

# The Mamluks | The Mamluk System

'In many ways the training of Mamluks can be compared to that of contemporary European knights.'

Most important, however, he was highly trained in the art of war, archery and horsemanship. Indeed, in many ways the training of Mamluks can be compared to that of contemporary European knights. Regular tournaments were held with competitive games such as polo (jawkan) designed to refine the Mamluks' equestrian skills. Once their training was complete the Mamluk was set free and given a set of weapons and a horse. Now they were free to embark on military careers that enabled the most skilled among them to rise through the ranks to serve as senior commanders, provincial governors, the sultan's retainers, or indeed as sultans themselves.



**Name:**  
Small water-basin

**Dynasty:**  
Around hegira 700 / AD 1300 Mamluk

**Details:**  
Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum  
Berlin, Germany

**Justification:**  
A small bowl embellished with scenes of hunting and jousting, both of which were popular Mamluk sports designed to demonstrate courage and endurance.

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**Name:**  
Grenades

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 6th century / post-AD 1184 Ayyubid

**Details:**  
Ajlun Archaeological Museum  
Ajlun, Jordan

**Justification:**  
Knowledge of explosive devices and projectiles was vital for effective warfare against the enemy.

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**Name:**  
Page from a manuscript on horsemanship

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 9th century / AD 15th century Mamluk

**Details:**  
Museum of Islamic Art  
Cairo, Egypt

**Justification:**  
To keep fit Mamluk knights regularly practised fencing, weight-lifting and swimming.

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**Name:**  
Ajlun Castle

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 579–658 / AD 1184–1260 Ayyubid–Mamluk

**Details:**

Ajlun, Jordan

**Justification:**

Mamluks were trained in and stationed at citadels and fortresses. This one at Ajlun was strategically important, situated on the trade route between Syria and Egypt.

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