



Glossary of Fencing Terms

Advance: Taking a step towards one's opponent.

Attack: Movement or series of movements by which a fencer tries to score a point. In foil and saber, the fencer who attacks first acquires the "right-of-way." In order to execute an attack properly (i.e. one that the referee will acknowledge), the fencer's hand must be clearly extending towards their opponent's valid target in a threatening manner.

Beat: Sharp tap on the opponent's blade to initiate an attack or provoke a reaction.

Engagement: Contact between the fencers' blades – often as the prelude to an attack.

En Garde: Position taken before fencing commences.

Feint: A false attack intended to get a defensive reaction from the opposing fencer, thus creating the opportunity for a genuine attack ("feint-disengage attack")

Fleche: Explosive, running attack (Foil and Epee only)

Flunge: Action unique to saber – a combination of a lunge and a fleche. Evolved recently after the FIE modified saber rules in 1992 to prohibit running attacks.

Guard: Part action in which a fencer blocks his opponent's blade.

Parry: Defensive action in which a fencer blocks his opponent's blade.

Lunge: Most common attacking technique, in which the fencer launches themselves at their opponent by pushing off from the back leg (which generally remains stationary).

Piste: French term for the fencing strip.

Point-in-Line: Action in which the fencer, who is generally out of attacking range, points their weapon at their opponent with their arm fully extended. A fencer who establishes a point in line has right-of-way, and their opponent cannot attack until they remove the blade from line by executing a beat.

Recover: The return to the en garde position after lunging.

Riposte: Defender's offensive action immediately after parrying their opponent's attack.

Second Intention: A tactic in which a fencer executes a convincing, yet false, action in hopes of drawing a true, committed reaction from their opponent.

Stop Hit, Stop Cut(saber): A counter-action made at the moment of an opponent's hesitation, feint, or poorly executed attack. To be awarded the point, the fencer attempting to stop hit must clearly catch their opponent's tempo. Hence, if their Stop Hit is not "in time," the referee may award the touch to their attacker.

Strip: Fencing area, 14 meters long by 2 meters wide.