

What is a **hoplite**?
It is an armed foot
soldier of ancient
Greece.



What is a **panoply**?
(Say **pan**-uh-plee.)
It is a complete set
of armor.

THE 4th CENTURY BC HOPLITE PANOPLY

Crest:

It is believed that the horsehair crest atop the helmet was intended to make the hoplite look taller and more intimidating.

Bronze Helmet:

The helmet illustrated here is an example of the Attic style, as opposed to the Illyrian helmet in the exhibit.

Although these helmets offered vital protection to the head, they had minimal padding, meaning that even a blow that did not fully pierce the helmet could still cause severe injury or death.

Doru (spear):

A hoplite's primary weapon was a long spear (six to nine feet in length) carried in his right hand.

Both ends of the spear could be used in battle. One end was an iron or bronze spearhead. The other was a bronze spear butt which served as a counterbalance and as a back-up weapon if the spearhead broke off. If the spear butt also broke off, the hoplite finally turned to his sword (or **xiphos**) as a last resort.

Bronze Cuirass (say kwi-ras):

This is part of the armor that consisted of both a breastplate and backplate. In later times, the bronze cuirass was often replaced by the lighter **linothorax**, a type of armor made from layers of stiffened linen.

Bronze Greaves:

These protected the lower legs, which were not covered by the shield. The form-fitting greaves were most likely pulled open and placed on the leg without the use of ties.

Aspis (shield):

This 3-foot-wide circular shield was the most important part of a hoplite's equipment. It was always carried on the left side, so that the hoplite infantry presented a solid and consistent wall of shields to the enemy.

The shield was made of wood, often with bronze accents. Each hoplite would paint an emblem of his choice on the shield. The exception were Spartans, who all painted the Greek letter **Lambda (Λ)** for their homeland of Lacedaemonia on their shields.