

## Glossary of Fencing Terms.

**Absence of Blade:** When blades are not in contact (e.g. not engaged).

**Academic Assault:** A bout during a display in which hits are not actually counted.

**Aids:** The last three fingers of the sword hand.

**Advance:** to step forward.

**Angulation:** Bending the wrist when placing a hit, so as to present the point at right angles to the target.

**Annulment of a hit:** a valid hit, which is disallowed because of an infringement of the rules or a technical fault.

**Appel:** A beat of the foot.

**Assault:** A bout between two fencers.

**Attack:** An offensive movement designed to hit the opponent.

**Attack on the blade:** A preparation for an attack by beat, pressure or froissement.

**Attack on preparation:** An attack launched when the opponent is making a preparation for an attack.

**Avoidance:** ducking or moving sideways to avoid being hit.

**Back edge:** the edge of a sabre blade opposite to that of the cutting edge.

**Backward spring:** A leap backwards, out of distance, from the lunge position.

**Balestra:** A short jump forward during an attack.

**Barrage:** A tie bout between two team captains/ a fight off to determine a result in the event of a tie.

**Beat:** A preparation of attack made by striking the opponents blade sharply in order to deflect the point.

**Bib:** soft, padded attachment to the lower part of the mask to protect the neck and throat.

**Bind:** A preparation of attack which carries the opponents blade diagonally across their target area from high to low and vice versa.

**Blade:** main component of a sword on which the hilt is mounted.

**Body wire:** The wire that connects a fencer's weapon to the spool wire.

**Bout:** An Assault (fight) between two fencers where the hits are countered.

**Breaking ground:** Retiring by stepping backwards.

**Break time:** To change the rhythm of an action by losing time.

**Breeches:** white, knee-length trousers made of robust material; side fastening must be on the non-sword-arm side, and legs must have fastenings below the knees.

**Broken Time:** A pause deliberately made between two movements, which normally follow each other immediately.

**Brutality:** actions, which are performed with an unacceptable amount of force or violence, that cause discomfort to the opponent.

**Button:** soft covering over a non-electric foil or epee point.

**Cadence:** The rhythm in which a sequence of movements are made.

**Cede:** This is to partially give way to an opposition.

**Ceding parry:** A parry formed by giving way to an opponent who is attacking the blade.

**Central guard:** A position on guard when the hand is placed between two lateral lines and so not completely covered in any line.

**Change beat:** A beat made after first passing under or over an opponents blade.

**Change of engagement:** Engaging the opponent's blade in a new line.

**Chest protectors:** rigid breast cups that fit inside women's fencing jackets.

**Choice reaction:** reasoned response to a change of conditions presented by the opponent.

**Close quarters:** When two fencers are close together, but can still wield their swords correctly.

**Circular parry:** A parry in which the defenders blade describes a circle to gather the attackers blade.

**Competition:** aggregate of individual bouts or team matches required to determine a winner.

**Compound actions:** two or more single actions performed together as one continuous action.

**Compound attack:** An attack that includes one or more feints.

**Compound prises-de-fer:** two or more consecutive takings of the blade, alike or different, with no loss of contact with the opposing blade.

**Compound riposte:** riposte comprising of one or more feints.

**Compound preparations:** Multiple preparations executed together, without interruption.

**Compound Prises-de-fer:** An uninterrupted succession of takings of the blade.

**Conventions:** rules governing the method of fencing for each weapon.

**Coquille:** The bell shaped guard of a foil or épée.

**Corps À Corps:** When two fencers are touching so they cannot wield their weapons correctly.

**Coulé (or graze):** A thrust in the line of engagement while keeping in contact with the opponent's blade.

**Counter action parries:** A circular parry taken in the wrong line.

**Counter attack:** the offensive action made while avoiding, or closing the line against, an opponent's attack.

**Counter disengagement:** The action of deceiving a change of engagement or a counter parry.

**Counter offensive actions:** The stop hit and the time hit.

**Counter parry:** Circular parry.

**Counter riposte:** The offensive action, which follows the parry of a riposte or of another counter riposte.

**Counter time:** A movement by second intention.

**Coupé:** Another name for a cut over

**Covered:** A position of the sword hand and weapon that closes the line of engagement against a direct thrust.

**Croisé:** Taking the opponent's blade from high to low line on the same side as the engagement (not diagonally as in the bind).

Crosse grip: a moulded grip with finger protrusions, used on foils and epees

**Cross-step (cross-over):** A type of footwork made by crossing the feet:

**Cut:** A hit made with the front edge, or the first third of the back edge of a sabre.

**Cutover:** A disengagement made by passing over the opponent's blade.

**Cutting the lines:** Circular parries made otherwise than in the line of engagement.

**Defence:** not being hit by the opponent's offensive actions, either by parrying, avoiding, or moving out of distance.

**Delayed:** An attack or riposte made after a pause.

**Dérochement:** Evading an opponent's attempt to beat or to take the blade while the arm is extended.

**Detachment:** when both blades break apart.

**Detachment parry:** A crisp parry, in which the defender's blade leaves the attacker's blade immediately it has deflected it.

**Development:** The extension of the arm and the lunge.

**Direct:** An attack or riposte made in the line of engagement.

**Direct elimination:** A method of running a competition. Two fencers fight a bout; the loser is eliminated from the competition.

**Disciplinary code:** by taking part in a fencing competition, fencers' pledge their honour to observe the rules for competitions and the decisions of judges and to be respectful towards the president and the members of the jury.

**Disengagement:** Moving the weapon from the line of engagement into an opposite line by passing under the opponent's blade.

**Displacement:** turning or ducking to remove the target area from its normal position, resulting in the non-valid target being substituted for the valid target.

**Disqualification:** to be eliminated from a competition due to cheating or bad behaviour, or by default, e.g. late arrival.

**Doigté:** Finger play.

**Doilé:** An attacking movement during which the blade performs a complete circle in order to deceive the opponent's circular parry, or in other words it is a disengage followed by a counter disengage.

**Double hit:** When two hits arrive within one 25<sup>th</sup> of a second, or at the same time.

**Double action:** when both fencers choose exactly the same moment to make an offensive action.

**Double defeat:** in epee only; after the time has expired, if both competitors have received the same number of hits (or neither has scored a hit), they are counted as both having received the maximum number of hits being fought for, and defeat is scored against each, except in direct elimination where the fight goes on without limitation of time until there is a result

**Double prises de fer:** A succession of takings of the opponent's blade.

**Duration of bout:** actual fencing time allowed during a bout, ie a stop clock is started at the beginning of a bout, stopped each time the president halts the fencers and started again when the bout is restarted.

**Draw:** seeding of fencers to determine the bouts in a competition.

**Earthing of guard:** guards of electric weapons must be earthed correctly so that weapon hits do not register on them.

**Earthing of piste:** when electrical equipment, metal pistes must be correctly earthed so that hits do not register on them.

**Elbow guard:** a pad worn on the fencer's sword-arm elbow for protection.

**Electrical apparatus:** an electric box with red and green lights to register valid hits at foil, epee and sabre and white lights to register non valid hits at foil. The apparatus is mounted centrally, adjacent to the piste and connected by floor leads to spools with retractable cables placed at both ends of the piste, to which the fencers connect their body wires.

**Electric weapons:** foils, epees and sabres suitable for use with electrical apparatus.

**Engagement:** The crossing or touching of the blades.

**En marchant:** Movement made with one or more steps forward.

**Enveloppement:** Taking the opponent's blade and describing a circle to return to the line of engagement without losing contact of the blades.

**Epee:** The duelling sword.

**Evasion:** A dérobement.

**False attack:** An offensive movement that is not intended to score a hit.

**F.I.E:** Fédération Internationale d' Escrime.

**Feint:** An offensive movement made to resemble an attack, in order to draw a reaction from the opponent.

**Fencing line:** when fencers are fencing each other it should be possible to draw a theoretical straight line running through both leading feet and rear heels.

**Fencing measure:** The distance which exists between two fencers.

Fencing positions: The positions in which the sword arm and weapon may be placed to cover the lines of the target.

**Fencing time:** The time required to perform one simple fencing action.

**Field of play:** The piste and its extensions on which fencing takes place.

**Finger play:** The method of manipulating the weapon with the fingers.

**First counter riposte:** The attacker's first riposte.

**Flank:** the side of the trunk of the body on the sword-arm side

**Flèche:** An attack made by a succession of running steps, instead of by the lunge or steps forward.

**Foible:** The half of the blade nearest the point of the weapon.

**Foil:** The basic weapon with which the art of fencing should be learned.

**Forte:** The half of the blade nearest to the guard of the weapon.

**French grip:** A straight sword handle.

**Froissement:** A preparation of attack made by deflecting the opponent's blade with a strong, sharp grazing movement along it. It is a beat and pressure combined together.

**Gaining ground:** Stepping forward.

**Gaining on the lunge:** Bringing the rear foot up to the leading foot before making a lunge.

**Graze:** A Coulé along the opponent's blade.

**Grip:** The part of the handle normally held by the sword hand. Also the manner in which, the sword is held.

**Ground Judges:** Two judges who look for hits made on the ground at electric foil or épée.

**Guard:** The portion of the hilt between the blade and the handle designed to protect the hand.

Guards: fencing positions see prime, seconde, tierce, quarte, sixte, septime, and octave

**High lines:** The parts of the opponents target visible above their sword hand when in the on guard position.

**Hilt:** the assembled parts of the sword excluding the blade, ie the guard, pad, and pommel.

**Hit:** The offensive action that lands with the point or the edge on the opponent.

**Immediate:** An action made with out a pause.

**Indicators:** a system used in competition to determine a fencer's seeding after the first rounds. The first indicator is expressed, as a ratio of the number of victories and the number of fights and the second indicator is the number of hits scored minus the number of hits received.

**Indirect:** A simple attack or riposte made in another line.

**In Quartata:** An offensive movement made while removing the body out of line by a side step.

**Inside lines:** The parts of the target furthest away from the sword arm.

**Insufficient parry:** A parry that does not close the line completely, and through which the opponent can land a hit.

**Invitations:** Opening a line to offer a path for an opponent's offensive movement.

**Judges:** Those whose duty it is to watch for hits and assist the President.

**Jury:** the President and Judges who officiate at a fencing event.

**La Belle:** The deciding hit during a bout.

**Lines:** Theoretical divisions of the target area, corresponding to the fencing positions.

**Low lines:** The parts of the opponent's target visible below their sword hand when in the on guard position.

**Lunge:** The extension of the arm, body and legs used to reach an opponent.

**Making ground:** Advancing forwards.

**Manipulators:** The first finger and thumb of the sword hand.

**Martingale:** A loop of leather used to prevent a weapon flying out of the sword hand during a bout.

**Match:** A contest between two teams.

**Metallic over jacket (Lamé jacket):** A plastron of that incorporates a metallic mesh that is worn over the fencing jacket, on which valid hits are registered with electric foil.

**Metallic piste:** A copper mesh strip laid over the piste to neutralise hits made on the ground at foil or épée.

**Molinello:** A circular cut made to the head from the sabre parry of prime.

**Neuvieme:** High semi-supinated guard sword arm side (very high sixte).

**Octave:** low line, semi-supinated guard on the sword-arm side.

**On guard:** The position of the arms, body and feet adopted by a fencer when prepared for a bout.

**‘Open Eyes’:** Starting a movement with no prior knowledge of how it will finish, relying on reflexes to adjust and make the correct ending.

**Opposition:** A movement made without losing the opponent’s blade.

**Orthopaedic grip:** A handle moulded to shape of the fingers.

**Outside lines:** The parts of the target nearest the sword arm.

**Parry:** a defensive action made with the blade to deflect an attackers blade.

**Part-whole:** the teaching of movements in parts, i.e. isolating the parts of the movement demanding most skill and practising them in isolation; then putting the parts back together to make the whole movement.

**Patinando:** a step forwards with an appel from the rear foot at the same time as the front foot lands.

**Period of fencing time:** The time it takes to execute a movement of blade, body or foot.

**Passata Sotto:** The action of avoiding the opponent’s blade by ducking below it.

**Personal equipment:** The weapon and body wire used when fencing with electric judging apparatus.

**Phrase:** A sequence of fencing movements exchanged between two fencers leading up to a hit.

**À Pied Ferm:** A movement made while the feet remain immobile.

**Piste:** The part of the field of play within which the bout takes place.

**Plastron:** An under garment of cloth worn under the jacket.



**Pointe d'arrêt:** A serrated or triple pointed attachment to the tip of a blade, designed to fix a hit at electric foil or épée.

**Pommel:** A piece of metal screwed to the end of the hilt to lock the parts of the weapon together and balance the blade.

**Pool:** A group of fencers or teams in a competition.

**Preparation of attack:** A blade or body movement made prior to an attack.

**President:** The referee in a fencing bout.

**Pressure:** A preparation of attack made by pressing on the opponent's blade.

**Prime:** high line, Pronated guard on the non-sword-arm side.

**Principle of defence:** The application of forte to foible of the opponent's blade.

**Priority of line:** This exists when a fencer has the sword arm straight and threatening the target. The priority is lost if the blade is parried or beaten out of line.

**Priority:** At Foil and Sabre, the first person to start and straighten their arm with the point threatening the target has the priority of attack, this priority remains until the blade is parried or beaten out of line.

**Prise de fer (Taking of the blade):** A preparation for an attack in which the opponent's blade is taken by envelopment, a bind or a croisé.

**Progressive attack:** A method of executing the various movements of a compound attack, while the blade continuously approaches the target in order to cut time and distance to a minimum. The opposite of à pied ferm.

**Pronation:** The position of the sword hand with finger nails down.

**Quarte:** high line, semi-supinated guard on the non sword-arm side

**Quinte:** Low line, Pronated guard on the non sword-arm side at foil epee; and high guard at sabre to protect the head.

**Reassemblément:** Bringing the leading foot back to the rear foot while rising to full height.

**Recovery (or Return to guard):** Coming back to the on guard position after a lunge.

**Redouble:** A renewal of attack while remaining on the lunge, which includes one or more blade movements.

**Remise:** A renewal of attack while remaining on the lunge, by replacing the point on the target in the same line without with drawing the arm.

**Renewed attack:** A Remise, Redouble or Reprise.

**Repechage:** the competition formula, which gives losers of a direct elimination bout a second chance to stay in the competition

**Reprise:** A renewal of attack preceded by a return to guard.

**Retire:** Means to step back.

**Reverse beat:** A change beat or at sabre, a beat made with the back of the blade.

**Ricasso:** The flattened part of the tang of the blade, between the guard and the crossbar of an Italian foil.

**Riposte:** The offensive action that follows a parry.

**Sabre:** The cut and thrust weapon.

**Salute:** the acknowledgement with the weapon, which a fencer extends to their opponent at the start and conclusion of a bout.

**Seconde:** low line, Pronated guard on the sword-arm side.

**Second counter riposte:** The defenders second riposte.

**Second intention:** A premeditated offensive action made after an opponent has been induced to make a movement such as a stop hit.

**Semi-circular parry:** A parry during which the blade describes a half circle from high to low or vice versa.

**Sentiment du fer:** Feeling an opponent's reactions through contact of the blades.

**Septime:** low line semi-supinated guard on the non sword-arm side.

**Simple attack:** An attack made with one movement, either direct or indirect.

**Simultaneous actions:** Where both fencers conceive and execute a movement at the same time.

**Sitting down:** Bending the knees when in the on guard position.

**Sixte:** High line semi-supinated guard on the sword arm side at foil and epee, high Supinated guard on the non-sword-arm (to protect the head) side at sabre.

**Stance:** The position of the feet and legs in the on guard position.

**Stop hit:** A counter action made on an opponent's attack.

**Stop hit in opposition:** When a stop hit deflects the opponent's blade.

**Straight thrust:** A simple and direct offensive movement.

**Successive parries:** A series of parries that immediately follow each other until the attacker's blade is found.

**Supination:** The position of the sword hand with finger nails upwards.

**Taking the blade:** A preparation of attack by a prise de fer.

**Target:** The area of the body that counts as a good hit.

**Terrain:** the field of play. Also referred to as the measured piece of ground on which a duel is fought.

**Three-quarter Supination:** The usual position in fencing, with the palm upwards and the thumb slightly to the side.

**Tierce:** High Pronated guard sword-arm side

**Time hit:** A counter offensive action that anticipates and closes the final line of attack as it is made.

**Touché:** The word used to acknowledge a hit.

**To time:** To seize an opportunity and to execute a stroke at the correct moment.

**Trompement:** Offensive blade movements which deceive the opponent's parries.

**Two-time:** A movement made in two periods of fencing time.

**Uncovered:** A position of the sword hand and blade where the line of engagement is not closed.

**Valid hits:** These are hits which arrive on target.

**Warning lines:** These are the brightly coloured lines that are two meters from either end of the piste. These lines are to warn the fencer that they are close to the end of the piste.