

FOIL

A DOUBLE HIT GUIDE

The most common causes of confusion and dispute in foil matches are covering or substitution of the target and the allocation of points when both fencers have registered hits. The sections of the rules given here - EXTENSION OF THE VALID TARGET and VALIDITY OR PRIORITY OF THE HIT - govern those situations and are reproduced unedited and unamended. Covering the target (**t.79**), the attack (**t.83 to t.85**) and the parry (**t.86**) are clearly defined. The procedure for applying those definitions to a match is given under rule **t.89**.

The full rules of fencing are available from the **British Fencing** website as a downloadable pdf: (<https://www.britishfencing.com/the-fie-rulebooks/>)

EXTENSION OF THE VALID TARGET

t.79 1. At foil, it is forbidden to **protect** the target area or to **substitute** another part of the body for the target area, by covering it (cf. **t.158-162**, **t.165**, **t.170**); any hit scored by the fencer at fault is annulled.

a) If, during the fencing phrase, there is protection or substitution of a valid surface, the fencer at fault will be penalised as specified for offences of the 1st group (cf. also **t.29**).

b) If, during the fencing phrase, as a result of protection or substitution of a valid surface, a hit correctly given is registered as not valid, the fencer at fault will be penalized as specified for offences of the 1st group (cf. **t.158-162**, **t.165**, **t.170**) and the hit will be awarded.

c) However, hits which arrive off the target are counted as valid whenever, by reason of an abnormal position, the fencer has substituted this non-valid target for the valid target.

2. The referee may question the judges but he alone must decide whether or not the hit is valid.

VALIDITY OR PRIORITY OF THE HIT

t.82 The Referee **alone** decides as to the validity or the priority of the hit by applying the following basic rules which are the conventions applicable to foil fencing.

RESPECT OF THE FENCING PHRASE

t.83 1. Every **attack**, that is every initial offensive action, which is correctly executed must be parried or completely avoided and the phrase must be continuous — that is to say, co-ordinated (cf. **t.9.1**).

SUBSTITUTION

PREFACE

ATTACK

2. In order to judge **the correctness of an attack** the following points must be considered:

a) The simple attack, direct or indirect (cf. **t.10**), is correctly executed when the straightening of the arm, the point threatening the valid target, precedes the initiation of the lunge or the flèche.

b) The compound attack (cf. **t.10**) is correctly executed when the arm is straightened in the presentation of the first feint, with the point threatening the valid target, and the arm is not bent during the successive actions of the attack and the initiation of the lunge or the flèche.

c) The attack with a **step-forward-lunge** or a **step-forward-flèche** is correctly executed when the straightening of the arm precedes the end of the step forward and the initiation of the lunge or the flèche.

d) Actions, simple or compound, steps or feints which are **executed with a bent arm**, are not considered as attacks but as preparations, laying themselves open to the initiation of the offensive or defensive/offensive action of the opponent (cf. **t.10-11**).

t.84 To judge the **priority of an attack** when analysing the fencing phrase, it should be noted that: **1.** If the attack is initiated when **the opponent is 'point in line'** (cf. **t.15**), the attacker must, first, deflect the opponent's blade. Referees must ensure that a mere contact of the blades is not considered as sufficient to deflect the opponent's blade (cf. **t.89.5.a**).

2. If the attacker, when attempting to deflect the opponent's blade, fails to find it (**dérobement**), the right of attack passes to the opponent.

3. **Continuous steps forward, with the legs crossing one another**, constitute a preparation and on this preparation any simple attack has priority.

POINT IN LINE

RUNNING

t.85 Attacks by beats on the blade: **1.** In an attack by beating on the blade, the attack is correctly carried out and retains its priority when the beat is made on the foible of the opponent's blade i.e. the two-thirds of the blade furthest from the guard.

2. In an attack by beating on the blade, when the beat is made on the forte of the opponent's blade i.e. the one-third of the blade nearest the guard, the attack is badly executed and the beat gives the opponent the right to an immediate riposte.

t.86 The parry gives the right to riposte: **the simple riposte** may be direct or indirect, but to annul any subsequent action by the attacker, it must be executed immediately, without indecision or delay.

t.87 When a compound attack is made, if the opponent **finds the blade during one of the feints**, he has the right to riposte.

t.88 When **compound attacks** are made, the opponent has the right to **stop-hit**; but to be valid the stop hit must precede the conclusion of the attack by an interval of fencing time; that is to say that the stop hit must arrive before the attacker has begun the final movement of the attack.

JUDGING OF HITS

t.89 In applying these basic conventions of sabre fencing, the Referee should judge as follows:

1. When, during a phrase, both fencers are **hit simultaneously**, there is either a **simultaneous action** or a **double hit**.
2. The **simultaneous action** is due to simultaneous conception and execution of an attack by both fencers; in this case the hits exchanged are annulled for both fencers even if one of them has been hit off the target.
3. The double hit, on the other hand, is the result of a faulty action on the part of one of the fencers.

Therefore, when there is not a period of fencing time between the hits:

4. Only the fencer who is attacked is counted as hit:

- a) If he makes a **stop hit** on his opponent's simple attack;
- b) If, instead of parrying, he attempts to **dodge the hit** and does not succeed in so doing;
- c) If, after making a successful parry, he makes a **momentary pause** which gives his opponent the right to renew the attack (redoublement, remise or reprise);
- d) If, into a compound attack, he makes a **stop hit** without being in time;

e) If, **having his 'point in line'** (cf. t.15) and being subjected to a beat or a taking of the blade (prise de fer) which deflects his blade, he attacks or places his point in line again instead of parrying a direct thrust made by his opponent.

5. Only the fencer who attacks is counted as hit:

- a) If he initiates his attack **when his opponent has his point in line** (cf. t.15) without deflecting the opponent's weapon. Referees must ensure that a mere contact of the blades is not considered as sufficient to deflect the opponent's blade.
- b) If he attempts to find the blade, does not succeed (is the object of a **dérobement**) and continues the attack.
- c) If, during a compound attack, his opponent **finds the blade**, but he continues the attack and his opponent ripostes immediately.
- d) If, during a compound attack, he makes a **momentary pause**, during which time the opponent makes a stop hit, while the attacker continues his attack.

e) If, during a compound attack, he is **stop-hit** in time before he begins his final movement.

f) If he makes a hit by a remise, redoublement or reprise when his original attack has been **parried and his opponent has made a riposte** which is **immediate**, simple, and executed in one period of fencing time without withdrawing the arm.

6. The Referee must replace the competitors on guard each time that there is a double hit and he is unable to judge clearly on which side the fault lies.

BEAT ATTACK

PARRY & RIPOSTE

BEAT COUNTER

STOP-HIT

APPLY