

RULES OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC!

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE
ARMY, PATRICIANS, SLAVES, CITIZENS, & MORE!**

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Rules of the Roman Republic

Rule #1

The Roman army was made up of citizens from both the patrician and plebeian classes. The infantry ranks were usually filled with the low-class plebeians since they made up the vast majority of the population; the infantry is the part of the military that serves on foot. Patricians often served in the cavalry (on horseback) since they could afford their own horses. Consuls took the commanding position, and they would often appoint generals to lead smaller divisions.

The Roman army was organized into legions; these were large groups of 3,000 to 6,000 men and were often protected from the sides and rear by the cavalry. Legions were further broken down into centuries, or groups of 100 men. The leader of a century was called a centurion. Centuries would travel together with their legion, but they could act independent of their legion during battle and times of crisis.

Rules of the Roman Republic

Rule #2

The Roman republic was based around the relationship between the Senate, the two consuls, and the Assembly. In some ways the consuls acted like kings, however their power was severely limited. For example, the Senate could veto (or reject) a decision the consuls made; similarly, consuls could veto the ideas of the other. Also, consuls only served a one-year term and could not be elected again for ten years. In times of crisis though, a consul could be given complete control (dictator) for a period of six months.

The Senate was made of 300 men who, in Rome's early history, were chosen by only the high-class patrician elite. After the Conflict of the Orders, plebeians played a powerful role in determining the affairs of the Senate. The Senate served as judges, reviewed the laws, and directed the day-to-day affairs of the nation. A third group called the Assembly also developed to represent the common people of Rome. While initially their power was little, the Assembly eventually created laws and obtained the sole power to choose the consuls of Rome.

Rules of the Roman Republic

Rule #3

Citizenship varied quite widely during the Roman republic. Shortly after the Romans overthrew Tarquin the Great, the last Etruscan monarch, the Romans created a republic that gave power to Roman males; all males over fifteen who were descendants from the original tribes of Rome became citizens. These males wore togas as a way to distinguish themselves from other Romans. Eventually, as citizenship expanded, all citizens wore white togas.

Citizenship throughout Rome varied greatly. The full citizen could hold public office, vote on key issues, marry freeborn people, and practice business. Some citizens were not allowed to vote or hold public office but could still practice business. A third type of citizen could vote and practice business, but could not hold office or marry freeborn people.

The Romans had a very unique approach to how they handled the people they conquered. Instead of ruling these people as conquered subjects, the Romans invited them to become citizens. Rather than continuing to fight Rome, these people slowly became integrated into Roman society.

Rules of the Roman Republic

Rule #4

Many government positions existed within the Roman republic to ensure the government ran smoothly. For example, while senators served as judges on large matters, within local communities and regions that responsibility would fall to praetors.

An entire department was devoted to the administration of public games. Much like a modern day Parks and Recreation Department, aediles ensured the population was entertained. Initially aediles were in charge of organizing public festivals and games to ensure the people were enjoying themselves. Over time the position grew to monitor the quality of public markets, and even to ensure the city had a large enough grain supply to ward off a disaster.

Quaestors served in many different roles under the Roman republic. At first, the position was created to monitor the treasury; they ensured that Rome had an adequate gold supply and that taxation was being followed. Eventually, the position turned into a type of detective that investigated murders in the empire.

Rules of the Roman Republic

Rule #5

Slaves were bought and sold at markets everywhere throughout the republic. Unlike recent history though, slavery in Rome was not a racial matter; slaves in Rome mostly criminals or foreigners who lost a war. Manumission (to be released from slavery) was very common in Rome after a slave had served his or her punishment. In hard times, it was not uncommon for a father to sell his children into slavery to pay a debt.

There were virtually no laws that protected how slaves were treated. If slaves disobeyed their masters, they could be whipped, branded with a hot iron, or even killed. Often times punishment would happen in public to serve as an example to other slaves who thought of disobeying. However, since slaves were expensive, owners did not do this often.

Rules of the Roman Republic

Rule #6

Rome society gave few, if any, rights to women. The father was legally the head of the household and had complete authority over his wife and children.

Roman law reinforced this. For example, Roman law regarded that the wife was ". . . is the property of her husband and completely subjected to his will." Roman law also supported a wife being punished in any way the husband deemed appropriate; for example, he could have her killed or sold as a slave. The right to own property was also strictly prohibited by women; anything she owned instantly became her husband's property upon their marriage.

Children had few rights as well. A father could sell off a child to pay a debt. If a child did something that disrespected his family, the child could be removed from the household at any age. Also, if a child was born with a deformity, or was determined to be weak at birth, Roman law supported their execution if the father asked for it.

Name _____ Period _____

Rules of the Roman Republic

1.) What government position managed games and entertainment for the people?

A: _____ Rule # _____

2.) How were legions and centuries similar? How were they different?

A: _____

Rule # _____

3.) What powers did the Roman Assembly have?

A: _____ Rule # _____

4.) How did citizenship vary in the Roman republic?

A: _____

Rule # _____

5.) What is the difference between the infantry and cavalry?

A: _____

Rule # _____

6.) During times of crisis, how long were dictators allowed to rule?

A: _____ Rule # _____

7.) What government position served as a treasurer?

A: _____ Rule # _____

8.) Describe the rights of women and children in ancient Rome:

A: _____

Rule # _____

9.) How was slavery different in Rome than elsewhere around the world later in history?

A: _____

Rule # _____

10.) What rules were placed on consuls?

A: _____

Rule # _____

OVERARCHING #1

In what ways was the government of the Roman republic similar to our government today?

OVERARCHING #2

In what ways was the government of the Roman republic different from our government today?

Rules of the Roman Republic

1.) What government position managed games and entertainment for the people?

A: **aediles** Rule # **4**

2.) How were legions and centuries similar? How were they different?

A: **legions were large armies of 3,000-6,000 men**
whereas centuries were smaller units of 100.

Rule # **1**

3.) What powers did the Roman Assembly have?

A: **could approve laws and choose consuls** Rule # **2**

4.) How did citizenship vary in the Roman republic?

A: **it varied widely; full citizens could vote, hold office, marry, and practice business. a level down could not vote or hold office, but could still do business. A third could vote and do business, but no office or marry** Rule # **3**

5.) What is the difference between the infantry and cavalry?

A: **infantry is foot soldiers and was mainly plebeian while calvary was on horseback and mainly patrician**

Rule # **1**

6.) During times of crisis, how long were dictators allowed to rule?

A: **6 months** Rule # **2**

7.) What government position served as a treasurer?

A: **Quaestors** Rule # **4**

8.) Describe the rights of women and children in ancient Rome:

A: **They had none. Women and children could be sold off, killed, treated however the husband wanted.**

Rule # **6**

9.) How was slavery different in Rome than elsewhere around the world later in history?

A: **Slavery was not race-based in Rome...slaves were often criminals, captives from war**

Rule # **5**

10.) What rules were placed on consuls?

A: **1 year terms, could not serve again for 10 years, could be dictator for 6 months in crisis**

Rule # **2**

OVERARCHING #1

In what ways was the government of the Roman republic similar to our government today?

- had departments for different matters
- had law-makers and enforcers
- had term limits
- had a large army

OVERARCHING #2

In what ways was the government of the Roman republic different from our government today?

- some people had virtually no rights
- could have dictators
- had slavery