

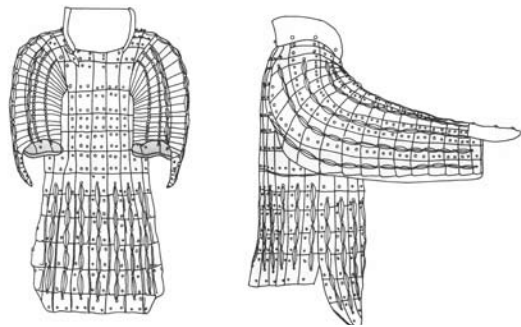
Charioteer and Horse

Earthenware 221–206 BC Ht. 190 cm (charioteer)
Ht. 166 Le. 193 cm (horse)
Emperor Qin Shihuang's Terracotta Army Museum

Chariots were already common on the battlefields of China before the time of the First Emperor. By the Qin unification, chariots had apparently become an elite division of the First Emperor's army. All charioteers from the terracotta warrior pits held official rank, as indicated by their flat headdress, and drove chariots pulled by four horses. The charioteer, then called *yushou* (royal driver), controlled and directed the formations of foot soldiers.

Each chariot also carried one or two soldiers who would have fought with a medium-range weapon like a *ge* dagger-axe over the moving wheels. Because the charioteer would not be able to defend himself while holding the reins, most wore special armour, with sleeves that extended over the hands and a high collar to protect the neck. However, our charioteer in the exhibition bravely wears just the armour of a regular soldier.

A few charioteers had the honour of driving a command chariot containing a general (see page 42) and a guard. Such a chariot would also have contained a leather drum and a bronze bell (see example in the exhibition) used by the general for directing military movements. Slight differences between cavalry and chariot horses found with the terracotta army suggest that in life they were specially selected for their roles.



Cavalry Horse and Soldier

Earthenware 221–206 BC Ht. 172 Le. 203 cm (horse)
Ht. 184 cm (soldier)
Emperor Qin Shihuang's Terracotta Army Museum

Two kinds of horses, both for the battlefield, were found in the terracotta pits: horses for mounted cavalry, and horses for pulling the war chariots. This cavalry horse is beautifully outfitted, with its saddle showing ornamental studs, girth strap, and crupper. It was ridden without stirrups, which did not come into use until later centuries. The head is modelled in extremely fine detail—with flared nostrils, skin creases around the wide-open eyes, ears pitched forward and alert, and mouth slightly open—presenting great character and realism. Its remarkable size matches that of the real horses buried near the First Emperor's tomb.

In battle, a unit of the First Emperor's cavalry was likely deployed to the rear of the military formation, as displayed in Pit No. 2, where 116 saddle horses were found in this position, each accompanied by a standing cavalry soldier.



Civil Official

Earthenware 221–206 BC Ht. 188 cm
Shaanxi Institute of Archaeology

In 2000, archaeologists discovered a new pit with life-sized terracotta figures at the southwestern corner of the First Emperor's tomb complex, very close to the mound itself. This time, it held not soldiers but civil officials. Their high rank is suggested by both the distinctive cap and the flat-ended shoes with raised toes, exactly like those of the armoured figure of a general in the exhibition. Their hands are tucked into the long sleeves of their robes. Each official has a knife and sharpening stone hanging from the right side of his waist, necessary tools for working on the bamboo strips or wooden tablets used for writing at the time. A wooden tablet was likely slipped into the space between the left arm and chest, just as we would now carry a file folder or notepad to a meeting. Archaeologists believe this pit represented an administrative office, probably the Department of Justice.



Armour and Helmet

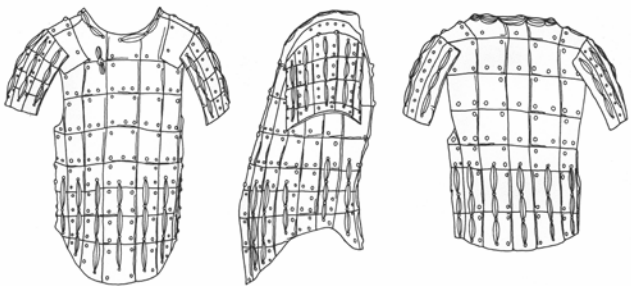
Stone 221–206 BC Ht. 77 Wi. 50 cm (armour)

Ht. 38 Wi. 21 cm (helmet)

Shaanxi Institute of Archaeology

Stone armour and helmets were not used for actual combat. A suit is extremely heavy, weighing as much as 20 kilograms, as it could have more than 600 limestone plaques linked together with copper wires. Yet hundreds of life-sized suits were made and buried specially for the First Emperor's underworld army. Real armour and helmets used in the Warring States period were made from iron or leather.

Found in 1999 at the southeast corner of the tomb complex, Pit K9801 is as large as the terracotta warrior Pit No. 1, but only one-eightieth of it has been excavated, revealing 87 suits and 43 helmets. It is hard to imagine how many more suits there could be, and in what variety, if the pit were excavated entirely. It appears that the huge quantity of armour buried would have been sufficient to outfit the 8,000 terracotta warriors. However, none of the terracotta warriors wear helmets, possibly to demonstrate their bravery in the service of the First Emperor.



Reconstruction of these suits is extremely time-consuming, since all were found collapsed. The wooden stands or hanging frames on which they were probably mounted originally had disintegrated long ago.

