

About Fencing

Fencing is the Olympic sport of sword-fighting that teaches discipline, dexterity and endurance.



US Fencer Jon Tiompkin (right) jumps during his team bout against Russia.

In fencing, two competitors compete to score points on each other with their weapons. To beat an opponent, a fencer must use bladework, footwork, tactics and strategy. There are three weapons in fencing: the **Foil**, **Épée** and **Sabre**.

Foil



Épée



Sabre



Why fence?

- ▶ **Endurance** — Your first tool is movement, so you will learn footwork, lunges, and escape moves.
- ▶ **Dexterity** — Your hand must be agile and controlled to out-fence your opponent.
- ▶ **Speed** — To score, you must be faster than your opponent!
- ▶ **Control** — You learn from your defeats, and learn to appreciate what each fencer teaches you.
- ▶ **Fun** — Fencing (and your opponents) never stops challenging you, so you will gain more satisfaction with each skill mastered.
- ▶ **Concentration** — Martial arts help you focus. Get better grades without trying! OFC fencers have been National Merit Scholars, taken AP classes, entered honors college at Ole Miss.
- ▶ **Competition** — The end-goal of Fencing is to win tournaments locally, nationally, and to represent the United States internationally.
- ▶ **Confidence** — Put it all together, and you really learn what you can do!

At a glance:

Benefits

Speed, endurance, agility, discipline and tactical thinking.

Class format

Warm-up & Stretching

Footwork

Drills & Fencing

Is fencing different from dueling?

In fencing, you fence to 5 (or 15) points. You use a flexible blade, with a button at the tip. All fencers wear protective gear, including jackets, gloves and masks.

What does fencing look like?

Fencing is more mobile and athletic than the “classical” fencing style everybody knows from TV and the movies.

Does fencing hurt?

Not if you do it right! Although fencing is a martial art it is very safe. We are strict about using full safety equipment. We also do stretching and warm-ups to prevent strains and twists.

Is fencing safe?

The **National Athletic Trainers' Association** places the low injury rate for fencing as comparable to tennis, golf and rowing, and far below soccer, basketball and football.

Fact!

Fencing has been in every Olympics, starting with the first in 1896. *Pierre de Coubertin*, creator of the Olympics, was a fencer.

Online information

Find more information online!

Our website:

<http://www.OxfordFencing.com>

<http://www.WhatIsFencing.com>

The weapons in fencing

Fencing has three weapons, each derived from a historical antecedent. Modern fencing weapons are lighter, safer sport versions of the real thing. All weapons range from 30” to 35” long, and weigh under 500 grams.

The Epee:

The Epee is descended from the duelling rapier. Epee fencers score touches with the tip of the blade, and are allowed to hit any part of the opponent’s body. Epeeists often train to hit the hand, toe and leg, since these are the closest targets.



The Sabre

The Sabre is descended from the curved cavalry sword. Sabre fencers can score with the tip, but more commonly use the edge of the weapon to make “cuts” to the target. Sabre is the only edged weapon in fencing. Sabre fencers can hit any part of the opponent’s body above the waist.



The Foil

The Foil is descended from the French smallsword, a light rapier where agility counted for more than power. The foil has a small, round hand-guard and a blade that is rectangular in cross-section. Foil fencers score touches with the tip of the blade. Most fencers start with the foil, as it comes with a set of rules, technique and conventions that translate easily to epee and sabre.



Target areas

Each weapon has a different target area, and therefore different strategies for scoring points.

You are only allowed to hit the target area for the weapon you are using. If you hit outside the target area, no point is awarded.

