



The Society of American Fight Directors

GLOSSARY OF TERMS (10/10/10)

It is important to note that the terms listed below may not correspond to the proper definitions of the actions as they are applied to historical or modern fencing, swordplay, boxing or wrestling. These terms are theatrical in nature, not tactical, describing the action as it is executed in the performance environment.

Active Hand: The non-weapon bearing hand used to block, check, lock, parry, strike or trap the opposing weapon or parts of a partner's body.

Advance: Linear footwork carrying the body forward by moving the lead foot first, followed by the lag foot (without crossing them). (also called *Fencing Step*)

Appel: A sharp foot stomp which may be used to emphasize a feint or deliver a renewed attack from a lunge with added impetus.

Attack on the Blade: Actions used to remove or displace the opposing blade before an effective offensive action can be launched. These may include a *Glissade*, *Beat*, *Press*, as well as any *Prises de Fer*.

Attacker: The actor/combatant who initiates the offensive action or attack. (also called *Aggressor*)

Avoidance: A movement of the body and/or feet vertically, horizontally or diagonally in order to dodge an attack.

Balestra: A compound piece of linear footwork carrying the body forward by executing a jump and a lunge in quick succession. (also called *Jump-Lunge*)

Beat Attack: A sharp tap with the forte or middle part of one's blade against the middle or weak part (foible) of the opponent's blade to remove a threat, open a line for attack, or to provoke a reaction.

Beat Parry: An aggressive defensive action that strikes the attacking blade, knocking it aside.

Block: A defensive action made with the hand or arm intended to stop a punch, kick or similar attack. A block can be made on either side of the body and in all lines. These may be as follows:

Across the Body Block: A block made on the opposite side of the body from the defending hand and/or arm.

Cross Block: A block where both hands/arms are used together. They are crossed at the forearms, the one over the other, catching the attacking limb where the forearms meet between the hands. (also called *X Block*)

Descending Block: A block delivered downward to defend against an ascending diagonal or vertical attack.

Opposition Block: A defensive action where the hand or arm is brought up as a solid wall or shield against the attack.

Parallel Block: A block made with the defending hands/arms placed one beside the other for greater defense. The arms are not crossed. (also called *Double Block*)

Redirection Block: A defensive action where the hand or arm intercepts the attack and then immediately displaces or removes the attack.

Rising Block: A block delivered upward to defend against a descending diagonal or vertical attack.

Same Side Block: A block made on the same side of the body as the defending hand and/or arm.

Semicircular Block: A block that goes from a high line to the low line, or a low line to the high line, in a semi-circular path on the same side of the body.

Transfer Block: A block that uses both hands/arms, one after the other, to deflect and control the attack, freeing the first hand for a counter attack. (also called *Replacement Block*)

Wing Block: A defensive action made with the muscle groupings of the upper arm. The arm is bent, taking the attack on the back of the forearm and outside of the upper arm.

Break Fall: Any maneuver that dissipates the energy or force from a fall or roll and gives the illusion of impact.

Butt End: The trailing end of the staff in the En Garde position.

Center Line: An imaginary line that bisects the body.

Horizontal Center Line: The imaginary line that bisects the body horizontally at waist level delineating High Line and Low Line. (also called *Mid Line*)

Vertical Center Line: The imaginary line that bisects the body vertically through the center delineating Inside Line and Outside Line.

Change Beat: A changement immediately followed by a beat attack.

Change of Engagement: To release contact of the blades, and reestablish contact in a new line.

Changement: An action of the blade that carries it from one line of engagement to another.

Check: A move where the defender places a hand (usually the Active Hand) on the aggressors attacking limb to control the movement of that limb. It does not stop the movement of the aggressors limb.

Choke Hold: Any grasp or hold on the area of the throat made with the hand(s) or limb that gives the impression of strangling the victim.

Circular Sequence: A series of steps and blade-play executed on a circular, rather than linear, track of footwork.

Closed: Said of a line of attack, when the defender's blade placement prevents an attack to that particular line. (also called *Covered*)

Contact Strike: Any offensive action that makes contact with the intended target on the body of the receiver.

Corps-à-Corps: Literally meaning "body-to-body." Describes the moment where distance is closed and there is body contact and/or the weapons are locked together and immobilized.

Counter Attack: An attack made in response to an attack, which is intended to hit the opponent before their attack is completed.

Counter Parry: A parry that begins in one line, then travels in a full circle, returning to the line of the original parry. (also called *Circular Parry*)

Coupé: A changement that takes the point of the aggressors blade around the point of the opposing blade.

Cross Parry: A double fence parry where the weapons are crossed at or near the forte, forming an "X" with the blades, catching the attacking weapon between the points of the two defending weapons.

Cross Step: Circular footwork carrying the body diagonally Off-Line by stepping forward to either the right or left, ending with the legs crossed.

Cue-Reaction-Action: A basic stage combat principle/process used to achieve a safe and dramatically effective sequence of events. (also called *Action - Reaction - Action*, and *Preparation - Reaction - Action*)

Cut: An attack made with the edge of the blade that is blocked or parried.

Deception of Parry: The action of deliberately avoiding a partner's parry.

Demi-Volte: Circular footwork which removes the body from the line of attack by swinging one foot behind the other, turning the body so that the trunk is 90 in relation to the attack.

Disarm: An action of the blade or body that removes a weapon from the hand of one's partner.

Disengage: a.) *noun.* The act of removing the weapon from contact with the partner's weapon. b.) *verb.* Moving the aggressor's sword from the line of engagement to a new line of engagement by passing the point around the opposing weapon's hilt. May also re-engage the original line.

Distance: The proper measure between two or more combatants to safely execute any particular technique in stage combat.

Double: A compound attack in any line that consists of two deceptions of parry in the same line, one after the other.

Duck: The vertical lowering of the head and torso to avoid an attack at the head.

Elbow Attack: Any offensive striking technique made with the elbow.

En Garde: The basic physical "ready" position of a combatant.

Engagement: The crossing, joining or touching of blades.

Expulsion: Using the energy and movement of a *Check* or *Prise de Fer* to throw or fling the opposing arm and/or weapon aside.

Eye Contact: A basic stage combat principle/process used to assure mutual awareness and readiness to perform the techniques.

Fall: Any technique that allows a combatant to safely drop from a standing or elevated position to the floor, landing on some part of the body other than the feet.

Feint Attack: An attacking action made without intending to hit and designed to draw a reaction or a parry from an opponent.

Flip: An offensive movement that controls the victim's center, lifting them off their feet and returning them to the ground on some part of the body other than the feet.

Fore End: The leading end of the staff in the En Garde position.

Glissade: A cut or a thrust initiated from a successful parry, during which the weapons remain in contact. Executed in conjunction with a Yield Parry.

Goofinition: The placement of the weapon bearing hand where the thumb is held upward or downward. (also called *Half Pronation*)

Grand Volte: Circular footwork which removes the body from the line of attack by swinging one foot behind the other, turning the body so that the trunk is 180 in relation to the attack.

Grappling: The attempt to use body weight, grips, and leverage to control or injure one's opponent while in extremely tight distance.

Hair Pull: A grasp with one or both hands in which the victim's hair appears to be clasped in the fist(s).

Hand Parry: A method of defense where the unarmed hand is used to deflect or block the opposing weapon.

Hanging Parry: Any parry protecting a high line with the hilt high and the point down.

Invitation: Any movement of the weapon or body designed to lure the other combatant into an attack.

Kick: Any offensive striking technique made with the leg/foot.

Ax Kick: A downward traveling kick that impacts with the heel.

Back Kick: A kick traveling directly backwards that impacts with the heel.

Crescent Kick: A large arcing kick traveling in a semicircular path that impacts with the edge of the foot. May be made to the inside (*Inside Crescent Kick*) or to the outside (*Outside Crescent Kick*).

Front Kick: A kick traveling directly forward that impacts with the ball of the foot. (also called *Stomp Kick*)

Heel Hook Kick: A kick traveling in a circular path from a chambered position of the knee, generally executed in a horizontal plane, that impacts with the heel or sole of the foot.

Roundhouse Kick: A kick traveling in a circular path from a chambered position of the knee, generally executed in a horizontal plane, that impacts with the top of the foot.

Side Kick: A kick traveling out from the side of the body that impacts with the heel or edge of the foot.

Snap Kick: A kick traveling forward in a quick in and out action from a chambered position of the leg, that impacts with the top of the foot.

Knap: A technique for creating the sound of impact of a strike.

Body Knap: A percussive slap to a major muscle group on the body.

Cage Knap: A percussive slap made when the foot of one combatant connects with their partner's crossed and slightly cupped hands.

Clap Knap: A percussive slap made when one combatant claps their hands together.

Shared Knap: A percussive slap requiring participation of both combatants. (also called *Partnered Knap*)

Slip-Hand Knap: A percussive slap made by allowing the punching hand to open slightly, creating the knap as it meets the non-punching hand.

Knee Attack: Any offensive striking technique made with the knee.

Lines of Attack or Defense: The areas of the body delineated by the intersection of the Vertical Center Line and the Horizontal Center Line.

High Line: The area of attack and defense located above the Horizontal Center Line.

Inside Line: The area of attack and defense located opposite of the weapon bearing side, delineated by the Vertical Center Line.

Low Line: The area of attack and defense located below the Horizontal Center Line.

Outside Line: The area of attack and defense located on the weapon bearing side, delineated by the Vertical Center Line.

Lock: Any technique applied to the joints used as leverage or to immobilize one's opponent. (also called *Joint Lock*)

Long Form: The hand placement that utilizes the full length of the quarterstaff for attack and defense.

Lunge: Linear footwork carrying the body forward by extending the lead foot in a long step, leaving the trailing foot in place.

Moulinet: "Little windmill" The action of spinning the blade in a circular fashion (either forward or backward) in a diagonal, vertical or horizontal plane.

Inside Moulinet: A moulinet executed on the Inside Line of the body.

Outside Moulinet: A moulinet executed on the Outside Line of the body.

Non-Contact Strike: Any offensive action that creates the appearance of contact with the intended target on the body of the receiver.

Off-Line: a.) Any offensive action that is directed to a target away from the body. b.) The relationship of combatants' bodies when their Vertical Center Lines are offset.

On-Line: a.) Any offensive action that is directed to a target on the body. b.) The relationship of combatants' bodies when their Vertical Center Lines and shoulders are lined up.

Opposition Parry: A simple defensive action made by meeting the attack with the defending weapon.

Overhand Grip: Holding a sword, dagger, or knife with the blade above the hand.

Parallel Parry: A double fence parry made by placing the defending weapons one beside the other.

Parry: A defensive action which blocks or deflects an attack.

One, Parry of: Defending the low inside line with the point down, the hand in Goofination with the thumb down. (also called *Watch Parry*)

Two, Parry of: Defending the low outside line with the point down, the hand in pronation.

Three, Parry of: Defending the high outside line with the point up, the hand in pronation.

Four, Parry of: Defending the high inside line with the point up, the hand in supination.

Five, Parry of: Defending the head with the blade held above the head, the hand and hilt on the weapon bearing side.

Five A, Parry of: Defending the head with the blade held above the head, the hand and hilt on the non-weapon bearing side. (also called *Muscle Beach Parry* and *Window Parry*)

Six, Parry of: a.) Defending the high outside line with the point up, the hand in supination.

Seven, Parry of: Defending the low inside line with the point down, the hand in supination.

Eight, Parry of: Defending the low outside line with the point down, the hand in supination.

Partnering: A basic stage combat principle/process in which two or more combatants actively work together to safely and effectively make nonviolent actions appear dangerous and real.

Pass Back: Linear footwork carrying the body backward by passing the lead foot to the rear.

Pass Forward: Linear footwork carrying the body forward by passing the lag foot to the front.

Patinando: A compound piece of linear footwork carrying the body forward by executing an advance and a lunge in quick succession. (also called *Advance-Lunge*)

Pommel Attack: Any offensive action delivered with the pommel of a weapon.

Press: An attack on the blade that pushes the opposing blade aside, opening a line of attack.

Pressure Glide: An attack on the opposing blade that combines a strong pressing of the blade with a fast graze from forte to foible. Generally executed from an en garde position as a preparatory action to an attack.

Prise de fer: An attack on the Blade that controls the opposing weapon following a successful parry. All three *Prise de fer* actions may also be performed in the Unarmed, Knife, and Quarterstaff disciplines.

Bind: An attack on the blade which carries the opposing weapon from a high line to the low line on the opposite side of the body, or from a low line to the high line on the opposite side of the body.

Croisé: An attack on the blade which carries the opposing weapon from a high line to the low line on the same side of the body, or from a low line to the high line on the same side of the body. (also called *Transport* in Unarmed and Knife disciplines)

Envelopment: An attack on the blade that, by describing a circle with both weapons in contact, returns to the original line of engagement.

Pronation: The position of the hand where the palm is turned down.

Punch: Any offensive striking technique made with the hand(s) that are executed with the hand closed into a fist.

Back Fist: A punch made with the back of the hand.

Cross: A punch that travels across the victim's jaw-line, from either right to left, or left to right. (also called *John Wayne Punch*)

Double-Hand Hammer Punch: A descending, vertical punch made with the hands clasped one around the other, that hits with the little fingers down and thumbs up, to strike like a club or hammer. (also called *Captain Kirk*)

Hammer Punch: A descending, vertical punch made with a closed hand that hits with the little finger down and thumb up, to strike like a club or hammer.

Hook: A punch delivered with the arm curving through the air in a tight hooking motion.

Jab: A linear in-and-out punch delivered from the leading shoulder and foot.

Rabbit Punch: A sharp, chopping punch delivered downward in a diagonal plane, as if to the back of the neck.

Roundhouse Punch: A large, dynamic punch that travels in a wide arc at the defenders head level, from either right to left, or left to right. (also called *Hay Maker Punch*)

Stomach Punch: A punch delivered towards the abdomen of the victim. May be either contact or non-contact.

Straight Punch: A linear punch delivered from the rear or back shoulder and foot.

Uppercut: A punch delivered with a bent arm in an upward motion.

Punto Reverso: A supinated thrusting attack delivered from the attacker's inside line.

Recover Back: Linear footwork carrying the body to an En Garde position from a lunge by bringing the forward foot back.

Recover Forward: Linear footwork carrying the body to an En Garde position from a lunge by bringing the rear foot forward.

Reinforced Parry: A parry that is given extra support from another source.

Replacement Parry: A double fence parry where the attacking blade is stopped with a single weapon and then a second weapon engages the attacking blade and takes the place of the first parry. (also called *Transfer Parry* and *Sequential Parry*)

Retreat: Linear footwork carrying the body back by moving the rear foot first, followed by the lead foot (without crossing them).

Riposte: A return attack made by a defender immediately following a successful parry.

Roll: Any technique in which the body is safely turned on the floor. May be executed forward, backward, or sideways.

Short Form: A hand placement that divides the quarterstaff into three equal sections.

Shoulder Roll: Rolling on a diagonal from one shoulder to the opposite buttock (forward shoulder roll) or rolling from one buttock to the opposite shoulder (backward shoulder roll).

Slap: An offensive strike delivered with an open hand, usually made to the face.

Slash: An attack made with the edge of the blade that is avoided. The most common are horizontally at head level, horizontally across the mid-line (stomach, back, or side), and diagonally (ascending or descending).

Slip: Circular footwork carrying the body diagonally Off-Line by stepping back to either the right or left, ending with the legs crossed.

Supination: The position of the hand when the palm is turned up.

Throw: A move in which the defender is grasped and propelled to the ground.

Thrust: An attack made with the point of the weapon.

Thwart: Footwork carrying the body Off-Line by moving both feet (the right foot first when moving to the right/the left foot first when moving to the left) without crossing the legs.

Trap: Any technique that immobilizes an opponent's limb(s) and/or weapon(s) to effect an attack or disarm.

Traverse: Footwork carrying the body Off-Line by extending a foot in a long step, leaving the trailing foot in place.

Underhand Grip: Holding a dagger or knife with the blade beneath the hand, gripped with the thumb at the pommel.
(also called *Reverse Grip*)

Victim: The actor/combatant who receives the offensive action or attack. (also called *Defender* or *Recipient*)

Yield Parry: A parry made from engagement, in conjunction with a glissade, where the blades remain in contact throughout.