



FENCER PACKET

2024-2025

SEASON

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OVERVIEW OF THE SPORT

Fencing is a unique and exhilarating sport that combines physical and mental agility. It involves one-on-one combat with the aim of scoring points by making valid touches on your opponent. Fencing promotes discipline, focus, and quick decision-making.

The goal of a fencing bout (that's what an individual "game" is called) is to score 15 points (in direct elimination play) or five points (in preliminary pool play) before your opponent can do the same or time expires. Each time a fencer scores a touch, they receive a point.

Points are received by making a touch in the opponent's target area. Direct elimination matches in epee and foil consist of three three-minute periods with a one-minute break between each.

For more beginner background on the sport, visit [USA Fencing's Basics of Competition page](#).

BENEFITS OF FENCING FOR CHILDREN

- Develops physical fitness and coordination
- Enhances mental sharpness and strategic thinking
- Instills discipline and self-control
- Fosters camaraderie and teamwork

OUR COACHES

Coach Nick | Foil Coach

Nick Going's 20 years of fencing experience began with a routine viewing of the film *The Princess Bride*, and he quickly sought out the nearest fencing club. Now, over 20 years later, Nick continues to compete himself while coaching and In 2016 Nick opened Still Point Fencing (SPF) to spread his love of sport fencing throughout Arizona. During his coaching career Nick has served as the foil coach of Arizona State University, assisted the United States National Parafencing team, and currently serves on the Arizona Fencing Division board in the role of Secretary. His students have medaled at the Regional and National levels, competed as NCAA athletes, and served as accredited referees. Patience, persistence, and dedication are only a handful of virtues that Nick has learned while pursuing his passion for fencing. As a coach, Nick works to instill these values into the students he teaches.



OUR COACHES

Coach Jay| Epee Coach

Jay Fowler started fencing in 2005 in Phoenix, Arizona with Romanian fencing master Adrian Colcisca. In 2009 he founded Wildcat Fencing at the University of Arizona where he went on to be the head coach after graduating, a role he continues to hold. As the coach at Wildcat Fencing he turned out more than a dozen Division I fencers and built one of the most competitive epee clubs in the southwest. He has been the number one men's epeeist on the Arizona Division points every season since 2016, currently holds the rank of Moniteur from the USFCA (US Fencing Coaches Association), an 'A' rating in epee, and a six in epee refereeing. Jay joined SPF in 2021 bringing a thriving epee program with him.



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Assistant Coaches / Guest Coaches

Our assistant coaches range from experienced adult fencers to youth fencers who have competition experience at the highest level and have strong leadership qualities. We utilize these coaches to lead warmups, footwork, referee and lead drills during class which frees up our coaches to offer lessons and individualized instruction simultaneously. Our assistant coaches also offer lessons and act as sub should another coach be unavailable to lead class.

Student Assistants

Similar to our assistant coaches, student coaches are fencers who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills, have strong fencing fundamentals, and exemplify sportsmanship. We use student assistants to provide support in class and gain experience so that they may play a larger role as an assistant coach in the future.

Parent Representatives

Our parent reps are seasoned fencing parents (and sometimes fencers themselves!) who have great knowledge of the sport. They are incredibly useful sources of information who we rely on to answer commonly asked questions. Parent representatives can help answer questions related to the following:

- Equipment Purchasing
- Tournaments
- Classification and seeding explanations
- Event recommendations
- Carpooling & Lodging
- Basic Equipment Repair
- Supplemental Training opportunities
- Etc. etc. etc!



PRICING OPTIONS

BASE MEMBERSHIP \$95 Monthly

Includes access to two practices and open bouts weekly.

COMPETITIVE MEMBERSHIP \$145

Our competitive membership is geared towards fencers looking to compete at a higher level and focuses on conditioning, tactics, and bouts. Includes all base membership features and access to our Tuesday competitive class.

SILVER PACKAGE 1 \$225

- All access to normal class hours, open bouts, and competitive class
- Access to Tuesday Competitive Class
- 1 weekly private, one-on-one lesson
- Free equipment rental

GOLD PACKAGE 2 \$275 (10% Savings)

- All access to normal class hours, open bouts, and competitive class
- Supplemental competitive class
- 2 weekly private, one-on-one lessons
- Free equipment rental

EQUIPMENT RENTAL \$10 Monthly

Fencers are welcome to rent all equipment needed to get started in the sport for \$10 monthly. Swap sizes and avoid purchasing multiple uniforms as your fencer grows.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE \$300

Ordering equipment can be confusing, so we'll size gear specifically for you from our equipment vendors.

(Includes mask, jacket, glove, electric weapon, under arm protector, chest protector)




*Fencers looking to compete will need to purchase an electric lame, body/mask cords, and a backup foil to be competition ready

We offer a family referral discount rate of 50% off each additional family member who fences.



CLASS SCHEDULE

Click the image below for an enlarged image of the schedule.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
EPEE	FOIL	EPEE	FOIL	EPEE	COMBINED	FOIL
Hours: Adult Practice 5:30pm - 7:30pm.	Hours: Competition Class Coach Approval Required 5:00pm - 7:00pm. Lessons available 4:00-5pm	Hours: Youth Practice (Ages 12-17) 4:30pm - 5:30pm. Adult Practice 5:30pm - 7:30pm.	Hours: Youth (Ages 8-12) 5:00pm - 6:00pm. Intermediate (Ages 13+) 5:00pm - 6:00pm. Open Boutng (all ages) 7:00pm - 8:00pm. Lessons available 4:00-5pm & 7:00-8pm	Hours: Youth Practice (Ages 12-17) 4:30pm - 5:30pm. Adult Practice 5:30pm - 7:30pm.	Hours: On Saturday's where our fencers are not traveling to compete, we often open up the club for practice supervised by assistant coaches. Fencers may use this time for open boutng, lessons with a coach, or conditioning. *Times Vary	Hours: Youth (Ages 8-12) 5:00pm - 6:00pm. Intermediate (Ages 13+) 5:00pm - 6:00pm. Open Boutng (all ages) 7:00pm - 8:00pm. Lessons available 4:00-5pm & 7:00-8pm

Note that any class schedule changes will be communicated via **Band** (see next section for information about this communication app). Our policy is that up to one class may be canceled each month due to tournaments. In busy months with more class cancellations due to events, we offer makeup classes to ensure students receive consistent training opportunities.

LESSONS

What is a fencing lesson?

Fencing lessons are short 20 minute sessions where a coach can work one-on-one with a student and address that fencer's individual needs.

People learn differently. Rather than asking a question in group class, some hesitate or are shy to ask for clarification or help in front of others, then end up struggling on particular aspects. The one-on-one time allows a coach the opportunity to give the student individualized drills, exercises, breakdown of technical elements, and mental skills that get practiced repeatedly in the lesson then in group sparring so that it becomes ingrained.

How do I book a lesson?

Some students have recurring discounted lesson appointments booked monthly as part of their membership package. If your membership level includes lessons, work with our coaches to set up a time that works for you. Membership levels that include lessons have priority registration. When individual lessons are available, those 20 minute lessons can be booked for \$20. Note that guest coaches can set their own lesson rates.

If you are scheduling a lesson to try a lesson, or are scheduling infrequent lessons, please utilize our [booking tool here](#). Note that these lessons are only offered before class or during open bouts on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays and occasional Saturdays.



COMMUNICATION

Our foil program utilizes the '**Band**' application in order to communicate with students and parents. It also adheres to USA Fencing's rules and regulations related to safesport moderation for communication with athletes.

We communicate all class schedule changes, upcoming tournaments, events, and more via this application so make sure you join, allow notifications, and check Band regularly.

To download and join our class, follow the link here or use the QR code below: <https://stillpointfencing.com/communication-app>

New to Band and need some help navigating the app?

Watch [this video](#) to learn what you need to know.

When is the best time to ask questions?

If you have a question for a coach, we ask that you message the coach via Band so they may respond outside of practice time. We aim to minimize disruption to class time. Coaches can answer questions related to:

- Tournament
- Fencer Goals
- Training opportunities

Our Parent representatives are great resources too! Feel free to reach out to them regarding:

- Equipment
- Carpooling
- General fencing questions
- Tournament flow

Additional Club Communication Opportunities

Our beginning of the season Parent Meeting and quarterly 'Pick-Nick' events are great ways to speak with our coaches directly, ask questions and provide any comments you have.



FOIL EQUIPMENT GUIDE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

If you're just starting out, we provide all the equipment fencers need to participate in what is commonly called 'dry' or 'practice' fencing. Beginners can rent an underarm protector, chest protector, glove, mask, and weapon from us for **\$10 monthly** and size up as they grow.

Once you have decided to invest in the sport, purchasing your own equipment is exciting and offers an opportunity for the fencer to own equipment that suits their specific build and needs. However, the many options of equipment available can be overwhelming. Please see our recommendations for beginner/starter gear in the next section.

Where to buy fencing equipment?

Fencing equipment can be purchased at most Regional and National level events, but otherwise must be purchased online. Purchasing gear at Regional and National events is a great way to avoid shipping costs and try on items to ensure they fit. We do not recommend buying gear from Amazon, it is important to purchase from a reputable vendor. Sometimes more experienced fencers will also hand down/sell their used equipment that is still in good shape.

Vendors

Absolute Fencing

<https://www.absolutefencinggear.com/>

Leon Paul

<https://www.leonpaulusa.com/>

Fencing Post

<https://thefencingpost.com/>

Blue Gauntlet

<https://www.blue-gauntlet.com/>

FOIL EQUIPMENT GUIDE AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

The following gear recommendations are what we recommend for fencers to replace broken equipment. Advanced fencers may deviate from these recommendations to suit their needs. Remember to ask Parent Representatives if you have questions.

Weapons

- Complete Foil
 - Base options are fine. Most fencers use a visconti small grip. Your fencing coach can help size your grip.
- Replacement Blade
 - Cut blade to 2.5 for Small Grip (if using small visconti grip)

Cords

- Bodycord
- Mask Cord

Shoes

- Asics Gel Rockets (Can be found at most shoe stores or amazon) or other flat soled shoes (volleyball)

Pants

- Fencing Knickers

Glove

- Glove

Chest Protector (Required for women)

- Chest Protector

Jacket

- Boys
- Girls

Mask

- Mask

Lame

- Boys
- Girls

EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

Caring for and cleaning fencing equipment is essential for maintaining its longevity, performance, and hygiene. Proper care ensures that your gear remains in good condition. Below is a comprehensive guide on how to care for and clean fencing equipment:

1. Inspecting Equipment:

- Before and after each use, inspect all of your fencing equipment thoroughly. Look for any signs of damage, wear, or corrosion.

2. Cleaning Gear:

- **Masks:**
 - Wipe down the inside and outside of the mask with a damp cloth or disinfectant wipe to remove sweat and dirt.
 - Ensure that the bib (throat protector) is cleaned thoroughly.
 - Pay attention to the mesh to remove any accumulated grime.
- **Jackets, Breeches, Plastrons, and Chest Protectors:**
 - Check the manufacturer's instructions for specific cleaning guidelines.
 - Machine washable gear should be washed according to the instructions, usually in cold water and a gentle cycle.
 - Hand wash items if machine washing is not recommended.
 - Avoid using harsh detergents or bleach, as they can damage the fabric and affect its protective qualities.
 - Hang jackets, breeches, and plastrons to air dry, avoiding direct sunlight.
 - Chest protectors often have removable covers that can be washed separately.
- **Gloves:**
 - Use a damp cloth to wipe down the gloves, paying attention to the palm and fingers where sweat tends to accumulate.
 - Allow gloves to air dry thoroughly.
 - Gloves can also be hand washed carefully.
- **Weapons**
 - Remove any dirt or rust from the blade using a clean, dry cloth.
 - Avoid using water on the blade to prevent rust.
 - Check for any loose screws or parts and tighten them if necessary.
 - Store weapons in a dry, well-ventilated area to prevent rust.

3. Storage:

- Allow all equipment to air dry completely before storing to prevent the growth of mold and mildew.
- Store gear in a clean, dry, and well-ventilated area.
- Avoid storing gear in direct sunlight or extreme temperatures, as this can degrade the materials.

4. Maintenance:

- Check and replace any worn-out or damaged parts such as glove grips, mask straps, or jacket buttons promptly.
- Periodically inspect electrical equipment (for electric fencing) for loose wires or damaged connections.

5. Protective Gear:

- Always wear the appropriate protective gear during training and competitions to prevent injuries.



GENERAL SAFETY

Staying safe while fencing is paramount to enjoying the sport and preventing injuries. Fencing, like any physical activity, carries inherent risks, but with proper precautions and techniques, you can minimize these risks significantly. Here are some essential tips for staying safe while fencing:

1. Wear Protective Gear:

- Always wear the appropriate protective gear, including a mask, jacket, gloves, plastron (underarm protector), chest protector (for females), breeches (pants), socks, and fencing shoes.
- Ensure that all gear fits properly and is in good condition, with no tears or signs of wear.

2. Warm-Up:

- Always start your fencing session with a proper warm-up to prepare your muscles and joints for activity.
- Include dynamic stretches and movements that mimic fencing actions to improve flexibility and reduce the risk of injury.

3. Practice Control:

- Practice controlled movements and attacks to avoid accidentally injuring yourself or your sparring partner.
- Develop spatial awareness and control over your weapon to prevent unintended collisions or strikes.

4. Respect Boundaries:

- Maintain a safe distance from your opponent during bouts to minimize the risk of accidental collisions.
- Always respect the boundaries of the fencing strip (piste) and stay within its confines during matches.

5. Communicate:

- Communicate with your sparring partner or opponent to ensure mutual understanding and cooperation during training and matches.
- If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe during a bout, don't hesitate to voice your concerns to your coach or referee.

6. Stay Hydrated and Rested:

- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after fencing sessions to stay hydrated.
- Ensure you get adequate rest and recovery between training sessions to prevent fatigue and overexertion.

7. Avoid Overtraining:

- Avoid overtraining by listening to your body and giving yourself time to recover between intense workouts.
- Incorporate rest days into your training schedule to prevent burnout and reduce the risk of injury.

8. Seek Medical Attention for Injuries:

- If you sustain an injury while fencing, seek prompt medical attention, and follow your healthcare provider's recommendations for treatment and recovery.
- Avoid returning to fencing until you have fully recovered from any injuries to prevent exacerbating them.

FOIL FENCING

Rules and Scoring

- The target area is the torso, excluding the arms and head.
- Valid touches are scored with the point of the foil.
- The first fencer to reach 15 points or the highest score within a set time wins.

[USA Fencing Penalty Chart](#)

So, what's legal in fencing and what isn't? You don't need to learn all the rules right away. Your coach will help you learn the essentials and introduce you to more specifics over time.

Category One

All Category One penalties are interdependent. Upon the first occurrence of an offense during a bout, the fencer is warned and receives a yellow card. Committing any additional offense during the bout will result in the offender receiving a red card and the opponent receiving a penalty touch.

Category Two

All Category Two penalties are also interdependent. A fencer is given a red card upon first and any subsequent infraction during a bout.

Both Category One and Two infractions result in the annulment of a touch made by the offending fencer while committing the offense.

Category Three

Category Three penalties may be assessed for infractions against safety or the order of the competition.

Such infractions can result in penalty touches (red card) or expulsion (black card) from the competition.

Category Four

The Category Four penalties involve unsportsmanlike conduct, using fraudulently modified equipment, collusion or brutality.



STILL POINT FENCING CODE OF CONDUCT

Abide by the precepts of integrity, good sportsmanship, and respect while fencing and in your daily life.

Demonstrate respect and good sportsmanship with both words and actions. Everyone who participates has the right to feel safe, included, valued, and accepted.

Fence hard. Be Kind. * Lose with honor and win with dignity.

At the end of a bout, shake your opponent's hand with your non-weapon hand.

Before leaving the Club, put away your equipment. Hang up your fencing uniform, pick up after yourself and dispose of any and all personal trash.

Never argue with a referee, opponent, instructor, or coach.

Do not try to unfairly influence others to give you an advantage, such as throwing a bout, giving touches, or tampering with your equipment.

If you are late for training/class, join with the least amount of disruption. If you can't make training/class or scheduled lesson, let your coach know ahead of time.

Less experienced fencers should ask more experienced fencers to bout. Experienced fencers should fence with less experienced fencers with patience and encouragement.

Safety is very important; always check your equipment for defects in gloves, masks, uniforms and blades. Never point your weapon at anyone who is unmasked or unprotected. Always keep your weapons pointed downward when carrying them around. Do not throw equipment under any circumstance.

Respect Club equipment as if it was your own property.

If at any time a fencer or parent threatens the safety of other fencers, guests, or coaches a member of the Still Point Fencing staff may immediately escort the threatening individual from the premises.

No Discrimination - Coaches, fencers, guests, and staff are expected to treat other coaches, fencers, guests, and staff at all times and in all respects in a manner free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, status, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Coaches, fencers, guests, or staff who don't comply with this code of conduct may be subject to sanctions that may include exclusion from fencing activities, suspension of fencing lessons or expulsion from the club.



COMPETITION

Overview

Once you've acquired the necessary gear and understand the rules (typically 2 months or so, for beginners) it's time to get ready for your first tournament! There are many options for tournaments and what is right for your fencer will depend on their competitive goals and level of fencing experience.

Prior to competition, your fencer will need a USA Fencing account and membership. Memberships to USA Fencing are available here: <https://www.usafencing.org/membership>. We recommend purchasing the ACCESS membership if your fencer intends only upon fencing local level events and the COMPETITIVE membership if you or your fencer intends to compete regionally/nationally. Upon signup, be sure to affiliate yourself with Still Point Fencing as your primary club, which will seed you or your fencer apart from other club members in sanctioned tournaments when possible.

Still Point Fencing is a fencing club in the Arizona Division, which is part of Region 4. Region 4 consists of Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado.

Local tournaments (Tucson, Phoenix, Flagstaff, Prescott, and occasionally California and El Paso) can be found on the website AskFred. <https://www.askfred.net/>. Membership to this website is free and required to register for events. Be sure to link your USA Fencing account with your account here. Utilize the search parameters on Ask Fred to find events you or your fencer are eligible for. Details on event eligibility can be found in the 'Types of Tournaments' section below. Local tournaments are the best way to begin competing and fencers should participate in as many local events as possible to develop their skills and progress to regional and national events.

Regional and National events can be found on USA Fencing's website and represent a high level of competition. Fencers must have a usa fencing membership level of 'competitive' to register for these events. The Regional and National event schedule is posted generally in August of each year and events can be found here: <https://www.usafencing.org/all-events>



TYPES OF TOURNAMENTS

Tournaments in the USA fall in the categories of local, regional, and national. Local competitions are sponsored by the clubs themselves or the governing Division. Regional competitions include Super Youth Circuit (SYC), Regional Youth Circuit (RYC), Regional Open Circuit (ROC), and Sectionals. The last category of domestic tournaments is those run by the USFA. These include the North American Cups (NAC) which typically combine several different events in a tournament and are held around the country throughout the season. The championship tournaments for US fencing are the Junior Olympics in February and the Summer Nationals in July.

Regional and National Tournaments often have a tiered cost based on time of registration, and may have event caps in place. It is important to register early to reserve a spot at regular fees for these tournaments.

[USA Fencing Age Classification Chart](#)

[USA Fencing Athlete Handbook \(With Qualification Info\)](#)

Youth

- Youth means fencers who are 14 years old or under. Youth fencing is further divided into Youth 8 (Y8), Youth 10 (Y10), Youth 12 (Y12), and Youth 14 (Y14). A fencer's age on January 1 of the current season determines eligibility.
- SYC/RYC-On the regional level Youth fencers are also eligible to compete in RYC and SYC events. RYC events are held all over the country and are listed on both the USFA web site and on AskFRED. RYCs do not award points for the National Points List. SYC events are fewer and larger; and fencers who finish in the top 40% will be on the National Points List.
- Youth fencers can also compete in two national level events: the Youth NAC (typically held in Spring) and Summer Nationals though athletes need to qualify for this event. Please refer to the Athlete Handbook for the qualification pathways.



TYPES OF TOURNAMENTS CONTINUED

Cadet and Junior

- The next two categories, Under 17 (U17) and Under 20 (U20) are more commonly referred to as Cadet and Junior respectively.
- The U.S. Championship tournament for Cadet and Junior fencers is known as the Junior Olympics, or JOs. Qualification for JOs is by having national points (from a NAC) or by placing in the top 3 or the top 25% (whichever is greater) of participants in the qualifying tournament. Running the qualifying tournament is the responsibility of the Divisions within the USFA.

Senior

- The senior category includes everyone age 13 and up. Club tournaments referred to as “opens” are open to any USFA member 13 or older regardless of rating.
- Preregistration (through AskFRED) is required for these but typically deadlines are fairly close to the time of competition. These larger events may include both mixed and men’s and women’s events. In addition, some clubs host “ratings restricted” events in which participants are restricted to those at or below a certain rating (C and Under, D and Under, and so forth). Regional Open Circuits (ROCs) are listed on both the USFA web site and on AskFRED. ROC tournaments also serve as a qualifying pathway for Division IA, one of the events at Summer National Championship.



TYPES OF TOURNAMENTS CONTINUED

Veterans

- Veteran fencers are those aged 40 and up. There are two Veterans' NACs during the season. Events held during these competitions include: Veteran Combined (40+); Veteran 50-59, Veteran 60-69, and Veteran 70+. Veterans' events are also held at Summer Nationals. Participation in any NAC; any ROC; Sectional Championships; or the Division 2/3 qualifying competition makes the fencer eligible for National Championships in this category.

Division I, IA, II, III

- At the national level, participation in Senior NACs is based on rating. Division 1 NACs (typically two or three per season) are restricted to fencers with a rating of a C or higher. Division 2 is restricted to C and under. Division 3 is restricted to D and under. National Championships are held in all three categories as well as an additional category, Division 1-A. For details about the qualification pathways for these events, please consult the Athlete Handbook.

This is so confusing! How do I decide which tournaments to compete in?

- You can compete in as many tournaments as you like. When deciding on your competitive schedule you should talk to your coach about which tournaments will help you meet your goals for the upcoming season. You should also be honest with yourself about your budget. While going to national tournaments is a lot of fun, it can also be expensive. National tournament fees are considerably higher than those for locals and one must typically include airfare, hotel, and dining expenses. We recommend students participate in as many local events as possible initially and then begin to compete regionally after they have achieved success or earned ratings at the local level.



CLASSIFICATIONS

USA Fencing ranks fencers with letters, “A” through “E”. These classifications (sometimes called “ratings”) are earned in tournaments. In general, the higher the level of fencers already in the tournament, the higher the classifications that get awarded. “A” is the highest letter classification that a fencer can earn; “E” is the lowest. Fencers who have not yet earned an “E” are considered Unclassified (“U”). Fencers can earn classifications independently in each of the three weapons.

Letter classifications can be used as a measure of a fencer’s progress in the sport. They are also used for the initial seeding in tournaments. For seeding purposes, the fencer’s classification is used, along with the year it was earned. For example, a B24 would be ranked above a B23, who would be ranked above a C24. Your classification drops one letter if it’s not renewed within four years. For example, at the end of the 2028-2029 season, a C24 would become a D24.

The Classification chart is available here:

<https://www.usafencing.org/classification-chart>

Classifications for kids

For events in the Youth and Cadet age groups, categories E1 and D1 do not exist. If a Youth or Cadet competition is not at least a C1 event, then no classifications are awarded.

How long does it take?

Since fencers progress at different rates, there is no set timeline for earning new classifications. Some fencers will earn an “E” or “D” within a year of starting competition; others may take longer. The higher levels (“A” and “B”) require much more technical and tactical ability, as well as competition experience. Because a classification represents a “high water mark”, fencing more competitions means more opportunities to earn a new classification. The age group rule described above means that youth fencers often don’t have the opportunity to earn any classification at all until they start fencing Youth-14 and older events.



WHAT TO BRING TO A TOURNAMENT (FOIL PROGRAM)

Two weapons in “fighting” condition (2 is mandatory, 3 is preferred!)

- Mask
- Underarm protector (must be padded protector)
- Chest protector (mandatory for ladies)
- Athletic shoes
- Two body cords (and two mask cords)
- Fencing jacket
- Knickers
- Tall socks (tall enough to touch the bottom of the pants, two pairs to be safe!)
- Glove (Ensure there are no holes)
- Lamé
- Equipment maintenance kit: Allen Wrench , Foil tape
- The entrance fee. What payment is accepted? Don't get caught with just a credit card if the club doesn't have a card reader. Know what kind of payment is accepted, and make sure you have it on hand for registration.
- USA Fencing membership card. It's always a handy thing to have around.
- Snacks, Water/Sports Drink,



TOURNAMENT WALKTHROUGH

The content in this guide was written by Tim Morehouse and adapted for Still Point Fencing. Tim is an Olympian who currently coaches out of Tim Morehouse Fencing Club. Thanks to him for this comprehensive guide.

When Should We Arrive?

Students should arrive no later than one hour before the check-in time closes of their individual event. There are several key tasks that occur before a tournament begins including checking in, equipment check and warm up time.

What Should We Do When We Arrive at the Tournament?

- **CHECK-IN TO THE TOURNAMENT:** You need to check-in upon arrival to ensure that you are officially registered to compete. You should have your USA Fencing # (Physical card or online card) as well as a form of identification for the fencer.
- **EQUIPMENT CHECK:** You generally will need to complete a "weapons check" which includes both a safety and functionality inspection at tournaments. Depending on the competition size, this can take anywhere from 10 to 30+ minutes including the time it takes to wait in-line. You should get in-line to check equipment immediately after checking in. Some tournaments allow you to perform equipment check the night before your event, be sure to check the event details to determine the best time for you to go to equipment check. (Note: if something "Fails" inspection then you may need to purchase or borrow whatever piece of equipment did not "Pass".)
- Though equipment check requirements can vary, typically you will bring the following items for inspection:
 - Mask
 - Lamé
 - 2x Body Cords
 - 2x Mask Cords
 - Glove



TOURNAMENT WALKTHROUGH

- **WARM UP:** The kids need to WARM UP for at least 40 minutes before the start of pools. Depending on the venue space, the coaches will lead a group warm up BUT warming up and being prepared is ultimately the kids responsibility. If coaches are working an earlier event then students should be prepared to run, stretch, do a bit of footwork and ideally fence electrically with their club-mates.
- **REPORTING TO FENCE: "STRIP ASSIGNMENTS":** Parents and students should LISTEN, LOOK AND ASK to ensure that they report to their strips on-time. This generally happens within minutes of "Pools being Posted".

Check Strip Assignments Online: www.fencingtimelive.com (This resource is typically only available at larger events, such as national competitions.)

EXPECTATIONS AND CHAMPIONS MINDSETS

- **Mindset #1:** The students, coaches and parents at SPF are a team. The coaches do their best to get to as many matches as possible, we expect best efforts and spirit from the students and parents have an important role to play with logistics and support.
- **Students Should Stay Focused and Alert:** It is essential students pay attention to what is happening, especially between rounds so they do not miss their matches or show up unprepared to fence their best. Students need to be ready to compete both physically and mentally at all times. During pools, they should remain by their strip and during Direct Eliminations they should remain in their "Pod Area" to hear their match being called. Sometimes this is a tournament official calling out a name in a loud and crowded room. Students can be in 4 places at a competition: 1. competing in a pool or DE or nearby the place where they are about to compete, 2. Staying near or around their teammates and coaches especially during the same event 3. Bathroom: Tell a coach or club-mate in your event if you need to go to the bathroom and it is near the time to compete. 4. the "team spot" in the venue. On the other side, students should NOT wander aimlessly or walk around the venue without purpose.



TOURNAMENT WALKTHROUGH

- The 5 things We Expect from our Students at All Competitions: (And Always) 1. Their Best Effort (We will Always Be Proud of Them if they give everything they have no matter what the outcome) 2. Being Respectful and Good Sports (Win or Lose) to everyone 3. Supporting their club-mates: Being Happy for Each Other in Success and Supportive in Down Times. 4. Listening to the coaches 5. Fencing with Enthusiasm!
- Strip Coaching: You will NOT have a coach at every match. Our coaches do their best to get to as many strips as possible but this is an imperfect science that depends on where strips are located, how many fencers are competing at the same time. etc. I can only guarantee you that we do our absolute best to be at as many individual matches as possible.
- Stay with The Club Group: In-between matches, students in a particular event should stay together and look out for each other. They should not be wandering off or getting unfocused . (Yes, this is a repeat. Stay focused!)
- If Club-mates Fence Each Other: There is absolutely NO CHEERING, COACHING or anything when fencers from our club compete against each other. This includes parents, students and coaches. This will destroy club culture and it creates bad blood when it happens. This is a non-negotiable. We are one team.
- If Your Child is Eliminated Early: (Mindset: Learn and Study as much as possible). If a student doesn't make the finals (only 2 people make it from the entire field!) and is eliminated in an earlier round, they should gather their equipment and then go to cheer for any of their remaining club-mates in the tournament until everyone is eliminated.



TOURNAMENT WALKTHROUGH

- Please plan to be at the competition (your event) from start to finish unless the tournament event is running over 4+ hours). There is a lot to be learned at a competition outside of a competitors own match time. Students who want to become champions should study other clubs fencers and watch the finals of their event. and generally have the plan to learn as much as possible from the experience of being there. Our students and families supporting each other will ultimately raise up the tournament results of the entire club and make for a stronger community. (There is no leaving right away when students are eliminated if we want to be the best club. If a student is upset at their result, it is even more important that they pull themselves together and do what a champion would do and not leave the venue. Champions support their teammates)
- **Fencing with/without a Strip Coach: (CHAMPION MINDSET)** "Bouts are won/lost at practice". Students/parents should not feel as if they cannot win if they don't have a strip coach.
- A student who is fencing should be focused on what they can control such as what moves they are going to do, being warmed up and having their back-up equipment near the strip. etc. and not on what they don't have. Feeling that something is "wrong" will create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Pre-Bout excuses for why you are going to lose will only lead to more losing and won't serve anyone positively in the long run (these are worse than post-bout excuses).
- **Only the Coaches should be Coaching or Addressing The Referees:** Parents and club-mates can cheer (positively only) for their children and club-mates. They should not be giving coaching advice especially if a coach is there trying to communicate with the fencer who is competing.
- Only the coaching staff should be talking with referees with the exception that students who are competing are encouraged to ask a referee to explain a few calls during a match if they do not understand why something is called. (Not every point!)



SUPPORTING YOUR FENCER AT A TOURNAMENT

- What Can Parents do at a Tournament to Help?
- Help Ensure Your Child Makes It To The Tournament (The 1st Victory is getting to the tournament!)
- Check Strip Assignments and Ensure Students Make It To their Bouts On-Time
- Make Sure your Child is drinking water and that they eat a healthy pre-tournament meal and that they have light snacks
- Help Coaches Know Where Your Child Is Fencing
- Film the matches for analysis later.
- Cheer positively
- Re-enforce our Champions Mindsets
- Keep Your Child from Distractions
- Keep them at the tournament after they are eliminated to watch and cheer for their teammates and watch the finals.
- Understand that sports is a great place for children to learn about how to deal with setbacks, challenges and disappointment (Champions do this the best).
- Champions Never Give Up! The people that win consistently will always fight and give their best effort even when things are not going their way in a bout. Even in the darkest moments, we expect our students to pull themselves together and push forward. Champions NEVER EVER give up.
- Champions Don't Make Excuses: This is particularly important to remember at tournaments for everyone. We own outcomes: win or lose. We have to own results if we want to be champions. Something will always be "wrong" and something unexpected will always happen at a tournament. Champions rapidly accept their circumstances "It is What It Is" so they can immediately go to what they can control. No Excuses! Give our opponents their due for beating us and come back strong next match.
 - Excuses...(Frequent Examples start with these...)
 - The referee...blah blah blah.
 - The Coaches...blah blah blah.
 - School Work..."This or that"

It is not that these things aren't valid if a bad call occurs, but Champions just find solutions and overcome obstacles.



YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT

USA Fencing has put together a very helpful guide for new parents that contains information for new parents. You can find it here: <https://www.usafencing.org/fencing-for-parents>.

As a parent, your primary purpose is to support and encourage your child. Parents greatly contribute to the success experienced by their children as well as other children in the youth program. Parent's attitudes are often adopted by their children, who consult them for advice and approval. Parents, be aware of this and strive to become positive role models. Most importantly, this includes showing good sportsmanship at all times and respecting coaches, officials, and opponents.

Get your child to the club to train regularly. School obligations come first, so utilize school holidays for maximizing training opportunities. Training two months a year at a camp will yield very limited results. A consistent training curriculum is strongly encouraged.

Help your child establish and achieve the goals they set for themselves. Avoid imposing your own goals or the coach's goals on your child. "Success," sometimes interpreted as "winning," comes at different ages for each fencer. Success in youth fencing is achieved if the program helps the child love fencing. Great achievement will occur when the child loves the sport. The best way to help your child achieve his goals and reduce their fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make mistakes. When your child makes one, remember that they are still learning. Encourage their efforts and highlight the successes and the things your child did well. Your child will have good days and bad ones. Help them through the bad days and celebrate the good days they are fortunate to have.

Be careful not to emphasize winning to the exclusion of your child having fun and learning about themselves while enjoying the exciting sport of fencing. Encouraging a healthy environment that emphasizes learning and fun can develop a more positive self-image, an invaluable asset throughout your child's life.



RESOURCES

- USA Fencing Athlete Handbook
 - <https://www.usafencing.org/athlete-handbook>
- USA Fencing Rulebook
 - <https://www.usafencing.org/usa-fencing-rule-book>
- Academy of Fencing Masters Blog
 - <https://academyoffencingmasters.com/blog/>

