

YOUTH INTERMEDIATE STUDY GUIDE



EQUIPMENT

Fencers joining the Youth Intermediate class should already have their own mask, glove, jacket, and plastron. As they progress through the program and start competing, they are expected to also purchase knickers, fencing socks, and the electric gear appropriate for their weapon of choice. A list of recommended gear is available at the front desk.

PRIVATE LESSON

Private lessons are an integral part of learning how to fence. The coach will provide individualized instruction tailored to that student.

Private lessons are not a requirement, but are highly encouraged for all fencers. One private lesson a week is a good rhythm for young fencers, especially as they start competing at the regional level.

FOOTWORK

- **Double check forward:** forward movement starting with half step forward, followed by half step back, followed by an advance.
- **Double check back:** backward movement starting with half step back, followed by half step forward, followed by a retreat.
- **Jump:** forward jump starting with the front foot, and landing both feet at the same time. The jump should remain low to the ground, be small, finishing en garde.
- **Forward recover:** recovery from the lunge bringing the back leg forward to an en garde.
- **Fleche:** offensive movement, extending the front arm, tip pointing at the target, shifting the balance forward by bringing the back foot forward and pushing off the front leg (see picture below).



SIMPLE ATTACKS

Simple attacks are most effective on the opponent's forward preparation, and around a blade search. Fencers should be able to set-up simple attacks in a bout situation by maneuvering their opponents. Fencers can also use a blade preparation, such as beat, to set-up a simple attack.

Examples:

- Sophie is advancing and attempts to engage. Maya deceives Sophie's search and lunges.
- Alex has a tendency to always beat back after their blade is beaten. Thomas beats to trigger Alex's automatic reaction and disengages.
- Justin is rushing forward. Aryana beat straight while lunging and catches Justin by surprise, who is unable to react in time.

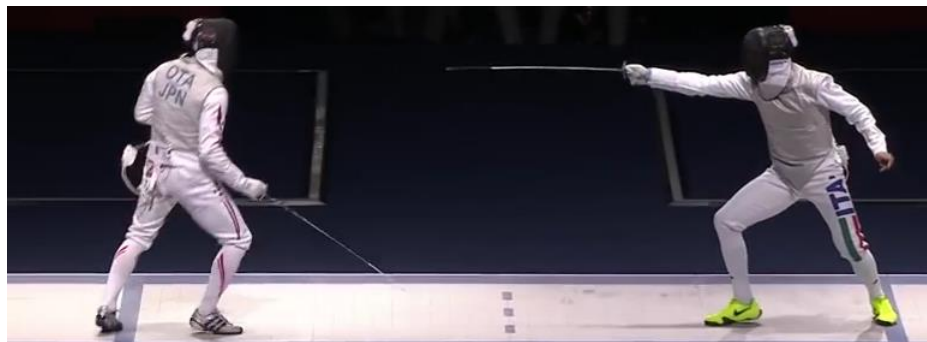
DEFENSES

Fencers learned the basics of defense in the Youth Beginner program. Now, they will learn how to set-up these defensive actions in a bout. When setting up defenses, arm and legs should be coordinated to properly work together.

Footwork preparations: fencers should move to keep their opponent at a safe distance, giving them enough time to react when being attacked. Fencers can also use advances or check steps to invite the attack at a chosen moment.

Hand/blade preparations:

- **Tip presence:** arm is slightly extended, tip toward the opponent. This is a way to discourage the opponent from getting too close, and/or encourage them to use blade preparation.
- **Point in line:** this is a specific position in which the fencer's arm is kept straight and the point of his weapon continually threatens his opponent's valid target, which gains right-of-way. Point in line must be established before the beginning of the attack. It forces the opponent to cancel their attack or use a blade preparation (see picture below).
- **Blade search/disruption:** this is an attempt to engage or beat the opponent's blade in order to interrupt their preparation or trigger their attack.



COMPOUND ATTACKS

Compound attacks are most effective when an opponent is “stuck” on their feet, or changing direction. Fencers should maneuver their opponent before attacking. They should also observe patterns in their opponent’s defense before deciding which compound attack they will use.

Examples:

- Sophie seems to always parry 8 after searching 6. Maya deceives Sophie’s 6, feints low with an advance, then disengages around 8 while lunging.
- Alex has a tendency to retreat to the end of the strip to set-up a parry 6, riposte. Thomas slowly prepares, moving forward. When Alex reaches the end of the strip, Thomas triggers a feint and disengage around Alex’s parry 6.
- Justin has established point in line, and seems ready to defend. Aryana knows Justin likes to parry 4... she beats and feints straight while advancing, and cut-over while lunging avoiding the parry.

COUNTER ATTACK

This is an attack executed when an opponent is already attacking. This is a counter offensive action which means it does not have right of way.

Counter attacks are better used when an opponent is moving fast, and executing large hand preparation.

When executing a counter attack, fencers have to make sure they don’t get hit by using:

- **Evade:** fencers can move their body to avoid getting hit while counter attacking. While evading, a fencer cannot turn their back to their opponent, or cover a valid target with a non-valid target.
- **Collapse distance:** recover forward after a counter attack with lunge making the distance very short. This makes it harder for an opponent to finish their attack.
- **Close the line:** immediately follow the counter attack with a parry to prevent the opponent’s attack from reaching the target (see picture below).



SECOND INTENTION

Second intention actions are, by definition, the second option in an action and are set up so that the primary action serves as the “feint” or diversion from a fencer’s true intentions.

In **second intention offense**, fencers are using their first attack as a cover for their real tactic. While they need to make the attack look convincing, they don’t intend to score the point with the attack. The attack is simply made in order to provoke the desired response from the opponent.

- **Counter riposte**: first attack intends to trigger a parry riposte. Attacking fencer then parries the riposte and hits.
- **Remise**: first attack intends to trigger a parry. Attacking fencer immediately attacks a second time in the same line, preventing the riposte from hitting*.
- **Reprise**: first attack intends to trigger a parry. Attacking fencer immediately attacks a second time in a different line, preventing the riposte from hitting*.

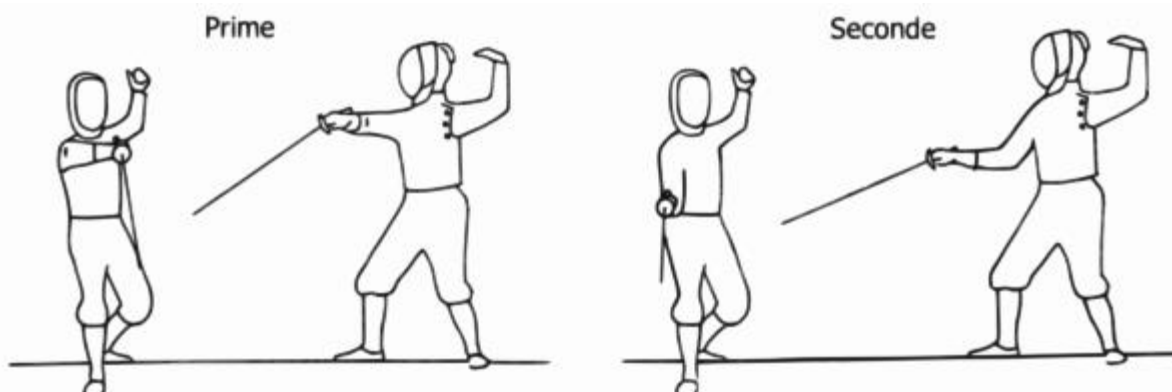
***Remise and reprise are counter offensive actions. When executing them, fencers have to make sure they don’t get hit using collapse or close the line (see counter attacks).**

In **second intention defense**, fencers maneuver their opponents to lure them into attacking or counter attacking in order to set-up a parry riposte.

- **Counter time**: first attack intends to trigger a counter attack. Attacking fencer then cancels their attack, parries the counter attack, ripostes, and hits.
- **False counter attack**: defending fencers pretends to counter attack to trigger their opponents attack. Defending fencer then cancel their counter attack, and parries, ripostes, and hits.

HAND POSITIONS

- **Prime**: hand high inside and turned down, tip pointing down. Better used in close distance and infighting situations.
- **Seconde**: stronger alternative to 8. Covers the low/outside line, hand turned down.

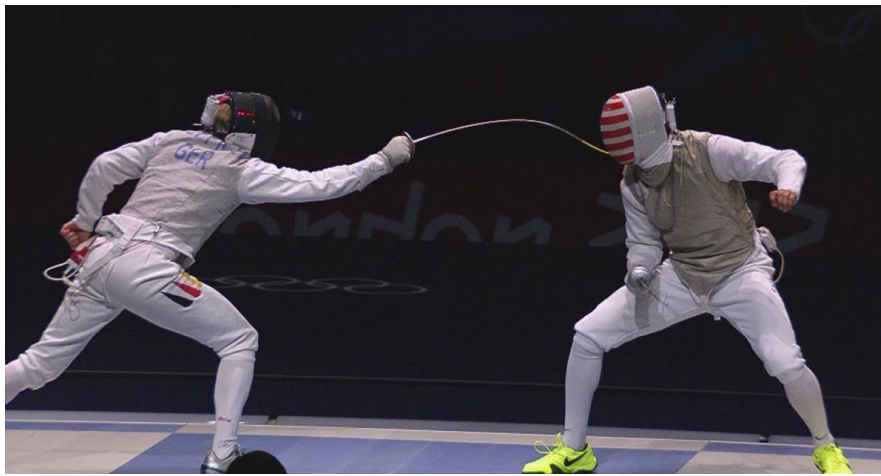


ABSENCE OF BLADE

This is the act of keeping the blade out of the opponent's reach to prevent a beat, or a parry. A fencer may use absence of blade to avoid blade disruption while advancing to gain distance before finishing their attack.

A fencer may also use absence of blade when setting up defense to prevent their opponent from using blade preparations.

When using absence, a fencer should manage their movement to avoid getting too close. This would result in getting their blade taken unexpectedly, or getting hit with a counter attack (see below).



EQUIPMENT REPAIR

Before graduating from the Youth Intermediate program, fencers should know how to:

- **Test and trouble shoot:** figure out which piece of equipment is at fault when something is not working properly.
- **Replace tip tape:** foil should have tape covering the top of the blade. Tape wears out and needs to be replaced regularly.
- **Repair a bodycord:** cords are easy to repair when broken.

These skills can be learned by attending an armory clinic at the club.

REFEREEING

All fencers should be able to referee and know the rules of fencing.

Youth Intermediate fencers may study the [Referee Study Guide](#) to expand their knowledge and practice their refereeing skills.