

The 63d Armor was organized in 1942 as the 745th Tank Battalion at Camp Bowie, Texas. After training in Texas and Louisiana, the battalion departed New York in the summer of 1943 and continued its training in England.



Landing on Omaha Beach on D-Day, 6 June 1944, the 745th supported the 1st Infantry Division during the Normandy Invasion. For its actions on the beachhead, the battalion was the French Croix de Guerre. After securing the Caumont, the battalion continued its support of the "Big Red One" moving south through the breakthrough at Marigny and then west toward Coutances. It assisted in closing the Argentan-Falaise gap in September, moved north to the Soissons area, and then advanced through France to the vicinity of Leige, Belgium.

In September 1944, the battalion, along with the 1st Division, destroyed an enemy pocket at Mons, Belgium, capturing more than 5,000 prisoners, including the commander of the German 6th Airborne Division. The withdrawal of German forces enabled the 1st Infantry Division to move rapidly toward Aachen, Germany. The division laid siege to the city taking it after a direct assault on 21 October 1944. The 1st then attacked east of Aachen through the Hurtgen Forest in the drive toward the Roer. After bitter fighting, it moved to a rest area in December.

Later that month, the division fought on the northern flank of the German counter-offensive in the Ardennes in the area of Eupen-Malmedy, repulsing the enemy after heavy combat. After the German counterattacks were thwarted, the division and its attached units pushed forward to reduce enemy pockets and throw the Germans out of the Belgian territory.

For its actions at Noms and at Eupen-Malmedy, the 745th Tank Battalion along with the division was awarded the Belgian Fourrangere. The battalion supported the 1st Division's attack against the Siegfried Line through 7 February 1945, when the 1st was relieved by the 99th Infantry Division.

Three years later, the battalion was redesignated as the 63d Heavy Tank battalion and activated in Germany as an element of the 1st Infantry Division. The battalion served in West Germany until 1955, when it, along with the division, moved to Ft. Riley, Kansas as part of Operation Gyroscope. The battalion was inactivated at Ft. Riley in 1957.

As part of ROAD (Reorganized Objective Army Divisions), the battalion was reorganized and redesignated on 25 January 1963 as the 63d Armor, a parent regiment under the Combat Arms Regimental System. The 1st Battalion was then assigned to the 1st Infantry Division at Ft. Riley. When the division deployed to Vietnam in 1965, the battalion remained at Ft. Riley. In 1969 it was posted to Ft. Knox, Kentucky, returning to Ft. Riley in 1970, when the 1st Division came

back from Vietnam. The battalion was inactivated in August 1987 and reactivated the following month at Ft. Irwin, California, home of the National Training Center.

The 2d Battalion was also active with the 1st Infantry Division during 1964-1965. It was reactivated in 1970 at Ft. Riley, Kansas when the division returned from Vietnam, and inactivated in 1983. To accommodate the requirements for the 1st Infantry Division to be reorganized as a mechanized unit, the 3rd and 4th Battalions were assigned to it. Eventually, the 3rd Battalion was reassigned to the 3rd Infantry Division in West Germany.

The 4th Battalion was inactivated in 1983. In September 1987, the 63rd Armor was reorganized under U.S. Army Regimental System with its home base at Ft. Irwin, California. It inactivated 15 October 1994 at Ft. Irwin, California, and handed their assignment to the 1st Squadron, 11th Cavalry Regiment. The colors remained cased until 15 February 1996 when it was brought back to serve in Vilseck, Germany as part of the 1st Infantry Division. The 1st Battalion 63d Armor Regiment continued to train in Germany, eventually becoming the Division's immediate ready task force (IRTF). In February 2003, the IRTF was attached to the 173rd Airborne Regiment and became the first airborne-inserted armor battalion, called to support the northern operation into Iraq to provide a credible threat to the Iraqi forces. The remainder of the battalion flew in later in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II, returning home in February of 2004. Upon returning to Germany, the 1-63rd Armor Battalion again cased their colors to support the troop drawdown in Germany.

On 16 March 2008, the colors were brought back to Fort Riley and the unit reflagged from the 2-70th Combined Arms Battalion. The 1-63rd CAB is currently scheduled to deploy sometime in late 2008.