

Foil Fencing 101

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A foil is a type of weapon used in fencing. It is the most common weapon in terms of usage in competition, and is usually the choice for elementary classes for fencing in general.

There are two varieties of foil in use today: the "dry", or nonelectric, foil; and the electrically scored foil. The components common to both varieties are the pommel, grip, guard, thumb pad, and blade. The nonelectric foil has a real tip with a blunted end that is capped with a plastic or rubber knob.

The electric foil also contains a socket underneath the guard that connects to the scoring apparatus via the body cord and a wire that runs down a channel cut into the top of the blade. The tip of the electric foil terminates in a button assembly that generally consists of a barrel, plunger, spring, and retaining screws. The circuit is a "normally closed" one, meaning that at rest there is always a complete power circuit. Depressing the tip breaks this circuit, and the scoring apparatus illuminates an appropriate light: white for hits not on the valid target area, or either red or green representing hits on the valid target area.