

# Siege

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A siege (from Latin sedere 'to sit') is a military blockade of a city, or fortress, with the intent of conquering by attrition, or by well-prepared assault. Siege warfare (also called siegecrafts or poliorcetics) is a form of constant, low-intensity conflict characterized by one party holding a strong, static, defensive position. Consequently, an opportunity for negotiation between combatants is common, as proximity and fluctuating advantage can encourage diplomacy.

A siege occurs when an attacker encounters a city or fortress that cannot be easily taken by a quick assault, and which refuses to surrender. Sieges involve surrounding the target to block provision of supplies and reinforcement or escape of troops (a tactic known as "investment"). This is typically coupled with attempts to reduce the fortifications by means of siege engines, artillery bombardment, mining (also known as sapping), or the use of deception or treachery to bypass defenses.

Failing a military outcome, sieges can often be decided by starvation, thirst, or disease, which can afflict either the attacker or defender. This form of siege, though, can take many months or even years, depending upon the size of the stores of food the fortified position holds. The attacking force can circumvallate the besieged place, which is to build a line of earth-works, consisting of a rampart and trench, surrounding it. During the process of circumvallation, the attacking force can be set upon by another force, an ally of the besieged place, due to the lengthy amount of time required to force it to capitulate. A defensive ring of forts outside the ring of circumvallated forts, called contravallation, is also sometimes used to defend the attackers from outside.

Ancient cities in the Middle East show archaeological evidence of fortified city walls. During the Warring States period of ancient China, there is both textual and archaeological evidence of prolonged sieges and siege machinery used against the defenders of city walls. Siege machinery was also a tradition of the ancient Greco-Roman world. During the Renaissance and the early modern period, siege warfare dominated the conduct of war in Europe. Leonardo da Vinci gained some of his renown from design of fortifications. Medieval campaigns were generally designed around a succession of sieges. In the Napoleonic era, increasing use of ever more powerful cannons reduced the value of fortifications. In the 20th century, the significance of the classical siege declined. With the advent of mobile warfare, a single fortified stronghold is no longer as decisive as it once was. While traditional sieges do still occur, they are not as common as they once were due to changes in modes of battle, principally the ease by which huge volumes of destructive power can be directed onto a static target. Modern sieges are more commonly the result of smaller hostage, militant, or extreme resisting arrest situations.

## The Siege

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The Siege is a 1998 American action thriller film directed by Edward Zwick. The film is about a situation in which terrorist cells have made several attacks in New York City. The film stars Denzel Washington, Annette Bening, Tony Shalhoub, and Bruce Willis.

## Waco siege

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The Waco siege, also known as the Waco massacre, was the siege by US federal government and Texas state law enforcement officials of a compound belonging to the religious cult known as the Branch Davidians, between February 28 and April 19, 1993. The Branch Davidians, led by David Koresh, were headquartered at Mount Carmel Center ranch in unincorporated McLennan County, Texas, 13 miles (21 kilometers) northeast of Waco. Suspecting the group of stockpiling illegal weapons, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) obtained a search warrant for the compound and arrest warrants for Koresh and several of the group's members.

The ATF had planned a sudden daylight raid of the ranch in order to serve these warrants. Any advantage of surprise was lost when a local reporter who had been tipped off about the raid asked for directions from a US Postal Service mail carrier who was coincidentally Koresh's brother-in-law. Thus, the group's members were fully armed and prepared; upon the ATF initiating the raid, an intense gunfight erupted, resulting in the deaths of four ATF agents and six Branch Davidians. Following the ATF entering the property and its failure to execute the search warrant, a siege was initiated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), during which negotiations between the parties attempted to reach a compromise.

After 51 days, on April 19, 1993, the FBI launched a CS gas (tear gas) attack in an attempt to force the Branch Davidians out of the compound's buildings. Shortly thereafter, the Mount Carmel Center became engulfed in flames. The fire and the reaction to the final attack within the group resulted in the deaths of 76 Branch Davidians, including 20–28 children and Koresh.

The events of the siege and attack, particularly the origin of the fire, are disputed by various sources. Department of Justice reports from October 1993 and July 2000 conclude that although incendiary CS gas canisters were used by the FBI, the Branch Davidians had started the fire, citing evidence from audio surveillance recordings of very specific discussions between Koresh and others about pouring more fuel on piles of hay as the fires started, and from aerial footage showing at least three simultaneous ignition points at different locations in the building complex. The FBI contends that none of their agents fired any live rounds on the day of the fire. Critics contend that live rounds were indeed fired by law enforcement, and suggest that a combination of gunshots and flammable CS gas was the true cause of the fire.

The Ruby Ridge standoff and the Waco siege were cited by Timothy McVeigh as the main reasons for his and Terry Nichols's plan to execute the Oklahoma City bombing exactly two years later, on April 19, 1995, as well as the modern-day American militia movement.

## Siege engine

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A siege engine is a device that is designed to break or circumvent heavy castle doors, thick city walls and other fortifications in siege warfare. Some are immobile, constructed in place to attack enemy fortifications from a distance, while others have wheels to enable advancing up to the enemy fortification. There are many distinct types, such as siege towers that allow foot soldiers to scale walls and attack the defenders, battering rams that damage walls or gates, and large ranged weapons (such as ballistas, catapults/trebuchets and other similar constructions) that attack from a distance by launching heavy projectiles. Some complex siege engines were combinations of these types.

Siege engines are fairly large constructions – from the size of a small house to a large building. From antiquity up to the development of gunpowder, they were made largely of wood, using rope or leather to help bind them, possibly with a few pieces of metal at key stress points. They could launch simple projectiles using natural materials to build up force by tension, torsion, or, in the case of trebuchets, human power or

counterweights coupled with mechanical advantage. With the development of gunpowder and improved metallurgy, bombards and later heavy artillery became the primary siege engines.

Collectively, siege engines or artillery together with the necessary soldiers, sappers, ammunition, and transport vehicles to conduct a siege are referred to as a siege train.

### Siege of Sarajevo

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The siege of Sarajevo (Serbo-Croatian: ?????? ????????, romanized: Opsada Sarajeva) was a prolonged military blockade of Sarajevo, the capital of Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the ethnically charged Bosnian War. After it was initially besieged by Serbian forces of the Yugoslav People's Army, the city was then besieged by the Army of Republika Srpska. Lasting from 5 April 1992 to 29 February 1996 (1,425 days), it was three times longer than the Battle of Stalingrad and more than a year longer than the siege of Leningrad, making it the longest siege of a capital city in the history of modern warfare.

When Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia after the 1992 Bosnian independence referendum, the Bosnian Serbs—whose strategic goal was to create a new Bosnian Serb state of Republika Srpska (RS) that would include Bosniak-majority areas—encircled Sarajevo with a siege force of 13,000 stationed in the surrounding hills. From there they blockaded the city, and assaulted it with artillery, tanks, and small arms, dropping at least 500,000 bombs.

Units of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ARBiH) inside the city, who numbered around 70,000 troops, without heavy weapons or armor, defended much of the urban area of the city throughout the war but were unable to break the siege, which was lifted following the signing of the Dayton Agreement on 14 December 1995.

A total of 13,952 people were killed during the siege, including 5,434 civilians. The ARBiH sustained 6,137 fatalities, while Bosnian Serb military casualties numbered 2,241 killed soldiers. The 1991 census indicates that before the siege, the city and its surrounding areas had a total population of 525,980. According to some estimates, the total population of the city proper prior to the siege was 435,000. Estimates of the population of Sarajevo after the siege ranged from 300,000 to 380,000. Sarajevo's population endured up to six months without gas, electricity or water supply during certain stages of the siege.

After the war, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) convicted four Serb officials for numerous counts of crimes against humanity which they committed during the siege, including terrorism. Stanislav Galić and Dragomir Milošević were sentenced to life imprisonment and 29 years imprisonment respectively. Their superiors, Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, were also convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

### The Siege at Thorn High

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The Siege at Thorn High (Indonesian: Pengepungan Di Bukit Duri) is a 2025 Indonesian dystopian action thriller film written and directed by Joko Anwar, co-produced by Amazon MGM Studios and starring Morgan Oey.

The film was released by Amazon MGM Studios through Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer on 17 April 2025.

Siege (disambiguation)

*of sieges, see list of sieges. Siege, The Siege, Besiege or Besieged may also refer to: The Siege (Dunmore novel), by Helen Dunmore, 2001 The Siege (Kadare*

A siege is a military blockade and assault of a city or fortress with the intent of conquering. For a list of sieges, see list of sieges.

Siege, The Siege, Besiege or Besieged may also refer to:

Siege of Acre

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Siege of Acre (1189–1191), during the Third Crusade

Siege of Acre (1257–1258), during the War of Saint Sabas

Siege of Acre (1263), Baibars laid siege to the Crusader city, but abandoned it to attack Nazareth.

Siege of Acre (1291), the fall of the final Crusader city in the Levant

Siege of Acre (1799), during the French Revolutionary Wars

Siege of Acre (1821), part of Ottoman power struggles

Siege of Akka (1832), by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt

Siege of Rome

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Siege of Rome (472), by the Western Roman general Ricimer

Siege of Rome (537–538), by the Ostrogoths under Vitiges

Siege of Rome (546), by the Ostrogoths under Totila

Siege of Rome (549–550), by the Ostrogoths again under Totila

Siege of Rome (756), by the Lombards under Aistulf

Siege of Rome (1082–1084), by Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor

Siege of Rome (1849), by the French

Siege of Paris

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Siege of Paris (845), the Viking siege by Reginherus, possibly Ragnar Lodbrok

Siege of Paris (885–886), the Viking siege by Rollo

Siege of Paris (978), by Otto II of Germany, and Holy Roman Emperor

Siege of Paris (1429), by Charles VII of France and Joan of Arc

Siege of Paris (1435–1436), by Charles VII of France

Siege of Paris (1465), by the League of the Public Weal

Siege of Paris (1590), the Protestant siege by Henry IV of France

Siege of Paris (1870–1871), the German siege in the Franco-Prussian War

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