

DRILL AND ROUTINE

The Roman army was the most successful in the ancient world. It defeated many enemies and won many battles, even when its troops were outnumbered. At one battle, in 52 BC, 50,000 Romans led by Julius Caesar defeated an army of 250,000 Gauls. The Roman army was so successful because the soldiers were very well trained.

An officer training his men. The box formation was known as the *testudo*, or tortoise, and protected the Roman soldiers from spears and arrows.



Roman soldiers spent many hours training and drilling. They practised throwing their *pilum* and fighting with their short swords. Legionaries also practised battlefield exercises. These included marching in step, remaining in straight lines while moving in different directions, and forming up in special battle **formations**. Each legionary had to be able to march 32 kilometres in five hours, run long distances and climb over tall walls, all while dressed in full armour.

