

Glossary of terms

Absence of blade : Absence de fer

when the blades are not touching; opposite of engagement.

Advance : Marche

a movement forward by step, cross, or balestra.

Aids : Aides

the last three fingers of the sword hand.

Assault : Assaut, Combat

friendly combat between two fencers.

Attack : Attaque

the initial offensive action made by extending the sword arm and continuously threatening the valid target of the opponent.

Attack on the Blade: Attaque au fer

an attack that is prepared by deflecting the opponent's blade, eg. beat, froissement, pressure.

Balestra : Balestra

a forward hop or jump, typically followed by an attack such as a lunge or fleche.

Bayonet : Connecteur à baïonnette

a type of electrical connector for weapons.

Beat : Battement

an attempt to knock the opponent's blade aside or out of line by using one's foible or middle against the opponent's foible.

Bind : Liement

an action in which the opponent's blade is forced into the diagonally opposite line.

Black Card : Carton noir

used to indicate the most serious offences in a fencing competition. The offending fencer is usually expelled from the event or tournament.

Bout : Match

an assault at which the score is kept.

Broken Time : Changement de Rythme

a sudden change in the tempo of one fencer's actions, used to fool the opponent into responding at the wrong time.

Button : Mouche; Bouton

the safety tip on the end of practice swords.

Change of Engagement : Changement d'engagement

engagement of the opponent's blade in the opposite line.

Compound : Attaque composée ou parade composée

also composed; an attack or riposte incorporating one or more feints to the opposite line that the action finishes in.

Conversation : Conversation

the back-and-forth play of the blades in a fencing match, composed of phrases (phrases d'armes) punctuated by gaps of no blade action.

Corps-a-corps : Corps à corps

lit. "body-to-body"; physical contact between the two fencers during a bout, illegal in foil and sabre.

Counter-attack : Contre-attaque

an attack made against the right-of-way, or in response to the opponent's attack.

Counter-disengage : Contre-dégagement

a disengage in the opposite direction, to deceive the counter-parry.

Counter-parry : Contre-parade

a parry made in the opposite line to the attack; ie. the defender first comes around to the opposite side of the opponent's blade.

Counter-riposte : Contre-riposte

an attack that follows a parry of the opponent's riposte.

Counter-time : Contre-temps

an attack that responds to the opponent's counter- attack, typically a riposte following the parry of the counter-attack.

Coulé : Coulé

also graze, glise', or glissade; an attack or feint that slides along the opponent's blade.

Coup lancé : See flick ; "Coup déjà lancé" (Art. 32.2; 46; 47) :

a launched hit; an attack that starts before a stop in play but lands after. Valid for normal halts, but not valid at end of time.

Coupé : Coupé

also cut-over; an attack or deception that passes around the opponent's tip.

Croisé : Croisé

also semi-bind; an action in which the opponent's blade is forced into the high or low line on the same side.

Cross : Passe avant, passe arrière

an advance or retreat by crossing one leg over the other; also passe' avant (forward cross), passe' arriere (backwards cross).

Cut : Coup de taille

an attack made with a chopping motion of the blade, landing with the edge or point.

Deception : Dérobement

avoidance of an attempt to engage the blades; see disengage, coupe'

Derobement : Dérobement

deception of the attack au fer or prise de fer.

Direct : Coup droit

an attack or riposte that finishes in the same line in which it was formed, with no feints out of that line.

Disengage : Dégagement

a circular movement of the blade that deceives the opponent's parry, removes the blades from engagement, or changes the line of engagement.

Displacement : Esquive

moving the target to avoid an attack; dodging.

Double : Coup double

in epee, two attacks that arrive within 40-50 ms of each other.

Doublé : Doublé

an attack or riposte that describes a complete circle around the opponent's blade, and finishes in the opposite line.

Dry : Fleuret (épée, sabre) mécanique

also steam; fencing without electric scoring aids.

Engagement : Engagement

when the blades are in contact with each other, eg. during a parry, attack au fer, prise de fer, or coule'.

En Garde : En garde

also On Guard; the fencing position; the stance that fencers assume when preparing to fence.

Envelopment : Enveloppement

an engagement that sweeps the opponent's blade through a full circle.

Epee : Épée

a fencing weapon with triangular cross-section blade and a large bell guard; also a light duelling sword of similar design, popular in the mid-19th century.

False : Fausse attaque

an action that is intended to fail, but draw a predicted reaction from the opponent; also, the back edge of a sabre blade.

Feint : Feinte

attacking into one line with the intention of switching to another line before the attack is completed.

Fencing Time : Temps d'escrime

also temps d'escrime; the time required to complete a single, simple fencing action.

FIE : FIE (Fédération Internationale d'Escrime)

Federation Internationale d'Escrime, the world governing body of fencing.

Finta in tempo : Finta in tempo

lit. "feint in time"; a feint of counter-attack that draws a counter-time parry, which is deceived.

Fleche : Flèche

lit. "arrow"; an attack in which the aggressor leaps off his leading foot, attempts to make the hit, and then passes the opponent at a run.

Flick : Coup lancé, "Bingo"

a cut-like action that lands with the point, often involving some whip of the foible of the blade to "throw" the point around a block or other obstruction.

Flying Parry or Riposte :

a parry with a backwards glide and riposte by cut-over.

Foible : Le faible de la lame

the upper, weak part of the blade.

Foil : Fleuret

a fencing weapon with rectangular cross-section blade and a small bell guard; any sword that has been buttoned to render it less dangerous for practice.

Forte : Le fort de la lame

the lower, strong part of the blade.

French Grip : Poignée droite

a traditional hilt with a slightly curved grip and a large pommel.

Froissement : Froissement

an attack that displaces the opponent's blade by a strong grazing action.

Glide : Coulé

see coule'.

Guard : Coquille

the metal cup or bow that protects the hand from being hit. Also, the defensive position assumed when not attacking.

Hilt : Garde

the handle of a sword, consisting of guard, grip, and pommel.

Homologated : Homologué

certified for use in FIE competitions, eg. 800N clothing and maraging blades.

In Quartata : In quartata

an attack made with a quarter turn to the inside, concealing the front but exposing the back.

In Time : Coup de temps

when a stop-hit arrives at least one fencing time before the original attack.

Indirect : Attaque indirecte

an attack or riposte that finishes in the opposite line to which it was formed, by means of a disengage or coupe'.

Insistence : Coup droit d'autorité

forcing an attack through the parry.

Interception :

a counter-attack that intercepts and checks an indirect attack or other disengagement.

Invitation : Invite

a line that is intentionally left open to encourage the opponent to attack.

Italian Grip : Poignée italienne

a traditional hilt with finger rings and crossbar.

Jury : Jury

the 4 officials who watch for hits in a dry fencing bout.

Lamé : Plastron électrique

a metallic vest/jacket used to detect valid touches in foil and sabre.

Line : Ligne

the main direction of an attack (eg., high/low, inside/outside), often equated to the parry that must be made to deflect the attack; also point in line.

Lunge : Fente

an attack made by extending the rear leg and landing on the bent front leg.

Mal-parry : Parade insuffisante

also mal-paré; a parry that fails to prevent the attack from landing.

Manipulators : Manipulateurs

the thumb and index finger of the sword hand.

Maraging : Maraging

a special steel used for making blades; said to be stronger and break more cleanly than conventional steels.

Martingale : Martingale

a strap that binds the grip to the wrist/forearm.

Match : Match

the aggregate of bouts between two fencing teams.

Measure : Mesure

the distance between the fencers.

Middle : Milieu de la lame

the middle third of the blade, between foible and forte.

Neuvieme : "Septime haute"

an unconventional parry (#9) sometimes described as blade behind the back, pointing down (a variant of octave), other times similar to elevated sixte.

Octave : Octave

parry #8; blade down and to the outside, wrist supinated.

Opposition : Opposition

holding the opponent's blade in a non-threatening line; a time- hit; any attack or counter-attack with opposition.

Parry : Parade

a block of the attack, made with the forte of one's own blade.

Pass : Dépassement

an attack made with a cross; eg. fleche, "Russian lunge". Also, the act of moving past the opponent.

Passata-sotto : Passata Sotto

a lunge made by dropping one hand to the floor.

Passé : Coup passé

an attack that passes the target without hitting; also a cross- step (see cross).

Phrase : Phrases d'armes

a set of related actions and reactions in a fencing conversation.

Piste : Piste

the linear strip on which a fencing bout is fought; approx. 2m wide and 14m long.

Pistol Grip : Crosse; poignée orthopédique

a modern, orthopaedic grip, shaped vaguely like a small pistol; varieties are known by names such as Belgian, German, Russian, and Visconti.

Plaqué : Coup plaqué

a point attack that lands flat.

Plastron : Plastron

a partial jacket worn for extra protection; typically a half- jacket worn under the main jacket on the weapon-arm side of the body.

Point : Touche

a valid touch; the tip of the sword; an attack made with the point (ie. a thrust)

Point in Line : Menace

also line; an extended arm and blade that threatens the opponent.

Pommel : Pommeau

a fastener that attaches the grip to the blade.

Preparation : Préparation

the initial phase of an attack, before right-of-way is established.

Presentation :

offering one's blade for engagement by the opponent.

Press : Presser v. pression

an attempt to push the opponent's blade aside or out of line; depending on the opponent's response, the press is followed by a direct or indirect attack.

Prime : Prime

parry #1; blade down and to the inside, wrist pronated.

Principle of Defence : Principe de défense

the use of forte against foible when parrying.

Priority : Priorité

in sabre, the now-superseded rules that decide which fencer will be awarded the touch in the event that they both attack simultaneously; also used synonymously with right-of-way.

Prise de Fer : Prise de fer

also taking the blade; an engagement of the blades that forces the opponent's weapon into a new line. See : bind, croise, envelopment, opposition.

Quarte : Quarte

parry #4; blade up and to the inside, wrist supinated.

Quinte : Quinte

parry #5; blade up and to the inside, wrist pronated. In sabre, the blade is held above the head to protect from head cuts.

Red Card : Carton rouge

used to indicate repeated minor rule infractions or a major rule infraction by one of the fencers; results in a point being given to the other fencer.

Redoublement : Redoublement

a new action that follows an attack that missed or was parried; see also Reprise.

Referee : Arbitre, Président

also director, president; the mediator of the fencing bout.

Remise : Remise

immediate replacement of an attack that missed or was parried, without withdrawing the arm.

Reprise : Reprise

renewal of an attack that missed or was parried, after a return to en-garde; see also Redoublement.

Retreat : Retraite

step back; opposite of advance.

Right-of-way : Raison, Priorité

rules for awarding the point in the event of a double touch in foil or sabre.

Riposte : Riposte

an attack made immediately after a parry of the opponent's attack.

Sabre : Sabre

a fencing weapon with a flat blade and knuckle guard, used with cutting or thrusting actions; a military sword popular in the 18th to 20th centuries; any cutting sword used by cavalry.

Salle : Salle d'armes

a fencing hall or club.

Salute : Salut

with the weapon, a customary acknowledgement of one's opponent and referee at the start and end of the bout.

Second Intention : Seconde intention

a false action used to draw a response from the opponent, which will open the opportunity for the intended action that follows, typically a counter-riposte.

Seconde : Seconde

parry #2; blade down and to the outside, wrist pronated.

Septime : Septime

parry #7; blade down and to the inside, wrist supinated.

Simple : Attaque simple

an attack (or riposte) that involves no feints.

Simultaneous : Attaques simultanées

in foil and sabre, two attacks for which the right-of-way is too close to determine.

Sixte : Sixte

parry #6; blade up and to the outside, wrist supinated.

Stop Hit : Coup d'arrêt

a counter-attack that hits; also a counter-attack whose touch is valid by virtue of its timing.

Stop Cut : Coup d'arrêt

a stop-hit with the edge in sabre, typically to the cuff.

Three Prong : "Fil de corps épée"

a type of epee body wire/connector; also an old-fashioned tip that would snag clothing, to make it easier to detect hits in the pre-electric era.

Thrown Point : Coup lancé, "bingo"

a "flick".

Thrust : Coup de pointe, coup d'estoc

an attack made by moving the sword parallel to its length and landing with the point.

Tierce : Tierce

parry #3; blade up and to the outside, wrist pronated.

Time Hit : Coup de temps

also time-thrust; old name for stop hit with opposition.

Trompement : Trompement

deception of the parry.

Two Prong : "Fil de corps fleuret / sabre"

a type of body-wire/connector, used in foil and sabre.

Whip-over : Coup fouetté

in sabre, a touch that results from the foible of the blade whipping over the opponent's guard or blade when parried.

Whites : "Tenue"

fencing clothing.

Yellow Card : Carton jaune

also advertisement, warning; used to indicate a minor rule infraction by one of the fencers.