



DDHF rule framework

Version: 5.0en

Date: 02.12.2022

Audited by:

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Preamble

The purpose of this document is to provide a set of rules for sporting competitions in which participants can be measured in their fencing prowess with replicas of historical cold weapons.

The rule framework unifies, specifies and defines general rules and conditions that apply to all tournaments according to DDHF standards. It does not define the specific rules for scoring a hit or advancing in rounds. These are defined in an additional core rulebook, which is only valid in combination with the rule framework.

The framework applies to all genders, regardless of the grammatical gender of the nouns used, and also explicitly addresses all equally. The generic masculine is used to improve the readability of the document.

Outline

The framework is divided into two main sections, relevant to the respective groups of people:

- Rules for participants:
 - Restriction of participation
 - Personal equipment and weapons
 - General bout procedure



- o Conventions and hits
- o Generally prohibited actions
- o Violations and penalties

- Rules for the tournament management and judges:
 - o Fencing floor
 - o Tournament management, judges, assistants



Rules for participants

Any person who meets the following requirements is eligible to participate in a tournament:

1. Registration - The registration must be on time and complete; for this, the participation document is filled out and the documents regarding the exclusion of liability and data protection are signed. Any entry fee must be paid.
2. Physically fit - The person must be able to withstand the physical stress without risk to their health. In the case of disability, visible injury, obvious illness, etc., the tournament director may require a medical certificate or the signing of a waiver or declaration of good standing. It is up to the tournament management to refuse the participation of the person.
3. Uninfluenced by drugs (including alcohol) or performance-enhancing substances (doping) - The person must not be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or doping during the tournament. If a person obviously appears to be under the influence of named substances, the tournament management can refuse a participation of the person.
4. Appropriate Equipment - The person must use the equipment specified and defined by the tournament organizer. This will be approved by the Schutzmeister.
5. Knowledge of Tournament Rules - The individual must know, understand and adhere to the tournament rules used.
6. Minimum age - The tournament management determines the minimum age for the persons. Separate tournaments for youth under 18 years are possible.

Restrictions on participation

Restrictions on eligibility may be set for individual tournaments by the tournament managements. Examples:

- a. Competitions by gender (men's or women's tournament)
- b. Age group (competitions by age group)
- c. Regional tournament (only people with a certain place of residence or club headquarters)
- d. Championships (only persons with ranking)
- e. National tournament (only persons of one nationality)
- f. International tournament or open tournament (open to all persons)

The restrictions must already be determined and announced at the time of the invitation; they are valid for all persons without exceptions. No individual persons or groups of persons may be excluded on the basis of their political views, nationality or denomination.

The DDHF works together with its members against discrimination, racism, xenophobia and political extremism.

Personal equipment and weapons

Fencers must compete in sportswear suitable for fencing, covering the entire body with the exception of the hands and head (no visible, naked areas). Wearing jewelry, watches, etc. is prohibited. The inspection and approval of the equipment and weapons is carried out by the tournament management or the appointed Schutzmeister before the start of the tournament.

DDHF recommendation for personal protective equipment

Personal protective equipment recommended by the DDHF consists of at least the following items designed for historical fencing, if applicable:



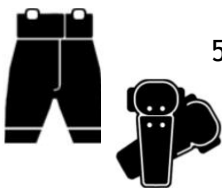
1. Head protection - a fencing mask FIE standard level 2 with a stab resistance of at least 1600N, which protects against thrusts and blows.
2. Rear head guard - a rear head guard made of a hard material that protects the back of the head and neck from blows.



3. Neck guard - a neck guard made of a hard material that covers the entire larynx and protects the neck from impact.



4. Upper body protection - an upper body protection with a stab resistance of at least 800N, covering the upper body from the hips (even with arms raised above the head) to the neck, as well as the arms to the wrists, front and back, protecting the upper body from blows and thrusts.



5. Leg protection - leg guards made of a hard material that protects the knees and shins up to the ankle from blows, and a thigh guard with a stab resistance of at least 800N that protects the thighs from thrusts and blows.



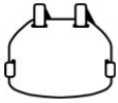
6. Hand protection (saber: weapon wielding arm) - gloves made of a hard material that protect fingers and wrist from blows.

For rapier and saber (on the free arm): Gloves made of a padded material that protects fingers and wrist from light blows.





7. Groin protection - a jockstrap made of a hard material that protects the genital area from blows.



8. Chest protection - a chest protector made of a hard material that protects the upper body from blows and thrusts.



9. Forearm and elbow protection -
 - a. For all tournaments except saber - a guard made of a hard material that protects the forearm and elbow joint on both arms from blows.
 - b. For saber - a guard made of a hard material for the forearm and elbow joint, which protects the arm of the weapon from blows.



10. Shoes - sports shoes that are appropriate for the respective surface and do not leave marks or traces on the hall floor.

Any protective equipment that poses a danger to the opponent is prohibited. This includes: the use of protectors with sharp edges or pointed corners, potentially metal armor parts, and loose or damaged protectors or equipment.

Additional personal protective equipment (such as back protectors, mouth or dental protectors, etc.) or protective applications must be coordinated with the tournament management.

It is the responsibility of the tournament management and the Schutzmeister appointed by the management to check the protective equipment used by the fencer for suitability and safety and to approve it for the tournament.



Recommendation of the DDHF for sports equipment and/or weapons

All sports equipment checked and approved by the tournament management, hereafter referred to as weapons, are marked in a suitable manner for this tournament (e.g. adhesive tape marked with a tournament abbreviation with date). The marking may only be removed after the tournament.

All blades are subjected to a bend test before the tournament. The weapon is set up vertically with the point on the ground and an appropriate weight is placed on the pommel. The blade should show visible deflection at the latest at the application of the maximum load, but may also bend at a lower load.

For all weapons applies:

- Tip - The tip of the blade (the Ort) must be blunt and rounded, if necessary, apply plastic or leather protectors.
- Edge - Both edges of the blade must be blunt.
- Parrying elements - The ends of the crossguard, as well as any parrying rings and other parrying elements must be rounded, and plastic or leather protectors must be applied if necessary.
- Pommel - The pommel must be rounded and have no protruding points or edges.
- Blade Quality - The blade must not have any cutting or tearing burrs or nicks.

1. Long sword



Only fencing feathers (Fechtfedern/Federschwerter) with the following characteristics are recommended as weapons:

- Blade length - The length of the blade must not exceed 105cm.
- Overall length - The overall length of the weapon must not exceed 140cm.
- Length of the crossguard - The length of the crossguard must be between 20cm and 30cm.
- Weight - total weight of the weapon must be between 1.2kg and 1.8kg.
- Bending behavior - The blade must visibly yield at an applied weight of 15kg.
- Shield - The shield must be rounded, injury to the opponent from possible spikes must be ruled out.

2. Rapier



Only rapiers with the following characteristics are recommended as weapons:

- Blade length - The length of the blade must be between 95cm and 130cm (to the crossguard).
- Overall length - The overall length of the weapon must not exceed 140cm.
- Length of the guard - The length of the guard must be between 12cm and 30cm.
- Weight - The total weight of the weapon must be between 0.8kg and 1.6kg.
- Bending behavior - The blade must visibly yield at an applied weight of 7.5kg.

3. Dagger as a sidearm to the rapier

Only daggers with the following characteristics are recommended as sidearms to the rapier:

- Blade length - The length of the blade must not exceed 55cm.
- Total length - the total length of the weapon must not exceed 70cm.
- Length of the guard - The length of the guard must be between 8cm and 30cm.
- Weight - The total weight of the dagger must be between 0.4kg and 1.2kg.
- Bending behavior - The blade is not required to flex (will be required in the future).

4. Saber



The recommended weapons are sabers with the following characteristics:

Blade length - The length of the blade must not exceed 90cm.

Overall length - The total length of the weapon must not exceed 105cm.

Length of the parrying element (parrying bar, parrying bow or basket) - the projection in the direction of the true edge must be between 3cm and 12cm, the projection in the direction of the false edge must be between 3cm and 6cm.

Weight - The total weight of the weapon must be between 0.7kg and 1.1kg.

Bending behavior - The blade must visibly yield at an applied weight of 15kg.

5. Long knife (Langes Messer)



Long knives with the following characteristics are recommended as weapons:

- Blade length - The length of the blade must not exceed 87cm.
- Overall length - The overall length of the weapon must not exceed 130cm.
- Length of the crossguard - The length of the crossguard must be between 10cm and 30cm.
- Weight - The total weight of the weapon must be between 0.9kg and 1.4kg.
- Bending behavior - The blade does not have to yield.

6a. Medieval sword wielded with one hand



The recommended weapons are swords with the following characteristics:

- Blade length - the length of the blade must be between 70cm and 100cm (measured to the crossbar).
- Blade geometry - The tip must be 2cm in diameter. The blade must have a width of at least 4.7cm at the crossbar.
- Total length - the total length of the weapon must not exceed 130cm.
- Length of the guard - the length of the guard must be between 10cm and 30cm.
- Weight - The total weight of the weapon must be between 0.9kg and 1.4kg.
- Bending behavior - the blade must yield at an applied weight of 10kg.

6b. Early Renaissance rapier or side sword



The recommended weapons are side swords with the following characteristics:

- Blade length - the length of the blade must be between 80cm and 95cm (including ricasso, i.e. up to the crossguard).
- Blade geometry - The tip must be 2cm in diameter. The blade must have a maximum width of 5cm at the crossbar.
- Overall length - the overall length of the weapon must not exceed 115cm.
- Length of the crossguard - the length of the crossguard must be between 10cm and 30cm. Parry elements other than baskets are allowed.
- Weight - The total weight of the weapon must be between 0.9kg and 1.4kg.
- Bending behavior - the blade must yield at an applied weight of 10kg.

7. Buckler



The buckler is primarily used as a defensive weapon for parrying. The buckler consists of the body and the handle, which must be firmly connected to the body. Any spikes or protrusions must be rounded or fitted with plastic or leather protectors. Bucklers with the following characteristics are recommended:

- Diameter - the diameter of the body must not exceed 42cm.
- Shape - the body has a circular disc shape and possibly a curvature (convex, concave or both). Special shapes (as seen e.g. with Talhoffer) are not regulated here and must be approved separately by the tournament management.
- Protruding parts on the body - The shield may have a beaded edge. Other protruding parts, such as blade catchers, are prohibited.
- Material of the body - the shield must be made of metal or plastic. A combination of different materials (e.g. wood, leather/rawhide and metal) is not regulated here and must be approved separately by the tournament management.
- Material of the handle - the handle can be made of metal, wood, plastic, etc. and does not have to match the material of the body.



General bout procedure

1. The pairing for the next bout is called by the assistant / Lüsner.
2. The fencers line up ready to fight within 2 minutes.
3. The referee will inspect the protective equipment and the approval of the weapon.
4. The fencers greet their opponent and the referee.
5. The fencers take up their positions at the assigned formation points after the command "Position!" ("Stellung!").
6. If necessary, the referee questions timekeepers and other judges with "Ready?" ("Bereit?") and waits for their confirmation.
7. The referee starts an encounter with the command: "Go!" ("Los!"). If applicable, the fight timer is started.
8. The fencers try to score a valid hit.
9. If a valid hit is scored or the referee has to intervene, the fight will be interrupted with the command: "Halt!". If necessary, the fighting time will be paused.
10. The next encounter is initiated with the command "Position!" ("Stellung!").
11. If a criterion for the end of the bout (points, time, etc.) is reached, the referee interrupts the fight with the command: "Stop!" ("Halt!") and announces the result.
12. The fencers greet each other and the referee.

If a fencer suffers an injury, they are entitled to demand a break of 10 minutes in total (can be divided). The fencing will be interrupted or postponed until then and continued after the break.

If a fencer does not appear voluntarily for understandable, personal reasons, the fencing will be evaluated as a victory for the opponent without any counter hits. If a fencer expresses or behaves derogatory, insulting etc. towards an opponent, the fencer can be disqualified from the competition.



Hit guidelines

The hit zone is defined as the entire surface of the fencer and their protective equipment. The definitions for valid hits are guidelines for fencers and judges.

Valid hits

1. Hit with the edge (Strike)

If a fencer succeeds in hitting the opponent with the edge, this counts as a hit. To be counted as valid, the following rules apply:

- The weapon must hit the opponent with an edge and the blade face must be in the plane of the blow. If the blade hits the opponent with the flat, the strike does not count as a hit.
- When striking, the point of the blade must travel over a recognizable length of about 60cm before the edge touches the opponent.

2. Thrust with the Tip of the blade (Thrust)

If a fencer succeeds in hitting the opponent with a thrust with the tip of the weapon, this counts as a thrust and as a hit. To be counted as valid, the following condition applies:

- The blade must visibly deflect, slide off the mask or visibly affect the opponent.

3. Cut with the edge (Cut)

If a fencer succeeds in drawing the edge of their weapon over a hit zone of the opponent and thereby exerting pressure, this counts as a cut with the edge and as a hit. To be counted as valid, one of the following conditions must be met:

- The blade must be applied to the target with one edge in the direction of pressure and be recognizably drawn along the hit zone (about 30cm).
- The blade must be applied to the target with the edge in the direction of pressure and the pressure must visibly affect the opponent.



4. Wrestling

If wrestling occurs within an encounter, the fencers have 10 seconds to achieve a recognizable dominance, otherwise the encounter is interrupted without scoring.

The encounter will be stopped immediately if a fencer is endangered or suspected of being endangered. The fencers are urged to take into account the special risk that comes from wrestling.

Bringing to the ground: If a fencer succeeds in bringing their opponent to the ground while remaining standing himself with the weapon in their hand or stably standing in front of their opponent, this counts as a hit - unless the opponent can roll off and immediately stand up again ready to fight or defend himself.

Fixation / Blocking: If a fencer succeeds in rendering the opponent incapable of action by a hold, whereby the opponent cannot free himself from this hold, this counts as a hit. The hold must be dominant and recognizable as an intended action. A fencer can give up at any time by tapping.

5. Crossing the outer line

Stepping over is when both feet of the fencer touch the ground outside the outside line. The outside line itself is part of the fencing floor. If a fencer actively or passively steps over the outside line, the fencing is interrupted and a hit is awarded to the opponent.

Actions that lead to a hit, but end with the hitting fencer stepping over the outside line, will be scored as "no score". (*Example: fencer A steps over - hit for fencer B; fencer A hits fencer B inside the fencing floor, but subsequently steps over the outer line: no score*).

6. Loss of the main weapon or disarming

If a fencer loses their weapon, either due to a (disarming) technique of the opponent or due to clumsiness, while the opponent is still holding theirs can come into measure again, this counts as a hit for the opponent.

Fencers are allowed to intentionally and independently disarm themselves without interrupting the encounter. If this happens in wrestling, it does not count as disarming.



Prohibited actions

For safety reasons and to maintain fairness in a sporting competition, the following actions are prohibited. In addition, all actions that constitute unsportsmanlike behavior or deliberate endangerment of the opponent are to be refrained from.

1. Kicks with the foot, lower leg, knee against joints and soft tissues or leg sweeps.
2. Punches with the fist, hand, edge of the hand, forearm or elbow.
3. Pommel strikes (their indication is allowed).
4. Blows with the parry bar ("Mordhau").
5. Pushing, shoving, bringing down, or the like with no apparent technique.
6. Blows to the back of the head and neck.
7. Hard blows on hands and back.
8. Lever techniques against joints (except levers for disarming).
9. Throws on the head.
10. Throwing the weapon or equipment.
11. Thrusts with weapons for which no bending behavior is specified.

The fencers are encouraged to use historically verified fencing techniques. Techniques from other martial arts are therefore to be avoided.

Violations and penalties

No advantage can be gained or a received hit prevented by own misconduct. Any hit scored by the fencer that is preceded or immediately followed by the fencer's own misconduct is canceled. Hits of the opponent remain valid in case of own misconduct and possible penalty hits are added.

Representation	Penalty	Pronounced by	Valid for
G = Yellow card	Warning	Referee	Current bout
R = Red card	Hit for the opponent	Referee	Current bout
S = Black card	Disqualification	Referee	Current bout

Yellow card - A fencer will be warned with a yellow card only once per bout. Any further offense will be punished with a red card.

Red card - Equal to a hit for the opponent (penalty hit), this is awarded to them like a regular hit. Only for category 2. offenses another red card can be given, otherwise the fencer will be disqualified from the current bout with a black card for the second red card.

Black card - A disqualification ends the bout and the victory is awarded to the opponent. The penalized fencer may continue to participate in the current competition, but may also be disqualified from the tournament entirely. A disqualification is pronounced by a referee and represented by a black card.

Misconduct (see following pages for explanations):



1. category	Sanction		
Grab and hold enemy moving weapon by the blade	Hit opponent		
2. category	Sanction		
	1st time	2nd time	3rd time
Deliberate time stalling	Yellow	Red	Red
3rd category	Sanction		
	1st time	2nd time	3rd time
Removal of protective equipment before the command "Halt"	Yellow	Red	Black
Insufficient equipment or non-appearance	Yellow	Red	Black
Disturbance of the order by the fencer or a person belonging to the fencer	Yellow	Red	Black
Refusing to obey the referee or not accepting a decision of the referee.	Yellow	Red	Black
Forbidden fencing action	Yellow	Red	Black
Steal hits	Yellow	Red	Black
Unnecessary harshness / uncontrolled fencing	Yellow	Red	Black
Not trying to not get hit	Yellow	Red	Black
4th group	Sanction		
Tear off opponent's fencing mask, protectors, gloves, etc. from the body	Tournament exclusion		
Improper behavior	Tournament exclusion		
Intentionally injuring the opponent	Tournament exclusion		



Categories of misconduct

1. Category

Grabbing and holding an opponent's blade while it is in motion - If a fencer grabs and holds the opponent's blade while it is still in motion, this is scored as a regular hit (hand hit) for the opponent. A one-handed hit executed thereafter will not result in a score.

Grabbing and holding the resting or controlled opponent's blade in preparation for another technique is allowed.

2. Category

Stalling - When a fencer tries to compensate for their opponent's advantage in fitness and their own disadvantage thereof by causing a stoppage without reason or with obviously pretextual reasons or by prolonging a stoppage unduly.

3. Category

Removal of protective equipment before the command "Halt" - If a fencer removes parts of their protective equipment before a halt of the encounter has been pronounced by the referee.

Inadequate equipment or failure to appear - If a fencer does not appear in time or with inadequate protective equipment or unsuitable weapon for the bout, they will receive a warning. The fencer will be called again and has 2 minutes to be ready for the bout. If the fencer still does not appear ready to fight after the second call, they will receive a penalty hit. The fencer has another 2 minutes to be ready to compete; if they cannot do so, they will be disqualified from the current bout.

Disturbance of the order by the fencer or a person belonging to the fencer - If a fencer or a person belonging to them disturbs the order, e.g. does not or only insufficiently follow the orders of the referee (e.g. questions them unjustifiably or starts a discussion about them) and or interferes with the course of the bout thereby.

Refusing to obey the referee or not accepting a referee's decision - When a fencer does not obey the referee's orders or makes unjustified criticism of the referee's decisions or does not accept and obey them.

Forbidden fencing action - when a fencer performs a forbidden fencing action (see chapter: Prohibited actions).

Stealing Hits - When a fencer attempts to ward off an imminent hit (such as by overstepping, deflecting an attack with their hand, or while wrestling) by unjustifiably calling for an interruption of the weapon session.

Unnecessary harshness / uncontrolled fencing - When a fencer attempts to intimidate or interfere with their opponent by using particular harshness. When a fencer performs actions that indicate a lack of weapon control and or disability to stop the weapon.

Not trying to not get hit - Fencers are encouraged to hit without getting hit. Fencers who only want to hit and do not try to protect themselves or do not actively avoid being hit will receive a penalty hit (in addition to any valid hit received).



4. Category

Tearing off the opponent's protective equipment - If a fencer intentionally tears or tries to tear off their opponent's fencing mask or gloves or other protectors from their body, they will be disqualified for the competition.

Intentionally injuring an opponent - If a fencer attempts to injure their opponent by deliberate actions, e.g. intentionally hitting unprotected areas or forbidden hit zones (if specified in the core rulebook), pushing after a lever, etc., or if the fencer willingly accepts an injury to the opponent, the fencer will be disqualified from the tournament.

Improper Conduct - Improper conduct includes, for example, any kind of vocal criticism of the conduct or decisions of judges, insulting or belittling a person or the audience, making threats, throwing equipment or weapons, making noise, or the like. If a fencer refuses to salute their opponent before or after the bout or abuses the formality of the salute to insult or ridicule. If a tournament participant behaves improperly during the tournament (also outside the fights), they will be excluded from the tournament.

It is the responsibility of the host to expel the fencer from the site of the competition and / or take further action.

Violations of group 4 can lead to a ban of the fencer for further tournaments by the DDHF. Such a case will be handled by the DDHF Sports Committee.



Rules for tournament management, judges and assistants

Tournament management

The tournament management is responsible for the organization, the execution and documentation of the tournament. It decides in the last instance on questions of rules. The tournament management ensures that at least one referee and one assistant (for transcript, documentation and if necessary timekeeping, etc.) are available for each bout.

For official tournaments of the DDHF at least one member of the tournament management must be an official representative of the DDHF. The tournament management sends the results electronically to the DDHF after the conclusion of the tournament.

Referee

Judges are qualified individuals appointed by the tournament management as an authority. They have the responsibility over a bout. They lead the bout with hand signals and commands, decide on the validity and scoring of a hit and announce the result of the bout. They may give disciplinary cards and exclude a fencer from the fencing. They check the documentation of the fencing.

General decisions of the referee can be appealed to the tournament management. Factual decisions cannot be appealed. Attempting to challenge factual decisions is considered improper criticism and will be penalized with a warning.

Assistants / Lüsner

Assistants, historically referred to as Lüsner, are individuals appointed by the tournament management to assist the judges in their duties. Assistants do not have to be qualified judges, but must receive appropriate instruction in their duties and responsibilities from the tournament management or judges. They are mainly responsible for the documentation of the competition.



Nomenclature

Fight - the comparison of two fencers with the aim of determining the objectively better. The criteria are the rules listed here and the result refers exclusively to a particular weapon and the sporting approach.

Encounter - single exchange between two fencers, starting with the command "Go!" and ending with the command "Stop!".

Bout - the sum of all encounters until the end of the bout (points, time, etc.) is reached.

Competition - sum of all bouts of all tournament participants (pool fights, final rounds, etc.) in a specific weapon genre.

Tournament - An event aimed at determining, through a series of bouts, the tournament participants with the objectively best performances in one or more competitions. A tournament may include various sports competitions.

Fencing floor

Depending on the space available, fencing floors of different sizes are possible. In a tournament with several fencing floors, all fencing floors must be the same size.

The fencing floor is defined as follows:

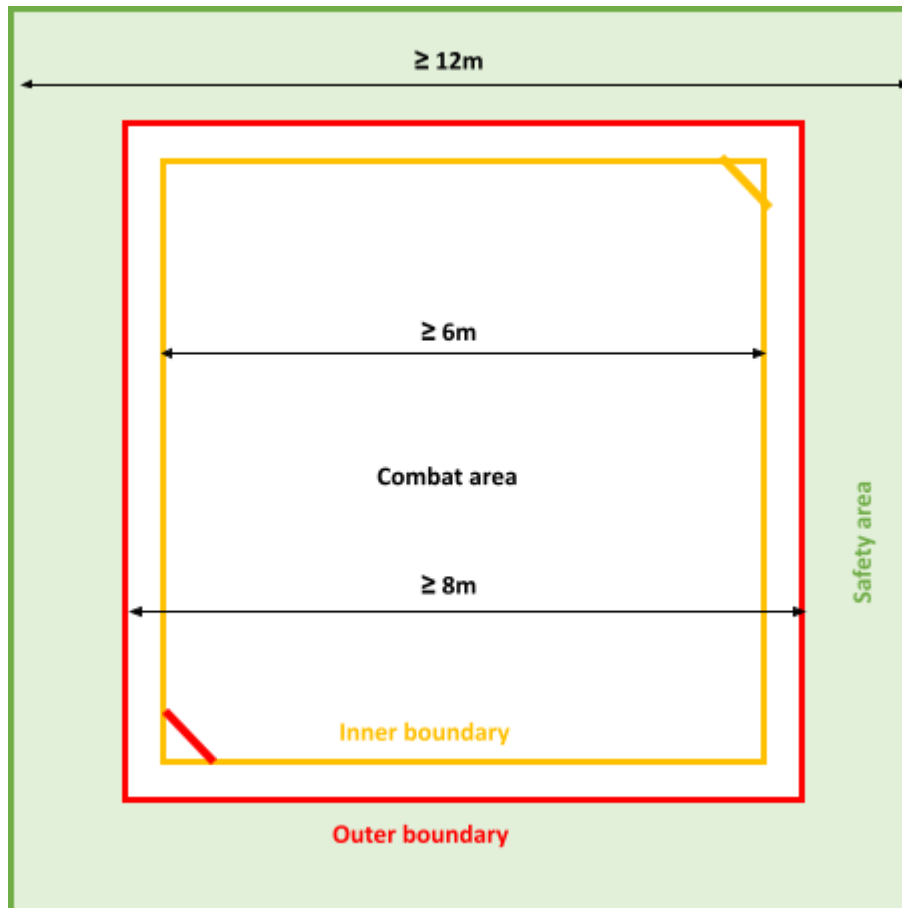
1. **Area** - The fencing floor is a square area with the size of 8m × 8m to a maximum of 14m × 14m (optimal size is 10m × 10m). Rectangular fencing floors are allowed as long as they do not fall below an edge length of 8m. It is bordered by a red outer line (Outer Boundary).
2. **Border zone** - The fencing floor contains a circumferential border zone. It extends from the outer line 1m inwards and is marked inside by a yellow warning line (inner boundary).
3. **Set-up points** - At two diagonally opposite points in the corner of the border zone are the two set-up points. Each set-up point is marked by a taped corner in the respective color (red or yellow).
4. **Safety area** - A safety area of 2m must be kept free around each fencing floor. If the safety area cannot be kept, pushing, carrying or shoving is to be forbidden in the rules for safety reasons. Active or passive stepping over will not be counted as a hit, but the fight will be restarted at the set-up points. An exception to this is when the fencer intentionally steps over the outside line to force an interruption of the encounter; in this case this action can be penalized with a hit for the opponent.

All lines must be clearly marked. The following color coding is recommended:

- a. Set-up corner - red or yellow.
- b. Warning line - yellow

c. Outer line - red

Definition and appearance of the fencing floor:





Change history

Version	Change	Date	Authors
5.0en	Translation of version 5.0 into English.	02.12.2022	Julian Nickerl Lukas Mästle-Goer