

ADVANCED ACTOR COMBATANT GLOSSARY

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This is a living document and while Fight Directors Canada seeks to keep this glossary up to date it is simply impossible to list all terms or techniques. Individual teachers may add to what is listed or suggest an alternative meaning or explanation for a particular term or technique. If there is a disagreement between what is written and what is taught in class the written test will err on side of the instructor.

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All references and definitions are taken from:

- 'The Complete Encyclopedia of Arms and Armour' Claude Blair & Leonid Tarassuk.*
- 'The Martini A-Z of Fencing' E.D. Morton.*
- 'Developing a Course in Stage Combat' Dr. Kara Wooten.*
- 'The Art and History of Personal Combat' Arthur Wise.*

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Advanced Actor Combatant Glossary of Terms

BROADSWORD AND SHIELD

ASPIS The round, bowl-shaped wooden shield used by Greek [hoplites](#).

BACK SWORD 1) A seventeenth-century cavalry broadsword, with single or basket guard. The blade was flat, broad and single-edged, which distinguished it from the more common two-edged cavalry broadsword. 2) The weapon used in a species of sword-play popular in the eighteenth century. The weapon was basket-hilted, the right edge only sharpened and the point rounded, not sharp. In the second half of the century, the popularity of the sport declined and was largely replaced by prize fighting with the fists. Backswordsmanship lived on, however, in the slightly different form of singlestick(q.v.)

BUCKLER. A small round shield, approximately 8 – 14 inches in diameter normally used with a single grip attached to its center.

GUIGE A long strap, used to hang a shield on the shoulder or neck. This was primarily done when the shield was not in use. Nevertheless, soldiers also wore the strap in this fashion in combat: it allowed the soldier to wear the shield on their back, freeing up their hand for use of a second weapon or a two handed weapon such as the spear.

HEATER SHIELD (Not a historical term, but a Victorian description due to this shield's resemblance to a clothes iron) As body armour improved, knight's shields became smaller, leading to the familiar heater style. Both kite and heater style shields were made of several layers of laminated wood, with a gentle curve in cross section. The heater style inspired the shape of the symbolic heraldic shield that is still used today.

KITE SHIELD (Sometimes called the Norman Shield) This medieval shield was rounded at the top and tapered at the bottom. This gave some protection to the user's legs, without adding too much to the total weight of the shield.

SCUTUM The large single griped shield of the Romans. It took various shapes over time the most common being a large curved rectangle.

SHIELD BOSS Is a round conical piece of thick metal at the center of a shield. The boss provided a place to mount the shield's grip and proved very useful in deflecting blows. As time went on and the heater shield became more popular, the boss became more of an ornamental piece. Often, bosses are not present on non-circular shields due to the differences in mounting the grip and the deflection technique being used.

TARGET A small round shield, similar to the buckler, more often used forearm against the back. Traditionally wood covered with leather. Generally no less than two feet wide.

ADVANCED RAPIER & COMPANION WEAPON

CASE OF RAPIERS. The simultaneous use of a pair of rapiers. Or a twin/matched pair of rapiers, generally carried in the same sheath, for those who favored double rapier play.

CAPE OR CLOAK With the development of the rapier came a want to have something in the non dominant hand to aid in attack and defense. First came the dagger, specifically made for use in the non dominant hand, but with the “parrying dagger” came edicts against its use and it was made illegal to carry one. One could however, always carry a cloak or cape, and thus the science of using the cloak as a defensive or offensive weapon evolved.

Closed Form: The more historically accurate form of cloak. The cloak is wrapped from inside to outside along the non dominant arm from hand to elbow leaving a length of cloak (the drape) to fall to about knee height in the engarde position. This form makes use of direct blocks/parries with the wrapped hand against thrusts or the drape of the cape to block cuts. Sometimes the hand in this form is used to grasp the opponent’s blade.

Club Form: In this form the cloak is held as one would a club, and used in much the same way; either as if it were a flexible sword in beat parries, or in attacks that are avoided or in special instances in controlled contact strikes to the opponent’s body.

Open Form: The largely theatrical style of cloak use. The use of the cloak opening the breadth of the fabric and using large sweeping motions to deflect or to initiate attacks. This form makes much of using figure 8 patterns.

Tutti Capperti: The use of the cloak and Rapier together in a joined parry leading to counter attack.

ADVANCED SMALLSWORD

BUTTERFLY GUARD. An eighteenth century smallsword guard or shell, generally symmetrical and comprised of two lobes.

COLICHEMARDE A peculiar variation of the small-sword which appeared in the early eighteenth century. The top third of the blade next to the hilt was much thicker than usual; below this, it narrowed very abruptly to the usual inconsiderable width. This odd construction was supposed to increase its strength while its triangular section, hollowed on the three sides, rendered it very light in the point. It was said to have been devised by Count John Charles von Konigsmark (q.v.) and is allegedly a corruption of his name.

COQUILLE. The cup guard on a foil.

SALLE. Properly speaking, salle d'armes, the actual apartment where matches are held, skills are practiced and lessons given. In more general use, however, salle has become synonymous with a fencing club as a whole.

SPADROON A light cut-and-thrust weapon, originating in Germany in the eighteenth century. It was hilted like a small-sword and had a flat, pointed blade, sharp on one end must be regarded as the modern fencing sabre.

ST GEORGE'S GUARD OR PARRY. The fifth (quinte) position and parry at sabre. The name was derived from the traditional position of St. George's hand when he slew the dragon. The early sabre masters were most insistent that it should invariably be executed with a step back.

SWORD-AND-LANTERN A form of surprise attack delivered by foot assassins and other ruffians, the lantern being held in the unarmed hand and used to dazzle the victim. The practice was so common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that assaults of this sort were made a capital offence.

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Eastern Martial Arts**

ABANIKO. (Filipino) a fanning strike in the high line with a single stick.

ABCEDARIO. (Filipino) Literally translates into “by the letters” or “by the numbers”. Main practice patterns performed in an Abierta (open) stance.

ABCEDARIO 4. A “Sinawali” or double stick pattern in Escrima comprised of four lobtik hits. Performed in the high line with an Abierta stance.

ABCEDARIO 6. A “Siniwali” or double stick pattern in Escrima comprised of six strikes, two lobtik and two witik’s. The witik is performed in the low lines in an Abierta stance.

ABCEDARIO 8. A “Siniwali” or double stick pattern in Escrima performed in Abierta stance and comprised of eight lobtik strikes; four done in the high line, four in the low line.

ABIERTA. (Filipino) An open body stance. Arms and weapons are not crossed.

AGAW. (Filipino) A disarming technique. Term describing all disarming techniques.

ARKO. (Filipino) This is the twirling motion of the stick that is seen in many of the basic Serreda Stick counter sequences. The stick is twirled in either an upward or a downward motion.

ARNIS/ESCRIMA (ar nis/eh screem ah). The best known and systematic fighting art of the Philippines originally known as Kali. Said to have originated in India and later refined with the introduction and influence of the rapier and dagger during the Spanish invasion in the Early to mid 1500’s. The English translation is “Armour of the Hands”.

BASTON/SOLO BASTON (Filipino) The single stick used in Escrima, Arnis and Kali.

BO. (Japanese) “Staff”, “stave” or “stick”. A wooden staff approximately six feet long. It is one of the five weapons systemized by the early Okinawan developers of te (hand), later called Kobudo and originated with the poles used by farmers to balance heavy loads across the shoulders.

BOKKEN. (Japanese) “Wooden sword”. A wooden staff resembling the contours of the forged Katana. As used by the Japanese feudal warrior, the Bokken proved to be combat-efficient and greatly increased the range of Kenjutsu (Art of the Sword) practices before coming into its own as a weapon of lethal possibilities. Main weapon for practice in Iado and Aikido.

BOLO. (Filipino) A type of machete used in Escrima.

DAGA. (Filipino) A dagger or knife used in Escrima.

DAISHO. (Japanese) “Big and small”. Two swords, one long (Katana) and the other short (Wakizashi) worn by the Samurai class in Feudal Japan.

DISTANCIA. (Filipino) “distance”. A critical distance can be defined as any distance that has the ability to form a crisis or threatening situation. In Arnis/Escrima that refers to any distance from which your opponent can strike you with their edged, impact or anatomical weapons. There are four distances in Arnis/Escrima, three of which are critical.

EARTH 6. (Filipino) A serreda, sinawali (doublestick) pattern that is similar to the heaven six pattern and performed entirely in the low lines. The main target areas being knees, ankles, feet and shins.

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ESPADA (Filipino) A sword used in Escrima

ESPADA Y DAGA (Filipino) The sword and dagger used in Escrima.

FLOURITE. (filipino) “Small flower/circle”. A stick technique resembling the Moulinet or Molinello from Rapier play. A quick circular action that can either act as a feint or an actual strike.

HAKAMA. (Japanese) “Divided spirit”. The skirt-like trousers primarily worn in Kendo, Aikido Iaido and sometimes in the upper ranks of Judo as well as some styles of Jujutsu. The traditional garb of the Samurai.

HEAVEN 6. (Filipino) A Serreda, sinawali (doublestick) pattern that is comprised of four lobtik and two witik strikes performed in the high lines.

IAI. (Japanese) 1. A sword exercise of Kata employing a series of thrusting and cutting techniques while drawing and returning the blade. 2. A form of sparring used in classical Karate in which both the attacker and defender begin by sitting and facing one another.

IAIDO. (Japanese) (Roughly) "the way of mental presence and immediate reaction." It replaced the earlier and more literal name *battōjutsu* "art of drawing the sword" The modern art of drawing the Samurai sword from its scabbard.

KAMAE. (Japanese) “Attitude” or “posture”. Ready Positions. The stances or ready positions. A general term found in all of the Japanese Martial disciplines. The five primary Katana/Bokken postures used in FDC are as follows:

1. **CHUDAN-NO-KAMAE.** (Japanese) “Middle level guard”. Most common posture in kendo with the point of one’s weapon aimed to the opponent’s throat or eye level. Considered both an offensive and defensive position.
2. **GEDAN/NO KAMAE.** (Japanese) “Lower guard” or “lower level guard”. Basic low posture for Katana, blade is in the centre line. Considered a defensive position.
3. **HASSO/NO KAMAE.** (Japanese) One of the five basic postures of Katana with the blade held vertically to the right or left side of the head, the true edge facing the opponent.
4. **JODAN-NO-KAMAE.** (Japanese) “High level posture” A posture in which one holds a weapon such as a Katana, Bokken or Shinai with one or both hands over the head.
5. **WAKI-NO-KAMAE** (Japanese) Low line “side” or “flank” positioning. A posture in which the Katana/Bokken is held to the right or left side of the body in a low line, and the blade positioned to the rear of the body. Considered a defensive position, and one used to draw in the opponent.

KATANA. (Japanese) “Sword”. A Japanese sword with a curved, single-edged blade twenty-four to thirty-six inches long. The Katana was worn with its scabbard thrust through the wearer’s belt. It was worn with the cutting edge up.

Parts of the Katana with Sheath:

1. **HAMON.** (Japanese) The pattern or design of the hardened martensite steel as it shows on the side of the blade including the transition zone (Habuchi) to the softer pearlite steel
2. **ITO.** (Japanese) Braid wrapped on the hilt to hold it the tang. It is wrapped over the Menuki to hold them in place.
3. **KASHIRA.** (Japanese) “Pommel cap” or “Ferrule”. A metal cap covering the tip of the hilt of Japanese swords. Daggers, etc. Frequently referred to as the Pommel, it is usually made as part of a set with the Fuchi.
4. **KISSAKI.** (japanese) Sword point of the Katana.
5. **KOIGUCHI.** (Japanese). Mouth band at open end of the scabbard.
6. **KURIGATA.** (Japanese) “Chestnut shape”. The cord knob of the scabbard of a Katana. The cord (sageo), which helps keep the sword in position in the wearer’s belt, passes through a hole in the Kuri-gata.
7. **NAKAGO.** (Japanese) The Tang; the portion of a Katana blade to which the hilt is attached.
8. **SAYA** (Japanese) The scabbard of a samurai sword (katana).
9. **TSUBA** (Japanese) The guard or hilt of a samurai sword.
10. **TSUKA** (Japanese) The grip or handle of a samurai sword.
11. **YAKIBA** (Japanese) Hardened edge of the sword (katana).

KEN. (Japanese) Straight sword made in early Japan. It was replaced by the Tachi in the Heian period.

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KEN-JUTSU. (Japanese) “Art of the sword”. An aggressive method of swordsmanship practiced by Japanese Feudal warriors in which the combatants pitted naked blade against blade. Today Ken-jutsu is practiced chiefly in the form of Kata and actual combat is staged only with Bokken. Ken-jutsu is the art from which Kendo developed.

KENDO. (Japanese) “Way of the sword”. The modern art and sport of Japanese fencing. The hands and forearms are protected by a Kote (wrist glove) and the chest is covered by a Do (breast plate). The head is protected by a Men (headguard) consisting of a nickel-steel grill and heavily padded cloth that covers the head, throat, and shoulders.

The Kendoka uses a Shinai (practice sword) which consists of four pieces of bamboo held together by cords. The object of a Kendo contest is to deliver scoring cuts to an opponent’s pre-determined target area: The center of the head, right side of the head, left wrist, right wrist, left side of the ribcage, right side of the ribcage. The throat and chest are targets for thrusting techniques.

KOB-KOB. (Filipino) A “Siniwali” or couple stick pattern in Escrima performed in Abierta stance and comprised of six witik strikes in high, mid and low lines.

KOBUDO (Japanese) “Weapons way” The practice of “Okinawan” weaponry with improvised farm implements.

- **BO.** (Japanese) “Staff”, “stave” or “stick”. A wooden staff approximately six feet long. It is one of the five weapons systemized by the early Okinawan developers of te (hand), later called Kobudo and originated with the poles used by farmers to balance heavy loads across the shoulders.
 1. **SAI.** (Japanese) A prolonged truncheon about fifteen to twenty inches long used as a defensive instrument against various weapons, specifically the sword and staff as well as empty hand attacks. It is believed to have originated from the pitchfork and is one of the five systematized weapons of Okinawan Kubodo.
 2. **KAMA** (Japanese) “sickle” The simple farming sickle used to cut wheat, rice, etc, that farmers converted into a weapon to combat the oppressive Japanese military of the time.
 3. **TONFA.** (Japanese) “Handle”. Another of the five farm implements developed in the Okinawan art of Kubodo. The Tonfa consists of a hardwood billet between fifteen and twenty inches long with a short projecting stub set about six inches from one end. It can be used to block or parry, thrust, or, be spun circularly to strike. Known also as the Tuifa. The original use of the Tonfa was as the wooden handles of a rice-grinding mill.
 4. **NUNCHAKU.** (Japanese) “Wooden flail”. An Okinawan rice thresher made of two unequal lengths of hardwood hinged together by a cord originally made of hair - either human or horse. During the Japanese occupation of the Ryukyu Islands some 350 years ago, invading warlords prohibited the use of ordinary weapons such as the gun, sword and spear. The Nunchaku developed as one of the five systematized weapons of the indigenous Okinawan art of Kubodo. The modern Nunchaku is made with both sticks the same length. Lighter woods and even plastic have replaced the heavy red oak and nylon cords or swivel-mounted chains are used in place of hair. The Nunchaku can be swung with tremendous velocity to strike. It can block or parry and the cord can be used to choke or catch an opponents wrist and apply severe pressure to immobilize and bring about a submission.

LOBTIK (Filipino) A strike that follows through it’s target.

POOK. (Filipino) “Zoning”. Refers to movements made with the intention of effectively blocking or evading an opponents strike.

PRIMERO. (Filipino) The first category of striking. The “dead” strike.

PUNJO. (Filipino) The butt end of an Escrima stick usually 3 – 4 inches long.

PUNTA (Filipino) The shaft, or striking end of an Escrima stick, usually 2 feet long.

SAMURAI. (Japanese) “Warrior” or “one who serves”. The swordsmen of Feudal Japan who served a lord and lived by the code of Bushido. Strict rules and regulations were established for

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Feudal lords and their Samurai after 1600 AD under the Tokugawa Shogunate. They regulated even the length of sword, type of dress and manner of speech.

STANDARD 6. (Filipino) A Serreda, sinawali (doublestick) pattern that is similar to the heaven six pattern. The difference being that the 2nd and 5th lobtik strikes are directed to the flank (midsection) of the body.

SUBURI (Japanese) The basic cutting and thrusting exercises of the katana, bokken or Kendo shinai. In Kendo, these are performed by the kendoka (practitioner) as a part of basic practice, both prior to wearing armour and with full armour. The practice is also performed individually, in a group session or with a partner. The exercises are to develop technique, build strength, speed and stamina, with the additional benefit of developing focus, concentration and correct breathing. A shout, known as *kiai*, is made on the completion of each strike. There are a series of eight basic cuts and thrusts using the Japanese sword (katana). These techniques are as follows:

1. Men-A long slashing stroke aimed at the center of your opponent's head.
2. *oshomen* – downward cut aimed at the center of your opponent's forehead
3. *hidarimen* – diagonal cut aimed at the left side of the mask
4. *migimen* – diagonal cut aimed at the right side of the mask
5. *migido* – diagonal cut aimed at the right side of the breastplate
6. *gyakudo* – diagonal cut aimed at the left side of the breastplate (also *hidarido*)
7. *kote* – downward cut to the right wrist
8. *hidarikote* – downward cut to the left wrist
9. *tsuki* – A thrust aimed at the throat

SUMBRADA. (Filipino) “Shadow”. A method of weapons sparring using an even number of counter techniques and offensive strikes.

TANTO (Japanese) A dagger with a blade eight to sixteen inches long and carried by the samurai in addition to the katana and wakazashi.

TRIANGLE STEPPING. (Filipino) “Hakbang Tatsulock”. The forward and reverse triangles used in the footwork patterns taught in Arnis/Escrima. The forward triangle is generally used for defensive purposes and the reverse triangle is generally used offensive movements.

WAKIZASHI (Japanese) “short sword” The shorter of the samurai's two swords. The wakizashi was the same as the katana except that its blade was only sixteen to twenty-three inches long. It was carried in the belt or “obi” with the katana.

WITIK. (Filipino) This method of striking involves retraction which is useful when switching directions or angles of attack. The strike is initiated in the same manner as the primero strike however at the point of impact it retracts making it more difficult to block, check or disarm. Faking maneuvers and multiple strikes are all executed in witik form.

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MARTIAL ARTS AXILLARY MATERIAL

AIKUCHI. (Japanese) Small Tanto (knife) without a tsuba (hand guard/hilt). Carried concealed inside the clothes, often by women.

BADIK. A Malayan dagger shaped like a butterfly when held together whose straight blade bears one sharp edge. Known in China as a Dip-Do or Bot Jum Do.

BALISONG. A “fanning” or “flicking” knife produced in the Philippines and considered a restricted or prohibited weapon. Colloquially referred to as a butterfly knife.

BISENTO. (Japanese). A spear-like weapon with a blade resembling a scimitar affixed to its end. It was used by the ninja of feudal Japan.

CHAIN. (Chinese) Any one of various weapons approximately twelve feet in length attached to a one pound metal weight with metal rings crowning its egg-shaped base. The Chinese version was swung around in a variety of unpredictable patterns and at a tremendous speed. Defensively it was used to keep enemies at bay while plotting a strategy against overwhelming odds or in an individual encounter. In Japan a similar chain was used and connected to a pick or sickle. Called *Kusari* in Japanese.

GUNBAI. (Japanese) The large solid open War fan. Could be used to ward off arrows, as a sun shade and a sign of truce.

GUNSEN (Japanese) Soldiers folding war fans used to keep cool.

JIAN/CHIEN. (Chinese) The double-edged sword used in many styles of Kung-Fu. Known also as the Gim (Tai-chi chuan) or Jian.

JO. (Japanese) “Small staff”. A four-foot long, two-inch thick wooden staff used in Jojutsu (art of the staff).

JUTTE. (Japanese) “Ten Hands” A forked iron truncheon that can parry an attack by a sword. It was used by Japanese warriors and commoners and later by the police. It derives its name from the fact that its original form resembled the Chinese character for the number ten and was a hand weapon. It resembles a one sided *Sai*.

KABUTO. (Japanese) The helmet worn by the Japanese Samurai. It was made of iron or lacquered leather and was secured to the head by a series of silk cords.

KAGI-YARI. (Japanese) “Key spear”. A Hooked spear used for parrying and hooking an opponent’s weapons.

ODACHI. (Japanese) “Large Tachi” or long sword, whose cutting edge was over 36 inches in length; not to be confused with the Katana. Usually carried slung across the back.

PUTONG. (Filipino) a headband worn as a symbol of bravery by Escrimadors who have killed several opponents in combat.

SHINAI (Japanese) A fencing practice sword made of bamboo strips, and used in the practice of Kendo.

TACHI (Japanese) A sword that predated the Katana, usually lighter and more curved. It was worn slung from a sword belt with the cutting edge down.

TESSEN (Japanese) A folding fan made to look like innocuous, but made of iron intended to be used as a covert weapon where weapons were prohibited.

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GENERAL SUPPLEMENTAL WEAPONS

FALCHION A curved sword of the scimitar type, from Latin falx, a sickle.(see Fauchion).

FLEURET An old-fashioned term for the foil, introduced in France towards the end of the seventeenth century, when all cutting actions were rapidly becoming obsolete and almost all attacks were executed with the point alone, protected by a small leather cap which might fancifully be supposed to resemble a fleure (flower bud).

HANGER 1) A curved cutting weapon similar to the cutlass, especially used by members of the armed forces. The name derives from the fact that the weapon was worn hanging perpendicularly. Moreover, with cutting weapons, the guards prime and seconde, in which the handle is high and the blade may be said to be 'hanging' down, were preferable to the tierce or quarte generally adopted in small-sword play. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, a small loop attached to the belt, in which the sword dagger hung.

POLEARM. A generic term for staff weapons.

SCHIAVONA An edged, basket-hilted sword, of the type used by the schiavoni - the body-guard of the Doges of Venice. The guard tapered upwards towards the point of its attachment to the pommel, as it does on the modern fencing sabre.

SCIMITAR The typical Oriental cutting weapon, with curved blade often broadening towards the point. It was introduced to western Europe by the housas or Hungarian light horsemen who became familiar with it in the long drawn-out Turkish wars, and whose hussar regiments, armed with the sabre, a close imitation of the weapon, set the fashion for every other European army.

SPADA (It.) A sword.

Found Weapon – Concepts – How to predict the unpredictable
– original from JF Gangnon updated Daniel Levinson

Safety rules/techniques:

1. Distance
2. Eye Contact
3. Target
4. Direction of force

Aspect of the object

1. Weight
2. Size
3. Shape
4. Texture – Rough/Smooth/Slippery
5. Structure- Solidity/Fragile/Fluidity
6. Variability- Irregularity/Consistency

Techniques of attack

1. Push
2. Punch – hit and retract
3. Thrust
4. Slap
5. Cut
6. Pull – Traction
7. Lever
8. Smother
9. Choke
10. Blind
11. Shared Resistance
12. Reversal of Energy
13. Throw

Defensive Action

1. Evasion
2. Opposition
3. Deflection

Control action

1. Trap/Lock
2. Croise/Bind/Envelopement
3. Grab

Taking Object – Disarm

1. Steal

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2. Threat
3. Hurt/Kill

Other Uses of an object

1. Original Function
2. Distraction
3. Tripping
4. Disarm
5. Projectile
6. Shield