

Gladiatura Terminology

ad digitum	<i>(lat. to the finger)</i> Regular form of gladiatorial combat, which was conducted until the surrender of one of the fighters. The surrender was indicated by one or two raised fingers see.
andabata	Gladiator wearing a helmet without eye holes. Probably fought against his peers by wildly flailing at each other.
arena	<i>(from lat. [h]arena, „sand“)</i> Fighting area covered in sand.
armatura	The fighting equipment of a gladiator. Each gladiator class had its own armatura which determined its fighting style.
auctoratus	A person voluntarily becoming a gladiator..
ballestra	A fast attack in fencing or sword fighting which includes a lunge or jump forward.
bestiarius	Gladiators fighting wild animals.
caligae	Leather sandals of the Roman legionary.
cingulum	Leather belt used by gladiators and the Roman legionary to protect the stomach and the kidneys.
confector	<i>(also carnifex)</i> A fighter who killed wounded animals at the venatio for good see.
crupellarius	A gladiator completely covered in iron armour. His existence is highly debated due the poor source material.
damnatio ad bestias	<i>(lat. condemnation to the beasts)</i> Form of capital punishment in ancient Rome in which convicts had to fight wild animals. Their equipment usually consisted only of a short sword and no armour, which, together with a lack of experience or no experience at all, almost always meant their deaths.
damnatio ad ferrum	<i>(lat. condemnation to the iron)</i> Form of capital punishment in ancient Rome. The convicts were sent against each other without armor and equipped only with a simple weapon as part of festivals. They fought until only one convict was left. This one could be pardoned under certain circumstances. Unwilling fighters were driven to fight with whips.
damnatio ad gladium	<i>(lat. condemnation to the sword)</i> Form of capital punishment in ancient Rome. The condemned had to fight a mostly hopeless battle against a gladiator. Whether this form of execution really took place is disputed. It is possible that special gladiators, rather executioners, were used for this purpose [SenProv].
damnatio ad ludum	<i>(lat. condemnation to the ludus)</i> Form of capital punishment in ancient Rome. The convicts had to serve their time in a ludus. After usually three years they could be pardoned.

dimachaerus	Gladiator with two swords and no shield. Details of this class are unclear due to a lack of source material.
editor	<i>also munerarius</i> Organizer of gladiatorial games.
eques	Mounted gladiator, easy to recognize by their tunics. Fought other equites, first on horseback, after throwing the spear the fight continued on foot.
essedarius	A medium gladiator with oval shield, gladius and throwing spear. Fought other essedarii or retiarii. Theories that they used chariots could not be proven.
exercitium fortis	<i>(lat. strength training)</i> Exercises to increase physical strength, usually body weight exercises.
exercitium pugnae	<i>(lat. fight training)</i> Free fight training and sparring.
familia	<i>(lat. family)</i> Also commonly used as description for gladiator groups.
fascia	<i>(lat. leg wrappings)</i> Leg armor of different gladiator classes. Depending on the class, either one lower leg or both legs are completely protected.
fighting line	A straight line between two fighters.
galea	Term for the helmets of legionaries and gladiators, usually made of bronze, brass or iron.
gallus	Gladiator based on the defeated Gauls. About 50 BC the Gallus was turned into the murmillo see.
gladiatura	Roman sport in which professional fighters (gladiators) fought each other in duels for the entertainment of the audience. Gladiatura is proven to have existed in the Roman Empire from 264 BC to the beginning of the 5th century AD.
gladius	A Roman short sword, mostly used for thrusts. It was used in several variants from the 3rd cen. BC till the end of the Roman empire plural.
gradus stabare	A pose in fencing. The leg on the shield side is in front of the other one. Both legs are bent.
hasta	A Roman light thrusting lance. The primary weapon of the hoplomachus see.
hoplomachus	Heavy gladiator, based on the Greek hoplite. Main enemy was the murmillo, sometimes the thraex see.
hordearii	<i>(lat. barley men)</i> Derogatory term for gladiators, used because barley was their main food.
infamia	Legal restrictions on outlawed groups of people, e.g. gladiators.
Jugula!	Assumed exclamation of the audience of a gladiator fight which demands the execution of the loser.
lanista	Head of a ludus, often a former gladiator.
ludus	A gladiator school in which gladiators lived and trained.

manica	Bracers from the shoulder to the hand, usually made of linen filled with horsehair and attached to the arm with several leather straps. In the 4th century A.D. also appeared sporadically manicae made of metal.
mappa	Small cloth thrown by the editor to signal the beginning of the games.
mensura	The distance between two fighters. The term originates in fencing.
missio	The surrender of a fighter, usually indicated by raising one arm with two fingers extended, kneeling before the opponent, or dropping the weapons.
munus	A service for the general public, e.g. festivities organized by private individuals for the public on feast days. Gladiatorial games (<i>munus gladiatorum</i>) fall into this category, as does military service (<i>munera militae</i>) or the exercise of civilian office (<i>munera civilia</i>).
murmillo	A heavy gladiator class, based on the Roman legionary. The main opponent was the <i>thraex</i> see.
naumachia	Representation of sea battles for the Roman audience. With considerable effort, arenas were flooded and sometimes several thousand slaves fought against each other on ships. The <i>naumachia</i> probably has the highest death toll of all battle depictions. There is no evidence that gladiators took part in them.
ocra	Greaves that protect the front and side of a lower leg. <i>Murmillo</i> , <i>secutor</i> and <i>provocator</i> each wore one short greave, <i>hoplomachus</i> and <i>thraex</i> wore two large greaves that reached above the knee.
palma	A palm branch (usually date) was often presented to a victorious gladiator as a symbol of victory. They are also often found on tombstones of successful gladiators.
palus	A wooden pole used by legionaries and gladiators to train fighting techniques.
parmula	Small shield. The <i>thraex</i> used a rectangular design, the <i>hoplomachus</i> used a round and often domed shield.
parmularius	Gladiators who fought with a small shield, either <i>thraex</i> or <i>hoplomachus</i> . The term also describes the fans of the gladiator classes.
pompa	Festive procession held on the day before the games. , <i>see</i> <i>munus</i>
pontiarius	A variant of the <i>retiarius</i> . He defended a wooden bridge with two access ramps against two <i>secutores</i> . Instead of his net he had access to throwing projectiles, most likely rocks. , <i>see</i> <i>retiarius</i>
prolusio	Fights between <i>tirones</i> and occasionally nobles with wooden weapons that served as a pre-program to the real gladiator fights. Here a participation of Roman nobles was not considered dishonorable. Emperor Commodus participated in them regularly.
provocator	Medium gladiator who fought other provocators. Striking features are the breast-plate and the helmet representing legionary equipment.
pugio	A Roman dagger used by legionaries. It is often falsely attributed to the <i>retiarius</i> .
pugnate!	(<i>lat. Fight!</i>) Exclamation by the referee to start a fight.
radix exercitii	(<i>lat. technical training</i>) Training of individual fighting techniques, with and without weapons.

rete	The net of the retiarius.
retiarius	Light gladiator who fought with trident, net and gladius. Only armatura not wearing a helmet which made him very popular with the Roman audience. Opponent was the murmillo, later the secutor see.
rudarius	Gladiators who fought with pole arms (hoplomachus and retiarius).
rudis	A wooden gladius which was given to gladiators who had earned their freedom after a successful career.
sagina	<i>(lat. fattening food)</i> term for gladiator food, most likely puls [QuintDec].
sagittarius	A light gladiator class armed with bow and dagger. Since only one pictorial representation exists, details are unclear.
samnite	Gladiator based on the defeated Samnians. Details are unclear due to a lack of sources.
saturnalien	Roman feast day in honor of the god Saturn. After 45.BC Saturnalia took place as a festival lasting several days. Gladiator fights were a common part of the festival.
scaeva	A gladiator who fought left handed. The term is a name suffix (<i>e.g. murmillo scaeva</i>), since theoretically any gladiator could be left-handed. Most often scaevas were paired against each other.
scissor	Heavy gladiator with a semicircular blade on the left arm. Fought against the retiarius or other scissores .
scutarius	Gladiators who fought with large shields, similar to a scutum. The term also describes the fans of these types of gladiators.
secutor	<i>(lat. pursuer)</i> Main opponent for the retiarius, equipped like the murmillo, but with an egg shaped helmet. , <i>see</i> retiarius
sica	Curved, single bladed short sword of the thraex, bases on the weapon of the Thracian-illyrian people.
sine Missio	<i>(lat. without mercy)</i> A fight without an option to surrender (missio). The loser of the fight was always executed. Although this form of fight is over represented in modern media, it was rather rare as it was too costly.
stantes Missi	<i>(lat. released while still standing)</i> Term for a draw in a gladiator fight. Both fighter were allowed to leave the arena alive.
State!	<i>(lat. Stop!)</i> Exclamation of the referee to stop or pause a fight.
subligaculum	Loin cloth for gladiators, usually made from linen plural.
summa rudis	The referee for gladiator fights. They usually wore a bright tunic with two coloured stripes and a wooden stick. They enforced the rules of the bouts.
thraex	A heavy gladiator, famous for the sica they used. Main opponent was the murmillo see.
tiro	Gladiators who have not finished their first fight in front of an audience.
tridens	A trident, main weapon of the retiarius.
umbo	<i>(lat. shield bosse)</i> A round recess for the hand in the middle of a scutum.

venatio	A hunting event during which venatores caught wild animals and bestiarii killed them.
venator	Gladiators who caught wild animals.
virtus	Biggest character virtues of a Roman man or gladiator. They include physical prowess, bravery, obedience, endurance in defeat and modesty in victory.



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