



# FENCING IN THE SCHOOLS

## Introductory Guidebook

Tim Morehouse • Jeff Spear • Jeff Imrich • Kalle Weeks  
Illustrations by Katherine LeClair

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# Lesson 1: Overview

## First Movements of Fencing



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Execute a basic en garde, advance, and retreat

**Fencing Skills:** Properly hold the foil and salute

**Core Principle:** Understand that **balance** is essential to all fencing movements

### Technical Skills Focus

**First  
Position**

**Salute  
(Air, Foil)**

**En Garde**

**Holding  
the Foil**

**Advance  
(Single)**

**Retreat  
(Single)**

### Routines

**Leader  
Line**

**Fencing  
Safety**

**Equipment  
Distribution**

**Using a  
Mask**

**Equipment  
Return**

### Activities

**Group Practice**  
Position Game

**Drill**  
1-2 Drill

**Game**  
Maestro Says

### Preparation & Equipment

- Masks and foils are utilized in this lesson
- No special room preparation is necessary for this lesson



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 1: Flow

## First Movements of Fencing

### Start

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Overview & Warm Up

- ▶ Begin with light running or any warm-up you deem appropriate.
- ▶ If the students have not seen the Fencing In The Schools assembly, introduce fencing.
- ▶ Explain leader line and have students assume the formation.

### Core Principle

3 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Balance

- ▶ Discuss how balance in fencing requires weight to be evenly distributed and maintaining balance requires good technique and body positioning during fencing actions.

### Teach Skills

4 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### First Position, En Garde, Advance & Retreat

- ▶ Remember to reference the core principal balance when teaching these skills
- ▶ After students advance or retreat they should be back in a correct en garde position and on balance.

### Group Practice

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Position Game & 1-2 Drill

- ▶ Practice 1st position and En Garde with Position Game
- ▶ Practice advance and retreat with 1-2 drill and verbal commands

### Teach Routine

7 MIN

Foils & Masks  
Leader Line

### Equipment & Safety

- ▶ Students will learn to use masks and foils and the safety rules of foils.
- ▶ Have students get the mask first, foil second and return to the line. Take your time and emphasize safety

### Teach Skill

4 MIN

Foils & Masks  
Leader Line

### Holding the Foil & Salute

- ▶ Demonstrate how to hold the foil with the fingers.
- ▶ Make sure students put their thumbs over the top of the grip and don't hold the foil with a closed fist.

### Game

8 MIN

Foils & Masks  
Leader Line

### Maestro Says

- ▶ Play Maestro Says (Simon Says) and give students a chance to practice the moves in a more competitive environment.
- ▶ If you play with elimination, have students who are eliminated put away their mask/foil.

### Closing

4 MIN

Foils & Masks

### Closing

- ▶ Make sure again to emphasize safety and no running with foils as students put away the equipment.

# Lesson 2: Overview

## Learning the Lunge and Making Multiple Steps



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Execute a lunge and a recovery

**Fencing Skills:** Make a fencing handshake, and understand that it is a sign of respect.

**Fencing Skills:** Perform smooth, sequential advances and retreats

**Olympic Principle:** Understand that executing actions in the correct distance is essential

### Technical Skills Focus

Handshake

Advance  
(Multiple)

Retreat  
(Multiple)

Lunge

Recovery

### Routines

Partner  
Lines

En Garde  
Lines

End  
Lines

This lesson also includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Leader Line, Return Equipment

### Activites

**Group Practice**

Leader-Follower  
(with the Teacher)

**Drill**

Leader-Follower  
(with a Partner)

**Game**

Advance Lunge Game

### Preparation & Equipment

- ▶ Masks and foils are utilized in this lesson
- ▶ The room will be set up in the basic 4-line formation



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 2: Flow

## Learning the Lunge and Making Multiple Steps

### Start

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Overview & Warm Up

- ▶ Warm up actively by reviewing the footwork and movements from lesson 1 (first position, en garde, advance and retreat, salute)

### Core Principle

4 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Distance

- ▶ Discuss how correct distance in fencing is the optimal distance at which to execute a move or an action. Correct distance is dynamic but is best generalized as 'not too close and not too far.'

### Teach Skills

6 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Lunge, Multiple Steps

- ▶ Take your time teaching correct technique for the lunge as it is deceptively difficult.
- ▶ Watch out for hopping! When making multiple steps students should remain in-balance throughout.

### Group Practice

6 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Leader-Follower with the Teacher

- ▶ Emphasize the importance of distance in successful fencing again here.
- ▶ Introduce signal commands for lunge and multiple advances/retreats.

### Teach Routine

4 MIN

No Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Partner Lines

- ▶ As you teach and practice partner lines, emphasize the distinction between the role of training partner and role of fencer

### Drill

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Leader-Follower with a Partner

- ▶ Use the commands "Fence" "Halt" and "Change Leaders".
- ▶ On "Halt," ask students to check to see if they are still in the distance where they started.

### Game

6 MIN

No Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Advance Lunge Game

- ▶ Play the advance lunge game with the "High Five" variant.
- ▶ Emphasize the importance of playing with the distance in order to win.

### Closing

4 MIN

No Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Emphasize safety and no running with foils as students put away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 3: Overview

## Thrusting to a Target



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Execute a thrust to different target zones

**Fencing Skills:** Use a scoring jacket safely and efficiently

**Core Principle:** Know that the goal of fencing is to hit the opponent on target, and to do that they must keep their point toward the target and avoid distractions (Go for the Goal)

## Technical Skills Focus

**Thrust**

## Routines

**Using  
a Jacket**

**Using  
Electronic Scoring**

This lesson also includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Leader Line, Partner Line, En Garde Lines/End Lines, Return Equipment

## Activites

**Group Practice**

Signal Commands

**DRILL**

Target Practice

**GAME**

Distance-Only Fencing

## Preparation & Equipment

- ▶ Masks, foils and jackets are utilized in this lesson
- ▶ The room will be set up in the basic 4-line formation



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 3: Flow

## Thrusting to a Target

### Start

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Overview & Warm Up

- Review footwork to get students moving and warmed up.
- Optional: Get more active and use the leader-follower activity to warm up

### Core Principle

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Go for the Goal

- Emphasize the importance of remaining focused on the Goal/Target. There are a lot of distractions in fencing but never forget the goal!

### Teach Skills

4 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Thrust

- Describe the different targets or scoring zones and how to hit them
- Make sure students extend their arm and follow it with a lunge

### Group Practice

3 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Signal Commands

- Have students lunge and thrust straight when you drop the foil
- Have students lunge and thrust to the flank when you put your foil in parry-6 position!

### Teach Routine

5 MIN

All Equipment  
Leader Line

### Using a Jacket & Electronic Scoring

- Show students how to put on a scoring jacket and how to use the scoring apparatus

### Drill

7 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Target Practice

- Emphasize keeping point aimed at the goal/target.
- Make sure students become familiar with thrusting at their peer's target and having others thrust at theirs.

### Game

6 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Distance-Only Fencing

- Have students play with as many different partners as possible.
- Help students keep their focus solely on landing their foil to target without worrying about blade work.

### Closing

4 MIN

No Equipment

### Closing

- Emphasize safety and no running with foils as students put away the equipment.
- Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 4: Overview

## The Basics of Parry and Riposte



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Execute parries 4 and 6, and know which targets these parries defend

**Fencing Skills:** Know how to properly execute a riposte, or a thrust after a parry

**Core Principle:** Recognize how situational awareness is critical for execution of a parry or any complex action in fencing and life

### Technical Skills Focus

**Thrust  
(Riposte)**

**Parry  
(4 and 6)**

### Routines

This lesson includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Using a Jacket, Using Electronic Scoring, Leader Line, Partner Line, En Garde Lines/End Lines, Return Equipment

### Activities

**Group Practice**  
Verbal Commands

**Drill**  
Parry-Riposte Drill

**Game**  
Point Parry Game

### Preparation & Equipment

- Masks, foils and jackets are utilized in this lesson
- The room will be set up in the basic 4-line formation





**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 4: Flow

## The Basics of Parry and Riposte

### Start

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Overview & Warm Up

- ▶ Review footwork to get students moving and warmed up using verbal commands.
- ▶ Emphasize some of the previous core values especially balance and keeping distance.

### Core Principle

7 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Awareness

- ▶ Convey that self awareness is recognizing and correcting one's own actions, and situational awareness is recognizing and accounting for one's opponent and surroundings

### Teach Skills

4 MIN

All Equipment  
Leader Line

### Parry 4, Parry 6 & Riposte

- ▶ Have students begin to check their own positions to emphasize awareness.
- ▶ Remind students of going for the goal – they should keep their point as close to the target as possible.

### Group Practice

3 MIN

All Equipment  
Leader Line

### Verbal Commands

- ▶ Use verbal commands to practice the parry 4 and 6 and riposte to the air

### Drill

7 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Parry-Riposte Drill

- ▶ Emphasize training partner/fencer relationship.
- ▶ Have students freeze after the lunge and parry and only riposte on command so they can check their form and position of their point.

### Game

8 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Point Parry Game

- ▶ Have students practice parries in a controlled but competitive setting.
- ▶ Remind students that they need to be aware of their opponent's movements and their own.

### Closing

4 MIN

No Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Emphasize safety and no running with foils as students put away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 5: Overview

## Learning to Disengage



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Execute a proper disengage to find an open target for a thrust

**Core Principle:** Understand the value of technique

## Technical Skills Focus

**Disengage**

## Routines

This lesson includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Using a Jacket, Using Electronic Scoring, Leader Line, Partner Line, En Garde Lines/End Lines, Return Equipment

## Activites

**Group Practice**  
Signal Commands

**Drill**  
Parry-Disengage Drill

**Game**  
No Movement Fencing

## Preparation & Equipment

- Masks, foils and jackets are utilized in this lesson
- The room will be set up in the basic 4-line formation



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 5: Flow

## Learning to Disengage

### Start

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Overview & Warm Up

- ▶ Use verbal commands for review, then move to leader-follower (possibly led by students.)
- ▶ Emphasize some of the previous core values especially balance, keeping distance, and awareness.

### Core Principle

4 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Avoiding Obstacles

- ▶ Convey that obstacles are things between you and your goal, such as the opponent's blade.
- ▶ Remind students that the opponent's blade is important only if it is in your way and slightly changing the angle of the foil can help avoid obstacles.

### Teach Skill

5 MIN

All Equipment  
Leader Line

### Disengage

- ▶ Have students make a small U with the tip of the foil to go around the opponent's blade.
- ▶ Remember that a small motion is best!

### Group Practice

4 MIN

All Equipment  
Leader Line

### Signal Commands

- ▶ Move your foil from parry 4 to parry 6. Students respond by disengaging.

### Drill

8 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Parry-Disengage Drill

- ▶ Emphasize small motions with the disengage..
- ▶ Have students practice disengaging around their opponent's blade and hitting to a real target.

### Game

10 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### No Movement Fencing Game

- ▶ Have students get in lunge distance and fence and their back foot may not move. Focus landing on the target and avoiding the obstacle of the opponent's blade.

### Closing

4 MIN

No Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Emphasize safety and no running with foils as students put away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 6: Overview

## Fencing with a Plan



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Integrate all fencing skills into a coherent strategy.

**Core Principle:** Understand the value of intention and planning

## Technical Skills Focus

### Integrate Skills

## Routines

This lesson includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Using a Jacket, Using Electronic Scoring, Leader Line, Partner Line, En Garde Lines/End Lines, Return Equipment

## Activites

### Group Practice

Parry, Lunge, Disengage  
(with the Teacher)

### Drill

Parry, Lunge, Disengage  
(with a Partner)

### Game

Jab Game

## Preparation & Equipment

- Masks, foils and jackets are utilized in this lesson
- The room will be set up in the basic 4-line formation



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 6: Flow

## Fencing with a Plan

**Start**  
5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Overview & Warm Up

- ▶ Use verbal commands for review, then move to leader-follower (possibly led by students.)
- ▶ Emphasize some of the previous core values especially balance, keeping distance, and awareness.

**Core Principle**  
4 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Intention & Planning

- ▶ Convey that reacting to opponent's moves only goes so far and fencers should plan their actions ahead of time and build strategies

**Group Practice**  
8 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Parry, Lunge, Disengage Drill Vs. Teacher

- ▶ Play Rock, Paper, Scissors except with Parry, Lunge, Disengage.
- ▶ Emphasize that students need to plan before they make a move.

**Drill**  
10 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Parry, Lunge, Disengage Vs. Partner

- ▶ Say, "En Garde! FENCE!" to begin the drill.
- ▶ Use the optional "no hitting" variant for greater control and emphasis on tactics.

**Game**  
9 MIN

All Equipment  
Partner Lines

### Jab Game

- ▶ Have one fencer try to parry without moving, while the other fencer makes any number of footwork moves but only one extension.

**Closing**  
4 MIN

No Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Emphasize safety and no running with foils as students put away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 7: Overview

## Tournament Roles & Procedures



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Learn the routines of the role of the referee, rules of school fencing, and team lines

**Fencing Skills:** Fence a match in competitive format and referee a match in a competitive format

**Roles:** Actively participate in fencing bouts as a referee and a fencer

**Core Principle:** Know that fair play is playing within the rules and in the spirit of honest competition

## Tournament Notes

- ▶ In this lesson students will learn how to fence in a team tournament
- ▶ Learning and practicing these routines is key for the effective, safe, and fun running of a tournament
- ▶ We strongly suggest running the 'competition' section of this lesson as a practice run between two teams so that students become familiar with the routines and the role of the referee.

## Routines

### Tournament Lines

### Rules of School Fencing

### Role of the Referee

This lesson includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Using a Jacket, Using Electronic Scoring, Leader Line, Using Fencing Pistes, Tournament Lines, Return Equipment

## Preparation & Equipment

- ▶ Masks and jackets for all students, 2 foils for the whole class
- ▶ The room should be set up with pistes



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 7: Flow

## Tournament Roles & Procedures

**Start**  
3 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Warm Up & Review

- ▶ Use verbal commands for review, then move to leader-follower (possibly led by students.)
- ▶ Emphasize some of the previous core values especially balance, keeping distance, and awareness.

**Core Principle**  
5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Fair Play

- ▶ Convey that fair play is playing within the rules and in the spirit of honest competition.
- ▶ Emphasize that though fair play is overseen by the referee, it is the responsibility of all fencers

**Teach Routines**  
8 MIN

Jackets, Masks, 2 Foils  
Leader Line

### Refereeing & Tournament Lines

- ▶ Explain the role of the referee and referee commands 'en garde', 'fence!', 'halt!', and 'point'.
- ▶ Describe team lines and how to rotate roles while using team lines.

**Competition**  
20 MIN

All Equipment  
Tournament Lines

### Refereeing & Tournament Lines Practice

- ▶ Have the whole class practice using tournament lines
- ▶ Make sure each student has a chance to referee and fence at least one match

**Closing**  
2 MIN

All Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Ensure students follow a safe and orderly procedure in putting away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 8: Overview

## Team Competition, Preliminary Round



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Fence and referee a competition

**Fencing Skills:** Properly execute the routines, procedures, and rules for the competition

**Core Principle:** Know that sportsmanship is about showing respect to your opponent and being gracious in victory and defeat

## Tournament Notes

- A tournament is a fun way to end the fencing unit and for students to integrate their skills in a competitive environment.
- In this lesson, encourage students to demonstrate sportsmanship by showing respect to their opponents and teammates.
- Give students the opportunity to take leadership roles on their teams and in their matches, but make sure they are playing fairly and not allowing dangerous situations to develop.

## Routines

This lesson includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Using a Jacket, Using Electronic Scoring, Leader Line, Tournament Line, Rules of School Fencing, Role of the Referee, Using Fencing Pistes, Return Equipment

## Preparation & Equipment

- Masks and jackets for all students, 1 foil per team
- The room should be set up with pistes





**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 8: Flow

## Team Competition, Preliminary Round

### Start

3 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Warm Up & Review

- ▶ Use verbal commands for review, then move to leader-follower (possibly led by students.)
- ▶ Emphasize some of the previous core values especially balance, keeping distance, and awareness.

### Core Principle

5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Sportsmanship

- ▶ Convey that sportsmanship encompasses the respect embodied by the fencing salute and the fencing handshake.
- ▶ Emphasize that sportsmanship and graciousness should be shown in both victory and defeat.

### Teach Routines

5 MIN

Jackets, Masks  
1 Foil per Team

### Teams

- ▶ Explain the role of the referee and referee commands 'en garde', 'fence!', 'halt!', and 'point'.
- ▶ Describe team lines and how to rotate roles while using team lines.

### Competition

25 MIN

Jackets, Masks,  
1 Foil per Team

### Tournament, Preliminary Round

- ▶ Have the whole class practice using team lines
- ▶ Make sure each student has a chance to referee and fence at least one match

### Closing

2 MIN

All Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Ensure students follow a safe and orderly procedure in putting away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Lesson 9: Overview

## Team Competition, Final Round



Students will be able to...

**Fencing Skills:** Fence and referee a competition

**Fencing Skills:** Properly execute the routines, procedures, and rules for the competition

**Core Principle:** Practice teamwork on the final day of the competition

## Tournament Notes

- This lesson can either be a new tournament with new teams, or it can be a continuation of the previous lesson's tournament. If the latter, consider making these gold and bronze medal matches!
- Encourage students to support and help their teammates while they fence.
- Give students the opportunity to take leadership roles on their teams and in their matches, but make sure they are playing fairly and not allowing dangerous situations to develop.

## Routines

This lesson includes the following routines introduced in previous lessons: Equipment Distribution, Foil Distribution, Using a Mask, Using a Jacket, Using Electronic Scoring, Leader Line, Tournament Line, Rules of School Fencing, Role of the Referee, Using Fencing Pistes, Return Equipment

## Preparation & Equipment

- Masks and jackets for all students, 1 foil per team
- The room should be set up with pistes



**UNIT ONE**

# Lesson 9: Flow

## Team Competition, Final Round

**Start**  
3 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Warm Up & Review

- ▶ Use verbal commands for review, then move to leader-follower (possibly led by students.)
- ▶ Emphasize some of the previous core values especially balance, keeping distance, and awareness.

**Core Principle**  
5 MIN

No Equipment  
Leader Line

### Teamwork

- ▶ Convey that teamwork and cooperation are essential to the growth of a fencer.
- ▶ Emphasize that a fencer can only get better if she has a teammate with whom to practice, and while competing as a team teammates can often see issues and opportunities that fencers cannot.

**Teach Routines**  
5 MIN

Jackets, Masks  
1 Foil per Team

### Teams

- ▶ Divide students into teams. These can be the same teams as the previous lesson or new teams, as appropriate.
- ▶ Decide on an order for students to fence and send teams to pistes.

**Competition**  
25 MIN

Jackets, Masks,  
1 Foil per Team

### Tournament, Preliminary Round

- ▶ Monitor the students as they referee and fence on their own.

**Closing**  
2 MIN

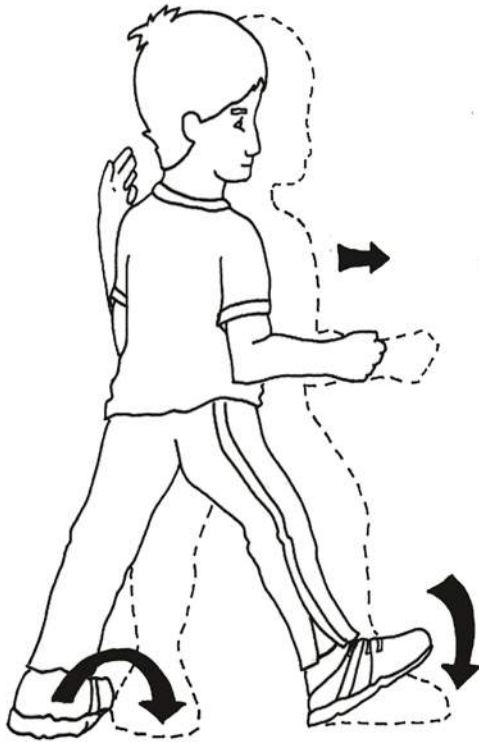
All Equipment

### Closing

- ▶ Ensure students follow a safe and orderly procedure in putting away the equipment.
- ▶ Designate a few students to wipe the masks with antibiotic wipes for the next class.

# Advance!

## TECHNICAL SKILLS UNIT ONE



The **Advance** is the basic forward movement in fencing, used to approach the opponent.

### Step By Step

- Begin in en garde position
- Raise the front toe
- Move the front foot forward, pushing forward with the back leg
- Land on the heel of the front foot, keeping weight balanced between the legs
- Simultaneously bring the front toe down and snap the back foot forward to return to en garde position

### Skill Notes

- Begin and end an advance on balance in en garde position
- The upper body should remain stable throughout the advance
- Fencers should be on balance and ready to stop or change direction throughout the advance
- Do not drag the back foot along the floor during an advance
- Raise the front toe first – do not 'toe off' the front foot during an advance

### Activites

Verbal Commands

Leader-Follower Game

1-2 Game

# Advance!

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

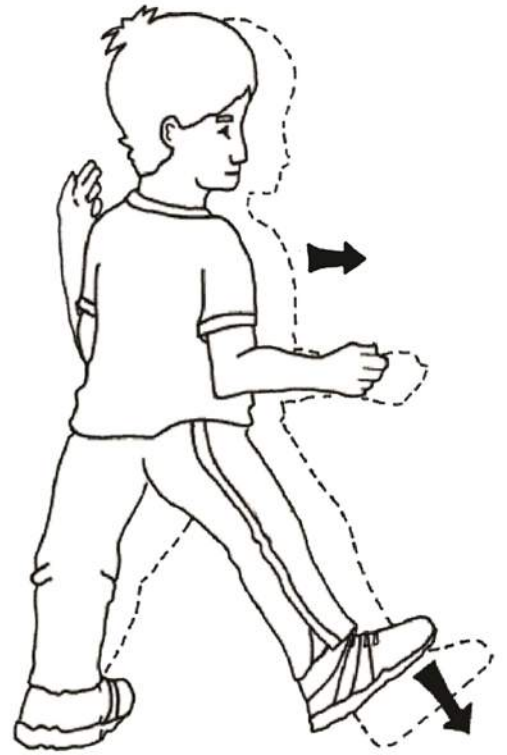
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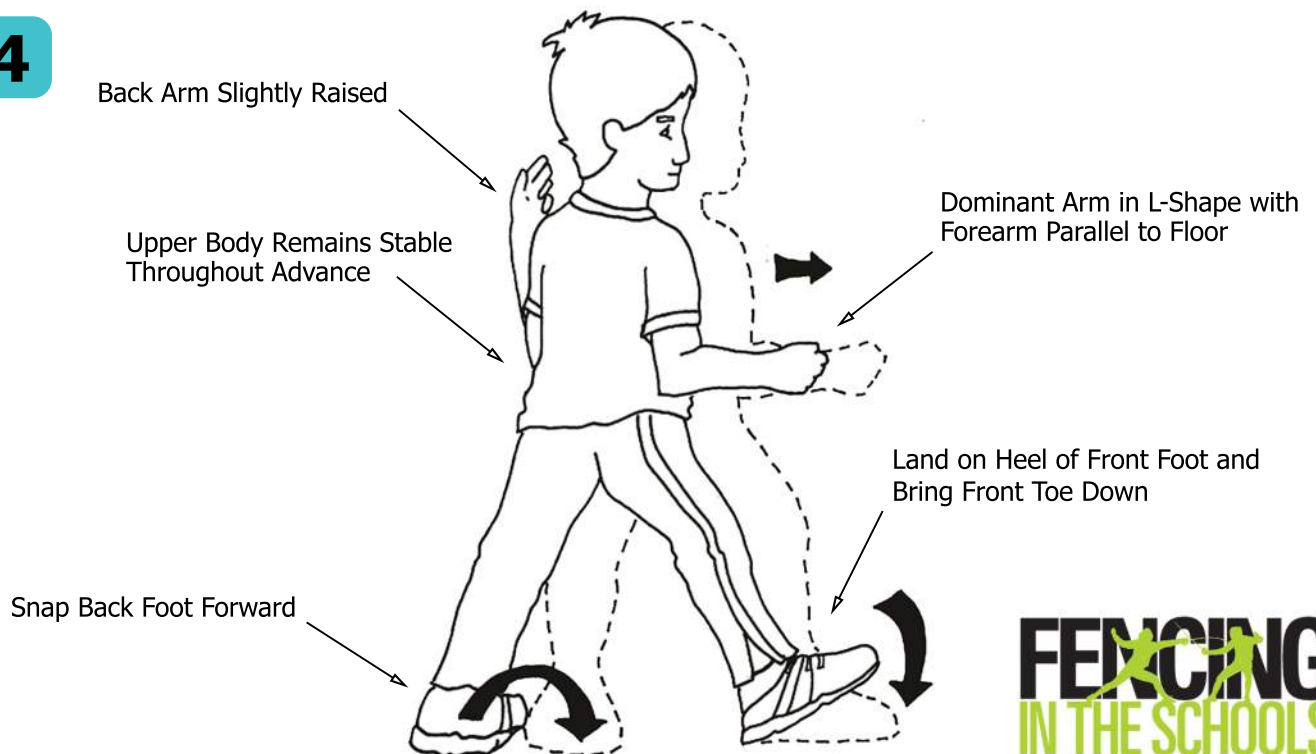
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3



4



# Disengage!

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

A **Disengage** is a small semicircular motion underneath the opponent's blade that is used to avoid a parry or find an open target.

## Step By Step

- Drop the point of the foil slightly below the opponent's foil
- Bring it back up on the other side.

## Skill Notes

- The disengage looks like drawing a U with the tip of the foil
- The disengage is a small motion, executed primarily with the fingers and a little bit with the wrist
- The forearm should move very little if at all
- The point of the foil should stray as little as possible from the opponent's target

## Activites

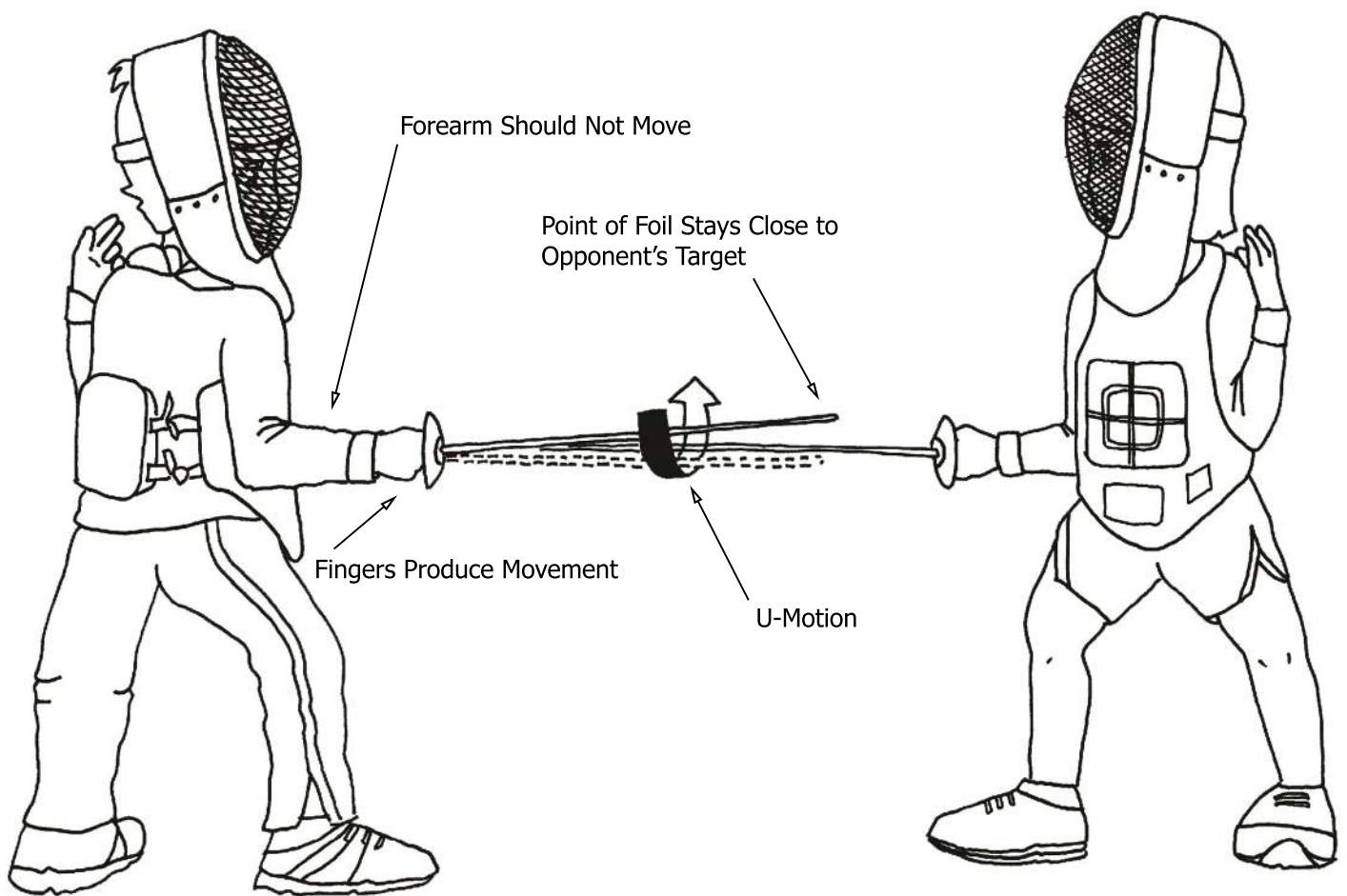
Verbal Commands

Jab Game

# Disengage!

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

1



# En Garde!

## TECHNICAL SKILLS UNIT ONE



**En Garde** is the ready position of fencing, and is the position a fencer takes before she begins fencing.

### Step By Step

- Begin with feet together, facing the instructor
- Move the foot of your dominant side (right foot for righties, left foot for lefties) forward about 1.5 times the length of your foot
- Rotate your back foot laterally so that it is at a 90 degree angle with the front foot
- Bend your knees keeping your weight evenly distributed between legs

### Skill Notes

- Feet about shoulder width apart, with the foot of the dominant side forward
- Feet at a 90 degree angle with respect to each other
- Weight evenly distributed between legs
- Knees bent
- Chest squared forward
- Arm of the dominant side in an L-shape with the forearm parallel to the floor
- Back forearm raised

### Activites

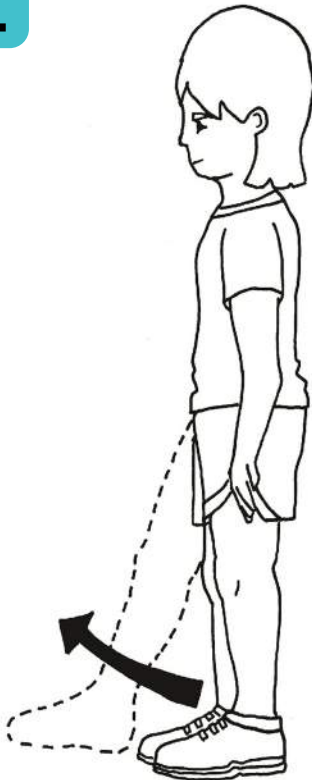
#### Position Game



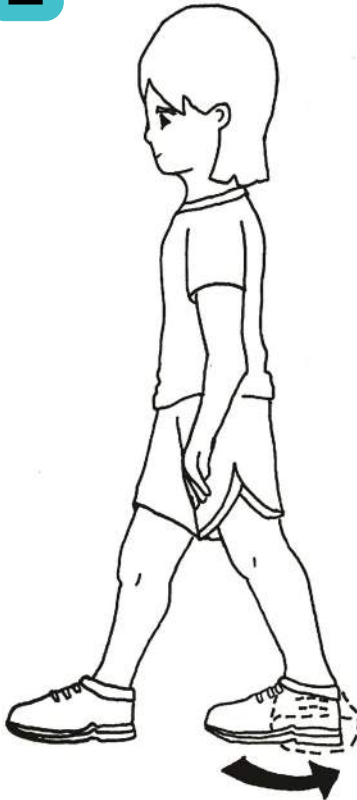
# En Garde!

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS

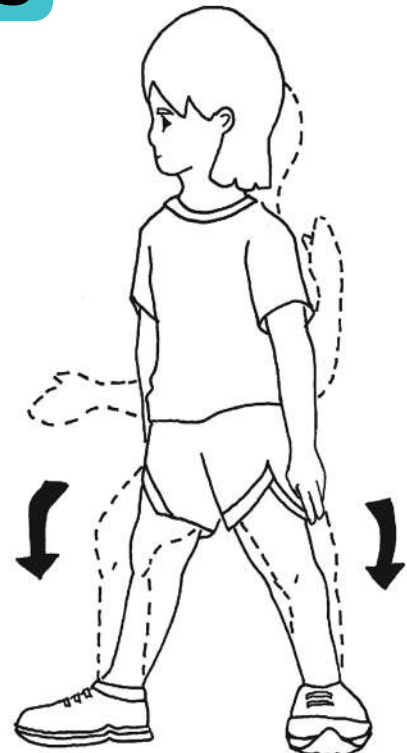
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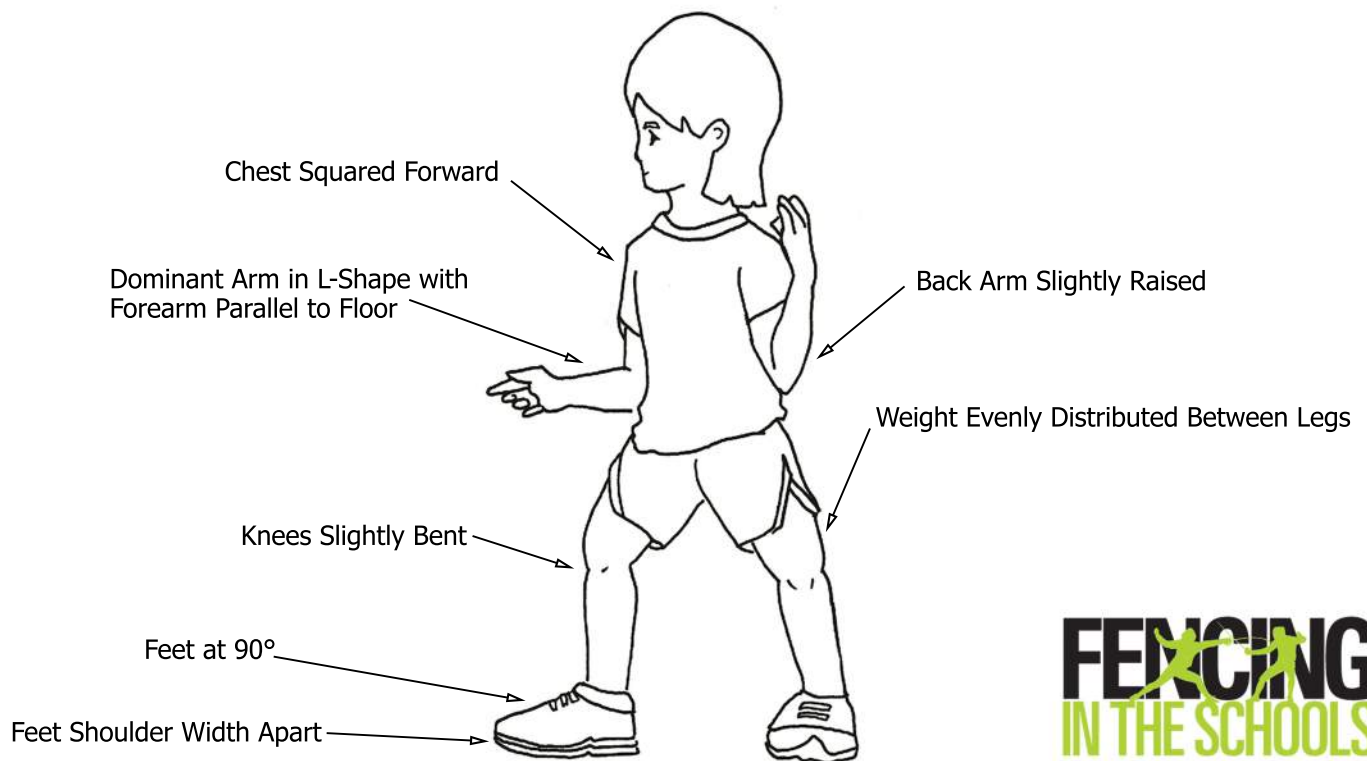
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# First Position

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE



**First Position** is the position from which fencers get en garde at the beginning of a bout and salute at the end of a bout.

## Step By Step

- ▶ Stand squarely and upright facing the instructor or the opponent, feet together
- ▶ Hold the foil pointed at the ground

## Skill Notes

- ▶ Fencers stand squarely at attention with their feet together
- ▶ The foil should be held so that it is pointed at the ground immediately in front of the fencer

## Activites

Position Game

# Handshake

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

Fencers **shake hands** following every bout as a sign of respect, and as symbolic closure and reconciliation after the bout.

## Step By Step

- Begin in first position
- Offer the hand that is not holding the foil to the opponent
- Shake hands, even between a right and a left hand

## Skill Notes

- Fencers never shake hands with the hand that holds the foil, because to present that hand constitutes a challenge
- Offering the hand without the weapon is a sign of peace and respect in fencing
- Therefore if a fencer is right handed she will always shake with her left hand, and if a fencer is left handed, he will always shake with his right hand
- If a left handed fencer fences against a right handed fencer, they shake hands using opposite hands

## Activites

Verbal Commands

# Holding the Foil

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE



When **Holding the Foil**, the foil must be held firmly but not too tightly, and the hand should be relaxed to facilitate the execution of blade work actions.

## Step By Step

- ▶ Hold the foil firmly between the thumb and forefinger of the dominant hand
- ▶ Wrap fingers 3-5 around the handle of the foil

## Skill Notes

- ▶ The thumb and forefinger hold the foil near the guard
- ▶ Fingers 3-5 wrap around the rest of the handle for stabilization
- ▶ The foil must be held firmly but not too tightly

## Activites

Verbal Commands

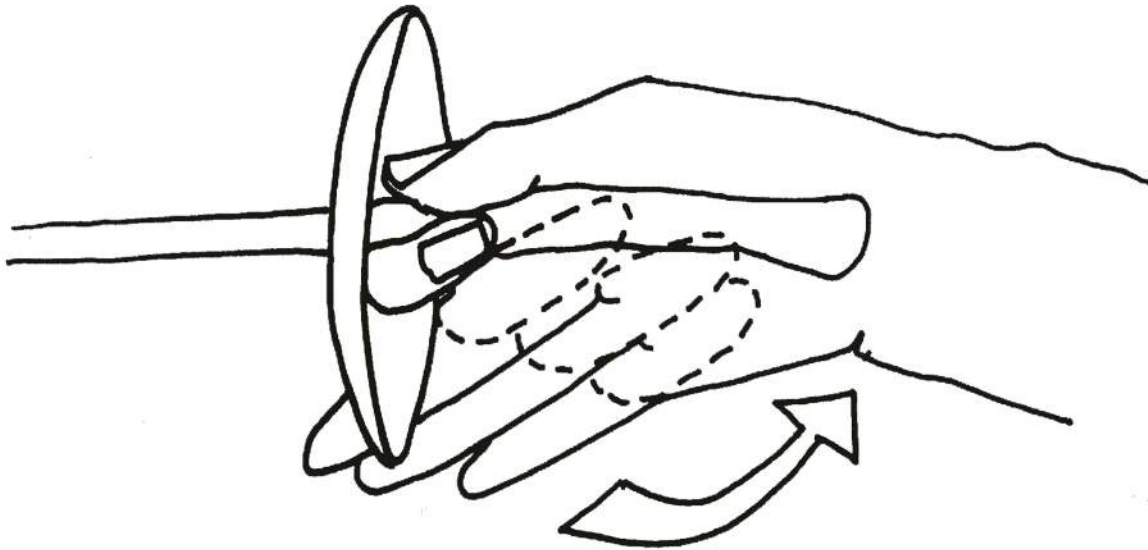
Leader-Follower Game

1-2 Game

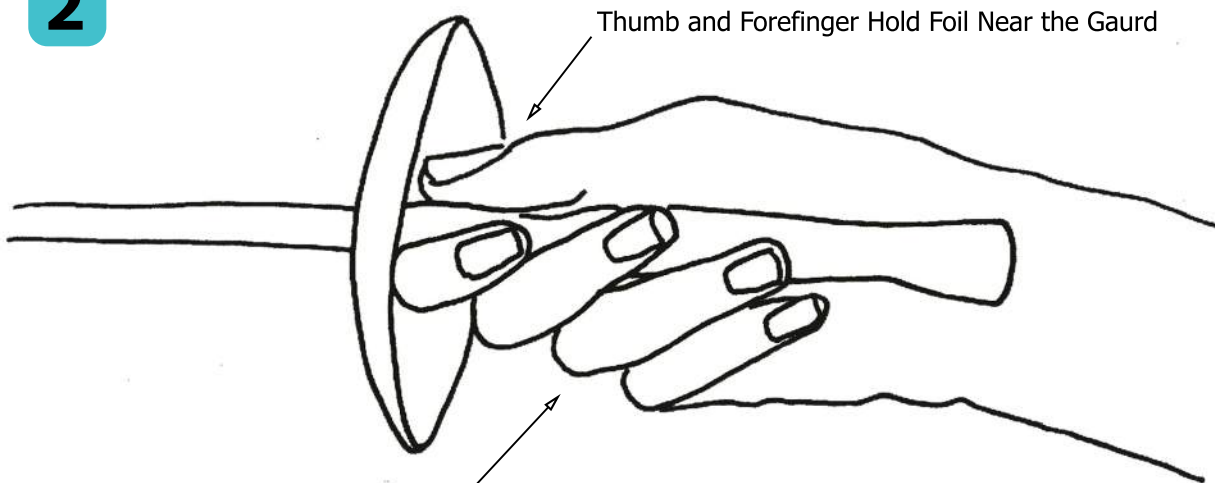
# Holding the Foil

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

1



2



Thumb and Forefinger Hold Foil Near the Guard

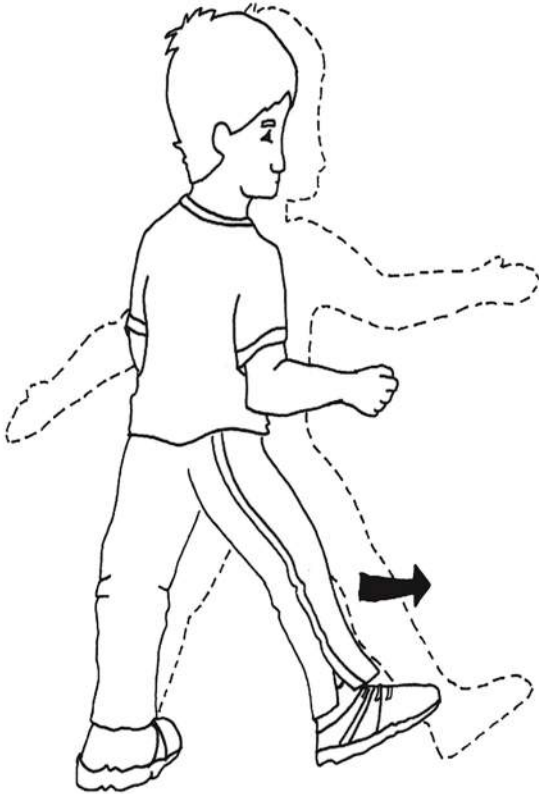
Fingers 3-5 Wrap Around  
the Rest of the Handle

# Lunge!

## TECHNICAL SKILLS UNIT ONE

The **Lunge** is the striking movement of fencing with the legs accelerating the fencer into range.

### Step By Step



- Begin in en garde position
- Raise the front toe and extend the front knee, moving the foot forward above the floor
- As the front leg extends, energetically push the body forward with the rear leg
- Land on the front heel with the front toe pointing forward
- Finish with the front shin perpendicular to the floor and the back leg completely straight

### Skill Notes

- Although the lunge is a footwork action, it is almost always executed in conjunction with a thrust.
- The arm should be fully extended in the thrust before the completion of the lunge
- The front toe must be raised and the front foot must begin to move forward before the body weight shifts forward. Otherwise, the fencer's weight will fall onto the front toe, which means the fencer will kick with his front leg rather than pushing with his rear leg
- The rear arm may extend during the lunge for counterbalance
- The torso should remain erect and stable throughout the lunge
- It is normal but not necessary for the back leg to get dragged along slightly in a very energetic lunge
- Fencers should fully extend the back leg to get maximum power from their lunge
- For safety, the fencer should land on his front heel with his front toe straight to avoid the risk of rolling his ankle, and should not allow his front knee to move beyond his front toe to avoid strain

### Activites

Verbal Commands

Leader-Follower Game

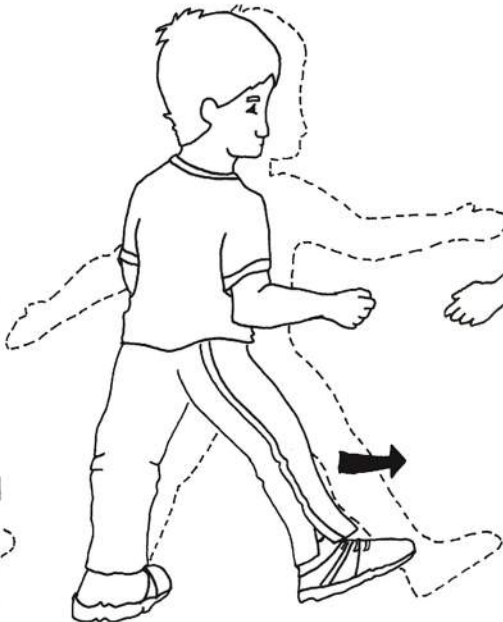
# Lunge!

TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

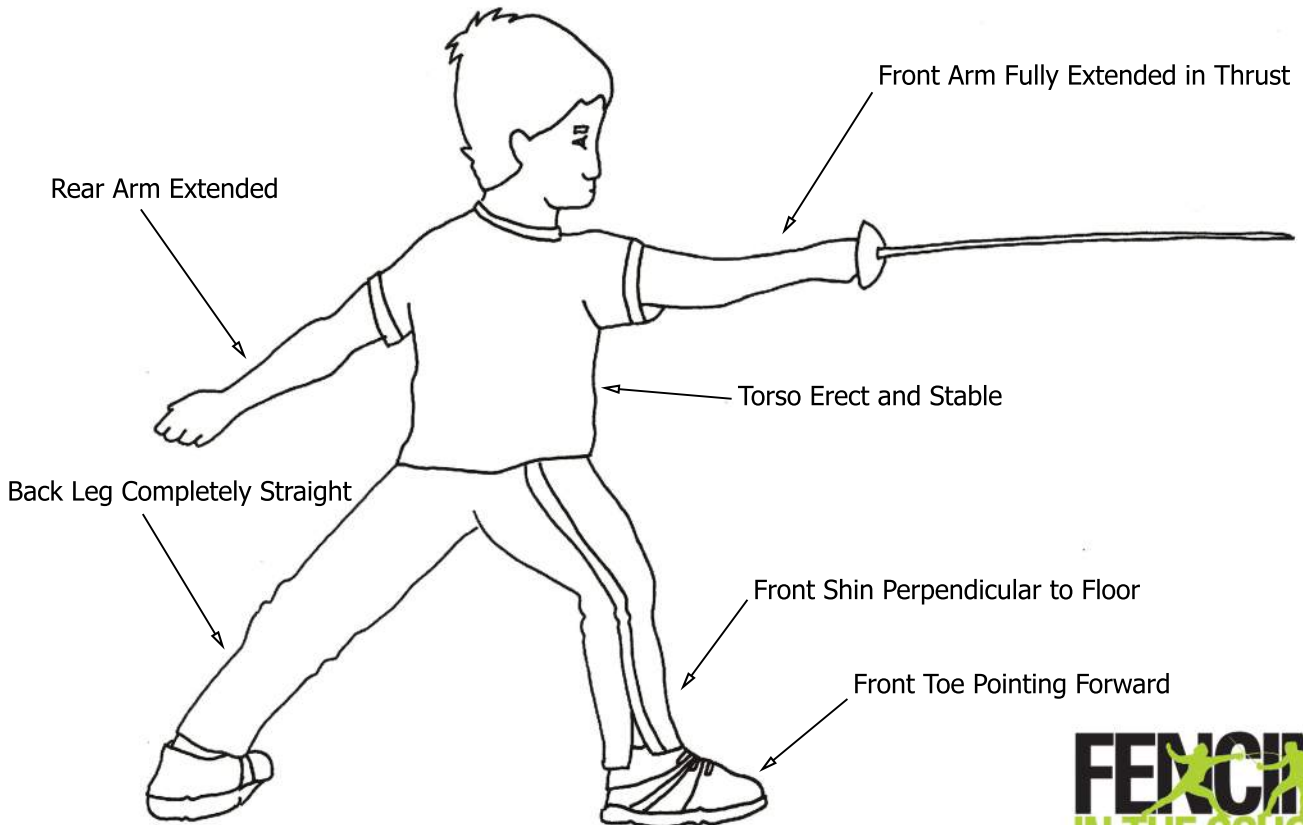
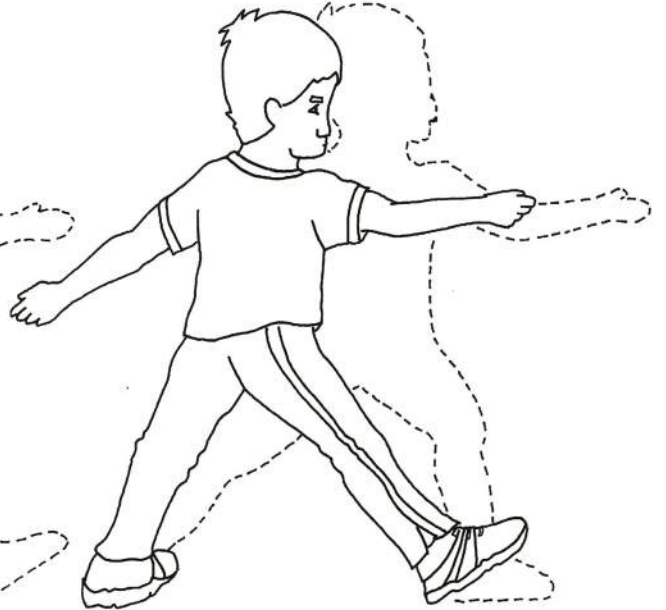
1



2



3



# Parry!

## TECHNICAL SKILLS UNIT ONE



The **Parry** is a block in fencing. There are eight PARRIES in fencing. The two parries taught in this class are numbers 4 and 6.

### Step By Step

- Begin in en garde with hand in neutral position
- Depending on the parry being executed, rotate the foil by pronating or supinating the hand, and move the foil to block the target.
- The fencer keeps the point of the foil toward the opponent's target while using the blade and guard of the foil to defend her own target.

### Skill Notes

- The parry should be as small as possible to defend the target, but no smaller
- While parrying, the point of the foil should remain pointed toward the opponent's target to facilitate an immediate riposte.

### Activites

Verbal Commands

Parry-Riposte Game



# Parry!

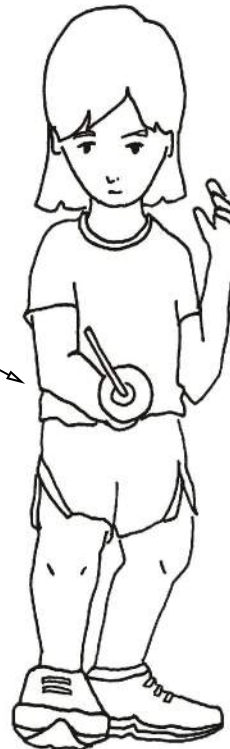
TECHNICAL  
SKILLS  
UNIT ONE

1



2

Dominant Hand  
Pronated



1



2

Dominant Hand  
Supine



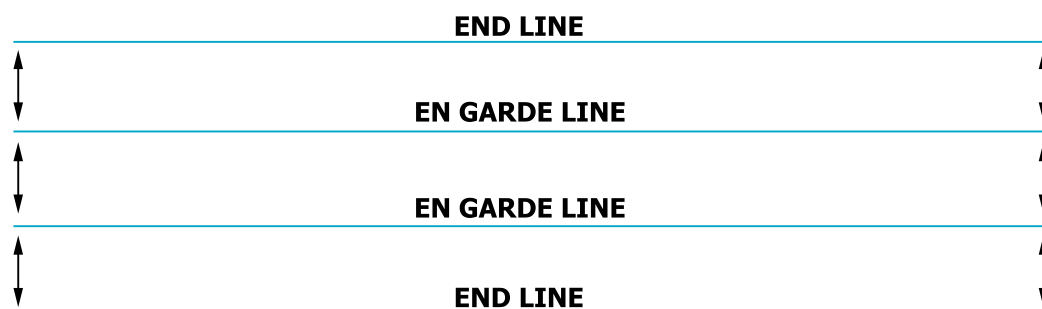
# En Garde & End Lines

- **En garde lines** are the lines that mark the distance at which fencers begin the match. They are parallel lines behind which fencers get 'en garde' to start a point.
- Regulation en garde lines are 4 meters (13 feet) apart. This is recommended if space is available.
- En garde lines should not be less than 2 meters (6.5 feet) apart.
- You will need one pair en garde lines per pair of fencers, or, preferably, a single, long pair of en garde lines behind which all fencers will stand in 'partner lines' (see below)

- **End lines** mark the ends of the fencing area. They run parallel to the en garde lines.
- Regulation fencing strips are 14 meters (45.5 feet) long, and therefore the end lines are 14 meters apart (and 5 meters or 16.25 feet) from the nearest en garde line.
- When laying down lines, ensure that there is a minimum of 2 meters (6.5 feet) between the nearest en garde line and the end line. 3 to 5 meters (9.75 to 16.25 feet) is recommended.

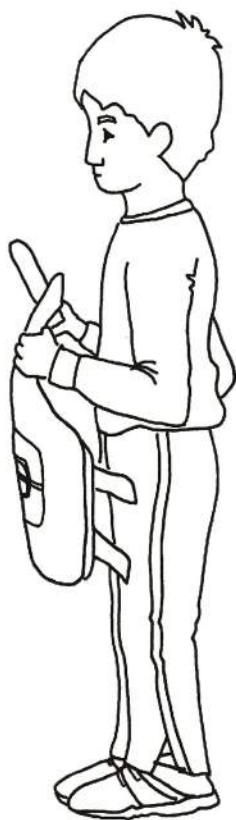
## Notes:

- Students must start all touches behind the en garde lines.
- Students may also start partner line exercises behind the en garde lines, instead of in a preset distance. (See Fencing Distance)
- If a fencer touches or crosses the end line with her foot, she and her partner must immediately stop fencing. If there is a referee, the referee should watch for this and immediately call 'halt!'
- If a fencer touches the end line during a competitive bout, her opponent scores a touch and both fencers reset to the en garde lines. This is especially important in rooms with objects lined up against the wall, to prevent collisions.



# Equipment Usage

ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE



## Using a Jacket:

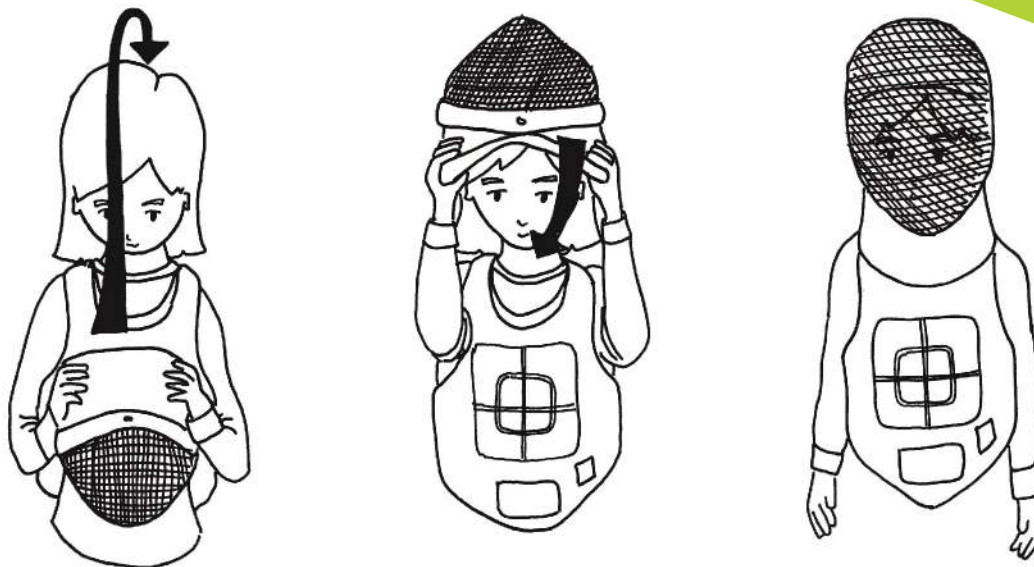
- Pick up the jacket and hold in both hands and pull the vest to your shoulders
- Fasten the back strap
- Fasten the neck strap

## Notes:

- Make sure the neck strap is as tight as possible to prevent gaps opening up between the neckline of the vest and the bib of the mask.
- The back of the jacket should be fastened snugly but not tightly. For larger students, extension straps are available.

# Equipment Usage

ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE



## Using a Mask:

- Pick up the mask, either with two hands on the sides of the mask or one hand at the top of the mask, and put the mask on top of your head with the bib facing forward.
- Rotate the mask downward over your head and settle your chin into the chin rest.
- Ensure that the mask is on completely so that the chin rest holds the chin and does not cover the mouth, and make sure the bib reaches down below the neck line of the jacket.

## Notes:

- Make sure the pads in the mask fits snugly under the chin and against the forehead
- The back strap of the mask is adjustable
- Never fence without a mask
- Always point the foil toward the floor when you or others around you are not wearing masks

# Equipment Usage

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**ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE**

## Using Electronic Scoring

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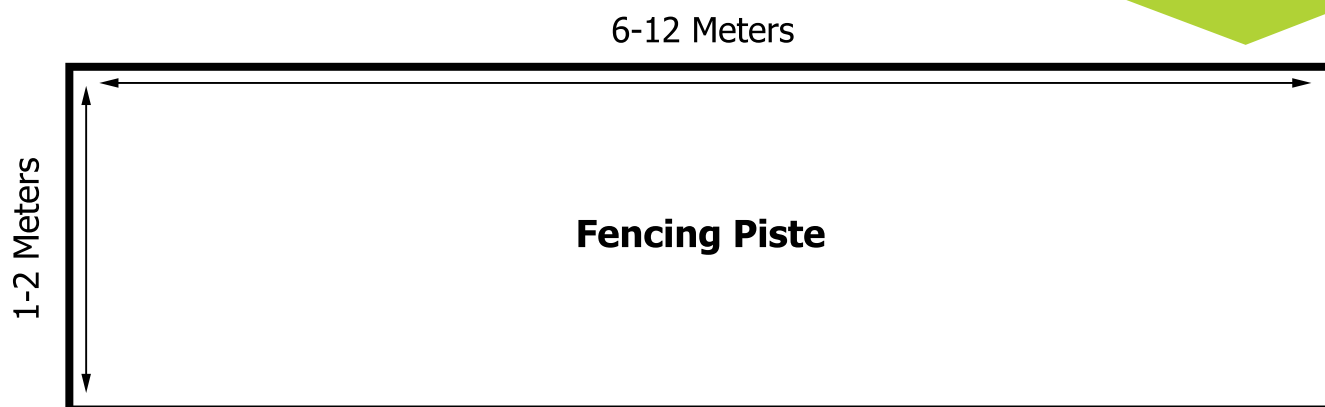
- Turn on the jacket by flipping the switch on the left side of the scoring box
- The scoring box will briefly light up and buzz when it is turned on.
- For most jackets, the switch being up is on and down is off. But on the most recently produced boxes, this was reversed by the manufacturer.
- Test the scoring apparatus by poking yourself on the green target area.

## Notes:

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- The Jacket is the only electronic piece of equipment.
- The outer cover is white with a green target.
- Underneath the target is the scoring area, a pad that will register touches and send a signal to the scoring box, which is housed in a clear plastic pouch near the bottom of the jacket.
- The scoring jacket requires a certain amount of direct pressure from the point of the weapon to register a touch.
- Slapping the target will generally not set off the scoring light.

# Equipment Usage



## Using Fencing Pistes

- ▶ Fencing pistes should be between 1 and 2 meters (3.25 – 6.5 feet) wide and between 6 and 12 meters long.
- ▶ The refereeing area should allow the referee to stand at least 1 meter, and preferably 2 meters, from the boundaries of all fencing pistes.
- ▶ Fencers must fence within the boundaries of the fencing piste. If a fencer steps entirely outside of the fencing piste with either foot, she receives a penalty (see fencing rules). The first offense is a warning, the second and subsequent penalties result in a point awarded to her opponent.

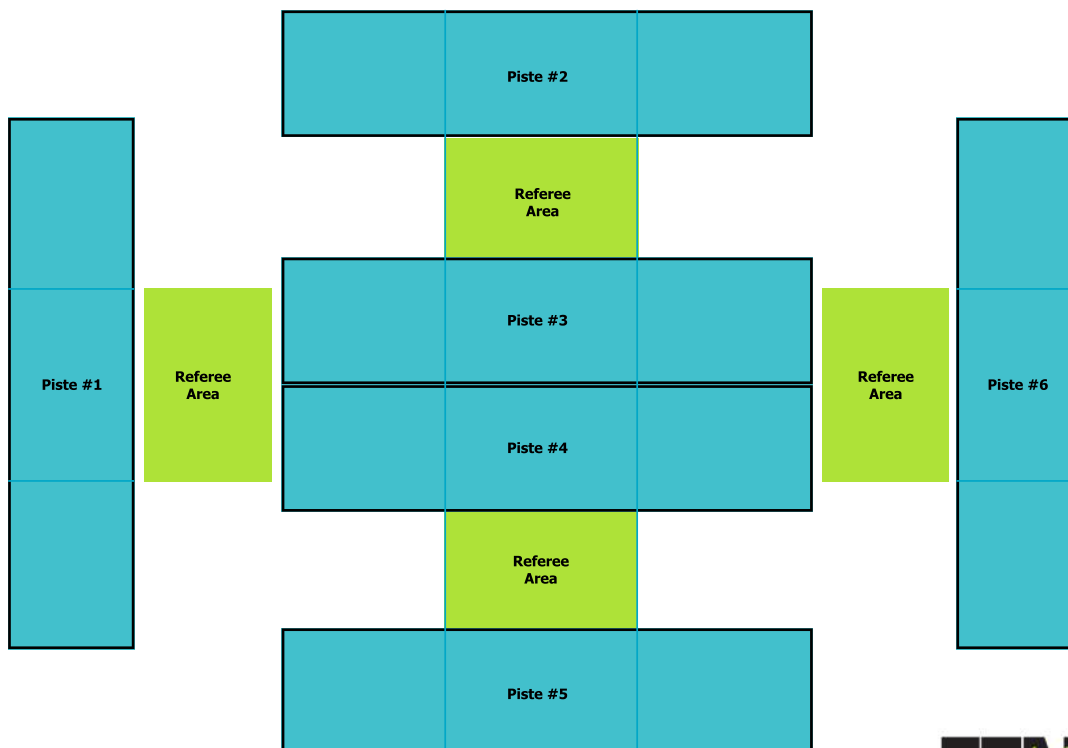
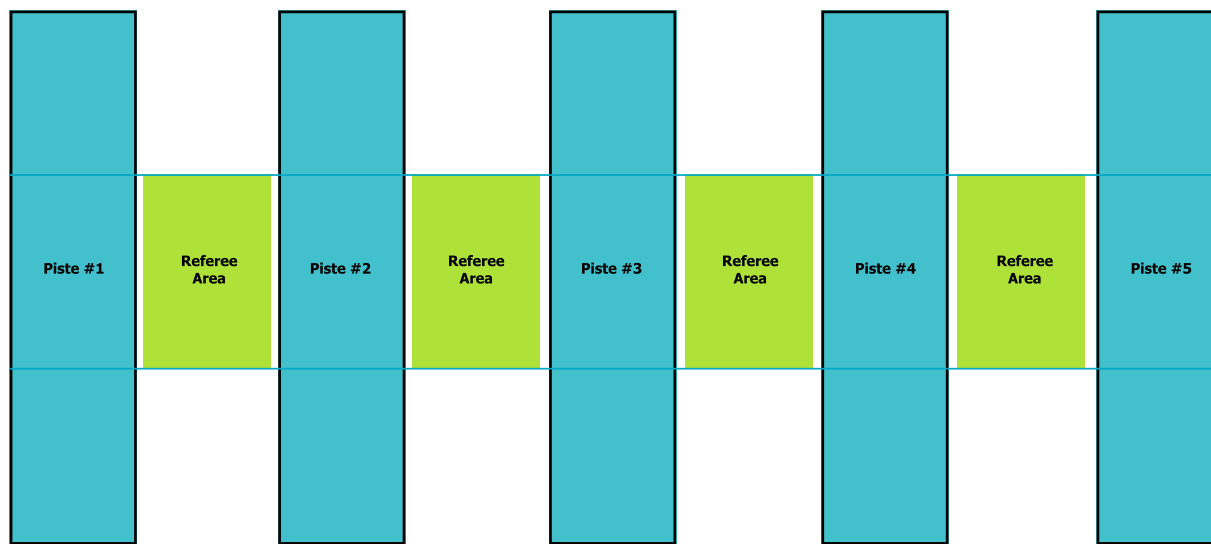
## Notes:

- ▶ If a student goes off the side of the piste, the point immediately stops and the fencers reset. (Optional) They get en garde in en garde distance with the fencer who did not go off starting where she was when her opponent went off. Note because en garde distance is longer than the distance in which students typically fence, this will often push the fencer who went off back somewhat.
- ▶ When students begin fencing bouts, it is important to create fencing areas that are sufficiently distinct so as to give the referee room to observe the fencing without risking being hit by wild blade actions.

# Equipment Usage

**ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE**

► Below are some examples of possible room configurations:



# Fencing Bouts



Kids kit fencing is a competition between 2 athletes wearing the FITS Kids Kit protective equipment and plastic foils.

## Step By Step:

- Two fencers get behind the en garde lines of a fencing piste.
- Two students serve as referees for the bout.
- The main referee will give the command 'En Garde,'
- When fencers are still and ready, the referee will give the command 'Fence!'
- The two fencers will fence until the referee gives the command 'Halt!' either for a touch scored or for a potentially dangerous situation.
- After the referee calls halt, the referees may award a touch to one or both fencers, as appropriate.
- Continue fencing until the designated time has elapsed or the designated number of points has been reached.

## Rules and Goals of FITS Kit Fencing:

### ➤ What is the goal of kids kit fencing?

- The goal of fencing is to land the point of your foil to the target area of your opponent while trying not to let your opponent land his foil to your target area

### ➤ What is the target area?

- The target area in kids kit fencing is the green scoring zone located on the front of the kids kit scoring jacket. Please Note: #1 The target area must be kept squared to the opposing fencer in KIDS KIT fencing. #2 the fencer may not cover target with the hand.



# Fencing Bouts



## ➤ What is the correct body position for competition?

- The off-hand of each fencer must not cover the scoring area and must be either held behind the back or up in the air. The target area must also remain squared to the opponent. Covering target or turning so that the opponent cannot access the target is subject to an immediate "Halt!" and a penalty.

## ➤ What is the field of play?

- Fencing takes place on the "piste" with areas marked for en garde, end lines, and side lines. The recommended piste size is 10-12 meters long, 1-2 meters wide, with the two en garde lines spaced 3-4 meters from each other and 3-4 meters from each end line. The size of the fencing pistes can be adjusted based on available space. Points begin with both fencers facing each other behind their en garde lines (i.e., they are 3-4 meters apart). If a fencer steps entirely out of the field of play with either foot, she receives a penalty (see below; 1st offense is a warning, all subsequent are a point awarded to her opponent).

## ➤ When is the start of play?

- When the designated referee says "En garde!" the 2 competitors must assume en garde position behind their lines and be completely still with their points at their opponent. When the referee says "Fence!" play will commence until a light goes on or someone says "Halt!"

## ➤ When is play stopped?

- Halt! Play is stopped when one or both of the competitors turns on the light of their opponent. Play can also be stopped at any time by a referee or anyone who yells "Halt!" the athletes must immediately stop. Play can be stopped for dangerous condition (such as protective equipment out of place or falling off), objects behind an athlete that they might trip on or rough fencing. (See 'rough fencing' below). Play also stops when one fencer raises her hand to indicate a hit (see 'Scoring')

# Fencing Bouts



## ► How does scoring work?

- Fencers score one point at a time by landing their foil on their opponents scoring zone during the period, which commences with a referee saying "Fence!" and ends with the referee saying "Halt!". A fencer must turn on her opponent's scoring light in order to score a touch. Once a fencer turns their opponent's light on, they should raise their back hand to signal their opponent they have scored and to signal "Halt!" in case others have not yet seen the scoring light. When a fencer raises her hand, the referee must evaluate both fencers lights. If both lights are on, both fencers score a touch. If only one light is on, that fencer's opponent scores a touch.

## ► What does the referee do?

- The referee is the official of a fencing match and has final say on all matters. The referee says "Halt!" if a light goes on and must determine if the fencers raised their hands together to award a point to each fencer or award one point to the fencer who landed first. The referee prepares the athletes for play by saying "En garde!", gets them to begin competing by saying "Fence!", and stops it by saying "Halt!" The referee is intended to enforce all the rules here.

## ► What does the secondary referee do?

- When possible another person should watch the bout to assist the referee. This person should stand on the opposite side of the piste as main referee to give the best line of sight to the referee's blind spots. This referee does not issue the commands "En garde!" or "Fence!", but should give the command "Halt!" for dangerous fencing or a scored touch.

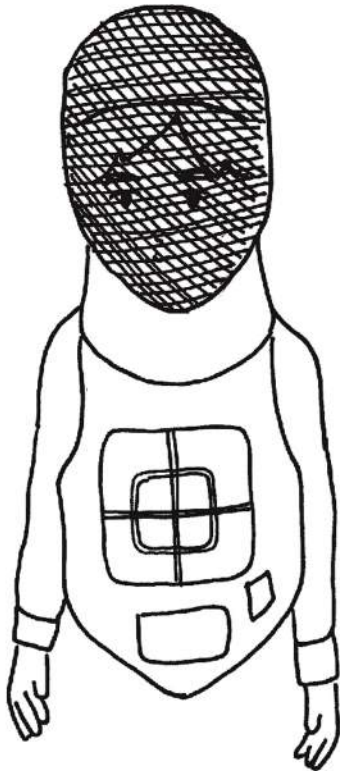
## ► When are penalties issued?

- Covering target or turning so the opponent cannot reach the target, stepping off the piste, breaking the plane of the opponent with the tip of the foil, and rough fencing\* are all subject to penalties. For the first offense, the fencer is given a warning. On all subsequent offenses, the fencer's opponent is awarded a point.

\*It is illegal to 'whack' or 'slap' at an opponent at any time. The point of the foil must always be aimed toward the opponent. If the tip of a fencer's foil breaks the plane of the opponent or if a fencer makes any movement that is wild, rough or intended to harm another player will result in an immediate "Halt!" and a penalty.

# Fencing Safety

ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE



When practiced correctly, fencing is one of the safest sports!

## Safety Rules

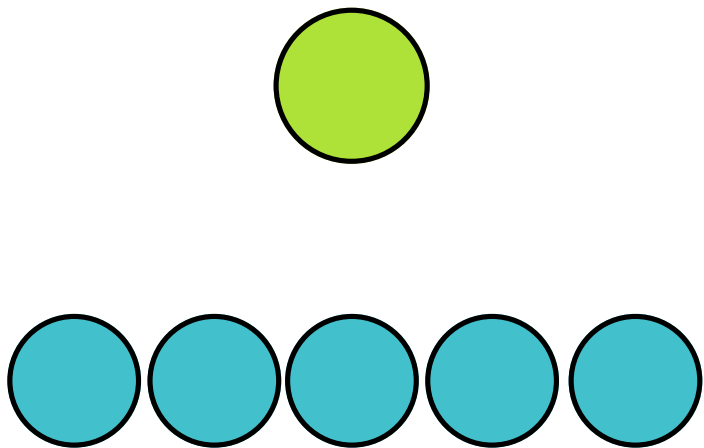
- Never fence without a mask
- Always point the foil toward the floor when you or others around you are not wearing masks
- Do not swing the foil through the air
- Make sure that all equipment is worn properly
- Never run with a foil
- Always listen to the commands of the teacher and the referee, especially the command 'Halt!'
- Maintain safe technique

## Skill Notes

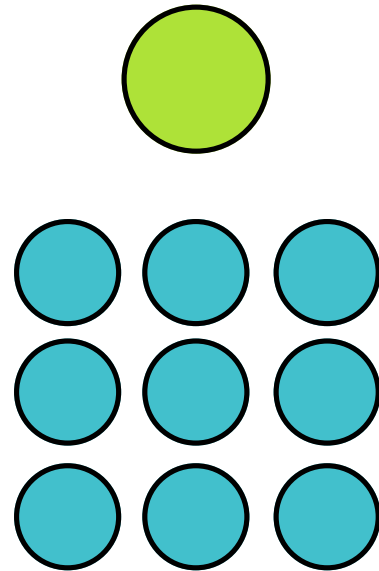
- Plastic foils are generally not dangerous even when abused, but creating good habits of fencing safety is important.
- When students are in leader line or partner line, make sure they maintain a reasonable distance between each other to minimize risk of collision or of accidentally hitting each other with their foils.
- Charge the referee and spectators with the authority to maintain safety rules during a match.
- Fencing technique is not only efficient, it is also safe. Maintaining good technique will reduce the risk of athletic injury

# Leader Line

ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE



**Standard Configuration**



**Alternate Configuration  
(for small spaces)**

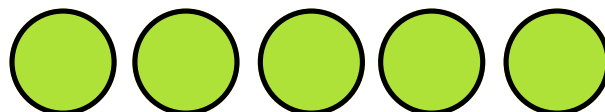
## Step By Step:

- Students line up facing a single leader, generally but not always the teacher.

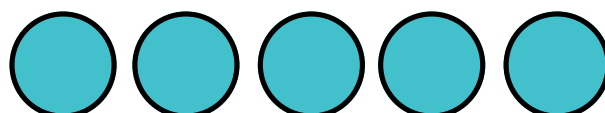
## Notes:

- This routine is used in all lessons.
- Most skill introductions and initial practice will take place in leader line.
- Students may lead the leader line
- It is possible to create a leader line with multiple tiers to accommodate more narrow spaces (see above).

# Partner Lines



**Standard Partner Lines**



## Step By Step:

- Begin in Leader Line with the teacher at the head.
- Count off every other student.
- Counted students step forward 3-5 steps and turn around to face the person who had been on their immediate right.
- This creates two lines of students, each with a partner.

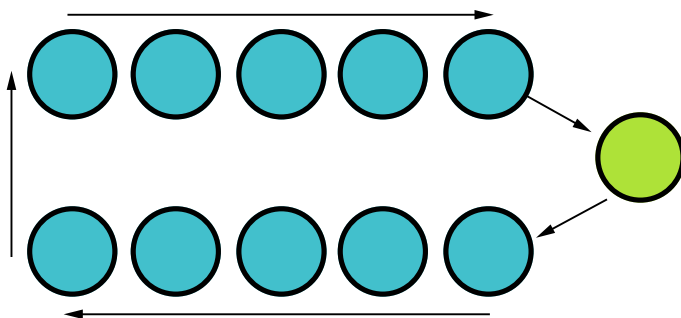
## Notes:

- Partner lines are most often used to practice blade work, but they are also used to practice more advanced footwork and distance.
- It is important to differentiate between the two lines, usually done by designating one line 'line A', and the other 'line B'
- When having students practice in partner lines, it is suggested that they rotate partners regularly
- Have students get into the habit of saluting their partner before and after each exercise
- When the curriculum calls for partner lines, it is also possible to have students stand behind the en garde lines on a fencing piste, if enough are available
- This has the advantage of getting students used to using fencing pistes and the en garde lines, but makes rotation more complicated if the pistes are not aligned, and it could potentially make monitoring students more complicated

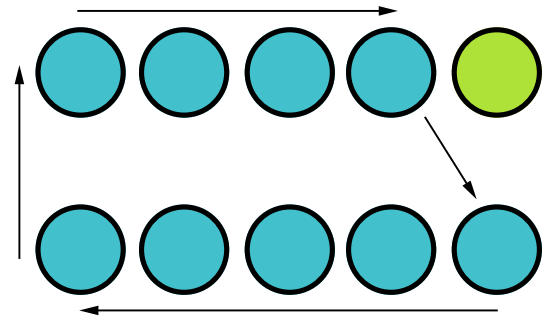
# Partner Lines

ROUTINES  
&  
PROCEDURES  
UNIT ONE

## Rotating Partner Lines (Odd #)



## Rotating Partner Lines (Even #)



## Odd Number of Students:

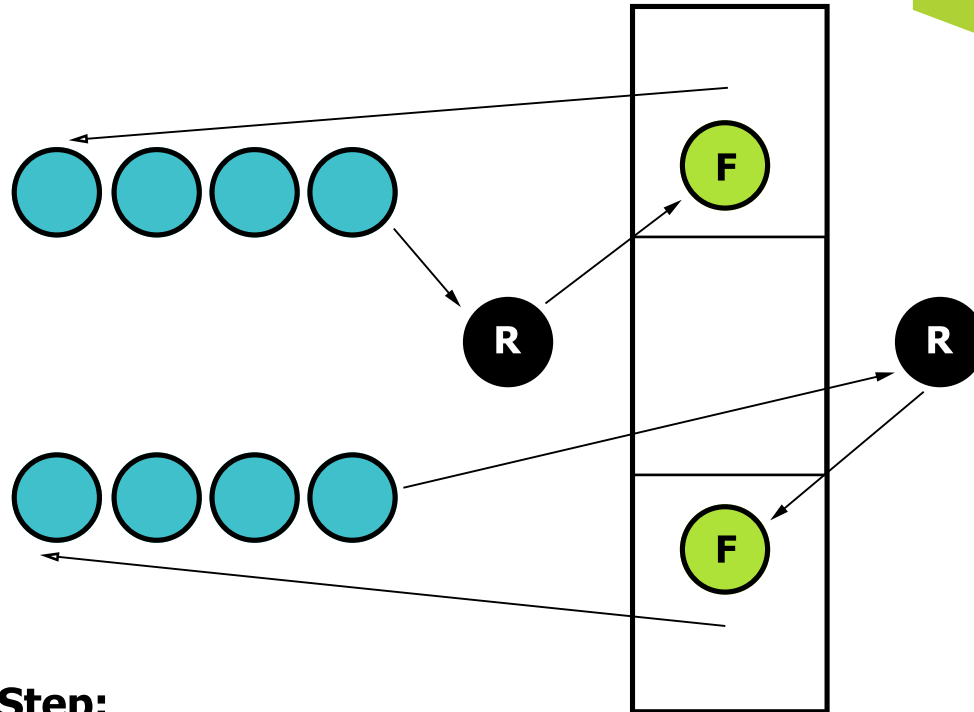
- If there are an odd number of students, have one student rest for each rotation. All students will rotate.

## Even Number of Students:

- If there are an even number of students, have one student on the corner remain in place and all other students rotate around them.
- If all students rotate with an even number, they will never match up against half the class.



# Tournament Lines



## Step By Step:

- Divide students into teams.
- Pair teams that will compete against each other.
- Two fencers are fencing, one from each team, and two are refereeing one from each team (See fencing bouts)
- The other students on each team form a line to the side of the piste where they can watch the fencing, cheer their teammates, and offer advice and encouragement.
- When the bout is over, the two fencers go to the end of their team's line, the referees become fencers, and the students at the head of the line become referees.

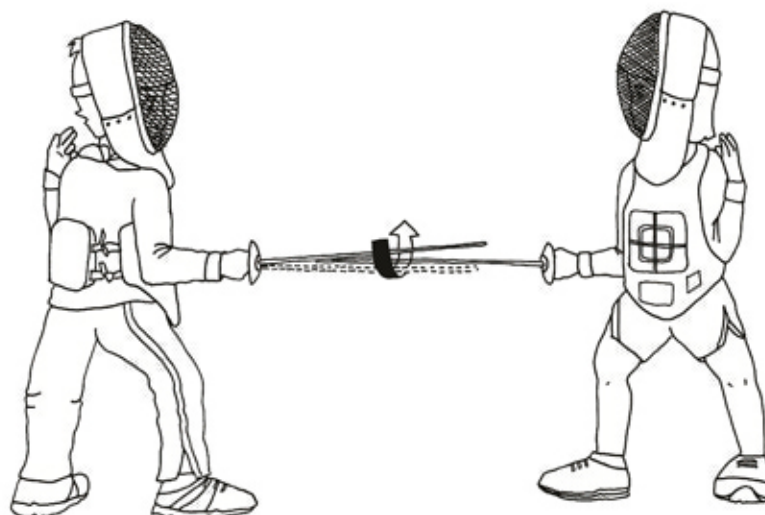
## Notes:

- This routine allow many students to participate in an ongoing competition, even while not actively fencing, while maintaining a robust order in the classroom
- Team lines are designed to render scoresheets obsolete, although scoresheets may still be used.

# Student Roles: Fencer



The unit on fencing is set so that students are not just passive learners but active participants in their own development as well as those of their classmates. They are also going to learn how to be a referee and be put into positions where they must assist in keeping everyone safe and ensuring fair play and that the rules are followed.



## The Fencer:

- Students will learn and develop the fundamental skills to be a successful fencer on the piste and how those skills can relate off the piste.

## When Students Take This Role:

- When fencing bouts
- When learning or practicing skills

## Details of the Role:

- The Fencer embodies the Core Principle of Sportsmanship
- Fencers try to improve their skills and apply them to bouts





# Student Roles: Referee

---

The unit on fencing is set so that students are not just passive learners but active participants in their own development as well as those of their classmates. They are also going to learn how to be a referee and be put into positions where they must assist in keeping everyone safe and ensuring fair play and that the rules are followed.

## The Referee:

---

- ▶ Students will act as a referee and learn the roles and responsibilities of keeping everyone safe and ensuring fair play.

## When Students Take This Role:

---

- ▶ When they are next in line to fence during a competition

## Details of the Role:

---

- ▶ The referee embodies the Core Principle of Fair Play
- ▶ The referee starts and stops the fencing in a bout, and awards points
- ▶ The referee oversees safety and enforces safety rules in the bout
- ▶ The referee should always be watching for unsafe situations and call "Halt!" if they arise
- ▶ The referee is the final arbitrator of all rules during a bout (except for the teacher)
- ▶ The referee watches for fencers covering target, stepping outside the boundaries of the piste, or otherwise violating the rules.
- ▶ The referee watches for hits to be scored and calls "Halt!" when they are



# Referee Commands

## ➤ **"En Garde!"**

- Fencers get in en garde position behind the en garde lines
- Fencers are ready to fence
- The hand signal for the command "En Garde" is the referee holding her hands at waist height with her fingers pointed forward and her palms perpendicular to the floor

## ➤ **"Fence!"**

- Fencers begin fencing
- The hand signal for the command "Fence" is the referee bringing his hands together from the "En Garde" hand signal. The referee may drop his hands while the fencers are fencing.

## ➤ **"Halt!"**

- Fencers must stop fencing immediately
- Anyone may call halt if they see a point scored or an unsafe situation
- The hand signal for the command "Halt" is the referee holding her arm fully extended with the palm out, as in a traffic cop's command to 'stop'.

## ➤ **"Point"**

- The referee awards one or both fencers a point
- The hand signal for awarding a point in fencing is the referee holding his arm out to the side with his forearm perpendicular to the floor and his palm open and pointing forward. The referee should hold up the hand on the side of the fencer who scored the touch. If both fencers score, he puts up both hands.



# Student Roles: Training Partner

---

The unit on fencing is set so that students are not just passive learners but active participants in their own development as well as those of their classmates. They are also going to learn how to be a referee and be put into positions where they must assist in keeping everyone safe and ensuring fair play and that the rules are followed.

## The Training Partner:

---

- ▶ Students need to work together to practice skills. Training partners don't try to 'beat' their partners, instead, they do specific actions that allow their partners to practice more easily.

## When Students Take This Role:

---

- ▶ When drilling skills
- ▶ When others are fencing in a competition

## Details of the Role:

---

- ▶ The training partner embodies the Core Principle of Teamwork
- ▶ Training partners do their best to help fencers become better

# 1-2 Drill

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 1



- **Explanation:** The Parry-Disengage Drill is primarily a practice or warmup for bladework skills. It is most appropriate when students are already familiar with thrust, parries, and disengages.
- **Usage:** This drill is a special case in which students rapidly must switch between the roles of fencer and training partner. This is because the student who is thrusting is helping the other practice parrying, and then beginning their riposte with a disengage.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Thrust, Parry Disengage
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Avoiding Obstacles

## Step By Step

- The Parry-Disengage Drill is practiced in partner lines
- Partners stand en garde in extension distance.
- The student who will be training partner first thrusts to chest
- The fencer takes a parry 4. The fencer then disengages and ripostes to flank.
- At this point the students switch roles
- The new fencer takes a parry 6, then disengages and thrusts to chest.
- The students switch roles.
- Repeat steps 4-7 until the teacher gives the command 'halt!'
- Switch which student starts and repeat, so that both students have the chance to practice parrying both targets

## Variants

- Students advance with their thrust and retreat with their parry

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this drill

# Advance-Lunge Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 2



- **Explanation:** The Advance-Lunge Game is an introduction and practice for lunging and manipulating distance
- **Usage:** Once students learn advance-lunge and basic distance, this drill should be appropriate throughout the unit. Later in the unit more complex strategies in this game should be expected and encouraged.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Lunge, Thrust
- **Core Principles:** Balance, Distance, Intention

## Step By Step

- The Advance-Lunge Game takes place in Partner Lines.
- Fencers must be en garde and still behind their en garde lines. Line A students are designated as the attackers and line B as the defenders who will maintain the en garde position.
- When the teacher gives the command 'Fence!', the attacker tries to score using an advance-lunge, and the defender tries to escape using footwork. The defender may make as many retreats as he wants to avoid the attacker's attack, but he may not parry or make an attack himself.
- After the attack, both fencers must freeze.
- The teacher tells them to check their distance, and switch roles.
- The teacher then gives the command 'Fence!' again and line B attacks and line A tries to escape.
- The teacher tells them to check their distance, and switch roles.
- Repeat steps 3-7 until one fencer hits.
- Remind students that while the defender can retreat as far as he wants to, if he retreats too far he will be unable to land his attack. To win the game fencers must concentrate on setting up proper distance, not making the longest attacks possible.

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this game



# Advance-Lunge Game

## Game Variants

### ➤ No Thrusting Variant (High Five Variant)

- The Advance Lunge Game can be played without foils.
- The defender offers the palm of his dominant hand as a target for the attacker.
- The attacker attacks by attempting to slap the palm of the defender.

### ➤ Continuous Variant

- In this variant, once the teacher gives the command 'fence!' fencers continue until one hits, and do not stop.
- The attacker may not make more than a single advance and a lunge.
- The defender may not begin to attack until his partner has finished her lunge.

# Band Drill



- **Explanation:** The band drill is a way for students already familiar with the lunge to increase the speed and acceleration of the movement.
- **Usage:** This drill is most effective when used as part of a more advanced footwork practice session

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Lunge, En Garde
- **Core Principles:** Balance

## Step By Step

- This drill takes place in partner lines
- Partners face each other, the fencer is in en garde and the training partner is standing squarely, facing the fencer. The partners hold an elastic band between them.
- On the teacher's command, the fencer lunges and the training partner pulls them forward slightly with the band.
- The fencer must first extend her arm, and her lunge is accelerated with the additional force.

## Equipment

- Elastic band, towel, rope or similar

# Distance-Only Fencing Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 3



- ▶ **Explanation:** This game reinforces the importance of distance by restricting fencers' ability to use other means to defend themselves and set up their own attacks.
- ▶ **Usage:** This game is especially important as a demonstration that in fencing the goal is to hit the opponent's target, not the opponent's blade. Many students forget this, especially when their prior exposure to fencing is exclusively cinematic fencing.
- ▶ **Usage:** This game is important as an initial integration of footwork skills with thrusting.
- ▶ **Usage:** This game can also be used as a review/reinforcement of the core concept of distance later on in the unit.

## Skills and Principles Practiced

- ▶ **Skills:** En Garde, Advance, Retreat, Lunge, Recover, Thrust
- ▶ **Core Principle:** Distance

## Step By Step

- ▶ This game takes place in partner lines.
- ▶ Fencers must be en garde and still behind their en garde lines.
- ▶ When the teacher gives the command 'Fence!', fencers may begin fencing.
- ▶ Fencers may not hit each others' blades with their own blade. Instead, they try to use footwork, thrusting, and distance to try to hit their opponent and not get hit themselves.
- ▶ The game continues until one or both fencers get hit, or when the teacher calls 'halt!'
- ▶ The teacher should call halt after about 15 seconds.

## Equipment

- ▶ All equipment is used for this game



# Foil Lunge Drill



- **Explanation:** The Foil Lunge Drill encourages students to lunge quickly and powerfully and to accelerate toward the target before an opportunity is missed, and to extend the arm at the beginning of the lunge
- **Usage:** This exercise is best used to improve the lunges of students who are already familiar with the skill.

## Skills and Core Principle Practiced

- **Skills:** Lunge, En Garde
- **Core Principle:** Go for the Goal

## Step By Step

- The Foil Lunge Drill takes place in partner lines.
- The fencer is in en garde, facing the training partner.
- The training partner holds a foil vertically with the tip down, using her finger on top of the handle to hold the foil in place.
- At the training partner's initiative, she may release the foil.
- The fencer must lunge and catch the foil by the handle before it falls to the ground.

## Variants

- Fencer gets en garde far enough from the training partner that he needs to make an advance-lunge to catch the foil.

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this drill

# Free Fencing Game



- **Explanation:** This game allows fencers to integrate fencing skills in an unrestricted environment without the pressure of referees or score.
- **Usage:** Free Fencing is only appropriate after students have learned all of the basic fencing skills.
- **Usage:** Free Fencing is most effective as a culmination of a practice, promoting integration of skills practiced in isolation, or as a warm up before more competitive fencing.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Advance, Retreat, Lunge, Recover, Thrust, Parry, Disengage,
- **Core Principles:** Balance, Distance, Point on Target

## Step By Step

- Free fencing takes place in partner lines
- Fencers must be en garde and still behind their en garde lines
- When the teacher gives the command 'Fence!', fencers may begin fencing
- The game continues until one or both fencers get hit, or when the teacher calls 'halt!'
- The teacher should call halt after about 15 seconds

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this game



# Jab Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 5

- **Explanation:** This game emphasizes avoiding the opponent's blade to successfully land an attack on the first try.
- **Usage:** The Jab Game is good practice for disengages.
- **Usage:** The Jab Game can also be used to emphasize the importance of intentionality and planning in fencing with more advanced students.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Thrust, Parry, Disengage
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Avoiding Obstacles, Intention

## Step By Step

- The Jab Game is played in Partner Lines.
- Fencers start out in lunge distance, facing each other in en garde.
- One fencer is the attacker, and the other is the defender.
- The attacker may use as many disengages as she likes, but may only thrust and lunge once.
- The defender tries to parry this thrust.
- If the attacker hits on her initial 'jab', she wins the game. If the defender parries this initial jab or the attacker's attack does not land for another reason, the defender wins the game.

## Variants

- This game can also be played from advance-lunge distance
- The attacker may start her attack at a time of her choosing, but once she starts, she must finish the advance-lunge.
- The only time she will have to see once she is in distance to strike will be during her advance, making this variant much harder for the attacker.

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this game

# King of the Hill Game



- **Explanation:** This game is a fun way for students to integrate fencing skills and concepts in an unrestricted, competitive environment.
- **Usage:** King of the Hill should not be played until after students know how to referee.
- **Usage:** This game can be used to practice refereeing.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** All
- **Core Principles:** All

## Step By Step

- King of the Hill takes place in pods of 3-4 fencers
- Two fencers are fencing, one or two are refereeing
- Fencers fence to 2 points
- The fencer who wins the bout remains as a fencer. The primary referee becomes the second fencer. The secondary referee becomes the primary referee. The fencer who lost the bout becomes the secondary referee.
- If a fencer wins three bouts in a row, she must give up her place after the next bout, regardless of whether she wins or loses

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this game

# Leader-Follower

Used in Unit 1, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9



- **Explanation:** The Leader-Follower Activity is a great introduction to the concept of distance, and to practice keeping proper distance.
- **Usage:** The Leader-Follower Activity can be used to review and practice footwork skills in a dynamic environment
- **Usage:** It is recommended to use the Leader-Follower Activity to introduce the core concept of distance and as a warmup and review before each lesson

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** En Garde, Advance, Retreat, Lunge (variant), Recover (variant), Thrust (variant), Parry (variant), Disengage (variant)
- **Core Principles:** Balance, Distance

## Step By Step

- This activity takes place in leader line
- The teacher gets en garde in front of the students and begins to advance and retreat
- For every advance made by the instructor, the students must retreat
- For every retreat made by the instructor, the students must advance
- Students should remain roughly in the same distance from the instructor throughout the movements

## Equipment

- No equipment is necessary for this drill

# Leader-Follower

## Drill Variants



### ➤ Leader Variant

- Students can lead the line, and their peers must keep distance with them

### ➤ Speed, Tempo, and Focus Variants

- The leader can vary the size and speed of steps
- The leader can add fakes or distractions

### ➤ Signals Variant

- This variant is good for review at the beginning of lessons
- (Lunge) When the leader drops her hand, followers lunge and freeze. Followers recover on command
- (Making the leader miss) When the leader lunges, followers take two fast retreats and freeze. When the leader recovers, followers lunge. Followers recover on leader's command
- (Commands) When the leader gives a command to execute a skill, the followers execute the skill (e.g. 'Parry 4!')
- (Additional signals as desired)

### ➤ Partner Lines Variant

- Students can follow their partner, rather than everyone following a single leader

### ➤ Playing with Distance Variant (Game Variant)

- This variant works best in conjunction with the partner lines variant. The speed, tempo, and focus variant must be used with this variant.
- Fencers will start in advance lunge distance. The follower is trying to maintain this distance, while the leader is trying to break out of this distance
- The leader moves backward and forward, using fakes and variations in tempo to try to make her partner make a distance mistake. The leader may not move behind the end lines or force her partner beyond the end lines.
- The follower tries to keep distance despite the difficulty
- The instructor will give the command 'halt!' and both the leader and the follower must stop and check the distance. If the distance is correct, the follower wins. If the distance is incorrect, the leader wins.

# Lunge, Parry, Disengage Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 6



- **Explanation:** In this game students use their skills in a tactical wheel similar to the game rock-paper-scissors.
- **Usage:** This game helps students integrate their skills and become familiar with the basic tactical sequences of fencing.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Lunge, Parry, Thrust, Disengage
- **Core Principles:** Awareness, Intention

## Step By Step

- This game is played in partner lines
- Two fencers stand in en garde out of lunge distance
- On the instructor's command 'Fence!' they can either lunge (with a direct thrust), parry, or disengage.
- If they do the same action, they tie and no one scores a point
- If they each do a different action:
  - Parry defeats Lunge
  - Lunge defeats Disengage
  - Disengage defeats Parry

**Rationale:** Against an opponent who is lunging with a direct thrust, a key defensive move is the parry to block that attack. To defeat a parry, the attacker can use disengage(s) to avoid the block. Against an attack with disengages, the optimal defense is to attack with a lunge and direct thrust.

## Variants

- **Leader Line Variant:** the teacher may play against the entire class (without keeping score).
- Use this variant introduce the game and concept of a tactical wheel to students

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this drill

# Maestro Says Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 1



- **Explanation:** Use Maestro (Simon) Says to practice any skill.
- **Usage:** Maestro says is most effective to practice recently-learned skills and integrate new skills with old skills. It is also effective as a review.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** 1st Position, En Garde, Advance, Retreat, Lunge, Recover, Thrust, Parry, Disengage, Salute, Shake Hands
- **Core Principles:** Balance, Awareness

## Step By Step

- This activity takes place in leader line.
- Maestro Says is 'Simon Says,' using the common fencing term 'Maestro' rather than 'Simon'.
- The teacher will give commands to the students. If the command is preceded by the phrase
- 'Maestro Says,' students must execute the action. If the command is not preceded by the phrase 'Maestro Says,' students must remain immobile.
- The teacher can try to trick students into making mistakes but ultimately the goal is to allow students to practice their skills in a slightly higher-pressure situation.

## Variants

- This game can also be played with elimination
- Students that make a mistake are eliminated from the game. The last student still in the game is the winner.
- This variant is only recommended for the end of a class, when eliminated students can put their equipment away when they are done.

## Equipment

- No equipment is used for this game



# No Movement Fencing Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 5



- **Explanation:** This game isolates blade work skills, allowing students to practice without the complication of distance.
- **Usage:** This game is most effective to integrate parries and/or disengages into students' repertoire.
- **Usage:** Playing this game at too advanced a stage is not advisable because distance is so critical in fencing and should be reintroduced as soon as students are comfortable with the basic bladework skills.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Lunge, Recover, Thrust, Parry, Disengage,
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Avoiding Obstacles

## Step By Step

- The No Movement Fencing Game is played in partner lines
- Fencers must be en garde and still in lunge distance from each other
- When the teacher gives the command 'Fence!', fencers may begin fencing
- Fencers must leave their back foot planted. They may lunge and recover in order to attack, or they may recover and parry to defend.
- The game continues until one or both fencers get hit, or when the teacher calls 'halt!'
- The teacher should call halt after about 10 seconds

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this game

# Parry-Disengage Drill

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 5



- **Explanation:** The Parry-Riposte Drill is a good introduction to parrying an opponent's blade. Note that this drill is a special case in which students rapidly must switch between the roles of fencer and training partner. This is because the student who is thrusting is helping the other practice parrying, and then beginning their riposte with a disengage.
- **Usage:** Use when students are already familiar with thrust, parries, and disengages.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Parry, Thrust, Disengage
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Avoiding Obstacles

## Step By Step

- The Parry-Disengage Drill is practiced in partner lines
- Partners stand en garde in extension distance
- The student who will be training partner first thrusts to chest
- The fencer takes a parry 4. The fencer then disengages and ripostes to flank.
- At this point the students switch roles
- The new fencer takes a parry 6, then disengages and thrusts to chest.
- The students switch roles
- Repeat steps 4-7 until the teacher gives the command 'halt!'
- Switch which student starts and repeat, so that both students have the chance to practice parrying both targets

## Variants

- Students advance with their thrust and retreat with their parry

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this drill

# Parry-Riposte Drill

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 4



- **Explanation:** The Parry-Riposte Drill is a good introduction to parrying an opponent's blade.
- **Usage:** Use the Parry-Riposte Drill after students are familiar with the basic motion of the parry, and have practiced with verbal commands.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Parry, Thrust, Riposte
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Intention (variant)

## Step By Step

- This drill takes place in partner lines
- One student is a training partner, and the other is a fencer
- On the teacher's command 'Fence!', the training partner will lunge with a thrust, and then freeze
- The fencer must parry the training partner's attack, and freeze.
- On the teacher's command 'Riposte!' the fencer executes a riposte to the training partner's chest or flank

## Variants

- This drill can be run with training partners thrusting to chest or to flank
- This drill can be run with the teacher calling out a target before the command 'Fence!'
- **Advanced:** This drill can be run with no predefined target. The training partner chooses a target and the fencer has to recognize and parry appropriately

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this drill

# Point Parry Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 4



- **Explanation:** The point parry game is primarily to practice parrying, but it is also useful practice for thrusts.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Thrust, Parry, Lunge
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Intention

## Step By Step

- The Point Parry game is played in partner lines
- Fencers must be in en garde position in lunge distance with the tips of their foil pointed at the ground
- One fencer is the attacker, the other is the defender
- The attacker may start her attack at any time and must try to land her attack with a thrust and a lunge
- The defender must try to parry.
- If the attacker lands her attack, she scores a point
- If the attacker fails to score on her first attempt to attack after raising the point of her foil from the ground (for any reason, including the defender successfully parrying, the attacker stopping her attack or missing, etc), the defender scores a point.
- The attacker may try to fake out the defender. If the defender raises the point of his foil when the attacker does not, the attacker scores a point.

## Equipment

- No equipment is used for this game

# Position Game

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 1



- **Explanation:** This game is useful for getting students comfortable and familiar with basic positions
- **Usage:** This game is most effective immediately after teaching the position

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** 1st Position, En Garde
- **Core Principles:** Balance

## Step By Step

- This activity takes place in leader line
- The instructor give students a series of commands, including but not limited to, the position to be practiced.

- **Example:** 'Jump!' 'Sit down!' 'Spin 360 degrees!' 'En Garde!'

## Equipment

- No equipment is used for this game

# Signal Commands Drill

Used in Unit 1, Lessons 2, 3, 5



- **Explanation:** Signal Commands are a simple way to get students familiar with different skills.
- **Usage:** They are most effective when used to help students become familiar with movements right after they have learned them, or as a basic review.
- **Usage:** They are also effective in conjunction with the leader-follower activity.

## Skills Practiced

- **Skills:** Advance, Retreat, Lunge, Recover, Thrust, Parry, Disengage, Salute

## Step By Step

- This activity takes place in leader line.
- Instructor gives a signal and the students execute the appropriate action
- **Example:** The instructor tells students to lunge when she drops her arm
- **Example:** The instructor tells students to make two fast retreats when he lunges

## Equipment

- No equipment is necessary for this drill



# Target Practice Drill

Used in Unit 1, Lesson 3

- **Explanation:** The target drill gives students the opportunity to practice thrusting to various targets.
- **Usage:** It is most effective shortly after the introduction of a new target, or as a blade work warmup.

## Skills and Core Principles Practiced

- **Skills:** Thrust to Chest, Thrust to Flank
- **Core Principles:** Go for the Goal, Distance (variant)

## Step By Step

- This drill takes place in partner lines.
- Students stand in en garde at extension distance from each other.
- The teacher calls out a target.
- The training partner drops his foil, and fencer thrusts to the designated target.
- If parries have already been learned, the training partner may instead execute the opposite parry, thus more realistically opening the designated target.
- Fencers must try to hit the target on the first movement. Hitting the target should not require multiple jabs.

## Variants

- Movement may be added by combining this with the partner lines variant of the leader-follower game.
- Fencers may try to hit with a lunge or an advance-lunge.

## Equipment

- All equipment is used for this drill

# Verbal Commands Drill

Used in Unit 1, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



- **Explanation:** Verbal commands are a simple way to get students familiar with different skills.
- **Usage:** They are most effective when used to help students become familiar with movements right after they have learned them, or as a basic review.

## Skills Practiced

- **Skills:** En Garde, Advance, Retreat, Lunge, Recover, Thrust, Parry, Disengage, Salute

## Step By Step

- This activity takes place in leader line.
- Instructor gives a command.
- Students execute the appropriate action.
- **Example:** Instructor gives a command to advance, and the students advance

## Variants

- Add modifiers to commands
- **Example:** Speed: Slow, medium, fast, very fast, (advanced) accelerated
- **Example:** Size: Long, medium, short, very short/almost in place
- **Example:** Combined: 'Fast, small steps'

## Equipment

- No equipment is necessary for this drill



# Glossary

**Underlined words are defined elsewhere in the glossary**

**Action:** A motion executed by a fencer

**Advance** (Fencing Skill): The basic forward motion fencers use to get closer to an opponent. See section 6 for description of skill.

**Advance Lunge:** An attack action executed with an advance and a lunge together to allow an attacker to cover additional distance.

**Advance Lunge Distance:** The distance at which a fencer can hit the opponent with an advance lunge, plus a thrust.

**Attack:** An attempt by one fencer to hit his opponent.

**Attacker:** The fencer executing an attack. Opposite of defender.

**Blade:** The part of the foil above the hand guard, including the tip.

**Blade Distance:** The distance at which a fencer can touch the top half of the opponent's blade with the top half of her own blade.

**Blade Work:** The actions used to move the foil to either hit the opponent or deflect the opponent's foil while they are attempting to hit, and the execution thereof.

**Bout:** two fencers fencing to a set period of time or a certain number of touches; Synonymous with 'Match'.

**Defender:** The fencer subject to an attack. Opposite of attacker.

**Disengage** (Fencing Skill): An action made prior to or during a thrust to avoid a parry made by the opponent. See section 4 for description of skill.

**Distance:** Proper distance in fencing is always changing based on circumstances. Some commonly used distances are: extension distance, lunge distance, advance lunge distance, blade distance, and en garde distance.

**En Garde** (Fencing Skill): The basic fencing position. Most Technical Fencing Skills and all bouts will begin with fencers in this position. See section 6 for description of skill.

**En Garde Distance:** The distance at which two fencers standing En Garde can just touch the tips of their foils when they extend their arms.

**Extension Distance:** the distance in which a fencer can hit the opponent with a thrust, with no footwork required.

**Foil:** One of three swords used in fencing, and the one used in Fencing in the Schools classes. (The others are the epee and the saber.)

**Footwork:** the actions with which fencers move toward and away from one another, and their execution.

**Leader Line:** Students line up facing a single leader, which can be either the teacher or one of their peers. This is most often used for the teacher to introduce new skills and to practice footwork. See also partner line.

**Lunge** (Fencing Skill): The footwork action commonly used to finish an attack. See section 6 for description of skill.

**Lunge Distance:** The distance at which a fencer can hit the opponent with a thrust and a lunge.

**Parry** (Fencing Skill): An attempt to block an opponent's thrust. See section 6 for description of skill.

**Partner Line:** Students stand in two lines facing each other so that each student has a partner in the other line. Most often used to practice blade work. It is important to differentiate between the two lines, usually done by designating one line 'line A', and the other 'line B'. See also leader line.

**Piste:** The area in which fencing takes place. Fencing in the Schools recommends a shorter version of the 14-meter regulation piste. Recommended dimensions for FITS Piste

**Pool:** A group of 4 to 8 fencers who fence each other in a round robin as part of a competition. Generally a pool is a subset of the entire competition field.

**Pool Sheet:** a matrix with fencers' names and an associated number down the vertical axis, and their numbers along the horizontal axis. These are used for recording scores in pool fencing.

**Recover** (Fencing Skill): To return to en garde after a lunge. See section 6 for description of skill.

**Retreat** (Fencing Skill): See section 6 for description of skill. The basic backward motion fencers use to increase distance from their opponent or to escape an attack.

**Riposte:** A thrust after a successful parry. See section 4 of curriculum.

**Target Area** (Facilitating Skill): The area on the jacket that a fencer must hit with the tip of the foil to score a touch. This area is marked in green.

**Thrust** (Fencing Skill): See section 6 for description of skill. An extension of the arm to move the tip of the foil toward the target area with the intention to of hitting the opponent.

**Touch:** A point in fencing. Many bouts in fencing continue until one fencer scores a certain number of touches.