

Getting to know an unusual sport:

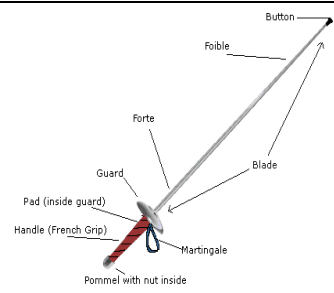


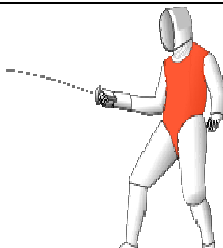
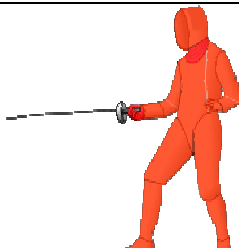

FENCING



WHAT IS FENCING?

Fencing is a sport that originated in Spain, in the XII Century. It is the art of armed combat involving cutting, stabbing or slapping three different types of weapons FOIL – EPEE - SABRE directly manipulated by hand. It involves patience and determination, discipline and competitiveness and it is a challenge to both body and mind. Fencing sport has been included in all summer Olympics ever since 1896.

WEAPONS

FOIL	EPEE	SABRE
		
		
Valid target for foil is the body torso	Valid target for epee is the whole body	Valid target for sabre is the body plus the head
Valid hits can only be scored with the point of the blade	Valid hits are made with the point only	Valid hits can be scored with the point or the cutting edges

FENCING EQUIPMENT

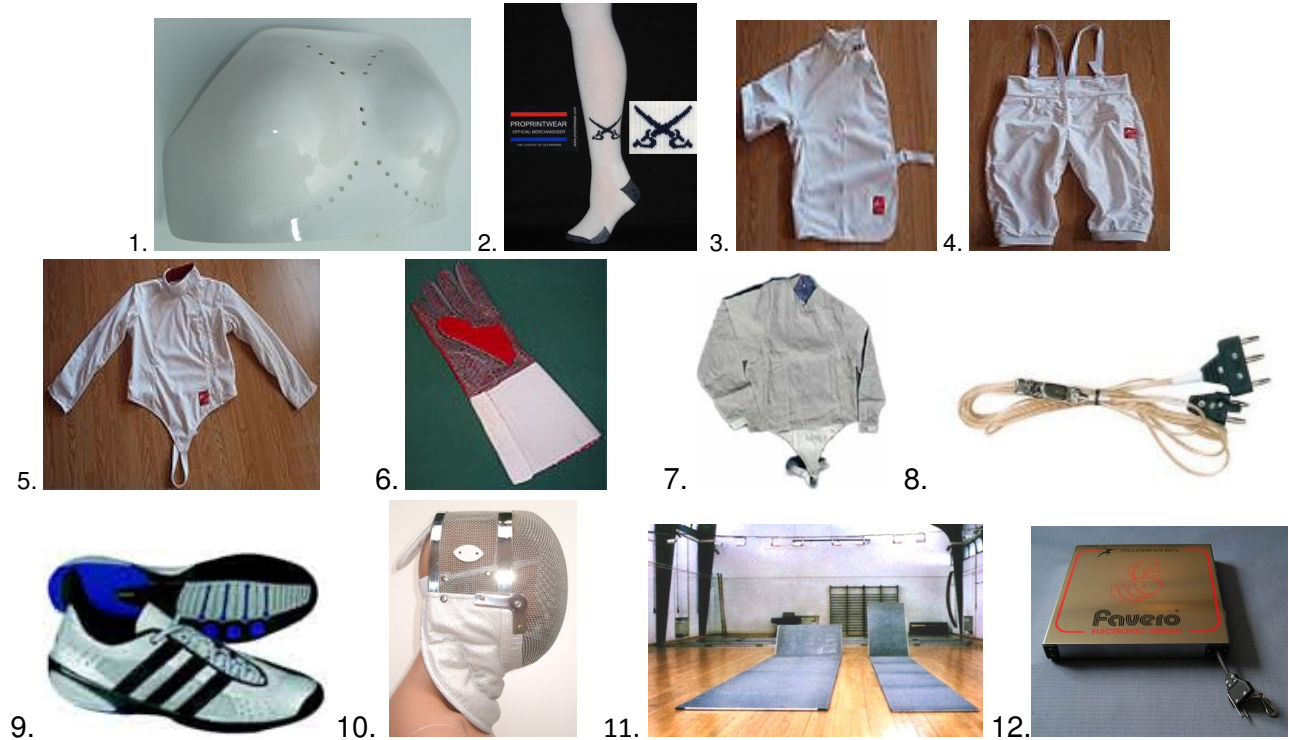
It is important to know if the athletes are left handed (LH) or right handed (RH) because the equipment is made according to which hand they will use to fence.

In order to fence, you must use the following equipment:

1. The chest guard (women only) is made of plastic
2. The socks are made of cotton and are reinforced on the shin and foot
3. The plastron is 800N* made by layer stretch material. It can be LH or RH
4. The breeches or trousers are 800N cotton. You may print your country's logo on them
5. The jacket is 800N cotton. It can be LH or RH
6. The glove is made of anti-slide waterproof leather. You must put it only on the hand that holds the weapon. It can be LH or RH
7. The electric vest/ jacket is made of electrically conductive threads. It can be LH or RH. Depending on the weapon, it has long sleeves or no sleeves. If you practice epee you will not need any electric vest
8. The body wire goes inside the electric jacket and it's made of rubber covered steel
9. The special fencing shoes have an anti-skid sole and you can't buy them in regular sporting stores
10. The mask it has two parts: the bib (1600N), that is made of electrically conductive threads and the mesh (1000N) which is very resistant, is made of stainless steel so it will resist rusting and will dent less
11. The strip or piste is where athletes fence. It's made of aluminium non-slip sheets. Each sheet measures cm.150x100x2,5. It weighs Kgs.24,00 and it has to be 14 m. long

12. The reel contains the self-winding electric wire (20 m) that connects the body wire of the athlete to electricity

*800N= 800 Newtons is the maximum amount of force that fencing clothing are supposed to protect against (because in case a blade breaks the athlete will not be injured).



FENCING LANGUAGE

The official fencing language is French. This is why fencers have to learn special terms or commands that are given in international championships. Some examples are:

"On guard," = assume the guard position

"Prete allez"= ready go

"Touchè"= touched

SCORING METHOD

Fencing is a very fast sport and electrical apparatus are used for registering hits. Red and green lights show valid hits and, at foil, white lights show non-valid hits. In competitions a fencer wins when 5 hits are scored in pools, or 15 hits in Direct Elimination Teams fight to 45 hits. A bout lasts a maximum of three minutes actual fencing.

NOTE: You must never try to fence without qualified supervision and without using all the correct equipment.



Scoring machine

WHO CAN FENCE AND AT WHAT AGE CAN YOU START FENCING?

Women and men can fence. Usually the best age to start fencing is around 8. From then on, you can fence until you feel like it. There is a special category of wheelchair fencing, which allows women and men, who have suffered an accident or who were born with a physical impairment to practice this sport. During the Special Olympics, wheelchair fencers are always present.

FENCING CATEGORIES

Youth 1	10- 11 years of age
Youth 2	12-13 years of age
Youth 3	14-15 years of age
Cadets	16-17-18 years of age
Juniors	19-23 years of age
Seniors	24-29 years of age
Veterans	Over 30 (Cat. 0) - Over 40 (Cat. 1) - Over 50 (Cat. 2) - Over 60 (Cat. 3)

PARAPLEGIC FENCING

Competitive wheelchair fencing was first introduced in 1953 and has been a Paralympic sport since Rome in 1960. The sport is now practised in 25 countries worldwide.



The wheelchair fencing is static: the fencers are clamped to the piste by a metal frame.

Fencers are classified according to their level of ability:

Class A: fencers have full sitting balance, and many can still stand or even walk.

Class B: don't have full sitting balance but do have full use of their arms and hands

Class C: fencers do not have full arm and/or hand activity.

FAMOUS ITALIAN OLYMPIC FENCERS

NAME	WEAPON	OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALS
Aldo Montano	Sabre	Olympic Gold medal: Athens 2004
Valentina Vezzali	Foil	Olympic Gold medal: Athens 2004 – Beijing 2008
Giovanna Trillini	Foil	Olympic Gold medal: Barcellona 1992
Andrea Cassarà	Foil	Olympic Gold medal: Athens 2004 (team)
Matteo Tagliarol	Epee	Olympic Gold medal: Beijing 2008
Paolo Milanoli	Epee	Olympic Gold medal: Sydney 2000 (team)
Sanzo Salvatore	Foil	Olympic Gold medal: Athens 2004 (team)
Alfredo Rota	Epee	Olympic Gold medal: Sydney 2000 (team)