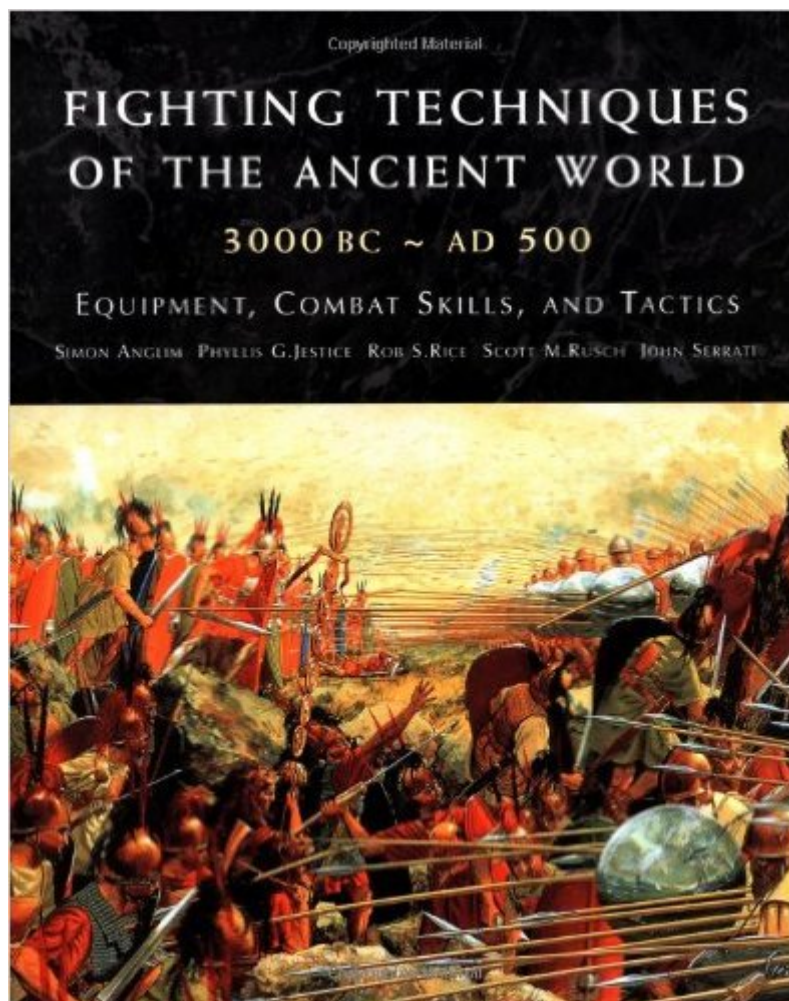


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# Fighting Techniques Of The Ancient World (3000 B.C. To 500 A.D.): Equipment, Combat Skills, And Tactics



## Synopsis

A comprehensive and heavily illustrated guide to warfare in the ancient world. This essential guide to ancient warfare describes the fighting methods of soldiers in Europe and the Middle East in an age before gunpowder. From a detailed examination of the individual components of an ancient army and their equipment, to a fascinating exploration of ancient battle strategies, siege warfare, and naval battles, it explores the unique tactics required to win battles with the technology available. Using specially commissioned color and black-and-white artwork and 24 full-color tactical maps, this book shows in great detail the methods by which armies, including Assyrians and Roman forces, prevailed over their foes, and why other armies were less successful. This is a must-read for any reader interested in ancient warfare.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The first thing I have to say is that evidently the authors and I understand the term "fighting techniques" differently. Doing a quick search for books with "fighting techniques" in the title will show that the term is generally held to refer to specific techniques and skills used in hand-to-hand combat. I was hoping to find some exploration of this, but it rated hardly a mention. Having said that, the book was a good solid overview of Ancient warfare, equipment, tactics, command and control, siegecraft. Nothing dramatically new (including many of the pictures) but if you want a sound book on ancient equipment and tactics, then I can recommend this one. There were a few strange assertions, like the claim that a particular bow had an effective range of 600m, over twice the length of the longest recorded bowshot! While I'm on bows, when will people realise that 'firing' a bow is an

act of arson, not one of war! Firearms are fired, bows are shot. And the multitude of authors resulted in some strange inconsistency in terminology, like mail being referred to by about three different names, none historically correct. The text also contained more than a reasonable number of typos and grammatical errors. The whole work felt rushed. Despite my misgivings, if you're after a good general work on ancient warfare, this is a fine book. Just don't expect to see any specific fighting techniques described. Stephen Hand Author of *Medieval Sword and Shield: The Combat System of Royal Armouries MS I.33*

**Pro:** Good survey of ancient warfare from Ancient Egypt and Sumeria through the Roman Empire. Physical quality is excellent. The authors are knowledgeable and competent. Extensive use of drawings, maps and art work is useful and effective. **Con:** Nothing really new here - much of the excellent art work is borrowed from older works. The authors cover the topics well but do not offer more insight into ancient warfare than previously offered by earlier out-of-print works by authors such as John Wharry, Sir John Hackett, and Peter Connolly. **Bottom Line:** If you need just one general purpose book on the subject, this does the job well. If you need more than a survey of ancient warfare, take a pass on this book and go after the works listed in the bibliography.

I must admit this book was a slight disappointment. After reading previous reviews and poring over the book's sample pages I had counted on this being an exhaustive work on Fighting Techniques of the Ancient World. Instead, it's more of a history lesson chronicling ancient cultures and their socio-economic along with politico-militaristic reasons for adopting certain types of equipment. Very little attention is actually given to "fighting techniques". There is quite a bit of information on weapons and armor and a moderate amount of information about how these were used in battles, but for the most part you read about the "hows" and "whys" of nations adopting certain weapons, armor, auxillary elements and not a concentrated explanation of their various roles and advantages in battles. This information IS in there, it's just a bit less substantial than I had anticipated and hoped for. But the book does offer an overwhelming myriad of pictures, sculptures, drawings, paintings, etchings, carvings, and diagrams to help illustrate their various topical points. This is supplimented by the best feature of the book: The battle layouts. There are roughly 18-20 full color, bird's eye view templates regarding major battles from Marathon to Mylae. These are wonderfully done and show each major step in the individual battle's progression. These are the real gems of the book. As a whole this book is worth checking out, the extensive in-depth analysis of naval, siege, mounted, and infantry warfare equipment and tactics are astounding. Every page has at least one picture or

diagram, and quite a few have sketches and layouts of various army formations, strategies, and planned progressive maneuvers. The only thing that is irksome is that you have to trudge through the history lessons and the campaign chronologies to get to the good stuff. In the end it's worth the money, but for God's sake go Used! And expect to spend as much time reading about the history and events leading UP TO a military tactic or piece of equipment as you would on the tactic or equipment itself.

This book is very good at describing ancient warfare and tactics. It gives a description of various famous historical battles and the reasons why the battle ended in the manner it did. While I enjoyed that aspect of the book I was hoping for a few other things. I wanted to see more actual pictures or re-creations of the instruments of war. They use too many line drawings I think. I'd also like to see more discussion on the evolution of thought behind the war machines themselves. The writings on battle strategies is good, though. I approached this book less interested in warfare specifically as much as I was interested in the technology and development of that technology in the instruments of war. If you're looking for that perspective you may not find it totally satisfying. However, the book is still an interesting read and you'll learn a lot and just how oversimplified the teaching in schools has become on ancient wars.

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