

For a link to a website where you can find out more about Alexander the Great and his family, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com

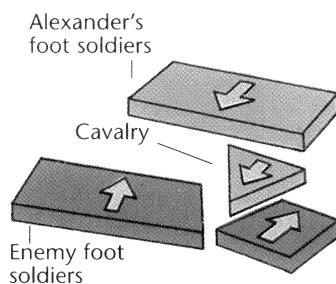
Alexander's army

Alexander inherited a large, well-trained army with high morale. He invaded Persia with an army of 30,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry.

The cavalry

The basic cavalry unit consisted of 49 men. It charged in a wedge-shaped formation with the commander in front. The cavalry was usually used to break up a phalanx of enemy foot soldiers.

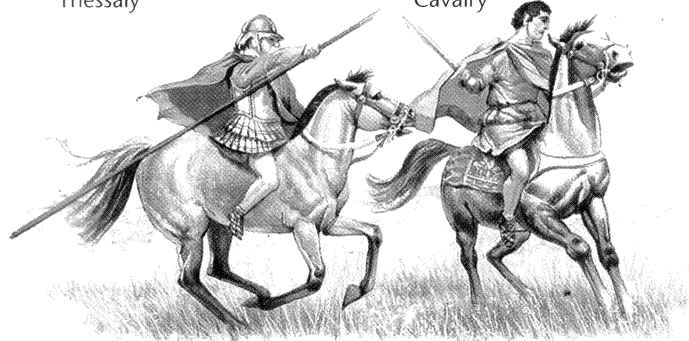
The cavalry often attacked by charging at the right end of the phalanx, which was its weakest point (see page 37). A phalanx of foot soldiers could then move in from behind in hand-to-hand fighting.



The cavalry was mostly made up of horsemen from Thessaly, with troops from the states of the Corinthian League. The elite troops, or Companion Cavalry, consisted of eight squadrons of Macedonian noblemen.

Cavalryman from Thessaly

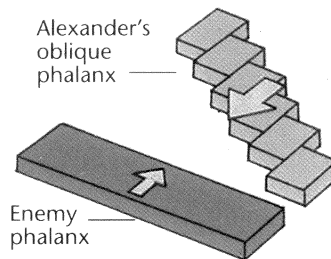
Member of the Companion Cavalry



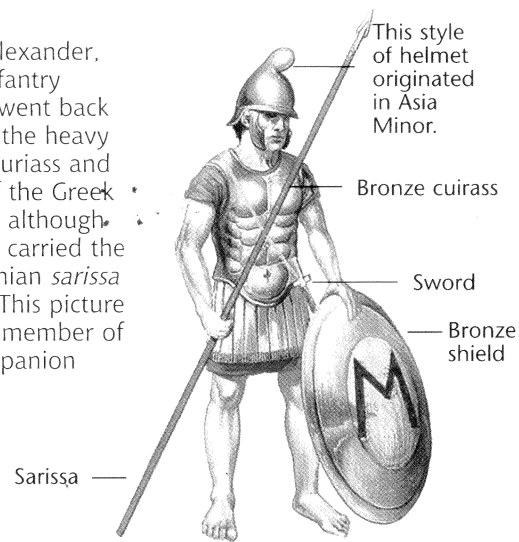
The infantry

The infantry was made up of foot soldiers, javelin throwers, archers and slingers. Alexander continued to use the Companion Infantry, and he also had a bodyguard known as the *hypaspists*.

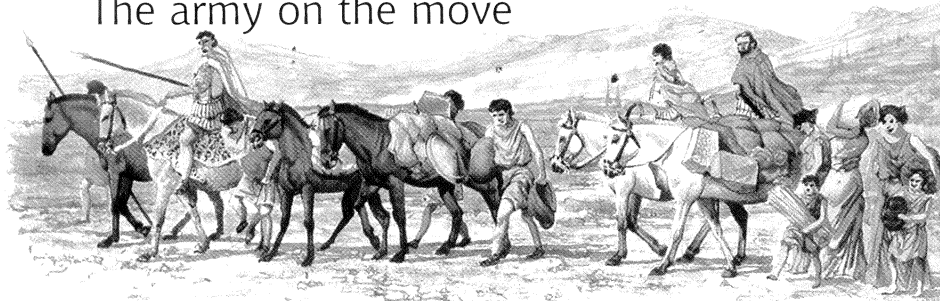
Foot soldiers continued to fight in a phalanx. Alexander often used the phalanx in an oblique formation, shown here. It enabled him to attack the weaker right wing of an enemy phalanx.



Under Alexander, many infantry soldiers went back to using the heavy bronze cuirass and shield of the Greek *hoplites*, although they still carried the Macedonian *sarissa* (spear). This picture shows a member of the Companion Infantry.



The army on the move



Each soldier was expected to carry all his own weapons, as well as a personal pack containing bedding and cooking equipment. Pack animals and baggage wagons were used to carry bulky equipment such as tents, water skins and siege equipment, and to move wounded men. The army was accompanied by servants and grooms, and by many women and children.

Key dates

336BC Philip is murdered and Alexander comes to the Macedonian throne.

334BC Alexander invades Persia. He defeats the Persian governors of Asia Minor at the Battle of the Granicus river.

333BC Alexander defeats the Persians, led by King Darius, at the Battle of Issus.

332BC Siege and destruction of the city of Tyre in the Lebanon. Alexander conquers Egypt and founds the city of Alexandria.

331BC Alexander defeats the Persians at the Battle of Gaugamela and becomes King of Persia.

327BC Alexander invades India.

326BC Alexander defeats the Indian King Porus at the Battle of the Hydaspes river.

323BC Alexander dies in Babylon.