

BASIC FENCING TERMINOLOGY

Advance - To move towards the opponent by stepping sequentially with first the front foot, followed by the rear foot, keeping the orientation of the feet constant, relative to each other.

Attack - The initial offensive action made by extending the weapon arm towards the opponent and continuously threatening the opponent's target.

Director - An American term describing the presiding judge of a fencing bout (now Referee).

Double touch - An event when both fencers hit each other simultaneously.

Epee - One of the three fencing weapons. The Epee is a thrusting-only weapon, with a blade triangular in cross-section. The target includes the entire body of the opponent.

Foible - The third of the blade closest to the tip.

Foil - One of the three modern fencing weapons. The Foil is a thrusting-only weapon, with a blade quadrangular in cross-section. The target is restricted to the torso (or trunk of the body) and the bib.

Forte - (pronounced "fort") The third of the blade closest to the guard.

Glove - The protective garment worn on the armed hand.

Guard (hilt) - The protective metal disc mounted on the hilt of the weapon.

Guard (on) - One of the two main fencing postures, characterized by offering the option of either attacking or defending. Also, a command issued by the Referee (Director) prior to the start of a bout.

Handle - The part of the hilt held by the fencer's hand; it may be French, Italian, or a wide variety of molded styles.

High Line - The part of the target area above a horizontal line drawn through the center of the target.

Judge - In non-electrical competition, an official whose task is to observe the fencer and determine if a touch has or has not landed.

Lunge - The basic fencing movement of the body made to deliver an attack to an opponent just out of arm's reach.

Manipulators - The thumb and forefinger used to control the weapon and blade motion.

Mask - The protective wire mesh head gear of the fencer.

Off-Target - A touch made upon a non-valid surface.

Parry - A defensive action of the blade and guard of the weapon, deflecting an attacking blade. Parries may be

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executed either by opposition, percussion, shielding.

Penalty - A punishment awarded to a fencer who has committed a rule infraction. The penalty, depending on the infraction, the penalty rules, and the discretion of the Referee, may range from having a point taken away or awarded to the opponent to being ejected from the competition.

Pommel - The part of the hilt at the very end, acting as a counterbalance to the blade and holding the parts of the weapon together.

Quarte (4th) - The fourth parry or guard positions, defending the high inside line with the hand held in supination.

Recovery - The action of resuming the guard position after having lunged.

Retreat - To move away from the opponent by stepping sequentially with the rear foot first, followed by the front, keeping the orientation of the feet relative to each other constant.

Right of Way - The event in Foil and Saber fencing which prevents the causing of a double touch by establishing priority when a fencer attacks first.

Riposte - An offensive action made by the fencer who has parried an attack.

Saber - One of the three fencing weapons. The Saber is a cutting and thrusting weapon with a bowed guard to protect the hand. The target is everything from the waist up, except the rear hand.

Salute - A courteous gesture to the opponent, jury, and audience, at the start and finish of a bout. The salute may be simple or elaborately choreographed.

Simultaneous (action) - An action executed by both fencers in a bout which are substantially simultaneous

Sixte (6th) - The guard or parry defending the outside high line with the hand in supination.

Strip - The competitive fencing floor area, also called the "piste".

Substitution (of target) - Replacing or covering the valid target area with invalid target area (in Foil and Saber only).

Target - The area of the fencer's body which is specified by the rules as legitimate scoring surface.

Thrust - One of the simple attacks, made in one motion by moving the point of the weapon directly towards the opponent's target with a full extension of the arm.

Touch - The arrival of the point or edge of the blade upon the bodily surface of the opponent, as specified by the rules.

Valid - The determination that a touch has been scored correctly on the target area specified by the rules.