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## **BASIC 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 originally taken from, 'The Complete Encyclopedia of Arms and Armour' Claude Blair & Leonid Tarassuk, 'The Martini A-Z of Fencing' E.D. Morton, 'The Art and History of Personal Combat' Arthur Wise.*

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## SECTION 1: GENERAL STAGE COMBAT TERMS

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**aikido roll:** A roll that resembles the shoulder roll but rather than using both hand and arms to lower the body to the floor the dominate arm is curved and used to guide the upper body to the floor. In effect making a circle of ones body to encounter the floor less in a diagonal line across the back from shoulder to opposite hip.

**alignment:** The body's posture when it is the optimal placement for skeletal bones to be efficiently used, so the muscles have to do less work for the same effect and freeing them up for efficient movement.

**cadence:** The rhythm in which a sequence of movements are made.

**centre lines:** The line that bisect the body into equal halves along the vertical as opposed to the median that separates the body into two equal halves above and below the waist.

**compound Attack:** Is an attack that is made up of more than one blade or limb action and normally involves at least one refusal of parry or evasion of the partner's attempt to block the attack. The opposite of a simple attack.

**Cue:** An action designed to warn the partner of the next move. After eye contact a cue is the first part of every aggressive action in Stage Combat.

**disarm:** The act of forcibly removing the partner's weapon from their hand.

**disengage:** The act of ceasing contact with the partner's weapon.

**dominant:** When right-handed the right side, when left-handed the left side.

**engage:** To establish contact with the partners weapon or person.

**Extended parry:** A parry made with the arm in full extension.

**extension:** The position of the arm at the completion of all sword attacks.

**feint:** An offensive movement made to resemble an attack, intending to draw a reaction from the opponent and open a new line of attack.

**high lines:** In general stage combat the areas of the body above the waist. In fencing the areas above the sword hand in the en guard position.

**in distance:** the measure where combatants could make contact with their partner by extending their weapon.

**inside lines:** The parts of the body to the non-dominant side (left of the sword hand when one is right-handed, and right of the sword hand if one is left-handed).

**Instinctive parry:** (*see Simple Parry*)

**lines:** The four quadrants of the body, specifically inside, outside, high and low. (See specific definitions)

**low lines:** In general stage combat the areas of the body below the waist. In fencing the targets below the sword hand in the en guard position.

**measure:** The distance between two combatants.

**median lines:** The line that bisect the body into equal halves along the horizontal at the waist as opposed to the vertical of right and left halves of the body.

**neutral:** the position where the hand is vertical with the thumb on top, i.e. half-way between supination and pronation. In sword usually only seen in a downward cut to the head.

**off-line:** The relationship of combatants bodies when their centre lines are offset to one another.

**off-line attack:** An attack that is directed at a target outside the partners body. The opposite of on- line attack. (*also Off Target*)

**on-line:** The relationship of combatants bodies when their centre lines are precisely lined up and combatants are facing each other, no matter where they are on stage.

**on-line attack:** An attack made directly to a target area of the body, usually out of distance, the opposite of an off-line attack. (*also On Target*)

**opening:** An unguarded area.

**out of distance:** The measure where combatants could not make contact with their partner by extending their weapon or limb.

**outside lines:** The parts of the body on the dominant side (right of the sword hand when one is right-handed, and left of the sword hand if one is left-handed).

**parry:** A defensive action whereby an attack is blocked, deflected or re-directed with a weapon or object. (sword specific parries under single sword)

The three categories of parry are:

1. simple / instinctive / direct
2. semi- or half-circular.
3. counter / circle / acquired

**progressive attack:** Executing the various movements of a compound attack while continuously approaching the target. The opposite of remaining with feet in place.

**pronation:** The hand orientation with the palm down. (inward rotation)

**reverse grip:** An inverted or underhanded grip on a weapon where the weapon is pointing below the pinky rather than above the thumb and first finger.

**salute:** A courtesy exchanged between combatants and duelists at the start and/or conclusion of an encounter.

**shoulder roll:** A roll diagonally across the back from shoulder to opposite hip, protecting the head and minimizing contact with the spine. Normally both hands and arms are used to lower the body to the ground.

Side fall: A fall where the combatant drops their weight center, then sits down to the left or right and using a lengthening of the arms and legs along the floor to absorb the momentum.

**Simple Attack:** A single direct attack. The opposite of a compound attack.

**Sit fall:** A backwards fall where the combatant steps back and sits down to absorb the momentum, using the opposite leg and upper body for counter-balance. (Also straight back fall)

**supination:** The hand orientation with the palm up. (outward rotation)

**Target (area):** The area to which an attack is delivered. A specific part of a body, a weapon or the area around them.

## SECTION 2: FOOTWORK, STANCE AND POSTURE

**advance:** From an en guard stance, the leading foot steps forward, followed by the trailing foot, (without crossing them) returning to the same distance between the feet.

**Appel** (Fr: “call”): The striking of the floor with the sole of the leading foot to draw a reaction from your partner. A feint with the foot.

**Balestra:** A preparation of attack. An aggressive hop forward followed by an attack, usually followed by a lunge.

**cross (step):** An avoidance where the working leg crosses in front of the supporting leg (which stays in place or pivots on the ball of the foot), removing the combatant from the line of attack.

**defensive guard (stance):** A stance where the non-dominant foot is forward.

**Demi-lunge:** The shortest of the lunges. Front leg is still bent and the rear leg is still straight but the distance between the feet is about half that of a lunge.

**Demi-volte:** A specific slip step with the non-dominant leg, where the back leg slips out to the side so the hips are brought 90 degrees to the line of attack. ?

**Double pass** (also *full pass*): A compound piece of footwork comprised of two passes in the same direction.

**En garde** (also *on guard*): A ready position from which a combatant can launch an offensive or defensive movement.

**Full pass:** see *double pass*

**Grande-lunge:** A long deep lunge where the leading foot is extended forward as far as the combatant can conveniently manage. Front leg is bent and the rear leg is straight the distance between the feet is about at least a third wider than that of a lunge.

**lead(ing) foot:** The forward foot at any time.

**lunge:** The forward extension of the arm, body, and legs, used to reach an opponent. A long step forward with the leading foot, leaving the trailing foot in place, usually immediately following a thrust. In the final position where the front knee is bent and back knee is straight. (See also demi-lunge and grand lunge.)

**neutral guard (stance):** A stance where both feet are parallel underneath the hips.

**offensive guard (stance):** A stance where the dominant foot is forward.

**Passada sotto** (It: “passing beneath”): An evasion lowering the physical centre towards the ground, removing it from the plane of attack, by extending the non dominant leg to the rear or to the side, and reinforcing one’s stance with the non dominant hand.

**Pass backward:** The leading foot crosses the trailing foot to the rear one full step. Hips may or may not retain original orientation.

**Pass forward:** The trailing foot crosses the leading foot to the fore one full step. Hips may or may not retain original orientation.

**Patinando:** A compound piece of footwork, comprised of an advance followed immediately by a lunge.

**Pied ferme:** A riposte or counter-riposte or any other action with NO footwork.

**Recover:** A return to the en guard stance after a lunge.

**Recover back** (also *recover to the rear*): Returning to the en garde stance after a lunge by moving the leading foot back.

**Recover forward** (also *recover to the fore*): Returning to the on guard stance after a lunge by moving the trailing foot forward.

**retreat** (also *retire*): From an en guard stance, the trailing foot steps backward, followed by the leading foot, returning to the same distance between the feet.

**slip (step):** An avoidance where the working leg crosses behind the supporting leg (which stays in place or pivots on the ball of the foot), removing the combatant from the line of attack.

**Sprint back:** A rapid sequence of passes backward.

**Stance:** The specific positioning of the feet and body as part of correct physical placement for a particular technique or form of combat.

**Thwart:** To step forward or rearward on a diagonal to the opponent with feet open (not crossed).

**trailing foot:** The rear foot at any time.

**traverse (step):** An avoidance, usually a diagonal slash. According to Hutton: “to shift one’s feet sideways; in traversing to the left, the left foot moves first and vice versa.”

**Volte:** A specific slip step with the non-dominant leg slipping around the dominant leg so it ends in front of the original leading leg so the hips are brought to more or less 180 degrees to the line of attack. Also referred to as Bum-in-Face by Maître d’Armes JP Fournier.

### SECTION 3: BASIC UNARMED GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Avoidance:** A defensive movement made by removing the body from the line of attack.
- Backhand:** An intended strike delivered with the back or knuckles of an open hand.
- Back fist:** An intended strike delivered with the back of a fist.
- Block:** A defensive action intended to stop a potential strike from reaching its intended target.
- Cage/caging:** Using your hands and forearms to keep the head and chest from striking the ground, wall or object when executing a Face Slam. Also allows a knap to add sound to the illusion.
- Choke:** An aggressive action designed to achieve the illusion of strangulation of a victim by using the operators limbs or a secondary object to constrict the throat of the victim.
- Contact slap:** A slap that makes contact with the body.
- Cross punch:** A Linear Punch delivered from right to left or visa versa that crosses the center point of it's intended target.
- Defensive stance:** A stance where the non-dominant foot is forward.
- Elbow strike:** An attack performed with the elbow to create the illusion of a strike.
- Forearm Block:** A Block using the forearm to stop or deflect an incoming strike. In stage combat we use the soft muscled points between and not upon the wrist or elbow joints on the forearm to make contact.
- Grapple:** The aggressive action of engaging in a close quarters fight without weapons or striking. (see also Wrestling)
- Guard:** A protective stance of the body designed to protect the most possible target points and still allow for strong mobility. In unarmed stage combat or guard is where the feet are positioned beneath the body shoulder width apart and one forward and one back with knees bent and both hands held loosely beneath the chin.
- Hammer punch:** A strike that uses the side of the fist, towards the pinky finger. The usual arm action is the same as when swinging a hammer.
- Hand Block:** A block using the front or the back of an open hand to stop or redirect an incoming strike.
- Head Butt:** The aggressive action of striking and opponent with the crown or forehead of your own skull.
- Jab:** A straight punch thrown from the lead arm that does not cross the central plane.
- Knap:** The sound used to create the illusion of a successful a strike.  
There are **Four different Types** for creating a knap:
- 1) Attacker, operator or first person.
  - 2) Victim, receiver or second person
  - 3) Shared, contact

4)  
5)

### Third person

There are Four different Knap techniques for creating the sound of a knap.

- 1) Slip, the knap is slipped into the actual move
- 2) Body Knap
- 3) Clap, made by a clap of the hands
- 4) Contact/Shared, actual contact of the attacker is made to some part of the victim's body

- Lock:** An aggressive technique for holding parts or all a victims body immobile using various grips and rotations. Usually executed against joints.
- Lunge Fall:** A forward facing Stage Fall in which the performer takes a large lunging step forward then places the thigh of their extended back leg on the ground, followed by their belly, their chest and their hands.
- Neutral Stance:** A stance where both feet are parallel underneath the hips.
- Operator:** The performer or character that initiates violence also known as Aggressor.
- Pat Block:** A block in which the palm of an open hand is used to stop or redirect an incoming strike by quickly and lightly pushing away an aggressors strike followed by an equally quick disengagement.
- Pile-driver :** A Linear punch delivered downward with the illusion of the full weight of the body behind it.
- Punch:** An intended strike delivered with the fist. There are a number of different types such as Straight Punch, Cross Punch, Hinge Punch, Hook Punch, Roundhouse Punch.
- Rabbit punch:** A specific punch designed to look like a strike to the spine or back of the neck.
- Roundhouse Kick:** A Large Round Kick in which the whole leg and foot travel around the operators body usually in full extension.
- Roundhouse Punch:** A large open round punch with the arm in full extension generally always crossing the victims center line unless blocked.
- Round Punch:** A Punch in which the fist travels a circular or semi-circular path from cue to target. (See also Hook Punch and Roundhouse Punch)
- Hook Punch:** A small and tight round Punch with the elbow bent generally never crossing the center line.
- Hinge Kick:** A kick in which the knee or hip operate as a fulcrum for the rest of the leg and foot to swing towards the target from, like a hinge. (See Crescent kick, Straight Kick, Snap kick)
- Stage Fall:** Descending the body from one height (or level) to another with the illusion of being out of control. (See also Sit Fall, Lunge Fall, Shoulder Roll)
- Sit Fall:** A controlled descent to the ground which eliminates the hands from striking the floor by using the legs to support the torso gradually from a standing position to a sitting position on the ground. Also known as a straight back fall



- Shoulder roll:** A roll that uses the hands to lower the body till the performer can make contact with the floor diagonally across the back from shoulder to opposite hip, protecting the head and minimizing contact with the spine.
- Slap:** Using the front of an open hand to strike a partner. Done in any line or angle.
- 1 **Drawing Slap:** Leading with the wrist and fore arm to pull the open hand through the intended target zone.
  - 2 **Pushing Slap:** Leading the action with the palm or fingers of an open hand with the forearm pushing it in a straight line through the target zone.
  - 3 **Hinging Slap:** A slap delivered by rotating an open hand through the target zone from the elbow shoulder or wrist.
  - 4 **Combination Slap:** A slap using two or more of these techniques to achieve the desired effect.
- Slip (step):** An avoidance where the working leg crosses behind the supporting leg (which stays in place or pivots on the ball of the foot), removing the combatant from the line of attack.
- Snap kick:** A hinge kick usually delivered with the top (laces) of the foot and usually involving a quick retraction of the foot following the strike.
- Stomp:** An intended strike with the foot, designed to slam the bottom of the foot downwards onto an opponent.
- Straight punch:** A linear punch traveling from the cue to the target without crossing the centre line.
- Throw:** To aggressively force a person or object to lift and pass through the air.
- Unarmed:** Without weapons.
- Uppercut:** A rising punch usually delivered to the face of an opponent.
- Victim:** The recipient of an aggressive or offensive action.
- Wing Block:** A Block using the upper arm to stop or deflect an incoming strike. With a bent arm the elbow is lifted above the head protecting the head like the wing of a bird. Contact is made on the triceps and deltoid muscles.
- Wrestle:** A close quarters fight that involves trying to throw or push your opponent to the ground.
- Working Leg:** The leg committing the action or being called on to do the necessary effort of the action.

#### SECTION 4: QUARTERSTAFF

**Quarterstaff uses many of the same terms as sword. Your instructor will lead you through the similarities and differences.**

**beat:** A sharp "tap" against either the middle or the fore end of the partner's staff, with the object of opening an offensive line, or provoking an attack.

**bind:** A preparation for an attack that carries the partner's staff diagonally across the body from high to a low line or vice versa.

**boxing guard:** When both hands are in pronation on the staff.

**butt end:** The end of the quarterstaff nearest the non-dominant hand.

**cut:** An attack made with an arc to the intended target area.

**fore end:** The end of the quarterstaff nearest the dominant hand.

**long form:** Hand positions using the full length of the staff for both defense and attack. The staff is controlled using the bottom third of the staff.

**mid-staff:** Centre third of the staff.

**short form:** Hand positions that divide the staff into three equal lengths for both defense and attack. The hands are placed at the central third of the staff.

**thrust:** An attack with the tip, fore end or butt end of the staff and with the arm in extension.

## SECTION 5: SINGLE SWORD

**acquired parry:** *see circular parry.*

**alternate five/counter five/five A:** *see sesta*

**attack on the blade:** A preparation of attack made from a guard position in which the partner's blade is taken by a beat, pressure or a froissement.

**beat:** An attack on the blade. A sharp tap against either the middle or the foible of the partner's blade, with the object of opening an offensive line, or provoking an attack.

**beat parry:** The simultaneous action of a parry and a strike upon the attacking blade that clears the line.

**bind:** A prise-de-fer. A preparation of an attack that carries the partner's blade diagonally across the body from high to a low line or vice versa, sometimes ending in an expulsion.

**change beat** (also *reverse beat*): A change of the line of engagement using a dégagé or a coupé immediately followed by a beat attack.

**change of engagement:** To release contact of the blades, and re-establish contact in a new line.

**circular parry** (also *counter parry* or *acquired parry*): A parry during which the defender's blade describes a circle to gather the partner's blade.

**closed line** (also *covered line*): When the position of the defender's weapon prevents an attack to that line of targeting.

**compound attack:** An attack composed of more than one blade action and incorporates one or more feints or deceptions of parry.

**corps à corps** (Fr: "body to body"): When the combatants come into physical contact and the weapons are immobilized.

**coulé** (Fr., also *glissade*): An attack from engagement, incorporating a grazing action, with the blades staying in contact throughout.

**counter parry:** *see circular parry*

**coupé** (Fr.): A disengagement made by passing the tip over the partner's blade.

**croisé** (Fr): A prise-de-fer. Taking the partner's blade from a high line to a low line or vice versa on the same side of the body, sometimes ending in an expulsion.

**cut:** An attack made with the edge of the blade.

**deception of parry:** The attacker's evasion of the defender's blade as the defender attempts to parry.

**dégagé:** Moving from the line of engagement to another line by passing the blade around the partner's hilt or forte. Traditionally changing from the line of engagement and passing under the opponent's blade or hilt.

**dérobement:** Evading a partner's attempts to beat or take the blade while the combatant's arm is extended.

**Diagonal Cut:** An off line cut to either the inside or outside line. It may be a rising or falling cut.

**Direct parry** (also *lateral, simple* or *instinctive parry*): a parry travelling in the same plane, either horizontally or vertically, ie carte to tierce, or Quinte to Low Quinte.

**doublé:** A compound attack. A thrusting attack that deceives a parry and a counter parry in the same line of attack.

**en garde** (also *on guard*): A ready position from which a combatant can launch an offensive or defensive movement.

**Engagement:** The crossing of blades.

**envelopment:** A prise-de-fer. Taking the partner's blade and describing a full circle to return to the original line of engagement without losing contact of blades, sometimes ending in an expulsion.

**expulsion:** A sharp movement on the partner's weapon, following a prise-de-fer, which forces a disengagement.

**feint:** An offensive movement made to resemble an attack, intending to draw a reaction from the partner.

**Fencing measure:** The distance that exists between two fencers.

**froissement** (Fr.): An attack on the blade. A grazing action with pressure usually ending in an expulsion.

**graze:** The action of the blades sliding along each other.

**hand parry:** A defensive move where the hand (usually gloved) is used to deflect or block an attacking blade

**hanging parry:** A parry protecting the diagonal high lines with the hilt high and the point low.

**invitation to attack:** A deliberate movement of the weapon or body intending to tempt the partner into an attack.

**molinello** (It.): The sword movement through a parry prime or octave into a downward cut to the head. A large circular downward cut to the head.

**moulinet** (Fr: "little windmill"): The action of pivoting the blades in circles in diagonal, vertical or horizontal planes. Often done in figure 8's as a flourish.

**octave** (Fr., also *parry 8*): The position and parry protecting the low outside line, with the hand in supination. This is a false edge parry. It is one of the last to be defined and adopted.

**parry:** (see definition under general terms)

The nine basic positions of sword parry are:

Prime

Seconde

Tierce

Carte or Quarte

Quinte

Sesta or Quinte Alternate

Sixte

Septime

Octave

(See individual definitions in glossary, and illustrations in appendix)

**piston thrust:** A thrusting attack following the retraction of the arm from extension by bending the elbow, keeping the tip towards the partner.

**point control:** The ability to accurately direct the movement of the point.

**pommel attack:** An attack made with the pommel of the weapon.

**preparation of attack:** A movement of blade or foot, designed to prepare the way for an attack, either by displacing the partner's blade from its line, or by obtaining a reaction from them. Preparations may be classified as follows (**SEE INDIVIDUAL TERMS FOR DEFINITIONS**):

1) Attacks on the Blade.

- a) beat
- b) pressure
- c) froissement

(See individual headings)

2) Prises-de-Fer

- a) croisé
- b) bind
- c) envelopement

(See individual headings)

3) Foot Motions

Movements with the feet ie: appel, balestra, jump.

**pressure:** An attack on the blade. A preparation of attack made by pressing on the partner's blade.

**prime** (Fr., also *prima* (It.), *parry 1*): The position and parry protecting the low inside line with the hand in pronation.

**prise-de-fer** (Fr: "taking of the blade"): A preparation of attack in which the partner's blade is taken by a croisé, a bind or an envelopment. A prise-de-fer can only be effective when the partner's arm is extended with energy through to the tip.

**punto** (It., also *punta*): a point attack

**punto reverso** (It., also *punta reversa*): A point attack delivered from the attacker's inside line to the partner's outside line with the hand often in supination.

**quarte** (Fr., also *carte*, *quarta* (It.), or *parry 4*): The position and parry protecting the high inside line with the hand in supination.

**quinte** (Fr., also *quinta* (It.) and *parry 5*): The position and parry protecting the head with the hand in pronation

**redoublement:** The delivery of a second thrust, without rising from the lunge, after the first attack has been parried.

**Refusing the blade:** Avoiding the partner's Attacks on the Blade or engagement.

**reinforced parry:** A parry that is directly supported by a secondary weapon, object or body part usually the hand.

**riposte:** The offensive action/thrust following the successful parry of an earlier attack.

**seconde** (Fr., also *seconda* (It.) and *parry 2*): The position and parry protecting the low outside line with the hand in pronation.

**semi-circular parry** (also *half-circular*): A parry during which the blade describes a half circle from a high to low line or vice versa.

**sentiment du fer** (Fr.: “sensation of the blade”): Feeling a partner's reactions through contact with the blades.

**septime** (Fr., also *parry 7*): The position and parry protecting the low inside line with the hand in supination.

**sesta** (It., also, *counter 5, parry 5A*): The position and parry protecting the head with the hand in supination. A reversed quinte.

**shunt**: Beating away a partner's blade using the guard or quillion after a successful parry

**sixte** (Fr., also *parry 6*): The position and parry protecting the high outside line with the hand in supination. This is a false edge parry.

**slash**: A theatrical cutting attack that is always evaded and not intended to land or be parried, but to slice through the space where the intended target was before their evasion.

**Cut across head/Slash over**: A horizontal cut designed to look as if it will strike the head if it lands. It may travel right to left or vice versa, and is usually avoided by ducking.

**Cut across stomach/Slash centre**: A horizontal cut designed to look as if it will cut the stomach open if it landed. It may travel right to left or vice versa. It is usually avoided by jumping back.

**Slash centre**: (*see Cut Across Stomach*)

**Slash over**: (*see Cut Across Head*)

**Stop-hit/Stop Thrust**: A form of counter-attack, delivered into the partner's attack or against his preparation. To be valid it must arrive on the target one movement ahead of the final attack.

**thrust**: An attack with the tip of the blade with the arm in extension.

**tierce** (Fr., also *terza* (It.) and *parry 3*): The position and parry protecting the high outside line, with the hand in pronation.

**yielding parry** (also *ceding parry*): This parry is performed by the original attacker being forced to commit to a parry while blades remain in engaged throughout.

## SECTION 6: WEAPONS AND ACCOUTREMENTS

**baldrick:** A sword belt hung from the shoulder.

**blunt** (also *rebated*): 1. No edge.  
2. A practice weapon.

**cup-hilt:** This type of guard is fashioned in the shape of a fairly shallow cup; it was common among rapiers in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and is a feature of the modern epee.

**CUTLASS** The naval equivalent of the cavalry sabre; a broad bladed, slightly curved cutting weapon. Authorities differ on the etymology of the word; the most probable derivation appears to be from the French coutelas.

**épée:** A dueling sword that evolved in the nineteenth century. One of the three competitive fencing weapons. It has a triangular blade.

**false edge:** The back edge of the blade.

**flat:** Part of the blade, the width of a sword blade that separates the two edges.

**foible** (17<sup>th</sup> c. Fr: “feeble”): The third of the blade nearest to the point. The weakest part of the blade, normally used for attack.

**foil:** The practice weapon of the small sword, evolved in the late seventeenth century. One of the three competitive fencing weapons. It has a rectangular blade.

**forte:** The third of the blade nearest to the hilt. The strongest part of the blade, normally used for defense.

**frog:** A leather loop worn on a belt in which a sword or weapon may be worn.

**fuller:** Groove or grooves cut into a blade to lighten the weapon whilst maintaining its strength. NOT A BLOODGUTTER

**grip:** 1) The part of the handle normally held by the hand.  
2) The manner in which the weapon is held.

**guard:** The portion of the hilt between the blade and the grip that protects the hand.

**hanger:** A girdle of a sword belt, usually with several straps.

**hilt:** Strictly, collective term for parts of the sword including guard, quillons, grip, and pommel. The term, however, is loosely applied to the guard itself in cup-hilt and cross-hilt.

**knuckle-bow:** A thin curved piece of metal, extending in a bow shape from the handle, where the latter joins the inside of the guard, to the pommel. In the absence of a basket-hilt, it offered some protection to the hand against a slash, although it was frequently still found on a small-sword of the eighteenth century, when a thrust was the chief danger to be feared.

**locking-nut:** A small nut fitting round the tang of the blade and enabling the pommel to be screwed over it.

**mid-blade:** The third of the blade between the foible and forte. Ideally, most attack/defense engagements should seek to avoid mid-blade contact in favor of the foible or forte, normally through correct fighting distance and hand/blade position.

**naked:** An unsheathed blade.

**pommel:** The part of the hilt that screws onto the 'tang' of the blade and holds the sword together. The pommel's weight also serves to counter-balance the blade.

**sabre:** Originally the heavy, curved, cutting weapon of the Cavalry. One of the three competitive fencing weapons. In the world of fencing it has a t shaped blade.

**scabbard** (also *sheath*): A leather or metal sheath in which a sword blade rests.

**sharps:** The name given to swords which are not rebated, blunted, equipped with buttons, or otherwise rendered innocuous for practice fencing.

**shoulder:** Part of the blade where the quillon block or cup sits.

**sword:** A generic term for any cutting or thrusting weapon palpably larger than a dagger and at the same time neither a hacking weapon like the axe, nor a staff weapon such as the spear or halberd.

**tang:** Part of the blade that runs through the hilt, starting at the shoulders of the blade. Usually threaded.

**temper:** The hardness or strength of the blade metal.

**tip** (also *point*): The fore end of the blade, used for thrusting and lunging attacks.

**true edge:** When an edged weapon is held correctly it is the edge of the blade pointing toward an partner. The true edge is opposite the thumb and in line with a knuckle bow if one is present.



## SECTION 7: THEATRICAL & PERFORMANCE

**acted aggression:** The illusion of force or violence.

**Actor's Parry:** An exaggerated parry of seconde #2 most frequently done as a circular parry.

**cadence:** The rhythm in which a sequence of movement is made.

**communication:** The ability to send clear signals between partners while they stay in character, with theatrical believability and complete their set choreography.

**Cue:** An action designed to warn the partner of the next move. After eye contact a cue is the first part of every aggressive action in Stage Combat.

**eye contact:** Looking into a partner's eye to ensure both performers are ready and are in the same place in the action to achieve a safe execution of a technique or fight sequence.

**fight captain:** A member of the cast who oversees the fight rehearsals on behalf of the Fight Director. They are not permitted to change, re-choreograph or choreograph without the Fight Director's presence at the rehearsal and approval.

**fight dynamics:** Energy of movement, expressing intensity, and quality of the movement.

**grounding:** Having a stable base from which to perform fight choreography.

**masking:** The action of 'hiding' combat techniques from the audience, to create the illusion of realism.

**partner:** For the purposes of staged combat, all techniques both in attack and defense are worked in partnership. Not in competition with a fellow actor.

**phrase:** A section of fight choreography.

**reaction:** Same as sell. The victim's performed movement to show the audience if, where, and how badly they have been hurt after the illusion of an attack by their partner.

**reverse energy:** The ability to counter the illusion's supposed energy in a direction away from the victim. This technique to protect the victim and assure that the operator is in complete control of any illusionary attack or action.

**safety:** The first rule of stage combat. The second being story, the third style. No technique, choreography, weapon or prop shall be used without safe operation.

**scratches:** The illusion of raking the face or body with fingernails or weapons.

**sell:** Same as reaction. The victim's performed movement to show the audience if, where, and how badly they have been hurt after the illusion of an attack by their partner.

**Stacking:** A masking technique. The cover of an action by one partner over another in relationship to the audience or the camera.

**Story:** Second rule of stage combat the first being safety the third style. The clear presentation of the fight so the audience can understand the various events.

**Style:** the third rule of stage combat the first being safety and the second story. The quality of different actions in the fight so the story fits the desired type of theatre.

**tracking:** The incorrect action of the aggressor where their attack does not remain in the plane where their partner was, but rather enters and the plane where their partner is evading to.

**walk- through:** A slow rehearsal speed/pace but with the full intention of the fight.

**willing suspension of disbelief:** The audience's ability to accept an event as believable within the context of the performance. An example would be a death by a sword thrust even though they can clearly see there is no blood, no tear to the costume, and blade passed upstage of the performer rather than actually entering the body.

**Upstage/Downstage Right/Left:** Upstage is away from the audience. Downstage is towards the audience. Stage right is to the audience left and stage left is to the audience right.

**yield:** To surrender.