

## Siege – Taking a Medieval Castle Without a Catapult

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In the later centuries of the Middle Ages siege engines were often employed to take down the walls of a medieval castle. But in the early centuries an attacking army often did not have the skill, resources, or time to build and use siege engine...

so they employed other very ingenious methods including biological warfare. A Medieval Castle is a fortress built out of thousands of tons of stone and designed for maximum safety and security yet they were still taken and often by very devious means. Here were some of these simpler and less technological ways that castles were sieged.

**Deception:** Spies were used to infiltrate the castle. They could, at night, open the castle gates or wreak havoc on the interior defenses of the castle. The most famous case of this tactic is the Trojan Horse.

**Treachery:** Someone trusted within the power structure of the castle could give misleading information that would bring down the castle. He could for example report that there were many more troops sieging the castle than there actually were. This would induce the castle residents to either revolt or surrender out of fear.

**Starvation:** This was a method used but it often meant many months, sometimes even a year or more. The sieging army would station itself around the castle and not allow any form of commerce. Eventually the inhabitants would surrender due to imminent starvation.

**Biological warfare:** Yep that's right. A sieging force could launch the remains of rotting corpses into the castle causing outbreaks of life-threatening illness.

**Simple Storm:** The sieging force could carry on an all out attack at various points of the castle. This overwhelming would hopefully break through in some places causing a collapse in defenses.

**Tunneling:** The sieging army would actually dig tunnels under the castle. The hope was not so much for an entry into the castle but for a way to collapse the castle defenses. It was because of this technique that many Medieval Castles had moats around them. A moat would cause the collapse and filling with water of any attempted tunnels.

Because the walls and fortifications of medieval castles were so well built an attacking army would often employ methods that didn't directly attack them. Instead they found and used a host of other means to either attack the inhabitants or get them to surrender. It is partially due to this process that many medieval castles still stand to this day.

To Learn More about Medieval Castles visit the author's website at: [The Medieval Castle Website](http://TheMedievalCastleWebsite.com)

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