



The map of the Roman empire over time

Students are often confused by the meaning of the word empire: in this content, it refers to the land over which the Romans held imperium, i.e. the territory which they controlled. It is important not to confuse this with the political label empire which can refer to the period of history during which Rome was ruled by emperors.

This map shows the size of the Roman empire at three important points in Rome's history:

- 44 BC - the year in which Julius Caesar was assassinated
- AD 14 - the year in which Augustus died, his adopted son Tiberius became the new *princeps* and thus established the hereditary rule of the Roman emperors
- AD 117- the Roman empire at its greatest extent under the emperor Trajan.

Three different coloured bands are used in this map to denote the territory at each of these times. The Romans divided their territory into administrative districts, known as provinces. Within each band, black lines are used to denote the borders of these provinces, and each province has been given its Latin name, printed in capitals.

As the empire expanded, the Romans re-shaped some of their provinces, and so it is important to note that the boundaries marked within Roman territory at 44 BC were not necessarily the same in AD 14, and so on. In Appendix 1 below, there are some notes to explain the most significant of these changes.

Also marked on this map are the places which are mentioned within *de Romanis*. Appendix 2 lists these places in alphabetical order, and summarises their importance.

Appendix 1

Africa: the province labelled as Africa Proconsularis was originally two provinces: Africa and Africa Nova. The province of Africa contained the land around Carthage and had existed from 146 BC. By 46 BC the land to its west had been conquered and formed the province of Africa Nova; this province was extended further west in 40 BC, and the outer perimeter shown on this map denotes the Roman territory at this date, rather than 44 BC. It is not known where the dividing line between Africa and Africa Nova fell, and so they have been labelled as one, but it is important to note that the territory was not combined and named in this way until Augustus.

Greece: the southern part of Greece, including Athens and the Peloponnese, was initially incorporated into the province of Macedonia, but Augustus turned it into the separate province of Achaëa in circa 27 BC. Under Trajan, territory on the west coast of Greece and to the north of Actium also became the province of Epirus.

Spain: the Romans expanded their control here gradually, but by AD 14 they had control of the whole land mass and they had redivided the territory into three provinces: the older provinces of Hispania Citerior and Hispania Ulterior no longer existed and instead were incorporated within the newer provinces of Hispania Tarraconensis and Hispania Baetica respectively.

Appendix 2

Actium	The sea battle fought near Actium was seen as the turning-point in Octavian's victory over Antony and Cleopatra (Chapters 10 and 11).
Aegyptus	Home to Cleopatra and one of the world's oldest civilisations (Chapter 10).
Alesia	The siege of Alesia was the turning point in Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul; when the Gallic chieftain Vercingetorix surrendered, Caesar's victory over all of Gaul was declared (Chapter 9).
Alexandria	The legendary city in Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great, and the place where Cleopatra and Julius Caesar first met. (Chapter 10).
Aquae Sulis (Bath)	Britain's only natural hot spring was home to a shrine dedicated to the Celtic goddess Sulis whom the Romans identified with their goddess Minerva. They built a large bath complex there which is well preserved today (Chapter 3).
Athens	The most famous of the ancient Greek cities and the birthplace of democratic government.
Battle of Zela	Straight after winning the Siege of Alexandria in 47 BC, Caesar travelled remarkably quickly from Egypt to fight Pharnaces II of Pontus. It is said that after he won the Battle of Zela, Caesar sent a message back to the senate at Rome that included the famous words <i>veni, vidi, vici</i> (Chapter 9).
Britannia	The Roman province in modern-day Britain (Chapter 12).
Caledonia	The land to the north of Hadrian's Wall; the Romans fought against Calgacus here at the battle of Mount Graupius (Chapter 12).
Camulodunum (Colchester)	The location of Boudicca's first victory against the Romans (Chapter 12).

Carthage	Home to the Carthaginians and Hannibal, Rome's greatest enemy: the Romans fought a series of campaigns against the Carthagians and finally conquered their territory in 146 BC (Chapters 4, 7, 9).
Cumae	Home to the Sibyl, the prophetic priestess of Apollo (Chapters 4 and 6).
Dalmatia (Illyria)	Illyria was the Roman territory where Octavian received the news of Julius Caesar's death in 44 BC. As emperor, he later turned much of it into the new province of Dalmatia (Chapter 11).
Delphi	Home to the most famous oracle in the ancient world (Chapter 6).
Dover	The location Caesar intended for his first invasion of Britain; the British troops waiting on the cliffs forced him to land near Deal instead (Chapters 9 and 12).
Gallia	The territory to the north and west of Italy, and the location of Julius Caesar's decade-long conquest in the 50s BC (Chapter 9).
Hadrian's Wall	Hadrian's Wall was a 73 mile long defensive fortification that marked the northern frontier of the Roman empire. (Chapter 12).
Londinium (London)	The city which would one day become the capital of Great Britain, and the location of Boudicca's second victory (Chapter 12).
Macedonia	The Roman province of Macedonia included the territory which had once been the kingdom of Macedonia and home to Alexander the Great (Chapter 10).
Mt Vesuvius	The volcano which erupted in AD 79 and buried much of the surrounding land in ash, preserving large quantities of evidence of Roman daily life at this time. (Chapter 8).
Mt Olympus	The mythical home of the Olympian gods (Chapter 1).
Mycenae	The home of Agamemnon, the most powerful Greek king at the time of the Trojan war (Chapter 6).
Newcastle	Known as 'Pons Aelius' (Hadrian's Bridge), Newcastle was a Roman fort and bridge over the River Tyne built in the 2nd century AD. Fragments of Hadrian's wall can still be seen in Newcastle today. (Chapter 12).
Ostia	Rome's coastal harbour (Chapter 2).
Pharsalus	The battle won here by Julius Caesar against Pompey and the Roman senate marked Caesar's victory and dominance over the Roman state. (Chapters 9 and 10).
Philippi	The battle fought here in 42 BC marked the end of the Liberators' civil war and established the dominance of the triumvirate (Chapter 11).

Phthia	Home to Achilles, the greatest Greek warrior to fight in the Trojan War (Chapter 6).
Pompeii	A city in the Bay of Naples near Mt Vesuvius; ash from the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 preserved many buildings and Roman artefacts (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6).
Rhodes	Home to the famous Greek orator, Apollonius Molon, who taught Cicero and Julius Caesar (Chapters 8 and 9).
Rome	The Romans' first and most important city; the city started as a small community of farmers in the 8th century BC, but grew in power and influence to become the centre of the ancient world.
Spartacus defeated	The final battle between the armies of the Roman Republic, led by Crassus, and the rebel gladiator Spartacus took place in 71 BC. It marked the defeat of Spartacus and his followers (Chapter 5).
Syria	Cleopatra fled here in the war against her brother (Chapter 10).
Tarsus	The place where Antony first met Cleopatra (Chapter 10).
The Aequi	The Italian tribe against whom the Romans were fighting when they appointed Cincinnatus as their dictator (Chapter 7).
The Etruscans	Many of Rome's earliest battles were against the Etruscans, but once Rome had conquered their territory, Etruria, the Romans absorbed many of their customs. (Chapters 2, 5, 6).
The river Nile	The Nile is the longest river in Africa and one of the reasons why Egypt was such a powerful kingdom in the ancient world. It allowed the Egyptians to grow plenty of food and move both people and trade goods through the kingdom. (Chapter 10).
The Rubicon river	The Rubicon was a shallow river that marked the border between Italy and the provinces where Caesar was allowed to command soldiers within the legal remit of his <i>imperium</i> . By choosing to cross the Rubicon with his soldiers, Caesar declared war on the senate. (Chapter 9).
The Sabines	An Italic people who lived in and around the Appenine Mountains. It is thought that some of the Sabines joined the Romans after the founding of Rome. The rest of the Sabines were conquered by the Romans in the 3rd century BC. (Chapters 5 and 7).
The Veientes	Home to the Veientes, an Etruscan tribe who fought against the Romans in the 5th century BC (Chapter 3).
Thessalonica	Cicero lived in exile here in 58 BC (Chapter 8).
The river Tiber	The river which flowed through Rome (Chapters 2 and 3).

Troy	The home of Rome's founding father, Aeneas (Chapters 2, 3, 6 and 11).
Verulamium (St Albans)	The location of Boudicca's third victory (Chapter 12).