

German Panzer unit insignia 1939-45

(part 1)

Author: Stefano Di Giusto

Available on www.panzer-ozak.it

This survey presents the unit insignia of Panzer- and Panzer-Grenadier-Divisionen, and of their Panzertruppe sub-units (Panzer-Regimenter and Panzer-Abteilungen); it does not deal with divisional sub-units from other branches that may have used different specific insignia.

Additionally, insignia of independent Panzertruppe units (called Heerestruppe, i.e. units not inserted in a Division but at the disposal of higher headquarters) are also presented.

Insignia are taken from photographs to be shown as used on vehicles, hence the varying image quality.

Recently added sections are highlighted by the label **NEW**

Recently updated sections are highlighted by the label **UPDATE!**

List of contents

1. Poland – September 1939	p. 1
2. 1940 Campaigns	p. 16
3. Denmark – Norway – April 1940	p. 16
4. West – May-June 1940	p. 17
5. Developments during the second half of 1940	p. 33
6. Balkans – April 1941	p. 34

Poland – September 1939

To the Polish campaign participated seven Panzer-Divisionen (1.-5., 10. Pz.Div. and Pz.Div. Kempf) and four leichte Divisionen, for a total of 14 Panzer-Regimenter and 6 Panzer-Abteilungen, of which one Regiment (Pz.Rgt. 25, composed of I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 23 and I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 25) and one Abteilung (I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 10) were used as Heerestruppe.

Units are difficult to identify because the use of insignia was extremely limited, and even the use of turret numbers (which may help to differentiate between units) was far from being generalised. In several units, tanks only had numbers painted on rhomboid plates attached to the hull sides and rear, while a few units carried no numbers at all.

Some assistance is provided by the fact that only the 1. leichte Division used Pz.Kpfw. 35(t) (both in Pz.Rgt. 11 and Pz.Abt. 65) and only Panzer-Abteilung 67 (3. le.Div.) used Pz.Kpfw. 38(t). Additionally, the Panzer-Abteilungen of 2., 3. and 4. leichte Divisionen were “verlastet” i.e. their tanks were transported on trucks and trailers; 2. and 3. leichte Divisionen were the only units equipped with Pz.Kpfw. II Ausf. D.

Panzer units fighting in Poland were mostly equipped with Pz.Kpfw. I and Pz.Kpfw. II (respectively 973 and 1127 in total on 1/9/1939). Only 87 Pz.Kpfw. III and 198 Pz.Kpfw. IV took part in the campaign, and their distribution was quite uneven: if Pz.Lehr-Abt. had 37 Pz.Kpfw. III and Pz.Rgt. 1 had 20, most of the other units had only 3 each, and some had none. For the Pz.Kpfw. IV, Pz.Rgt. 1, 2 and 11 had 27 to 28 each, Pz.Lehr-Abt

and Pz.Abt. 65 had 14 each, while all other Panzer-Regimenter only had 6 to 9 each, while some Panzer-Abteilungen of the leichte Divisionen had none.

Pz.Kpfw. IV were usually in the 4. Kp. and 8. Kp. of the Panzer-Regimenter, with some exceptions which may also help to identify the unit.

Before the start of the campaign all Panzer-Regiments were ordered to leave one leichte Kompanie per Abteilung at the home base for the training of replacements; therefore, each of the two Abteilungen in a Panzer-Regiment was left with three companies. As to the single Panzer-Abteilungen (65, 66, 67, I./10, I./23, I./25, Lehr), it seems that they also had three companies in Poland, so they likely also left one company behind at the home base.

The situation of which companies made up which Panzer-Regiment or Abteilung during the Polish campaign, and which were equipped with Pz.Kpfw. IV, is provided – as far as known – in the following table:

Poland 1939									Panzers on 1/9/1939 (data from Jentz, Panzertruppe)								
Unit	I. Abteilung				II. Abteilung				Notes	PzI	PzII	35t	38t	PzIII	PzIV	PzBefwg	Notes
	1.Kp	2.Kp	3.Kp	4.Kp	5.Kp	6.Kp	7.Kp	8.Kp									
PzRgt 1	-	x	x	PzIV	x	-	x	PzIV		39	60	0	0	20	28	6	
PzRgt 2	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV		54	62	0	0	6	28	6	
PzRgt 3	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	8.Kp.: no PzIV photos	62	78	0	0	3	8	9	
PzRgt 4	x	PzIV	x	-	PzIV	-	x	x		62	77	0	0	3	9	11	
PzRgt 5	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV		63	77	0	0	3	9	8	
PzRgt 6	x	x	-	PzIV	-	x	x	PzIV		59	79	0	0	3	9	8	
PzRgt 7	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	8.Kp.: no PzIV photos	61	81	0	0	3	9	10	
PzRgt 8	x	x	-	PzIV	x	-	x	PzIV		57	74	0	0	3	7	9	
PzRgt 11	x	x	PzIV	-	x	PzIV	x	-		0	45	75	0	0	27	6	PzBefw 35t
PzRgt 15	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Kp. numbers not used	72	81	0	0	3	8	11	
PzRgt 31	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV		80	63	0	0	0	6	11	
PzRgt 35	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV		99	64	0	0	0	6	8	
PzRgt 36	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV		84	66	0	0	0	6	8	
PzLehr-Abt	?	x	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	no photos of 1. Kp.	0	20	0	0	37	14	2	
I. Abt/PzRgt 10	x	x	PzIV	- (?)	-	-	-	-	Kp. numbers not used	28	34	0	0	3	4	5	
I. Abt/PzRgt 23	x (?)	x (?)	x (?)	PzIV	-	-	-	-	Kp. numbers not used	78	58	0	0	0	3	9	
I. Abt/PzRgt 25	x (?)	x	x (?)	x (?)	-	-	-	-	0			0	0	3			
PzAbt 65	x	-	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	no photos of 1. Kp.	0	20	37	0	0	14	2	PzBefw 35t
PzAbt 66	x	x	x	?	-	-	-	-		41	42	0	0	0	0	2	
PzAbt 67	x	x	x	-	-	-	-	-		0	23	0	55	0	0	2	PzBefw 38t
PzAbt 33	x (?)	x (?)	x (?)	x (?)	-	-	-	-	Kp. numbers not used	34	23	0	0	0	0	5	
total:									973	1127	112	55	87	198	138		

x = company took part in the campaign

- = company did not take part in the campaign

? = company participation in the campaign not confirmed

Finally, it is to be noted that in several units, insignia were painted in different colours to indicate the company; specific information is given in the unit sections. As a rule, the colours were: white for 1. and 5., red for 2. and 6., yellow for 3. and 7., blue for 4. and 8. Kompanie.

1. Panzer-Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Regiment 1: no specific insignia. Large or medium-sized white numbers painted on turrets and for Pz.Kpfw. I and II also on the rear hull / superstructure; for II. Abt. numbers were underlined.



Sometimes geometric signs were applied on turret rear, probably to indicate the Zug (platoon):



In 8. Kp., Pz.Kpfw. IV nr. 800 carried two horizontal white lines on the turret rear (on and below the cupola); Zugführer tanks carried one line only below the cupola



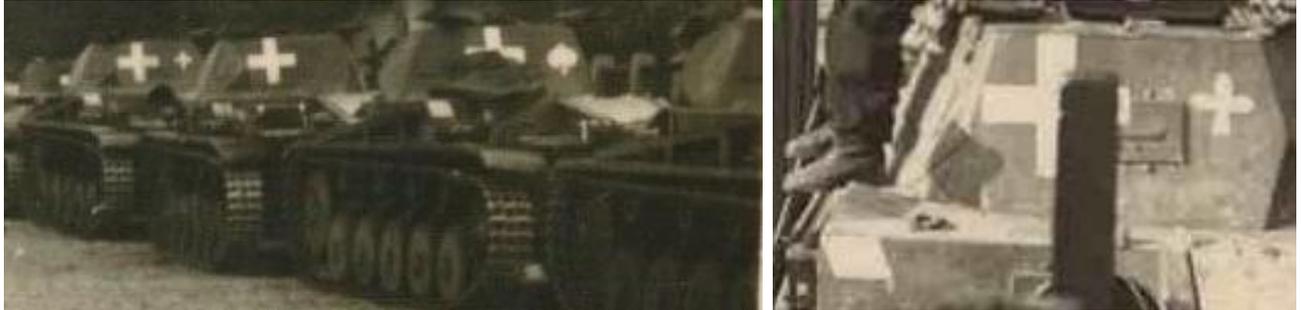
Panzer-Regiment 2: no specific insignia. Medium-sized white numbers followed by a dot to differentiate from Pz.Rgt. 1 (already used since 1938); numbers were painted on turrets, for Pz.Kpfw. I and II also on the rear hull / superstructure and for Pz.Kpfw. IV sometimes on hull front.



2. Panzer-Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Regiment 3: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates. A few tanks (perhaps only in 1. Kp.) carried cards symbols, meaning unknown



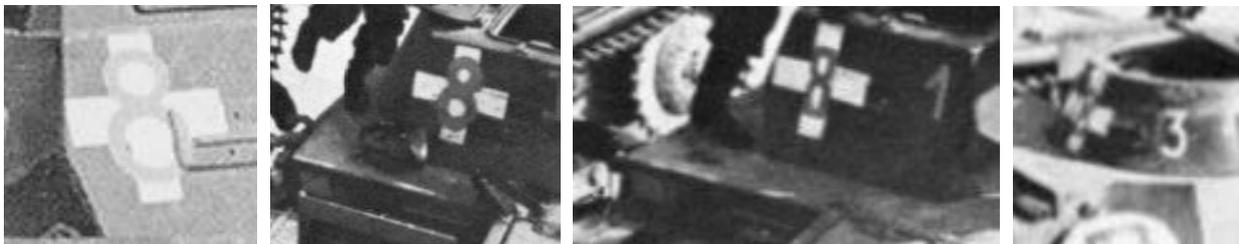
Panzer-Regiment 4: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates, with two known exceptions:

7. Kp. carried a 7 and a tactical symbol painted on turrets sides, and individual numbers on turret rears



and

8. Kp. had individual numbers on turret rears and the company number painted on the Balkenkreuz



Also, Panzer-Regiment 4 used a peculiar style for the numbers on the rhomboids, with narrow elongated figures:



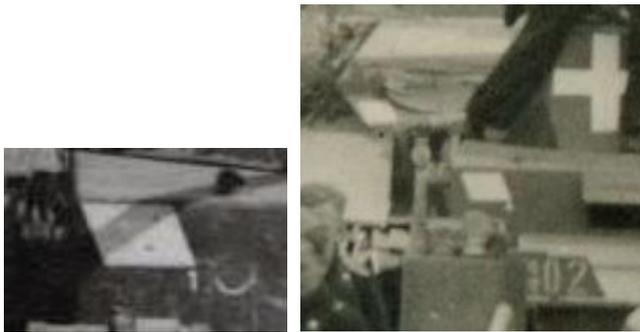
As there seems to have been no specific symbols to differentiate tanks of Pz.Rgt. 3 from Pz.Rgt. 4, and tanks from both regiments had rhomboids painted on the hull or superstructure front and rear,



attribution to a specific Regiment is difficult.

The rhomboids were apparently painted in different colours. These were possibly company colours. However, although drawing conclusions from black and white photos is very difficult, it might be that in Pz.Rgt. 3 the I. Abt painted the rhomboid in white, while II. Abt. in yellow or possibly pink.

Sometimes rhomboids were larger and had the company number below (probably Pz.Rgt. 3)



other times they appeared a bit smaller and flatter and had the company number next to them (probably Pz.Rgt. 4)



This insignia was seen on photos taken in 1938-39, including on a photo from a Pz.Rgt. 4 grouping. Positive identification with this unit is however missing. It is also not known how widespread its use was, and for how long it was used.



3. Panzer-Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Regiment 5: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates. Some tanks in at least 5. and 6. Kp. also carried a large one-digit number painted in white on the turret side and rear (probably the company number for the tanks of the Kp.Trupp (headquarters), the platoon number for the other tanks).



5. Kp.



6. Kp.

Some tanks carried names on the back of the commander's cupola

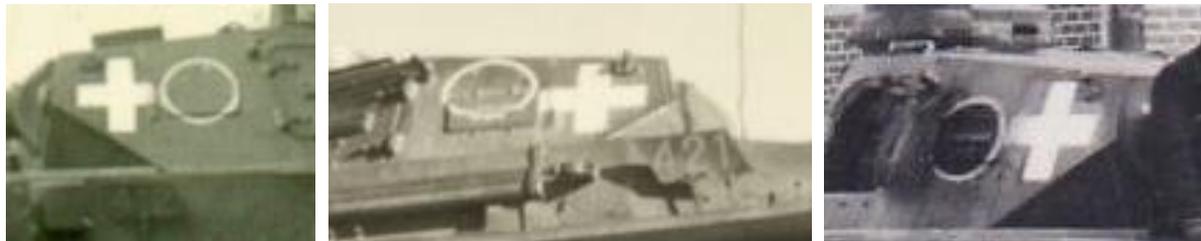


(Pz.Kpfw. IV 822 Hagen)



(Pz.Kpfw. IV Siegfried)

Panzer-Regiment 6: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates only for I. Abteilung. Additionally, Pz.Kpfw. III and IV in the 4. Kp. carried a large disk with white outline on the turret side, meaning unknown

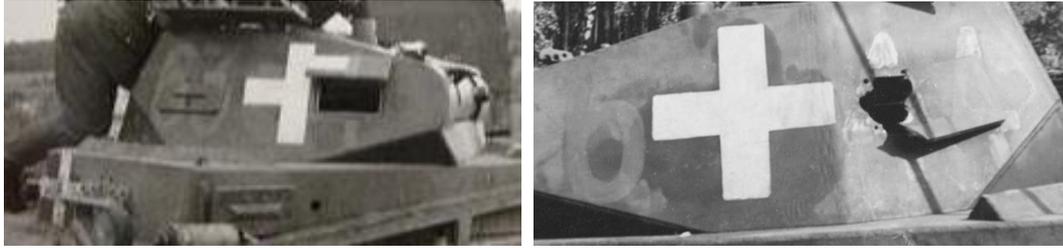


For II. Abteilung, numbers were also painted on the turret:

Pz.Kpfw. III Ausf B with nr II01



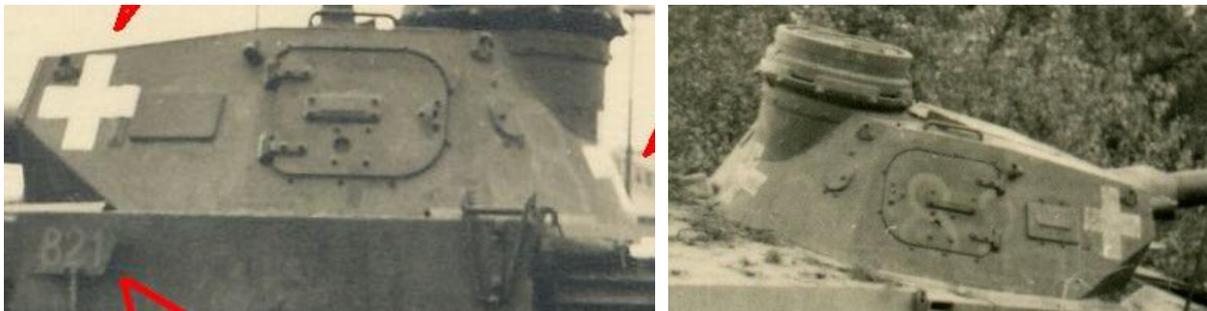
6. Kp. used large numbers painted on the turret sides, probably in yellow or red



7. Kp. used large turret numbers painted on turret sides and rear, probably in red with white outline

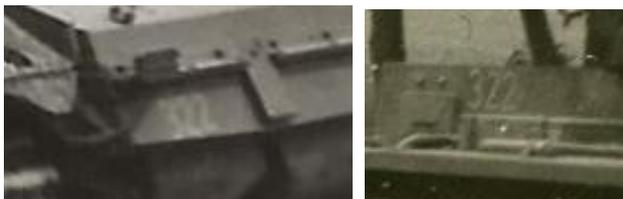


8. Kp. used large numbers painted on the turret sides and / or rear, probably in yellow or red

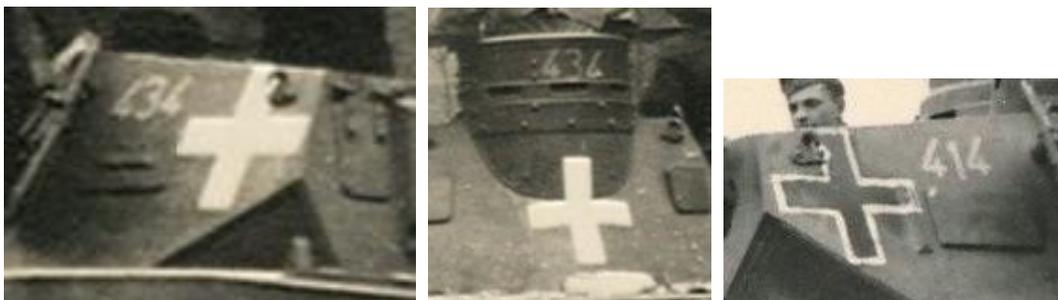


nr 821 (note large 8 on the turret rear, left of the Balkenkreuz) and nr 825 (full number visible on another photo)

Panzer-Lehr-Abteilung: no specific insignia. Sometimes Pz.Kpfw. III (the Abteilung had a high number of these, mostly new Ausf. E) had numbers painted on hull side and rear



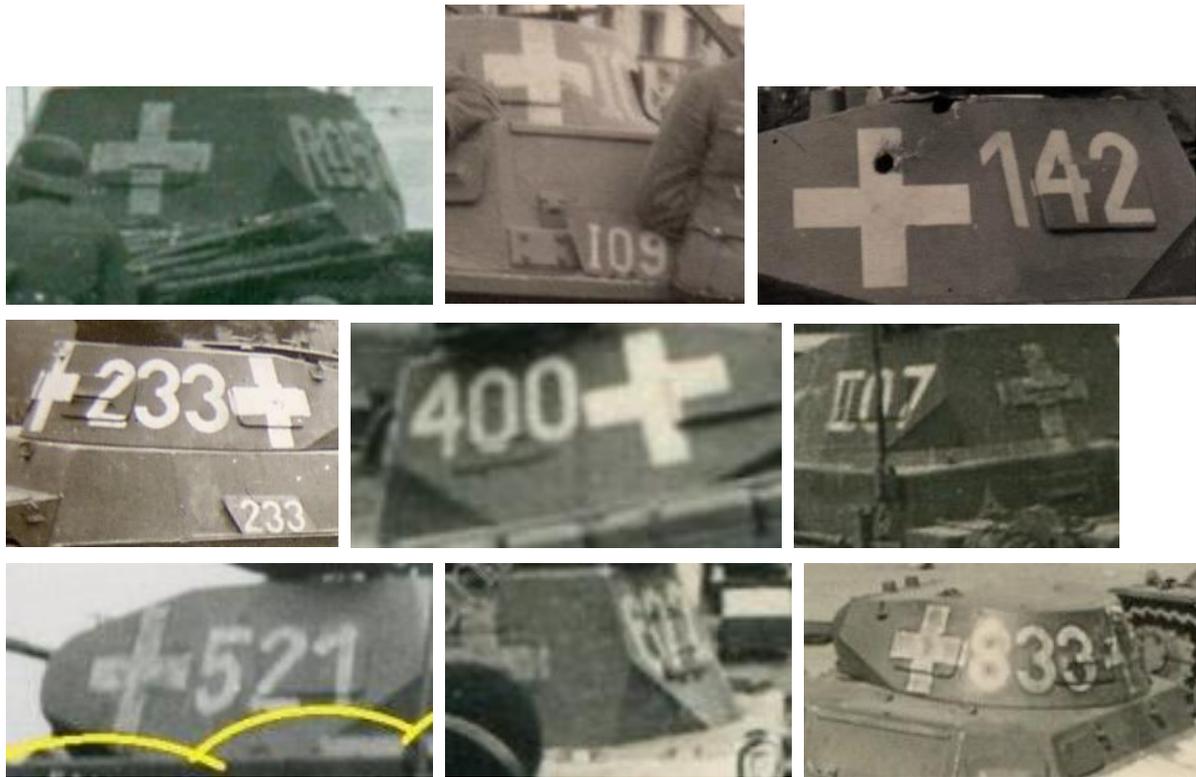
Pz.Kpfw. IV in 4. Kp. had small numbers painted on turret side and on the back of the commander's cupola



4. Panzer-Division



Panzer-Regiment 35: no specific insignia. Large white turret numbers.



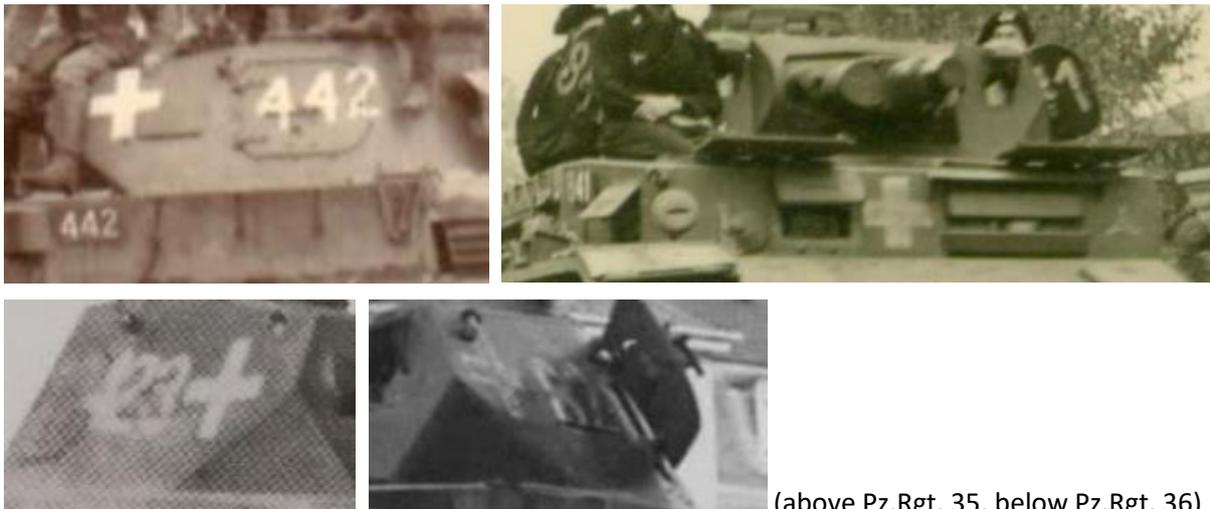
Panzer-Regiment 36: no specific insignia. Large yellow turret numbers. Sometimes unidentified tactical symbol on the turret rear (seen mostly on Pz.Kpfw. II and at least a Pz.Kpfw. IV from 8. Kp.)





There seems to have been no specific symbols to differentiate tanks of Pz.Rgt. 35 from Pz.Rgt. 36, and the type of numbering appears to have been very similar, so attribution to a specific Regiment is difficult. However, yellow crosses with white outline seem to have been peculiar to Pz.Rgt. 36, while Pz.Rgt. 35 used white crosses (sometimes smeared or overpainted for lower visibility, but without white outline).

Additionally, Pz.Kpfw. IV in Pz.Rgt. 35 had numbers on turret side hatches, while in Pz.Rgt. 36 they were applied further to the front on the turret side; Pz.Kpfw. IV were in 4. and 8. Kp. in both regiments.



(above Pz.Rgt. 35, below Pz.Rgt. 36)

Also, Pz.Kpfw. II from Pz.Rgt. 35 can be differentiated from those of Pz.Rgt. 36 as the former mounted a rack for storing 4 fuel cans horizontally on the right mudguard, while the latter mounted a box for storing 4 fuel cans on the engine deck.



Pz.Rgt. 35



Pz.Rgt. 36

5. Panzer-Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Regiment 15: no specific insignia. Numbers were always 1- (for company headquarters) or 2-figure (indicating platoon and tank number). The company was probably indicated by the colour of a rhomboid painted under the turret numbers and on turret rear; a black bar in the middle of the rhomboid probably indicated the II. Abteilung. It appears that all Pz.Kpfw. III and IV were in the I. Abteilung.

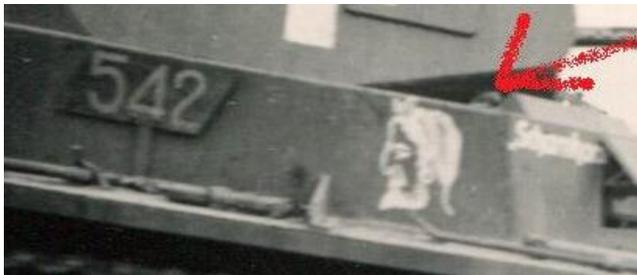


The original crosses were replaced by hand-made thinner ones during the campaign

Panzer-Regiment 31: no specific insignia but a few tanks (perhaps only in 3. Kp.) carried a lion painted on the turret sides (as later in France in 2. Kp., which was possibly the re-numbered 3. Kp.). Numbers were generally on rhomboid plates, in a few cases on the turrets (1. Kp.) or hull sides (8. Kp.).



Some tanks – perhaps only in 5. Kompanie – carried a death's head insignia on the front, and in some cases other insignia and names as well **NEW**



10. Panzer-Division

No known divisional insignia



Panzer-Regiment 8: as unit insignia it used a Wolfsangel (seen on a few tanks only). Most tanks carried no numbers. Some tanks (Pz.Kpfw. III and Pz.Kpfw. IV) carried horizontal stripes on the turret rear, probably to identify the company (as later in France)



Some other tanks carried single or double vertical stripes, other tanks a circle



In some cases Pz.Kpfw. I carried the front Balkenkreuz in a peculiar position, between the glacis and the superstructure front plate, perhaps for lower visibility (see photo below, top left).

During the campaign the original Balkenkreuz were replaced by hand-made thinner crosses on many tanks

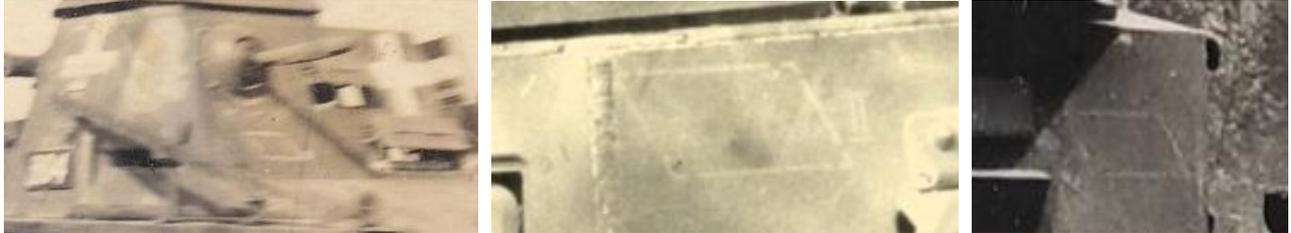


Panzer-Division Kempf (= Panzer-Verband Ostpreussen)

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Regiment 7: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates.

Some tanks had a rhomboid outline painted on the front plate **NEW**



On some tanks the Balkenkreuz had a square painted in the center, possibly in different colours, and sometimes had a bar painted on one of the arms, probably indicating the platoon



Sometimes the Balkenkreuz arms appeared as an outline only



The original Balkenkreuz were replaced by hand-made thinner crosses during the campaign (at least in 6. Kp.)



1. leichte Division

No known divisional insignia. It was the only unit with Pz.Kpfw. 35(t), both in Pz.Rgt. 11 and Pz.Abt. 65.

Panzer-Regiment 11: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates, nr. 3 and 4 had a peculiar shape.

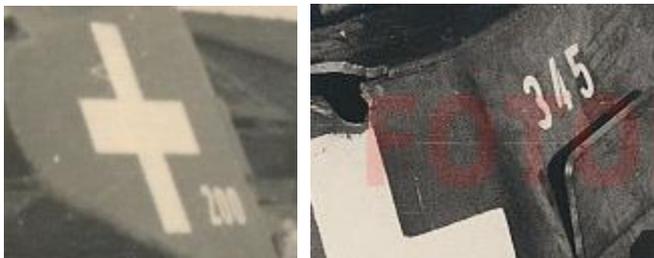


Panzer-Abteilung 65: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates.

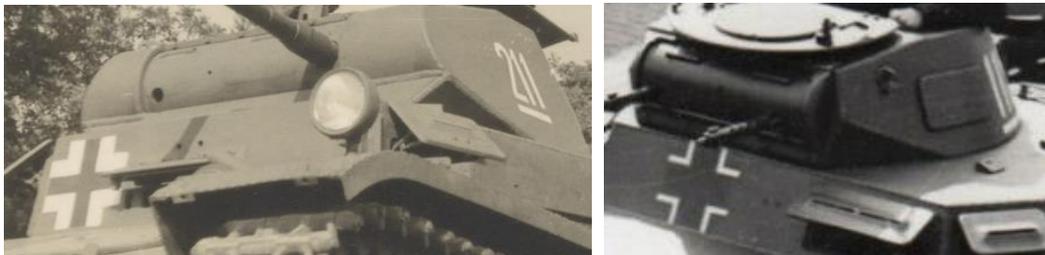
2. leichte Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Abteilung (verl.) 66 (it was equipped with Pz.Kpfw. II Ausf. D a.o.): no specific insignia. Small turret numbers



To note that in 1938-39 Panzer-Abteilung (verl.) 66 had used white outline crosses filled in black painted on the front, and white medium-sized numbers, mostly underlined



3. leichte Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Abteilung (verl.) 67 (it was the only unit using Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) in Poland, plus some Pz.Kpfw. II Ausf. D): no specific insignia. Rhomboids painted on the turret sides, in different colours to indicate the company, outlined in white



4. Kp. was renumbered 1. Kp on 26/8/1939; this explains why several tanks show an individual number starting with 4, but have a 1 next to the rhomboids painted on the turret sides (see 404 above).

4. leichte Division

No known divisional insignia

Panzer-Abteilung (verl.) 33: this unit used no specific insignia and no numbers, but carried white outline crosses filled in black instead of the usual white crosses during this campaign



Heerestruppe:

Panzer-Regiment 25: it was composed of I./23 and I./25:

I. Abteilung/Panzer-Regiment 23: no specific insignia, no numbers

I. Abteilung/Panzer-Regiment 25: no specific insignia, numbers on rhomboid plates.

I. Abteilung/Panzer-Regiment 10: no specific insignia, numbers on rhomboid plates on some tanks only (not seen on Pz.Kpfw. III and Pz.Kpfw. IV). Pz.Kpfw. IV and Pz.Kpfw. III can be identified because they had a panel mounted on the superstructure front to hide the Balkenkreuz which could be lowered onto the glacis plate



Although I./Pz.Rgt. 10 used normal white Balkenkreuz in Poland, it had used white outline crosses painted on the turret sides in Summer 1939



1940 Campaigns

Soon after the Polish campaign, the four leichte Divisionen were transformed in Panzer-Divisionen as follows:

- 1. leichte Division became 6. Panzer-Division (with Pz.Rgt. 11 + Pz.Abt. 65; both continued to be the only units equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 35(t) a.o.)
- 2. leichte Division became 7. Panzer-Division (with Pz.Rgt. 25 + Pz.Abt. 66, both equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) a.o.; also, in April 1940 I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 23 was re-numbered II. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 25)
- 3. leichte Division became 8. Panzer-Division (with Pz.Rgt. 10 + Pz.Abt. 67, both equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) a.o.)
- 4. leichte Division became 9. Panzer-Division (with Pz.Rgt. 33; Pz.Lehr.Abt and Pz.Abt. 33 were renamed respectively I. and II./Pz.Rgt. 33).

Pz.Abt. 66 and 67 handed in their Pz.Kpfw. II Ausf. D and became normal units (not "verlastet" any more).

Panzer-Division Kempf was disbanded and Pz.Rgt. 7 went to 10. Panzer-Division.

Pz.Kpfw. 35(t) were only used by 6. Panzer-Division; Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) only by 7. and 8. Panzer-Division.

Denmark – Norway – April 1940

Panzer-Abteilung z.b.V. 40

It was formed in March 1940 with three Panzer-Kompanien coming from different units: 6. Kp./Pz.Rgt. 6, 1. Kp./Pz.Rgt. 35 and 5. Kp./Pz.Rgt. 15. Curiously, during this campaign the tanks kept the original numbering, but added the insignia of Panzer-Abteilung z.b.V. 40 (generally with company number next to it).



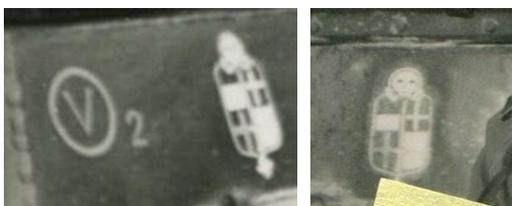
1. Kp. (from 6. Kp./Panzer-Regiment 6):



2. Kp. (from 1. Kp./Panzer-Regiment 35):



Shortly after the end of the campaign, 2. Kompanie started using this insignia:





3. Kp. (from 5. Kp./Panzer-Regiment 15):

West – May-June 1940

In this campaign the use of divisional insignia was generalised; some Panzer-Regimenter also used specific unit insignia. The use of turret numbers was more widespread but not generalised; sometimes this allows to positively identify the unit even though no unit insignia is visible.

As in Poland, each Abteilung had 3 companies, with the likely exception of Pz.Abt. 65 which seem to have had 4. Pz.Kpfw. IV were usually in the 4. and 8. Kp. of the Panzer-Regimenter, with some exceptions which may also help to identify the unit.¹

The situation of which companies made up which Panzer-Regiment or Abteilung and which were equipped with Pz.Kpfw. IV during the campaign in the West is provided – as far as known – in the following table:

France 1940									Panzers on 10/5/1940 (data from Jentz, Panzertruppe)								
Unit	I. Abteilung				II. Abteilung				Notes	PzI	PzII	35t	38t	PzIII	PzIV	PzBefwg	Notes
	1.Kp	2.Kp	3.Kp	4.Kp	5.Kp	6.Kp	7.Kp	8.Kp									
PzRgt 1	-	x	x	PzIV	x	-	x	PzIV	26	49	0	0	28	20	4		
PzRgt 2	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	26	49	0	0	30	20	4		
PzRgt 3	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	22	55	0	0	29	16	8		
PzRgt 4	x	PzIV	x	-	PzIV	-	x	x	23	60	0	0	29	16	8		
PzRgt 5	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV			0	0	42	26	27		
PzRgt 6	x	-	x	PzIV	x	-	x	PzIV	117	129	0	0					
PzRgt 7	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	22	58	0	0	29	16	9		
PzRgt 8	x	x	PzIV	-	x	x	PzIV		22	55	0	0	29	16	9		
PzRgt 10	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	0				0				
PzAbt 67	x	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	-	0	58	0	116	0	23	15	PzBefw 38t	
PzRgt 11	x	x	PzIV	-	x	PzIV	x	-	0				0				
PzAbt 65	?	?	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	0	60	118	0	0	31	14	PzBefw 35t	
PzRgt 15	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	51	61	0	0	24	16	15		
PzRgt 25	x	x	PzIV	-	x	x	PzIV	-					0				
PzAbt 66	x	?	PzIV	?	-	-	-	-	34	68	0	91	0	24	8	PzBefw 38t	
PzRgt 31	x	x	PzIV	x	x	PzIV	-	-	46	59	0	0	28	16	11		
PzRgt 33	x	-	x	PzIV	?	?	?	?	30	54	0	0	41	16	12		
PzRgt 35	-	x	x	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	69	50	0	0	20	12	5		
PzRgt 36	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	66	55	0	0	20	12	5		
total:									554	920	118	207	349	280	154		

x = company took part in the campaign

- = company did not take part in the campaign

? = company participation in the campaign not confirmed

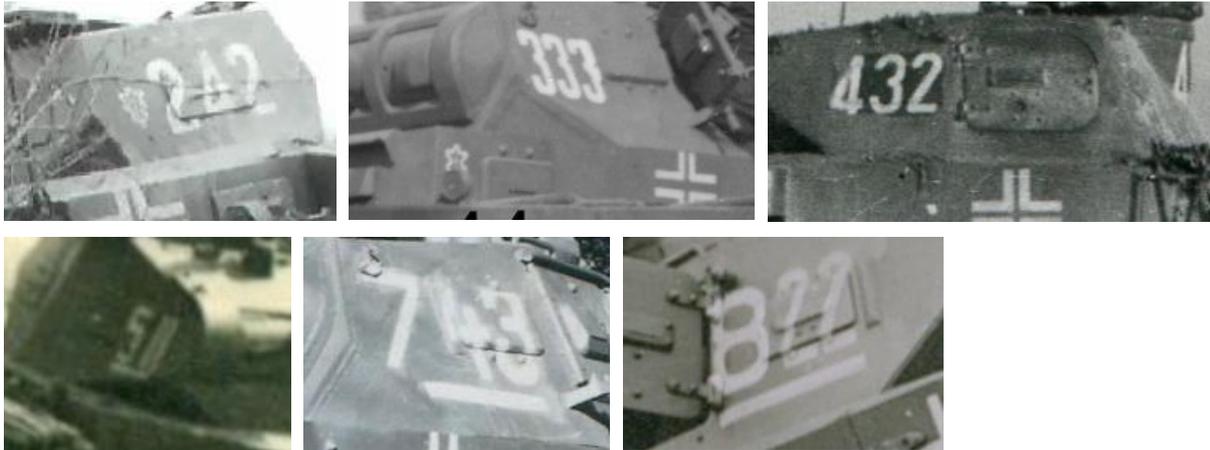
¹ A very detailed and useful study on the external appearance – including markings and stowage – of Pz.Kpfw. IV of all units participating in the campaign in the west in 1940 is “PzKpfw IV in Fall Gelb” by Craig Ellis (8wheels-good). In my opinion the author has however inverted Pz.Rgt. 1 and 2, and Pz.Rgt. 5 and 6.

1. Panzer-Division

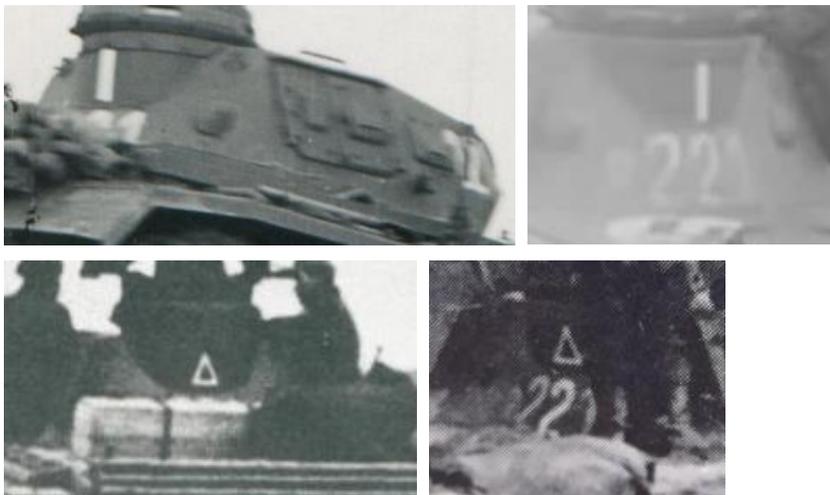


Divisional insignia: oak leaf²

Panzer-Regiment 1: no specific insignia. Large or medium-sized white turret numbers; for II. Abt. numbers were underlined



Tactical symbols were used at least in 2. Kp., meaning unknown



Like in Poland, in 8. Kp. Zugführer tanks carried one line below the cupola

² According to an order from November 1939 the division was supposed to use a dot as its insignia (see Panzertracts nr 1-2, pp. 188-189), but apparently this did not happen.

Panzer-Regiment 2: no specific insignia. Small white turret numbers mostly followed by a dot to differentiate from Pz.Rgt. 1 (a notable exception being 5. Kp. which apparently did not use the dot in this campaign). In a few cases tanks carried a K (for Panzergruppe von Kleist).



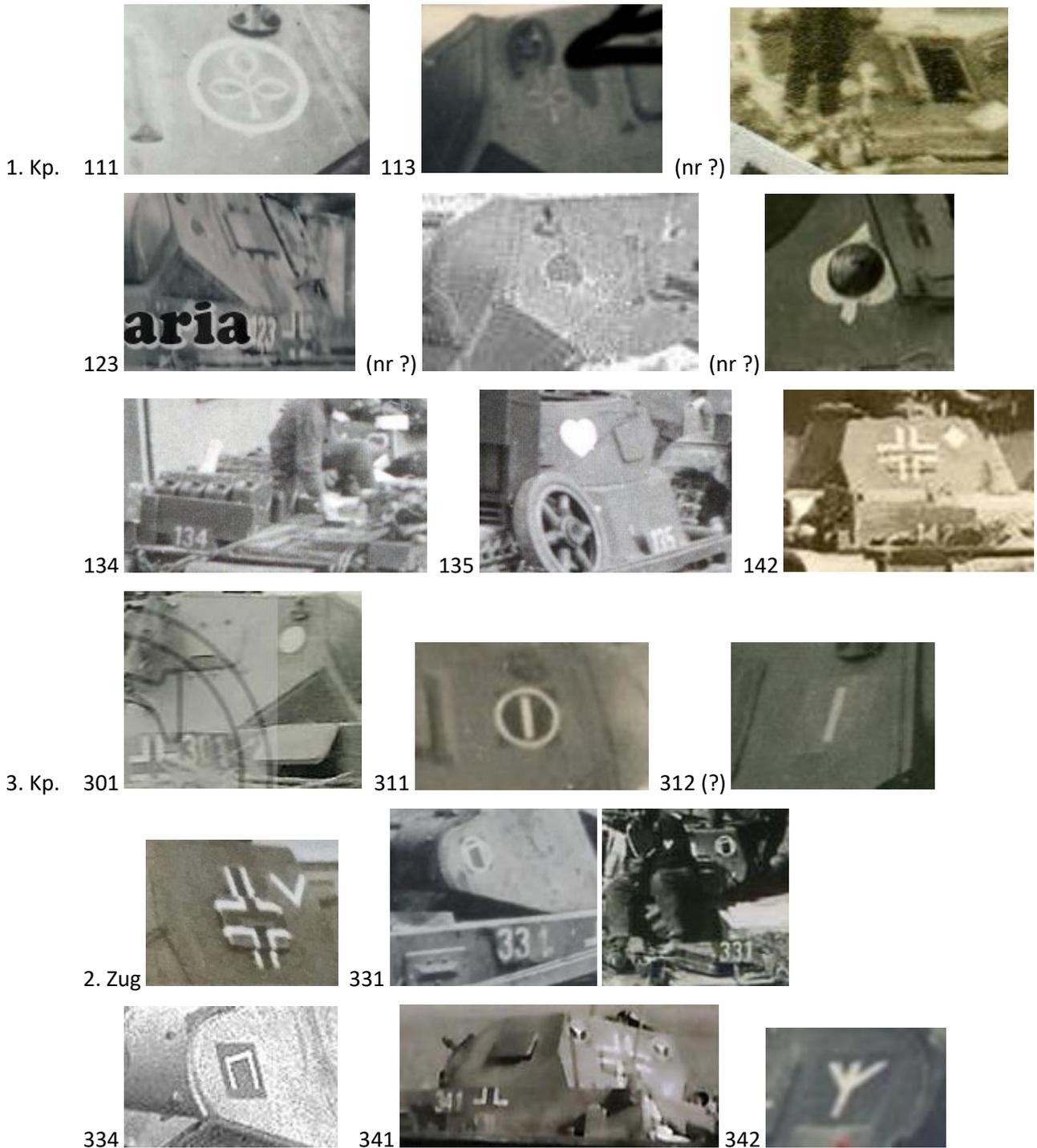
Some tanks (II. Abt. only?) carried on the front a removable plate with a Balkenkreuz painted on it.

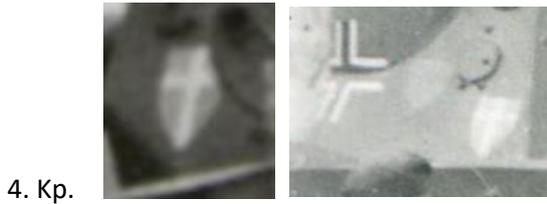


2. Panzer-Division

Divisional insignia: two dots 

Panzer-Regiment 3: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates. Tactical symbols were painted on the turret that probably identified company and platoon, or even each single tank; the large variety of such symbols has defied so far any attempt to clarify their meaning. A circle around the symbol seems to have identified a platoon commander. Some examples below:

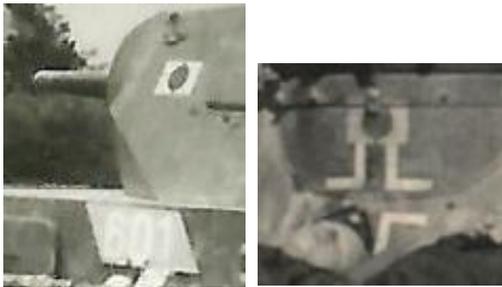




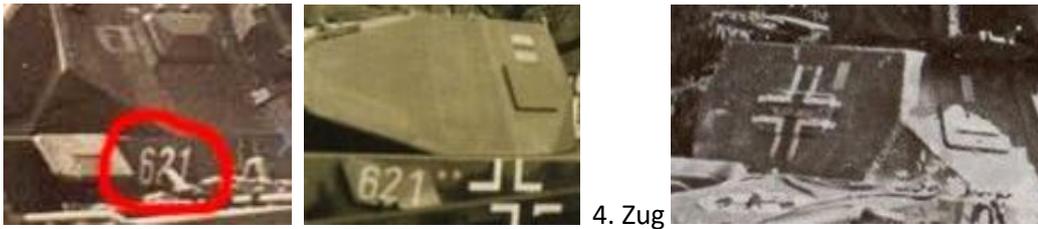
4. Kp.



5. Kp. 511



6. Kp.

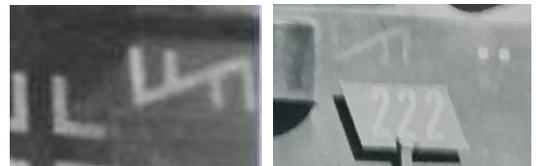


4. Zug

8. Kp. apparently used no symbol



Unidentified company:



Panzer-Regiment 4: as unit insignia it used a type of Wolfsangel (seen on few tanks only). Numbers on rhomboid plates. Like in Poland, 7. Kp. was an exception in that it had a 7 and tactical symbols painted on turrets, as shown by these examples:



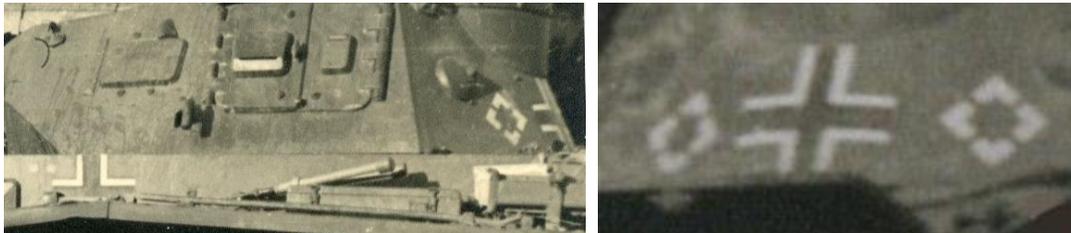


As there seems to have been no specific symbols to differentiate vehicles of Pz.Rgt. 3 from Pz.Rgt. 4, attribution to a specific Regiment is difficult. Tanks from both regiments had rhomboids painted on the superstructure front and rear, possibly in different colours; mostly, rhomboids had the company number next to them



In a few cases tanks from both regiments carried a K (for Panzergruppe von Kleist), later a G (for Panzergruppe Guderian).

Unidentified 2. Pz.Div. Regiment and Kompanie:

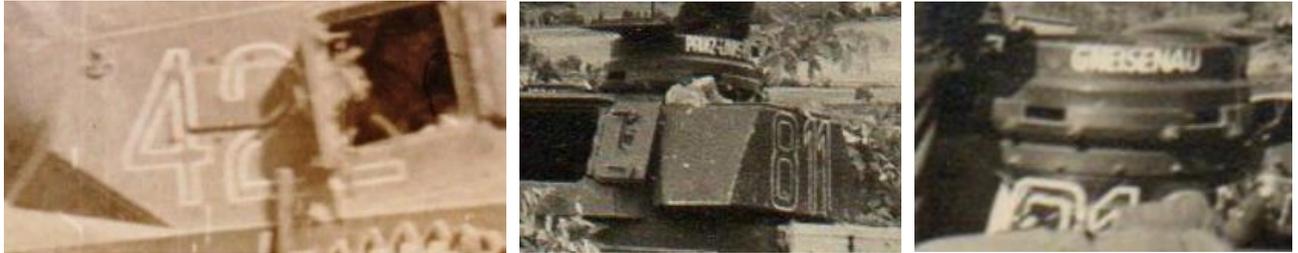


3. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia: (possibly a stylised Brandenburger Tor)

Panzer-Regiment 5: no specific insignia. Large turret numbers, apparently in white outline only (thinner than for Pz.Rgt. 6). Some tanks carried names on the turrets, often on the back of the commander's cupola.



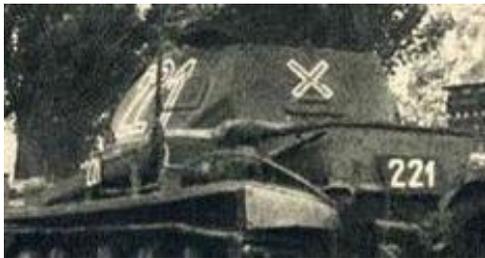
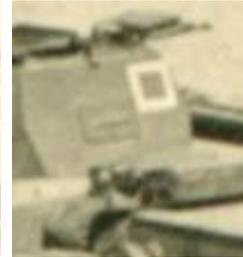
Tactical symbols were used at least in 1. and 2. Kp. to indicate the tanks of the Zugführer:



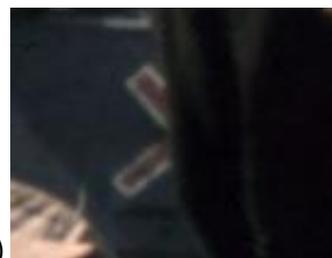
111 (circle)



141 (square)



221 (x in red with white outline)



Panzer-Regiment 6: no specific insignia. Large turret numbers, apparently in red with white outline (mostly hand-painted in irregular forms and sizes)

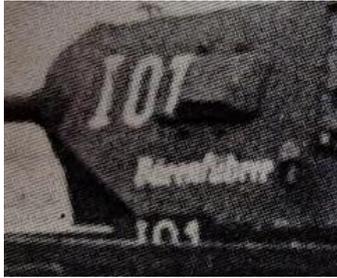


4. Panzer-Division

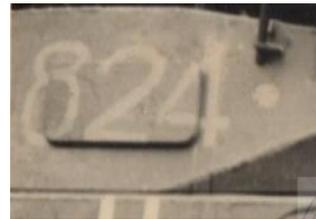


Divisional insignia: runic sign inside a circle

Panzer-Regiment 35: no specific insignia. Small or medium-sized turret numbers, white or yellow



Panzer-Regiment 36: no specific insignia. Small or medium-sized turret number, white or yellow, mostly (but not always) followed by a dot to differentiate from Pz.Rgt. 35



5. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia: inverted Y with one dot

Panzer-Regiment 15: no specific insignia, but at least a few tanks (probably from the Rgt.Aufkl.Zug) carried an unidentified insignia



Numbers were always 1- (for company headquarters) or 2-figure (indicating platoon and tank number). The company was probably indicated by the colour of a rhomboid painted under the turret numbers and on turret rear; a black bar in the middle of a rhomboid probably indicated the II. Abteilung.



Panzer-Regiment 31: no specific insignia but some tanks carried symbols that may have referred to the company, such as a dog's or wolf's head for 1. Kp., a lion for 2. Kp., an elephant's head for 3. Kp. UPDATE!



During the campaign a devil's head (which may have been originally a company's insignia) was adopted as



unit insignia for the entire regiment

Numbers on rhomboid plates or directly painted on superstructure side and rear, sometimes on the turret rear. **UPDATE!**

Sometimes stripes were painted in different colours on the turret rear, meaning unknown



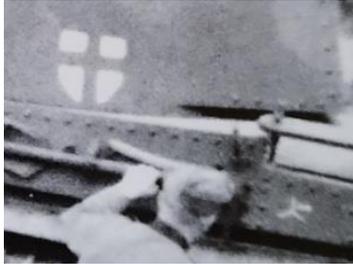
6. Panzer-Division

It was the only Division equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 35(t) both in Pz.Rgt. 11 and Pz.Abt. 65



Divisional insignia: inverted Y with two dots

Panzer-Regiment 11: no specific insignia. A few tanks carried a shield with a cross on the turret side



Numbers on rhomboid plates; as in Poland, nr. 3 and 4 had a peculiar shape

Numbers painted on turret side started to appear towards the end of the French campaign



Panzer-Abteilung 65: no specific insignia. Some tanks in 3. Kp. carried a lion insignia (company commander



was Hauptmann Erich Löwe).

Numbers on rhomboid plates.

At the end of the campaign, at least for 4. Kp. numbers were repainted directly on the superstructure, nr. 4



had an open top

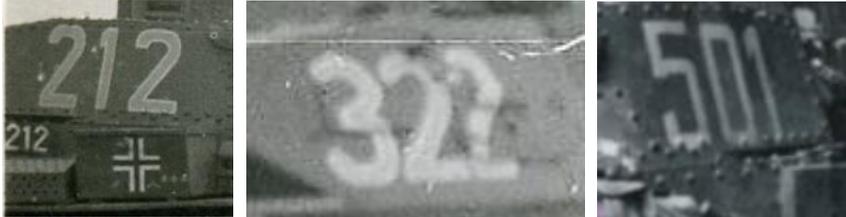
7. Panzer-Division

The division was equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) a.o., both in Pz.Rgt. 25 and Pz.Abt. 66



Divisional insignia: inverted Y with three dots

Panzer-Regiment 25: no specific insignia. Large turret numbers, apparently in red with white outline, or in



white or yellow only

Panzer-Abteilung 66: no specific insignia. Large turret numbers, apparently in red with white outline



Both Pz.Rgt. 25 and Pz.Abt. 66 had Pz.Kpfw. IV in their 3. Kp.; they can be differentiated because Pz.Abt. 66 tanks had narrower numbers on the turret sides, not painted on the side hatches; Pz.Rgt. 25 tanks on the other hand had wider turret side numbers extending over the side hatches.

8. Panzer-Division

The division was equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) a.o., both in Pz.Rgt. 10 and Pz.Abt. 67

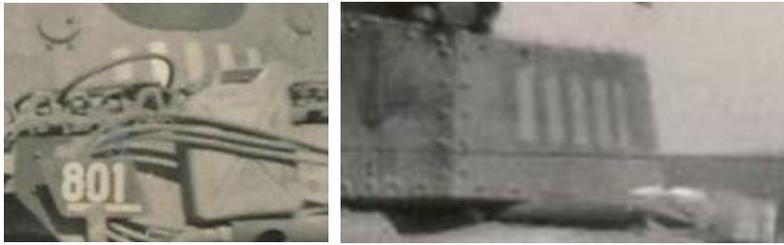


Divisional insignia: an X (already in use from late 1939)



Panzer-Regiment 10: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates

For 8. Kp. numbers were underlined. Vertical strips (meaning unknown) were sometimes painted on turret rear



Sometimes on Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) rhomboids were painted on turret rear (similarly to Pz.Abt. 67 in Poland), probably in different colours to indicate the company

Panzer-Abteilung 67: no specific insignia. Numbers on rhomboid plates or directly painted on superstructure



side (for Pz.Kpfw. IV in 3. Kp.)



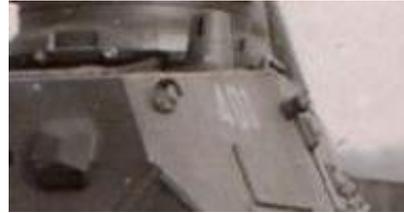
or engine deck side for Pz.Kpfw. 38(t)

9. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia: two X (sometimes apparently each X had a different colour)

Panzer-Regiment 33: no specific insignia. Apparently tanks from I. Abt. (formerly Pz.Lehr-Abt) carried small turret or hull side numbers, while tanks from II. Abt. seem not to have used any numbers



10. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia: a transversal bar

Panzer-Regiment 7: as unit insignia it used a bison outline



(in different colours



indicating the company)

sometimes underlined

Numbers on rhomboid plates, sometimes with one figure only



Some tanks had tactical symbols (meaning unknown) painted on the turret rear, perhaps only in the 4. Kp.:





Panzer-Regiment 8: as unit insignia it used a Wolfsangel (the divisional insignia was very rarely used on this regiment's tanks). Numbers on rhomboid plates or directly painted on superstructure



sides and rear

+ stripes on the turret rear (and sometimes side) to identify the company (1., 2. and 3. Kp.: respectively one, two or three vertical lines; 5., 6. and 7. Kp.: respectively one, two or three horizontal lines)



Unidentified tactical symbol



Developments during the second half of 1940

Four Tauch-Panzer-Abteilungen (A, B, C, D) were formed in July 1940 for the planned invasion of Great Britain.

During the second half of 1940 the number of Panzer-Divisionen was doubled from 10 to 20; this was achieved by creating new Panzer-Regimenter or by transferring existing regiments to new divisions, so that by early 1941 each Panzer-Division had only one Panzer-Regiment left. Panzer-Abteilung 66 and 67 were absorbed in the respective divisional Panzer-Regiment as III. Abteilung, while only Panzer-Abteilung 65 in 6. Panzer-Division kept its own numbering (until disbanded in early 1942).

The four Tauch-Panzer-Abteilungen were used to form the new Panzer-Regiment 18 and 28 of 18. Panzer-Division in December 1940; they became respectively I. and II. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 18, and I. and II. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 28. Panzer-Regiment 28 was disbanded already in March 1941; I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 28 became III. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 6, II. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 28 became III. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 18.

Tauch-Panzer-Abteilung A

No known insignia

Tauch-Panzer-Abteilung B

As unit insignia it used an anglerfish in a shield, apparently with different background colours, perhaps



denoting the company  (also used as II. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 18 until spring 1941)

Tauch-Panzer-Abteilung C



As unit insignia it used a shark  (also used as I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 28)

Tauch-Panzer-Abteilung D



As unit insignia it used a sword  (also used as II. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 28)

Balkans – April 1941

Five Panzer-Divisionen took part in the campaign in the Balkans in 1941: 8., 11. and 14. Pz.Div. fought in Yugoslavia, 2. and 5. Pz.Div. in Greece, 9. Panzer-Division in both countries.³

Balkans 1941													Panzers on 6/4/1941						
Unit	I. Abteilung				II. Abteilung				III. Abteilung				Notes	(data from Jentz, Panzertruppe)					
	1.Kp	2.Kp	3.Kp	4.Kp	5.Kp	6.Kp	7.Kp	8.Kp	9.Kp	10.Kp	11.Kp	12.Kp		PzI	PzII	38t	PzIII	PzIV	PzBefwg
PzRgt 3	x	x	PzIV	x	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	-	-		0	45	0	71	20	6
PzRgt 10	x	-	x	PzIV	x	x (?)	?	PzIV ?	x	x	-	PzIV	6., 7., 8., 9., 10.Kp. no photos	0	49	125	0	30	0
PzRgt 15	?	?	?	?	x	?	?	?	-	-	-	-	Kp. numbers not used	0	45	0	51	16	14
PzRgt 31	x	x	PzIV	x (?)	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	-	-	4. Kp. no photos	9	40	0	51	16	5
PzRgt 33	x	x	PzIV	x	x	PzIV	-	-	-	-	-	-		9	36	0	51	20	10
PzRgt 36	x	x	-	PzIV	x	x	-	PzIV	-	-	-	-		0	45	0	51	20	8
total:													18	260	125	275	122	43	

x = company took part in the campaign

- = company did not take part in the campaign

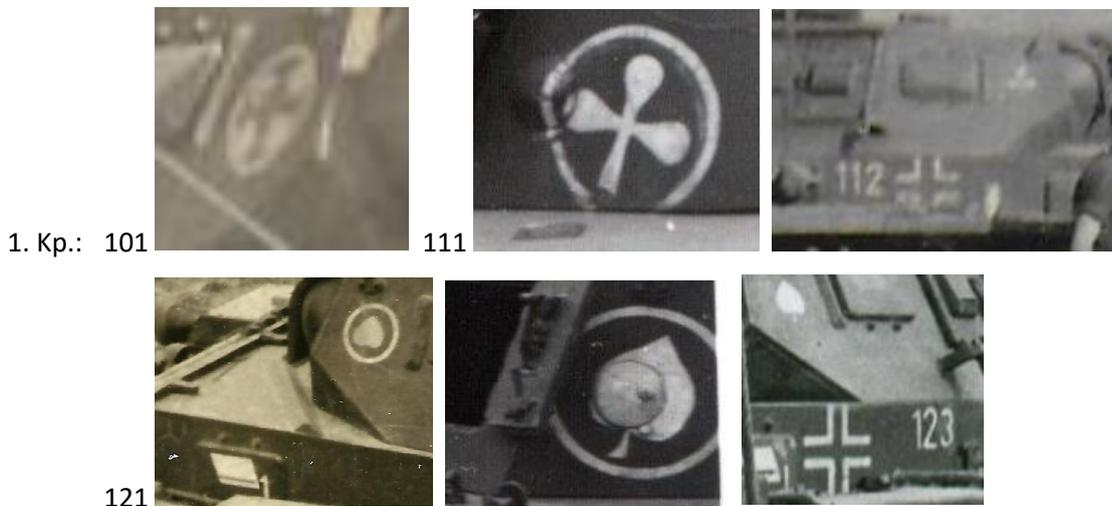
? = company participation in the campaign not confirmed

2. Panzer-Division

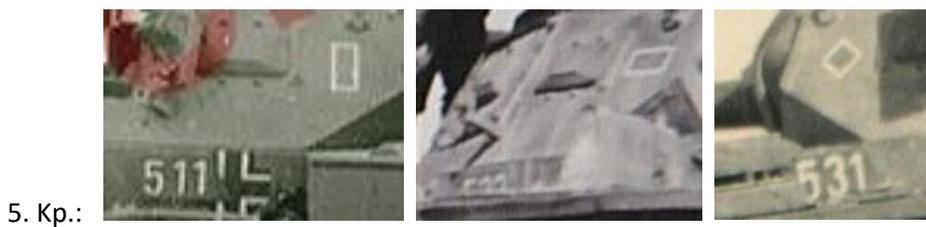
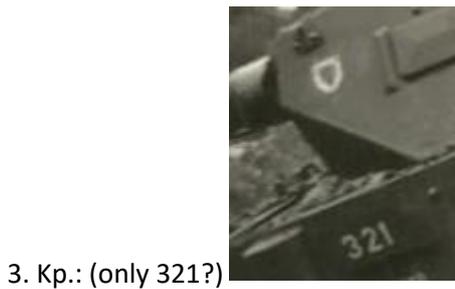
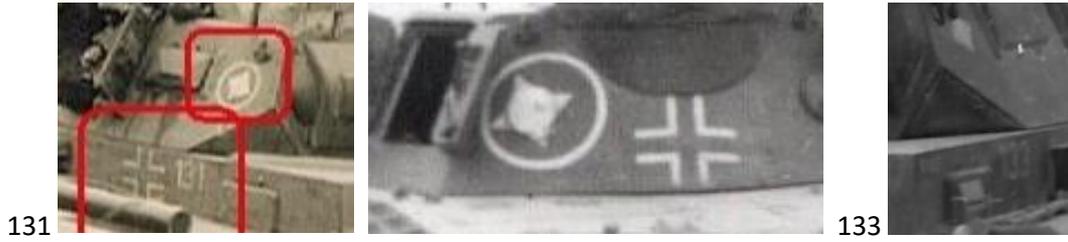


Divisional insignia:

Panzer-Regiment 3: no specific insignia. Three-digit numbers on rhomboid plates; often a white rhomboid with the company number next to it was also carried. Additionally, tactical symbols on the turret sides that probably identified company and platoon, or even each single tank; due to the large variety of such symbols – mostly different from those used in France – it is difficult to clarify their meaning. A circle around the symbol seems to have identified a platoon commander. Some examples below:



³ Additionally, I. Abt./Pz.Rgt. 2 was also briefly employed in Serbia, subordinated to Regiment Grossdeutschland.



6. Kp.: no symbol identified

5. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia:



Panzer-Regiment 31: devil's head like in the French campaign.

Mostly no number used,



sometimes small three-digit numbers on superstructure side

8. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia: (from January 1941)

The division was the only one equipped with Pz.Kpfw. 38(t) participating in this campaign

Panzer-Regiment 10: no specific insignia. Single-digit turret numbers plus three-digit numbers on rhomboid plates. Sometimes rhomboids were painted on the turret rear, probably in different colours (and sometimes



with white outline) to indicate the company



9. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia:



Panzer-Regiment 33: no specific insignia. Small three-digit turret numbers

11. Panzer-Division



Divisional insignia:



often together with the "Gespenster"

Panzer-Regiment 15: no specific insignia. Like in France rhomboid (in different colours to probably indicate the company) painted under the turret number and on turret rear (with black bar in the middle probably indicating II. Abteilung); numbers were always 1 or 2-figure



14. Panzer-Division

Divisional insignia:



Panzer-Regiment 36: no specific insignia. Small three-digit turret numbers