

# Glossary of Fencing Terms

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The following is a listing of several fencing terms. This glossary has been compiled from official definitions from the International Fencing Federation (FIE).

## Glossary of Terms in Fencing

**Advance:** To step forward.

**Beat:** A sharp tap on an opponent's blade to initiate or threaten an attack.

**Black card:** A card from the referee signifying a fencer has been expelled.

**Bout:** A contest in its entirety between two fencers.

**Centre line:** A line across the piste, or field of play, dividing it into two equal halves.

**Compound:** An attack or counterattack involving several moves.

**Corps-a-corps:** A move involving body contact, where two fencers are engaged in a way that allows neither to use his or her weapon.

**Counter-parry:** A defensive move where a fencer makes a circular movement around the opponent's blade and moves it away.

**Disengage:** To break contact between blades, done by one fencer passing his or her blade under the opponent's blade.

**Double hit:** Successful contact with the sword by both fencers within .04 of a second, counted only in epee competition.

**En garde:** French for "on guard", the position that fencers take before a bout begins or after a break in the action.

**Engage:** To make contact blade-to-blade.

**Feint:** A false attack designed to force an opponent into a reaction that opens the way to a genuine attack.

**Fleche:** A running attack.

**Hit:** A point scored by a touch with the tip of the blade or, in sabre, the edge of the blade against any part of the opponent's body in the target area.

**Lunge:** The basic attack in fencing where a fencer closes the distance between foes by moving the front leg forward while the back leg remains stationary and straightens out.

**Octave:** The eighth of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**One-metre penalty:** A penalty where the action is moved a metre further back on the piste for the offending fencer before a bout is restarted.

**On-guard line:** A line on each side of the centre line where a fencer stands to begin or resume a bout after a hit has been awarded.

**Parry:** A defensive action where a fencer blocks the opponent's blade.

**Penalty hit:** A hit credited to a fencer when the opponent commits an offence after a warning.

**Plastron:** Protective clothing worn under a fencer's jacket.

**Prime:** The first of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Quarte:** The fourth of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Quinte:** The fifth of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Recover:** To return to the en garde position after lunging.

**Red card:** A card from the referee signifying a penalty hit has been charged against a fencer for a rules violation.

**Redouble:** To attack an opponent a second time after the opponent fails to counterattack.

**Remise:** To attack again immediately after the opponent has blocked an initial attack.

**Right of way:** A rule established to eliminate virtually simultaneous attacks between two fencers in foil or sabre by allowing a referee to determine who was on offence at that moment and had "right of way" to score a point.

**Riposte:** A counterattack by a fencer who just has blocked an attack by the opponent with a parry.

**Seconde:** The second of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Septime:** The seventh of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Simple:** In one move, as in an attack or riposte involving a single move.

**Simultaneous:** A ruling of no hit when two fencers in foil and sabre hit each other at the same time with an attack, redouble or remise.

**Sixte:** The sixth of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Stop-thrust:** A sudden counterattack made by extending without lunging.

**Target:** The portion of the opponent's body which may be touched with the sword to score points.

**Thrust:** To extend the arm and sword toward the opponent.

**Tierce:** The third of eight defensive positions in fencing.

**Touch:** A hit with the point of the weapon or a cut with the edge of the sabre, scoring a point.

**Warning line:** A line two metres inside the rear line warning a fencer he or she is near the end of the piste.

**Yellow card:** A card from the referee signifying a warning has been issued to a fencer for violating a rule.