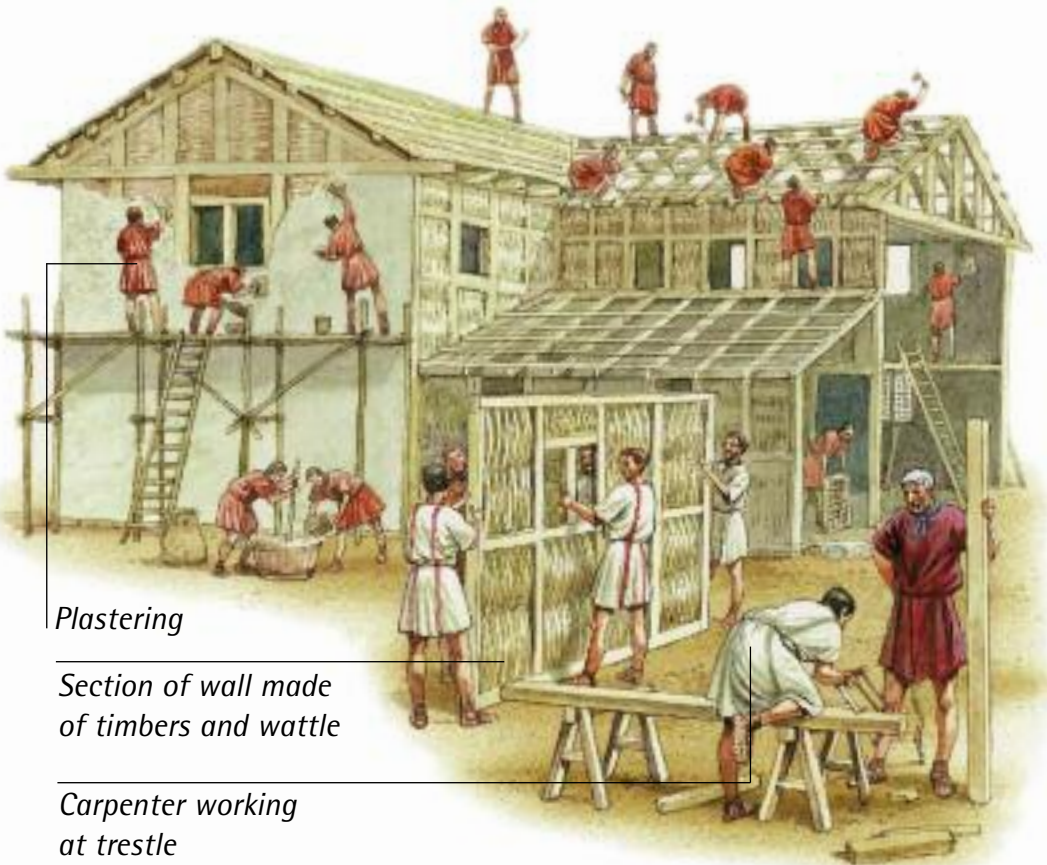
# Building a fort

After the battle has been won, it is essential that you secure your gains as soon as possible. By all means, give your soldiers a chance to celebrate their victory – and mourn the deaths of their comrades. But impress upon them the urgent need to build a fort to protect the area. Issue the command to start building works the very next day. It is very likely that enemy forces will regroup and attempt to win back their lands. A delay could result in heavy losses in this hostile terrain. The fort will provide a permanent base for a unit of around 500 men.

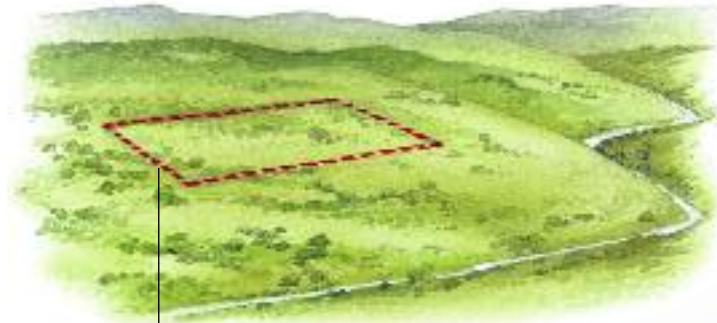


Your first task is to choose a suitable site for the fort. This should be on high ground, forcing the enemy to climb a slope to make an attack. Have the ground levelled and cleared of trees and bushes. Your surveyors should stake out the layout of the main roads and buildings.

2 Next, construct the fort's defences. Command a group of your men to dig the fortification ditches and strip turf from the whole area. The rubble and earth should be used to build the ramparts. At the same time, get other men to collect timber for the buildings. The carpenters should then start cutting the timber to shape.



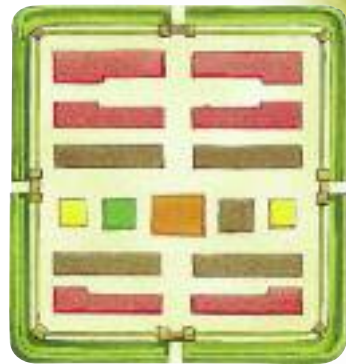
3 The walls of the buildings should be built in sections, which are fitted into place later. Each section has a wooden “skeleton” filled in with wattle (interwoven sticks) and daub (rough plaster). The walls are fixed to thick posts and given a coating of smooth plaster. They are painted to look like blocks of stone.



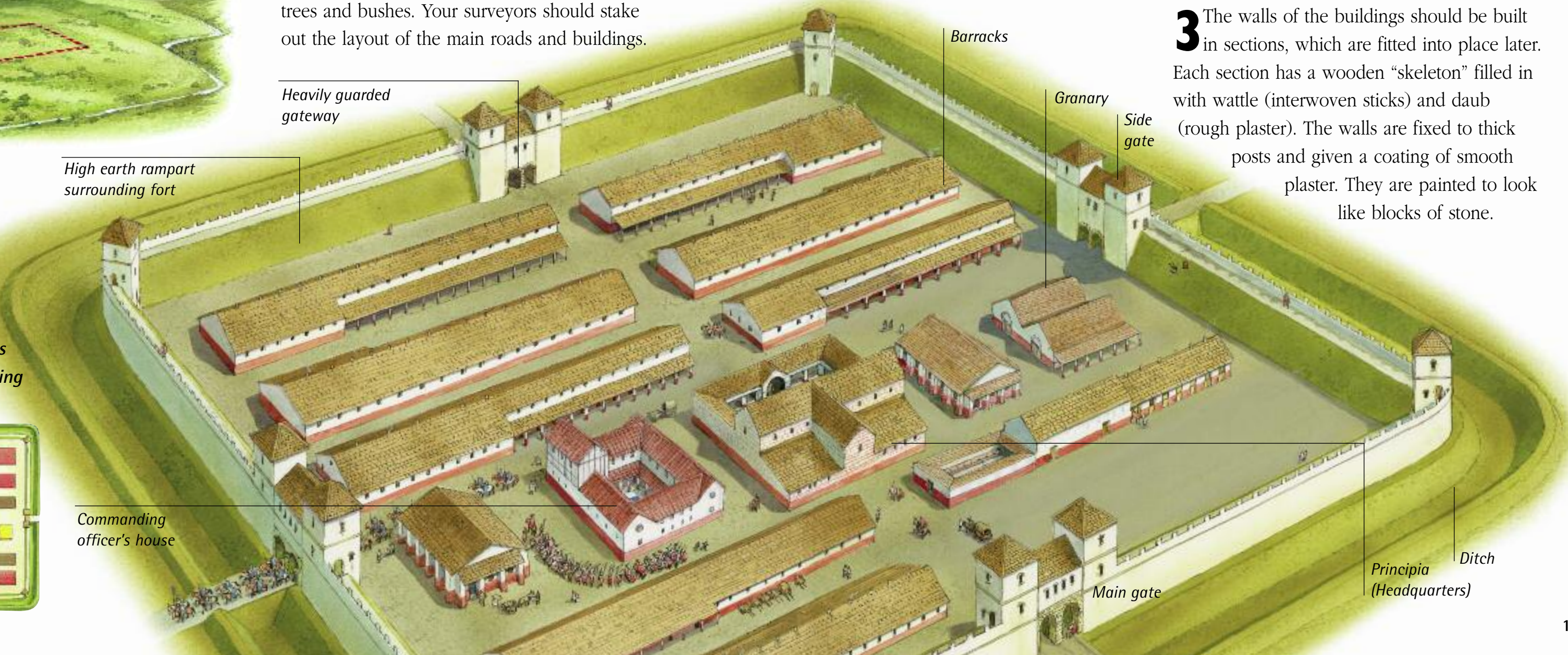
Site of fort

High earth rampart surrounding fort

- KEY TO PLAN
- Barracks
  - HQ
  - Granary
  - Workshops
  - Commanding officer

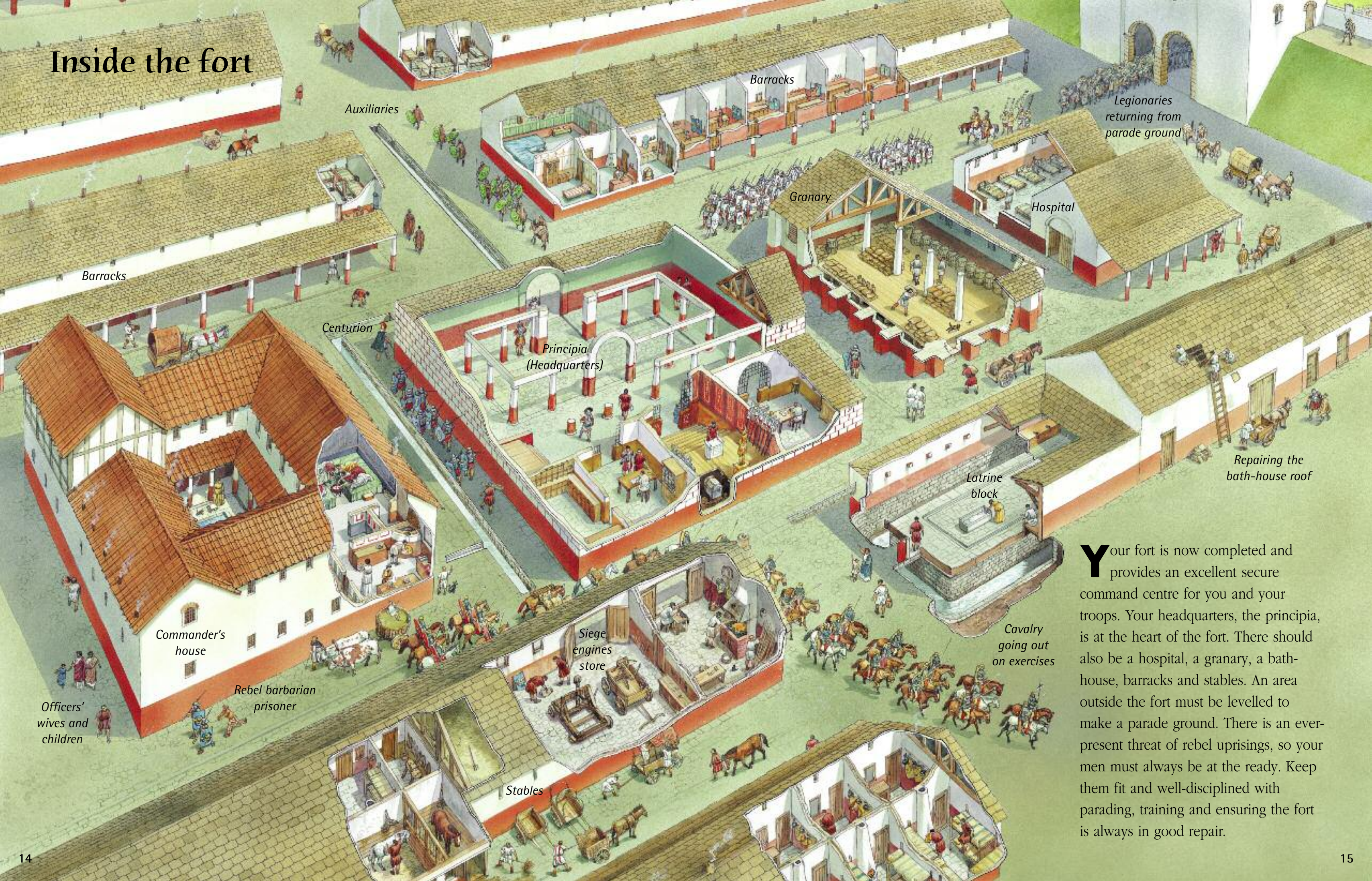


Commanding officer's house





# Inside the fort



# Inside the fort

Officers' wives and children

Rebel barbarian prisoner

Commander's house

Centurion

Principia (Headquarters)

Siege engines store

Stables

Barracks

Granary

Hospital

Latrine block

Cavalry going out on exercises

Legionaries returning from parade ground

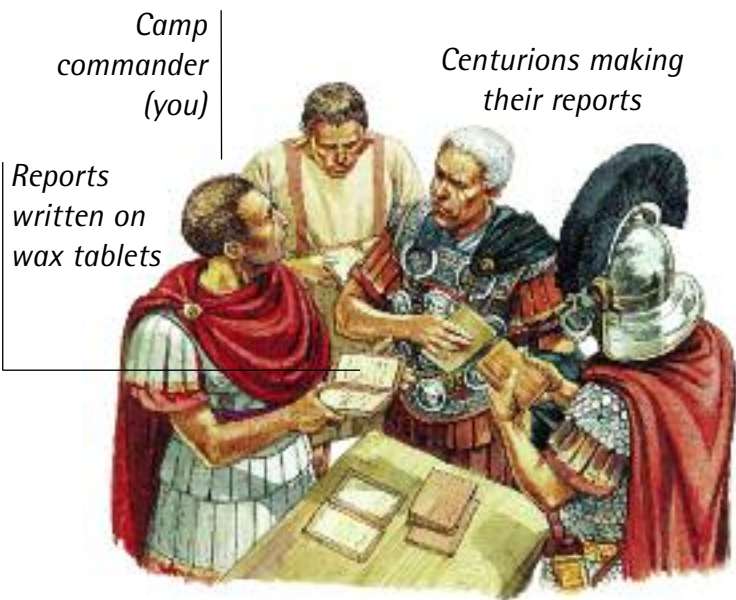
Repairing the bath-house roof

Your fort is now completed and provides an excellent secure command centre for you and your troops. Your headquarters, the principia, is at the heart of the fort. There should also be a hospital, a granary, a bath-house, barracks and stables. An area outside the fort must be levelled to make a parade ground. There is an ever-present threat of rebel uprisings, so your men must always be at the ready. Keep them fit and well-disciplined with parading, training and ensuring the fort is always in good repair.



# Daily life in the fort

*Your men must be kept busy while they are in camp. There is plenty to be done, and the men need to keep fit, disciplined and focused. There is a mix of experienced men and raw recruits in the legion. The trainees in particular need to use their time practising their fighting skills.*



The day starts with the morning report. All centurions must give you, as camp commander, a written account listing how many men are available for work, and what tasks have already been given out. You then discuss the duties for the day and divide them up between the centuries. Finally, you tell the centurions the day's password. This is to maintain security. Without the password, soldiers who leave the camp will not be allowed back in.



Line up your men for inspection on the parade ground before the centurions give them their tasks for the day. Your centurions should reprimand any legionary who is not properly dressed and equipped. Legionaries must train every day. Make sure new recruits are taught fighting skills and spend several hours a day in practice. Until they have learned proper control of their weapons they should use wooden swords and practise moves against a training stake. They could easily injure each other if they used real weapons at this stage.

Your army is still putting down pockets of resistance in the province so injuries are common. Medical aid in the camp hospital is basic. Wounds are cauterized (burnt to seal them) or sewn up, and broken bones put in a splint. If necessary, the surgeon will amputate badly injured limbs. The medical staff will use wine to dull pain and herbal remedies to aid healing.



Your legionaries are not permitted to have wives or families at the fort—it would distract them from their duties. You and your centurions are, however, allowed this



Maintaining discipline is vital. Your soldiers must obey orders instantly. Disobedience, incompetence and laziness must not be tolerated. A centurion will beat any soldier who steps out of line. Remember, if a man deserts, then ten of his century's soldiers should be executed as a punishment. Such measures will help you maintain complete obedience.



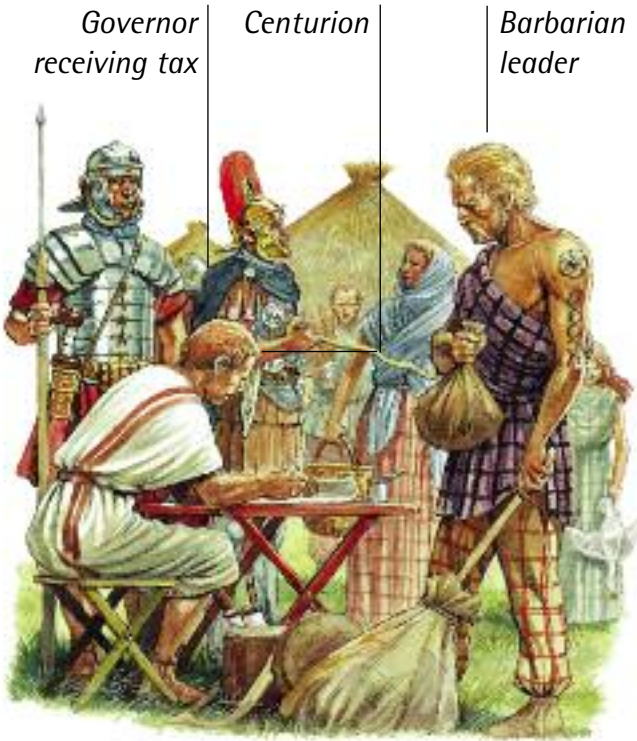


# Ruling the land

*You must waste no time in turning this barbarian land into a civilized Roman province. You may find the local population resistant at first, so a firm approach is vital. But remember that one of the secrets of the Empire's success is its tolerance. Keep order, but let the people continue to follow their own customs and religions. You need to assess the wealth of the land and the people so that they can pay a fair tax to Rome. Introduce Roman coinage to help integrate your province into the Empire.*

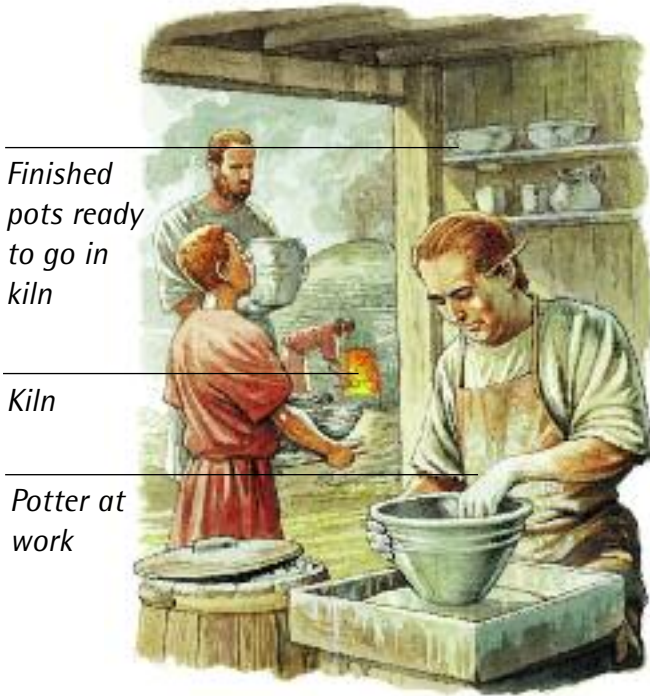
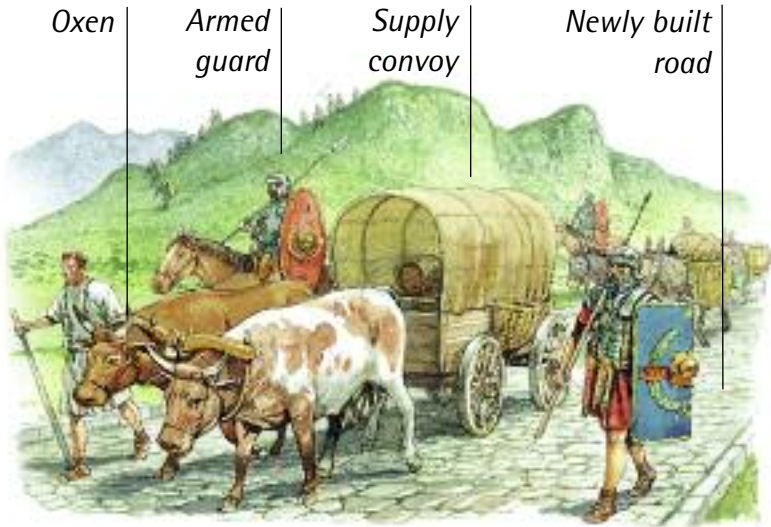


**B**egin a building programme at once. Over time, the fort will expand into a proper town. If you are near the coast, you may need to build a port. Money from taxes can be used to construct public buildings such as bath-houses, a basilica (town hall), granaries and an amphitheatre. The streets should be laid out in an ordered grid pattern for ease of access, and paved so that they don't turn to mud in wet weather. Building a water and sewerage system is another important part of bringing the Roman way of life to your province.



**R**ome demands that all provinces pay tax – a proportion of their wealth. Some of this will go back to Rome, but you can use some to fund your Romanizing programme. Do not over-tax and do not take bribes – you must be seen to be fair to gain trust and respect. Tax may be taken in the form of crops and goods as well as coins.

**I**t is essential that supplies can get to you easily and safely. Your road-building programme is the first step towards this (see pages 20–21). If the local people are still hostile towards you they may attack supply trains, so ensure these are always provided with an armed guard. In time, you will probably wish to import valuable luxury items, such as wine and glass, from other parts of the Empire.



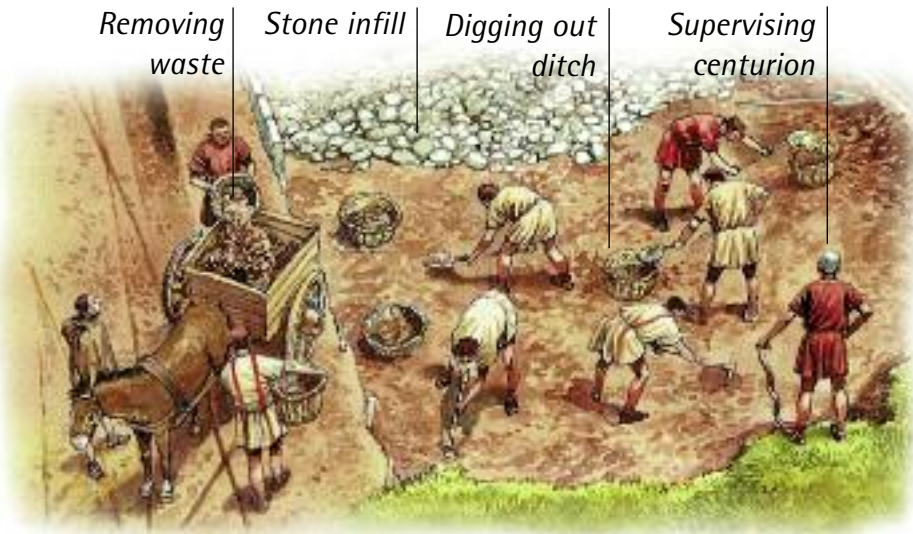
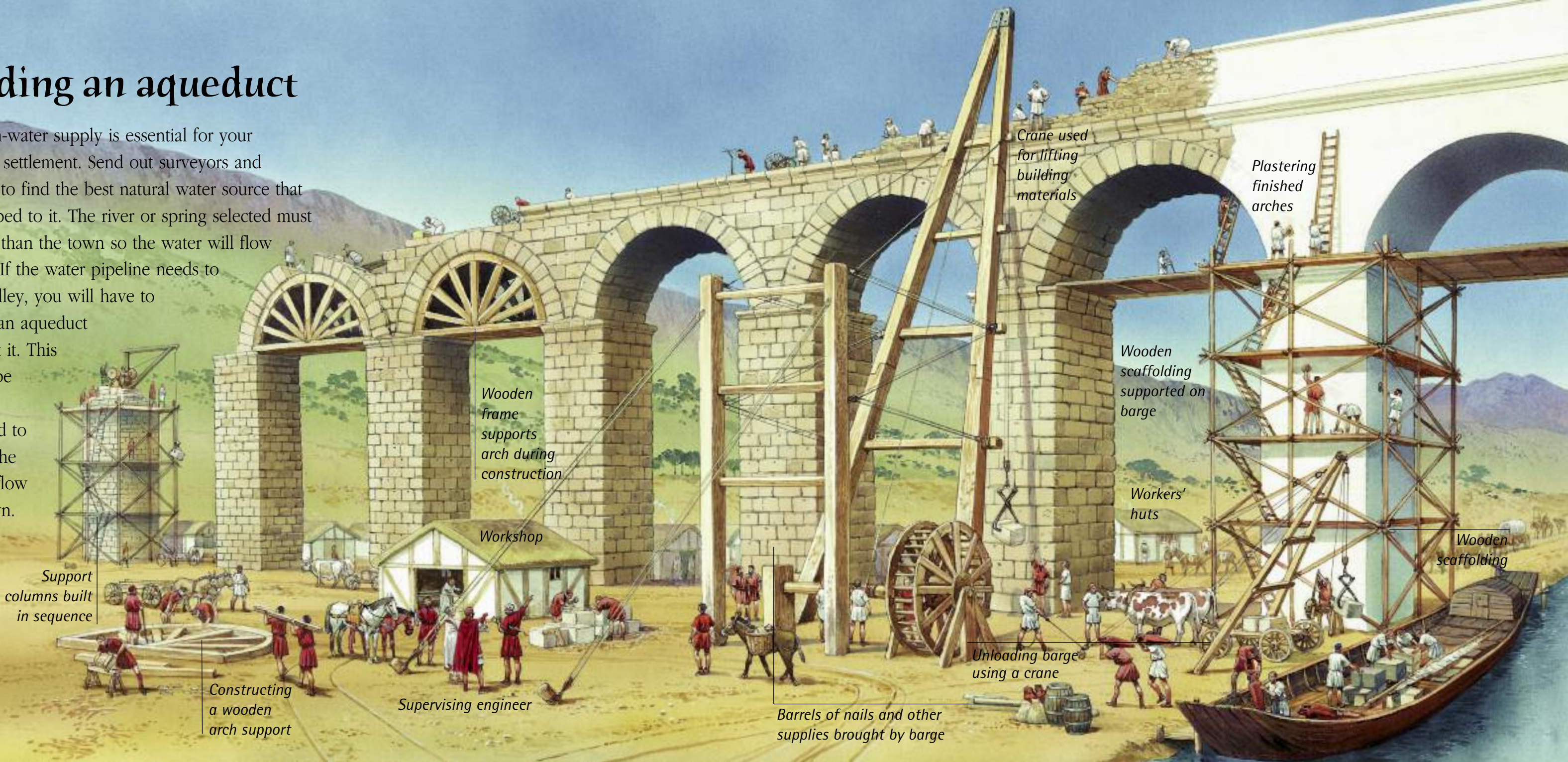
**Y**ou will need craftsmen, such as carpenters, leatherworkers, smiths and potters, to provide the town with goods and services. You will have brought some with you, but integrate local people by encouraging them to set up businesses in the town as well.



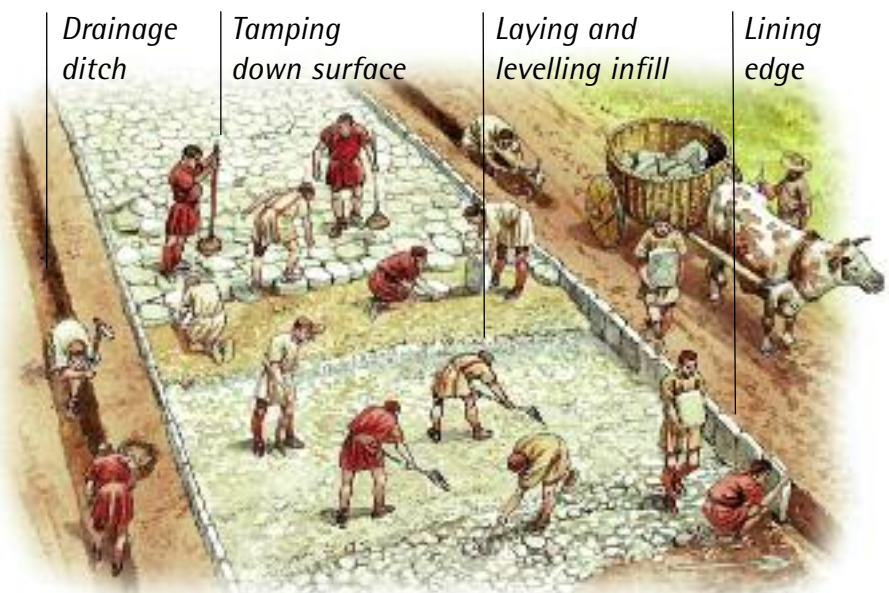


# Building an aqueduct

A fresh-water supply is essential for your new settlement. Send out surveyors and engineers to find the best natural water source that can be piped to it. The river or spring selected must be higher than the town so the water will flow downhill. If the water pipeline needs to cross a valley, you will have to construct an aqueduct to support it. This needs to be carefully engineered to maintain the downhill flow to the town.



*One of your first tasks will be to improve and extend the roads in your province, so that your men and supplies can move around easily. Your surveyors should plot the course of the road as straight as possible, as this will be the shortest route. To construct the road, dig out a trench and stamp it down. Level it with a layer of sand.*



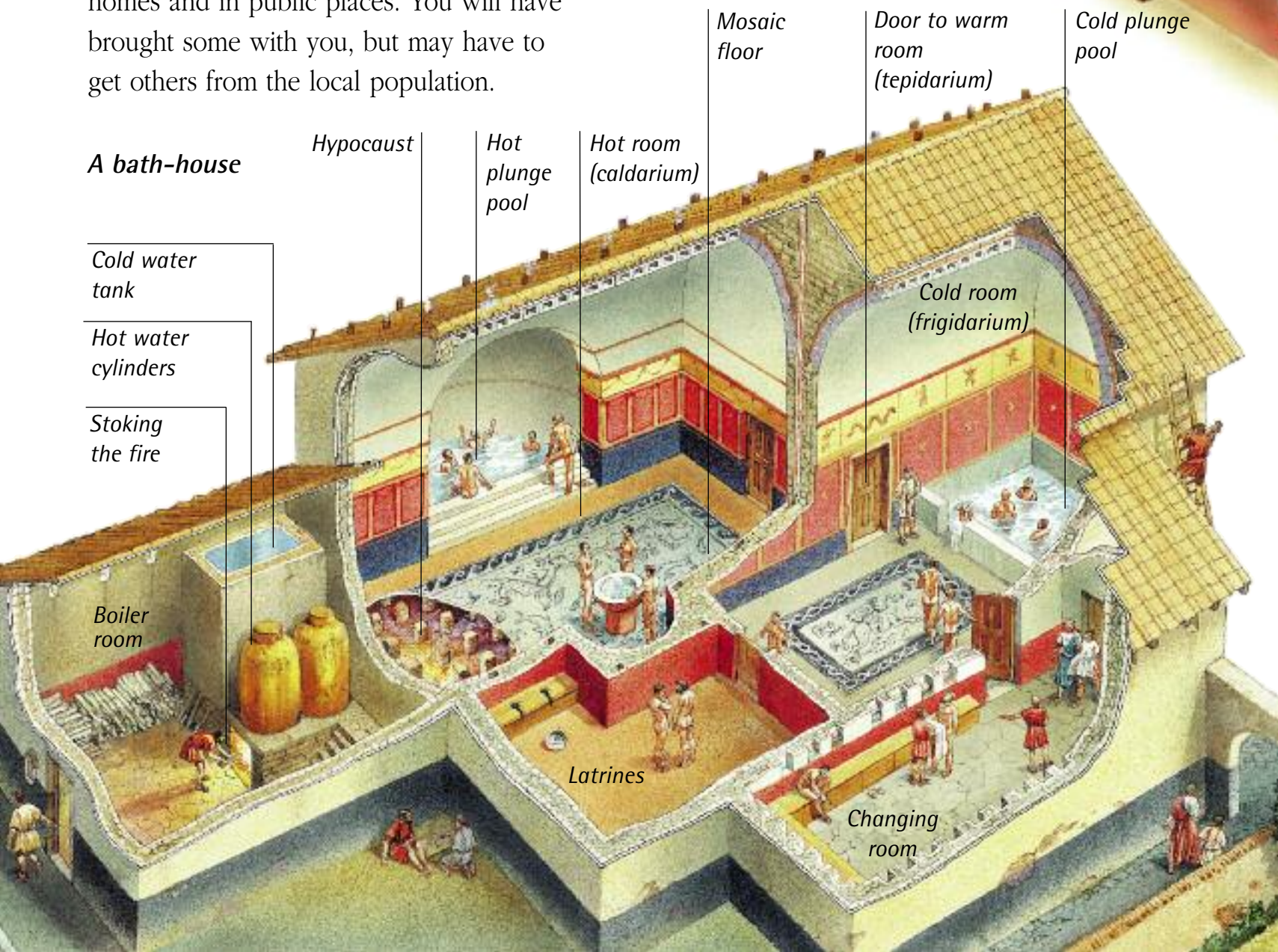
*Infill the ditch with stones and clay and edge with slabs. Finish off with a top layer of flat slabs. Tamp these down so they are even and firm. The final surface should be slightly curved so that rain will run off it. Dig ditches along the sides of the road to drain the water away. Your men should be able to build about 300 metres of road a day.*



# Bath-house and town house

If you have done your job well, you may be asked to stay on as provincial governor. This is a very responsible position of high status. Build yourself a splendid home in the town to reflect your importance. You should also ensure that the town itself has all the trappings of Roman civilization, such as an amphitheatre and at least one bath-house. This is all part of the process of integrating the new province fully into the Empire. Don't forget, you will need slaves to serve you in your homes and in public places. You will have brought some with you, but may have to get others from the local population.

## A bath-house



Cold water tank

Hot water cylinders

Stoking the fire

Hypocaust

Hot plunge pool

Hot room (caldarium)

Cold room (frigidarium)

Door to warm room (tepidarium)

Cold plunge pool

Mosaic floor

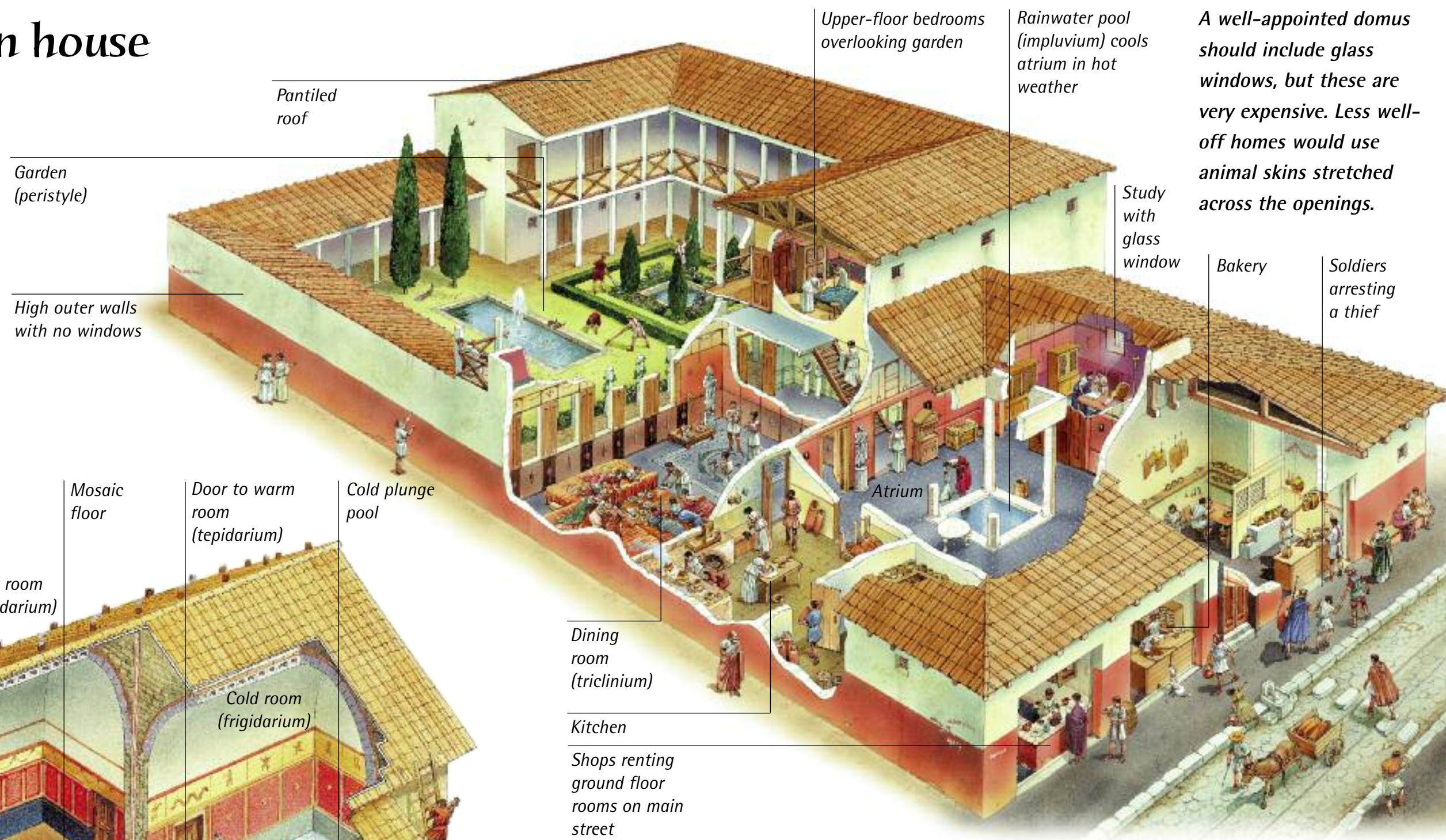
Latrines

Changing room

Garden (peristyle)

High outer walls with no windows

Pantiled roof



Upper-floor bedrooms overlooking garden

Rainwater pool (impluvium) cools atrium in hot weather

Study with glass window

Bakery

Soldiers arresting a thief

Atrium

Dining room (triclinium)

Kitchen

Shops renting ground floor rooms on main street

Bathing is a civilized Roman custom that is essential to introduce to your province. Bath-houses should be some of the first public buildings you put up. You will need a hypocaust (underfloor heating) for the warm and hot rooms. A furnace in the boiler house heats up both water for the baths – which is stored in cylinders until needed – and air, which circulates under the floors and in the walls.

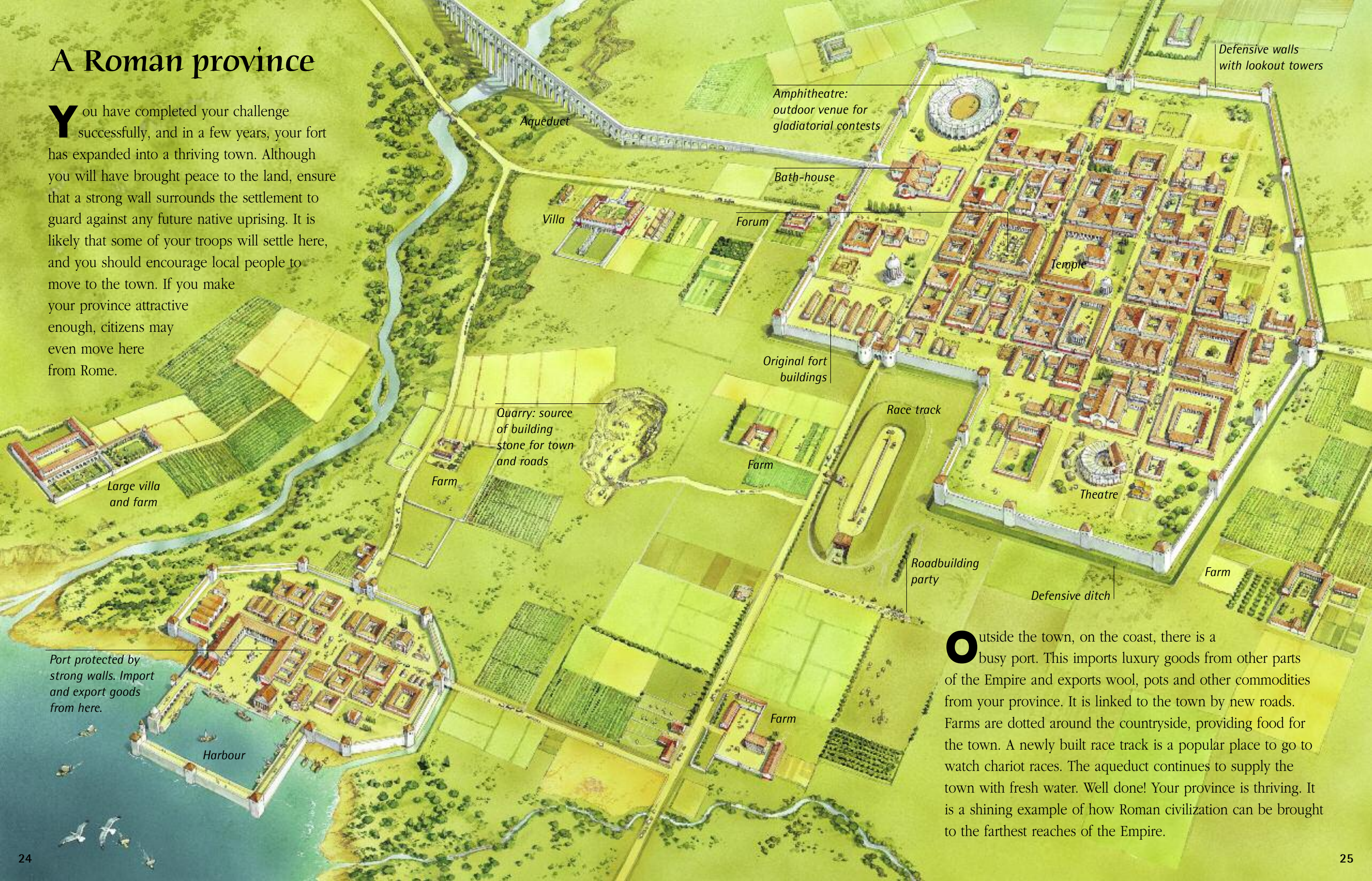
Even in the provinces, your domus (town house) should be a splendid affair: why not show local residents who's boss? A grand central atrium with a calming rainwater pool will impress your guests. Mosaics and wall paintings add style. Lower rooms can be rented out as shops. High walls with few windows and doors around the rest of the house will keep out the noise of the street.

A well-appointed domus should include glass windows, but these are very expensive. Less well-off homes would use animal skins stretched across the openings.



# A Roman province

**Y**ou have completed your challenge successfully, and in a few years, your fort has expanded into a thriving town. Although you will have brought peace to the land, ensure that a strong wall surrounds the settlement to guard against any future native uprising. It is likely that some of your troops will settle here, and you should encourage local people to move to the town. If you make your province attractive enough, citizens may even move here from Rome.



Port protected by strong walls. Import and export goods from here.

Harbour

Aqueduct

Amphitheatre:  
outdoor venue for  
gladiatorial contests

Bath-house

Villa

Forum

Temple

Original fort  
buildings

Quarry: source  
of building  
stone for town  
and roads

Farm

Farm

Race track

Roadbuilding  
party

Defensive ditch

Farm

**O**utside the town, on the coast, there is a busy port. This imports luxury goods from other parts of the Empire and exports wool, pots and other commodities from your province. It is linked to the town by new roads. Farms are dotted around the countryside, providing food for the town. A newly built race track is a popular place to go to watch chariot races. The aqueduct continues to supply the town with fresh water. Well done! Your province is thriving. It is a shining example of how Roman civilization can be brought to the farthest reaches of the Empire.

Defensive walls  
with lookout towers



# Timeline

## 753 BC

In what is now modern Italy, the building of the city of Rome begins.

## 510 BC

Rome becomes a republic. It is ruled by the Senate, a group of men from wealthy Roman families. Over the next 250 years Rome gradually conquers the country around it.

## 264 BC

Rome now controls all of Italy. The Punic Wars between Rome and the North African city of Carthage begin. Each side seeks control over the Mediterranean Sea.

## 218 BC

Hannibal, a Carthaginian general, leads a massive army, including 37 elephants, across the Pyrenees and Alps to invade Italy.

## 202 BC

Rome defeats Hannibal and invades Spain.

## 146 BC

Rome conquers Greece.

## 73–71 BC

Gladiator Spartacus leads a revolt of 90,000 slaves against the Republic. After several victories the revolt is finally put down by the army. Spartacus is killed in battle.

## 58–51 BC

Julius Caesar, a clever politician and general from a wealthy Roman family, conquers Gaul (France) and becomes very popular in Rome.

## 49 BC

Julius Caesar takes control of Rome, becoming its most powerful leader ever. He brings in new laws to make Rome wealthier.



## 44 BC

Julius Caesar is assassinated by a group of senators, who believe he has become too powerful. A struggle to succeed him follows between Octavian (Caesar's adopted son) and soldier Mark Antony.

## 31 BC

Octavian defeats Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium. Egypt becomes a Roman province.

## 27 BC

Octavian becomes the first emperor of Rome marking the beginning of the Roman Empire. He takes the name Augustus. He dies in AD 14.

## AD 43

Emperor Claudius conquers Britain.

## AD 60

British leader Boudicca rebels against Roman rule, but is defeated.

## AD 64

Half of Rome is destroyed by fire.

## AD 105–117

Emperor Trajan conquers land in eastern Europe and the Empire reaches its largest extent.

## AD 235–84

Plague, famine, rebellions and barbarian attacks weaken the Empire. Rome is defeated by Persia in AD 260 and abandons parts of eastern Europe.

Boudicca leads a rebellion in Britain in AD 60



## AD 370–410

The Empire is invaded by Huns from Asia and Barbarians from the north and east. Romans withdraw from Gaul and Britain.

## AD 395

The Empire is split into two—East and West. The West is rapidly overrun by Barbarians.

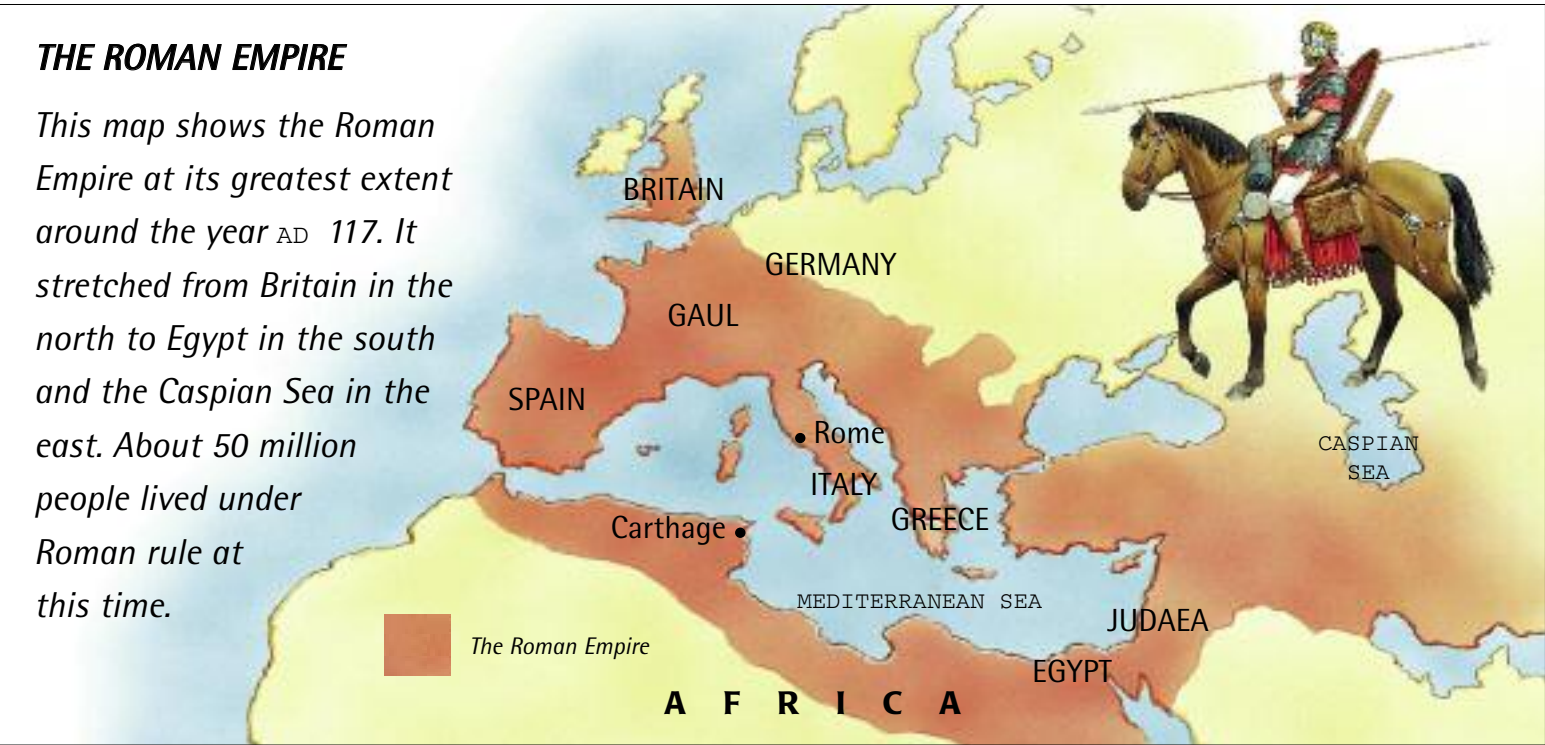
## AD 455

Barbarian Vandals destroy Rome.

## AD 476

Barbarian general Odoacer defeats Emperor Romulus Augustulus and makes himself King of Italy, marking the end of the Western Empire.

Vandals destroy Rome in AD 455





# Glossary

**Amphitheatre** A place where Romans went to watch entertainments. Usually roughly circular or semicircular with the stage in the centre and seats on raised steps all around.

**Aqueduct** A system of pipes and channels which brought clean water into towns from natural springs and rivers.

**Barbarian** A person who lived outside the Roman **Empire**. Barbarians were regarded by the Romans as rough and uncivilized.

**Basilica** A large public building, often built in the town's central square, where important local business was carried out – much like a modern town hall.

**Chariot** A cart with two wheels pulled by horses. The Romans used chariots for transport and racing.

**Centurion** Commanding officer of a **century**.

**Century** Army unit of 80 men (10 **contubernia**).

**Cohort** Roman infantry unit. Usually six centuries, 480 men. See **prima cohort**

**Contubernium** A basic army unit of eight men.

*A centurion shows off his phalerae (medals)*



*A Roman chariot race*

**Cuirass** Leather or metal body armour worn by Roman soldiers. It was made of several strips joined together to make it more flexible than a single piece.

**Denarius** A silver coin. In the first century AD a legionary was paid 225 denarii a year.

**Empire** The lands and people controlled by Rome for about 400 years from 27 BC. The Empire was ruled by an emperor.

**Forum** An open space in the middle of a town where markets were held. The forum was also a popular meeting place.

**Gladiator** A slave, criminal or prisoner of war trained to fight other gladiators and animals in arenas for the entertainment of the people. Gladiators sometimes fought to the death. After many victories gladiators might be given their freedom. A few gladiators were actually women.

**Governor** The ruler of a Roman province. Sometimes a high-ranking soldier would become governor of a province.

**Hypocaust** A central-heating system using hot air from a furnace forced through channels under floors and within walls.

**Latin** The official spoken and written language of the Roman **Empire**. It is not spoken today, but there are many words of Latin origin in modern European languages, such as English, French, Italian and Spanish.

**Legion** The largest unit of the Roman army made up of 6000 men.

**Mosaic** A decorative pattern or picture made from coloured pieces of stone, pottery or glass set into cement. Mosaics were often used to decorate floors.

**Phalerae** Disc-shaped medals worn by centurions on leather straps on their chest.

*Gladiators doing battle*



*Testudo formation*

**Prima cohort** The largest **cohort** in a **legion** made up of ten **centuries**, or 800 men.

**Republic** Rome between 509 and 27 BC ruled by the **Senate**.

**Senate** A group of important men who helped govern both the **Republic** and the **Empire**.

**Slave** A person sold to another to work for them for free. Slaves had no rights, but could be granted their freedom – for instance for long service – by their masters.

**Testudo** A military formation where soldiers protected themselves with their shields.

**Villa** A large house in the countryside.



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