

THE MACEDONIAN ARMY

Alexander inherited from his father, Philip, the magnificent Macedonian army that he led on his conquests in Asia. By the time they reached India, the Macedonians had been supplemented by units of native troops raised along the way.

PHALANX HEAVY INFANTRY UNITS: The units of the phalanx, called “taxeis”, numbered around 1500 men each and were recruited from native Macedonians. The soldiers were heavily armored and carried a 16-foot long pike, called a “sarissa”, and a short sword. The pike was so clumsy that both hands were required to use it and the shield was strapped to each soldier’s forearm. The soldiers were formed in massive, dense and carefully maintained formations, usually 16 ranks deep, presenting a dense and deadly hedge-hog of overlapping pikes to their front. Their high regard in the army is shown by their designation as “foot companions” (“pexhetaroi”). Slow moving but imposing, the phalanx units formed the base around which the more mobile units could be maneuvered.

HYPASPIST HEAVY INFANTRY UNITS: “Hypaspist” means “shield-bearer”, referring to the honorable office of a king’s armor bearer. They were Alexander’s foot guards, the crack infantry of his army. The hypaspist units, called “chiliarchiai,” numbered around 1000 men each, were recruited from the cream of the native Macedonians and consisted of tested, reliable, warriors, often grizzled veterans well into middle age. Equipped similarly to phalanx units, although apparently with somewhat lighter armor and shorter spears, the hypaspists were more maneuverable than the phalangites and usually operated on the flanks of the phalanx units, maintaining contact between the pikemen and fast-moving cavalry units on the army’s flanks.

PELAST LIGHT INFANTRY UNITS: These units numbered around 750 men each. Originally formed by Thracians and Greeks, by time of Hydaspes these units most likely consisted of mercenaries recruited from various nationalities in Alexander’s vast empire. Wearing some armor and carrying small shields (called “pelta”), peltasts used ordered formations suitable for melee. They were heavy enough to defeat skirmisher light infantry. Heavier infantry could be attacked by using their javelins to annoy their opponents, then closing with their swords once the javelins had disrupted their enemy’s formation.

JAVELIN LIGHT INFANTRY SKIRMISHER UNITS: These units numbered around 200 men each and were recruited from the Agrianians, wild tribesmen from a remote part of Macedonia. Wearing little or no armor, they fought in open order and were intended to skirmish and harass an unbeaten foe and to pursue a beaten one. The Agrianians were great favorites of Alexander; very tough and experienced, and often proved surprisingly effective using their javelins and swords in melee combats.

ARCHER LIGHT INFANTRY SKIRMISHER UNITS: These units numbered around 200 men each. One unit at Hydaspes was composed of Macedonians and the other of mercenaries from the island of Crete, which provided expert mercenary bowmen to armies throughout the Greek world. Like the Agrianians, they wore little armor, fought in open order and were intended to skirmish and harass. They preferred to fight at a distance with their bows and were not good at using their swords in close combat.

COMPANION HEAVY CAVALRY UNITS: The original companion (“hertairoi”) cavalry units were recruited from the Macedonian nobility and the king’s retainers, i. e., the king’s companions. The units, called “hipparchiai,” numbered around 400-500 men each and, by the time of the Battle of Hydaspes, were recruited from both Macedonians and Greeks. The units were battlefield cavalry, who formed and fought in close order, several ranks deep (some sources state that they used a wedge formation). The troopers wore a corselet and helmet, but carried no shield and were armed with a 12-foot long spear (“xyston”) and a sword. They were Alexander’s horse guards, the elite cavalry of his army and his preferred battle winners. Alexander always sought to bring his companions to the decisive point on a battlefield, then use their power to ride down the enemy and secure the victory.

BACTRIAN CATAPHRACT HEAVY CAVALRY UNIT: This unit numbered around 400 men and was recruited from the Bactrians, natives of the area west of India just conquered by Alexander. Wearing armor that covered almost their entire bodies, making shields unnecessary, these troops were, like the companions, battlefield cavalry who fought in close order and used their spears and swords to ride down enemy units.

JAVELIN LIGHT CAVALRY UNITS: These units numbered around 200-300 men each and were recruited from various Asian tribes who had recently fallen under Alexander's control. Wearing little armor and carrying only swords and javelins, they fought in open order and were intended to scout an opponent before a battle, skirmish and harass an unbeaten foe during a battle and pursue a beaten enemy after a battle. They are not very effective in melee except to ride down an opponent with many cohesion hits, when charging an enemy from the flank or rear or overrunning routed foes.

MOUNTED ARCHER LIGHT CAVALRY UNITS: These units numbered around 400-500 men each and were recruited from Asian tribes who had recently fallen under Alexander's control. Wearing little armor and carrying only swords and bows and arrows, they fought in open order and were intended to scout prior to a battle, skirmish and harass an unbeaten foe during a battle and pursue a beaten enemy after a battle. They are even less effective in close combat than the javelin light cavalry units.

MACEDONIAN HINTS ON PLAY:

- **General Battle Plan:** An overall Macedonian battle plan is dictated by the initial location of the units. Do not advance with the light infantry left flank units; the longer it takes for the enemy to reach them, the more time there is for the reinforcements to cross the river and join them. Similarly, hold back the phalanx units; the longer it takes for the Indians to mass elephants to their front for an attack, the longer the player has to develop his right flank attack. Attack with the right flank; all of the best Macedonian units are located there. Send forward the light infantry and hypaspist units to engage and defeat the elephant units in the area; support this attack with archery from the mounted archers, who should remain to the rear, out of reach of the elephants. Avoiding elephants, use the companion cavalry to ride down (attacking flanks and rears as possible) the chariot and infantry units on the flank. There are lots of enemies here, these battles will be protracted and the companions should sit for awhile to recover cohesion lost in the fighting, but eventually they should be ready to pounce on the flanks of the rest of the Indian army, supported by the hypaspists and mounted archers on their left.
- **Overall Tactical:** Keep in mind that positional superiority is always better than system or numerical superiority. What this means is that it is better to attack from the flank or rear than it is to be nominally bigger, heavier, better equipped or meaner than an opponent. A secondary consideration is "shock". Heavier units or those with longer pikes get a shock advantage making them more effective in melee.
- **Specific Tactical:**
 - 1) Use combined arms - whenever possible, use missiles (arrows and javelins) to cause cohesion hits on enemy units before entering combat with them.
 - 2) Don't move cavalry adjacent to elephants; this causes unnecessary cohesion losses to the cavalry units.
 - 3) Heavier units or those with longer pikes get a "shock" advantage that makes them more effective in a melee.

THE INDIAN ARMY

Porus was the most powerful ruler in his region and fielded a large and powerful army that was particularly well-equipped with war elephants. Most Indian army units were assembled only when needed and were less well-trained and far less professional and experienced than the Macedonian army's units. Although the Indian infantry and cavalry units could fight viciously

enough, if necessary, their basic mission was to cover the flanks of the elephant units and exploit breakthroughs made by the elephant units.

JAVELIN LIGHT INFANTRY UNITS: These units numbered around 700 men each. Wearing some armor, they fought in close order and were expected to both skirmish and harass a foe with their javelins and, also, to close to melee with their swords.

ARCHER LIGHT INFANTRY UNITS: These units were organized similarly to the javelin light infantry and numbered around 700 men each. Mostly unarmored and fighting in close order, they were expected to both skirmish and harass a foe with their archery and, also, to melee with their swords. Like most ancient archers, they preferred to keep their distance from their enemies and were quite ineffective at close combat.

ELEPHANT UNITS: The heart and pride of any Indian army was its corps of war elephants. War elephants had first been introduced in India during the sixth century B. C. Due to the necessities of tending to and caring for the elephants, these provided the basic standing army for an Indian potentate. Each elephant unit represents about six actual elephants, their riders and escorting infantry - each elephant might carry up to four riders and have eight accompanying infantrymen. The men all carried swords, and some also carried bows while others also carried javelins. The elephants were difficult to kill, but probably wore crude oxhide armor to avoid pain from enemy spears and missiles because an injured elephant might go berserk and trample any unit in its erratic path, friend or foe (elephant drivers had stakes to drive into their elephant's brain should this happen). Elephants frighten horses and therefore cannot be effectively attacked by cavalry and they can trample most infantry into the ground, although the dense Macedonian heavy infantry units did, with heavy losses, manage to contain the elephant charges at the battle.

CHARIOT UNITS: The chariot was way past its prime as a weapon of war by 326 B. C. Revered as a manner of carrying heroes and other big shots into battle in Indian legends, it stayed in use in the Indian army. Although Indian literature lists ten types of chariots, most of the chariots with Porus seem to have been drawn by four horses, were unscythed and carried a crew of four soldiers. Two other soldiers apparently ran alongside as escorts for each chariot and the soldiers all carried swords and a mixture of javelins and bows. Each chariot unit represents about 30 chariots and 180 men.

JAVELIN LIGHT CAVALRY UNITS: These units were very similar to their Macedonian army counterparts and numbered around 300 men each. Wearing some armor and carrying swords and javelins, they fought in a closed formation and were intended to scout prior to a battle, skirmish and harass during a battle and pursue after a battle. They are not very effective in melee except to ride down an enemy unit with many cohesion hits or when charging an enemy from the flank or rear.

INDIAN HINTS ON PLAY: No Indian hints are included in this demo as no artificial intelligence is yet available for the Macedonian side. This will be included in the finished game.