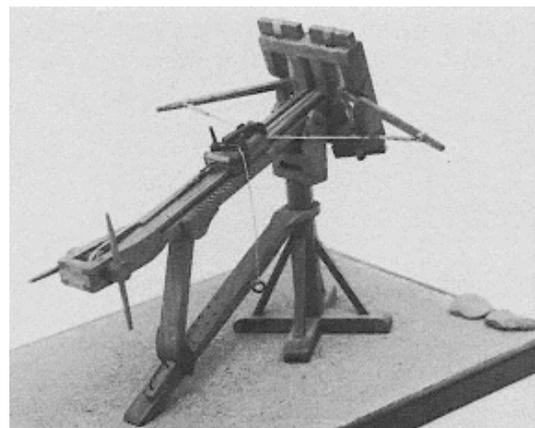


Ballista or scorpio



The ballista or scorpio is a powerful missile weapon of the Antiquity and early Middle Ages. It launches very large bolts (or sometimes round projectiles). Useful for sieges and sometimes for open battle, it can be peculiarly effective against groups.

Layer and assistant

Two characters are needed: a layer (or pointer) and an assistant or servant. In regular armies (Roman legion, etc.) the two soldiers standing by the ballista have both abilities; in other troops one is a qualified layer and the other a trained assistant.

It takes a whole game turn to reload (the ballista can shoot every other turn). If there is only one person loading and shooting (who must be a qualified layer or servant) it takes two game turn to reload (even with help of untrained people). A qualified layer may act as servant, but a trained servant, if he/she must replace the layer, shoots with -1 modifier to the dice. Other characters cannot use the ballista. If necessary an officer or engineer or scholar who has good reasons to understand the device may act as trained servants.

Protections

Armour, shield wall, pavise, wall of pavises, fence or screen of light wood or thin planks, give no protection from ballista bolts (it gets through without difficulty). Terrain gives protection as usual.

When shot at by light weapons, one or two layers or servants alone are "isolated targets at work"; when shot at by artillery they are a group in loose order (and the ballista can be destroyed as another person).

Movement

An unloaded ballista can be carried by four people as a very heavy and encumbering object (no shooting or reloading while so carried, movement -8 cm). It can also be mounted on a cart or on the back of an elephant, from where it shoots with -1 modifier if in movement or if the animal has been wounded.

Technical incident (optional rule)

If **the red die rolls 1**, technical incident or shooting delay:

If **under rain or by very wet weather** the ballista cannot function before it's thoroughly dried (not before the following day). **Otherwise**, shooting is delayed "for some time" (page 39 of the generic rules 2020) including the current game turn. In shooting phase of the next game turn (after all moves are done) roll the "some time" die, a result of 1 or 2 means that the ballista works again and can shoot immediately if wished (without having to reload as the bolt is still in place). Or on a result of 1, 2, or 3 in shooting phase of the following game turn, etc.

ballista or scorpio	dice	0 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm	40 - 60 cm	60 - 80 cm
at isolated target (or isolated couple) in movement or flat on the ground	1 red D6	6	7	(8)	—
at isolated target (or isolated couple) standing immobile or working	1 red D6	5 - 6	6	7	(8)
at a group in loose order or at a very large animal (elephant)	1 red D6 and 1 white D6	4 - 5 - 6	5 - 6	6	7
at a group in close order (shield wall, lancers or pikemen in ranks)	1 red D6 and 2 white D6s	3 - 4 - 5 - 6	4 - 5 - 6	5 - 6	6

Target is hit only if the **red die hits**, it causes as many casualties as successful dice (red and white) ...except if the target groups is actually in a single thin line regarding the ballista (whatever the player may think, carefully placing figures is not enough; without serious regular training a few warriors always find themselves behind others).