

Empire of Medieval Pursuits
Rules for Steel Cut and Thrust Combat v2018

These rules are meant to establish a minimum set of standards for Cut and Thrust Combat within the Empire of Medieval Pursuits. While these rules are set to help promote safe steel combat, they do not take away from common sense, judgment and individual concern for the safety of the participants involved in this activity. It should be standard practice to always be aware of one's personal safety and never commit to an action that will knowingly compromise the safety of one's opponent. Further, these rules are designed to augment foundational theories of swordplay and duelism. The Empire encourages practitioners to study the manuals, period sources, and from knowledgeable citizens, to help rediscover the western martial traditions.

1. Cut and Thrust is divided into two primary categories.
 - a. Flexible Cut and Thrust refers to lighter weapons such as Rapier, Small Sword, Saber, Lanza Etc
 - b. Rigid Cut and Thrust refers to Arming Sword, Longsword, etc.
2. Duelist Decorum: A higher standard of decorum between duelists is expected for both personal honor as well as learning this art.
 - a. Be excellent to each other.
 - b. Cordial behavior shall be maintained at all times. Displays of temper are highly frowned upon.
 - c. Control means you do not injure your opponent's with wild or overly hard thrusts and cuts. Your opponent should be able to feel a good thrust or cut, but they should not be hard enough to injure your opponent. Maintain control of your weapon attacks at all times.
 - d. Upon hearing the call of "HOLD" all fighting shall IMMEDIATELY stop. A combatant may call "HOLD" for any reason (ie: personal armor failure, perceived danger), but in doing so places himself at the mercy of his opponent. By stopping the combat he is in effect yielding and it is up to the discretion of his opponent to choose whether or not to resume the contest.
 - e. A fighter shall not enter the lists or participate in any form of EMP steel combat while impaired by alcohol or drugs (including, but not limited to: drugs prescribed by a licensed health care provider, over the counter medications, and illegal controlled substances.)
 - f. A fighter be in control of themselves and their weapon at all times. While accidents do happen, everyone should fight in a manner that is safe for themselves and their opponent.
3. Telling Blows
 - a. The acknowledgement of blows shall be based upon the honor system. If you have been properly struck with a thrust or a cut you are honor bound to make it known. It is up to the individuals fighting to correctly judge and acknowledge all blows given and received unless otherwise agreed upon.

- b. All blows are to be acknowledged as if one is completely unarmored and wearing period clothes.
 - i. Armor does not count as armor worn unless agreed upon by tournament rules or individual agreement
- c. A standard contest shall be to 3 telling blows or substantial.
 - i. Substantial blows in cut and thrust are to strikes that would be life ending, classified by location and effectiveness (ie. thrust to the face, throat, heart, lung, armpit, etc.) However unlike other forms of EMP combat substantial blows in cut and thrust are not delivered with any more force of fervor then a telling blow.
- d. A fighter shall not strike a helpless opponent beyond a touch.

4. Attacks, Thrusts, Strikes, and Blows

- a. Thrusts may be executed with or without a lunge and may be done with or without a step. The recipient must call any thrust that they feel, and is within measure.
- b. Cuts shall be delivered with enough force to be felt, but not enough to injure. The recipient must call any cut that they feel. True cuts that are percussive strikes may be delivered with the front or back edge of the blade but shall be done with control. Cuts may come from above, below or from either side. Full force hacks are a forbidden form of attack.
 - i. Tip cuts are an acknowledged attack, especially to the head.
 - ii. Draw cuts are also an allowed form of attack if they use at least one third of the length of the blade.
- c. Parries may occur from a combatants weapon, parrying device(bucklers, cloak, daggers etc), or the off hand.
- d. Disarms are allowed and do not stop the action of a fight. If an opponent drops their sword or has it taken from them you may continue to attack them. If grappling rule is in effect, this will usually start a wrestling match.

5. Weapon Standards:

- a. All weapons shall be free of rust, deep gouges, burrs, without any sharp edges or points.
 - i. Burrs and gouges may be filed or sanded to return the weapon to functional condition so long as the blade is not thinned.
- b. All blades shall have their ends blunted with heavy leather, plastic fencing blunts, or rubber rabbit blunts.
 - i. Blunts shall be held onto the blade with several wrappings of electrical or equivalent tape.
- c. A sharp sword or dagger blade may not have the edges ground off in an attempt to create a blunt sword for use in cut and thrust combat.
- d. All blades must be forged as blunted training to be combat.
 - i. Examples of acceptable blades include Practical Hanwei series, Tinker blunted lines, and Del Tin blunted lines.
- e. Blades shall not be modified in any manner that changes their temper such as heating them up and re-forging them.

- i. Tangs may be modified and welded so long as care is taken to not alter the temper of the blade.
 - ii. Blades shall not be cut down because of the dangers of changing the temper or flexibility of the blades.
 - f. Capes or cloaks used for parrying shall be in good repair with no un-mended rips or holes.
 - i. Hard or soft weights, such as steel, lead or sand, may not be used to increase the weight or spread of a cape or cloak.
 - ii. Light items such as rope, tennis or racket balls, or other non-rigid material may be used in the hem so long as it does not dangerously increase the weight and turning the cloak or cape into a flail.
 - g. Bucklers, shields, targes or targets may be made from wood, aluminum, steel, heavy plastic, leather and equivalent or superior materials.
 - h. Rigid parrying only devices such as sword sheaths, pewter mugs, rubber chickens, etc. may also be used as parry only devices.
 - i. Foils, Epees, and sport saber blades and other sport fencing blades are not allowed in EMP cut and thrust combat due to the higher demand on the weapons in historical fencing environment compared to the sport fencing environment.
 - j. Rubber spear tips used in HEMA are permissible in EMP Cut and Thrust
 - i. Rubber spear tips must have give and compression and may not be rigid.
- 6. Armor Standards for Flexible Cut and Thrust (Rapier, Saber, Small Sword, Lanza, etc)
 - a. Head and Face shall be covered by a minimum of a three weapons mask, its equivalent, or better must be worn.
 - i. The face must be covered by either 12 Kg mesh (standard three weapons mask mesh), it's equivalent or better.
 - 1. The face mask must be capable of passing a 12 Kg pressure test administered by a standard 12K mask tester without deforming, spreading apart or significantly flexing
 - ii. . Openings in mesh shall be no larger than 1/8" or 3mm wide.
 - iii. Perforated metal shall have a minimum off set of 3/16" or 5mm.
 - iv. All masks or helmets must be in good repair with no significant rust, dents, mesh that has been stressed apart, or broken weld points, etc.
 - v. The Back of the head and neck must be protected by heavy leather, its equivalent or better.
 - b. Neck shall be covered by a heavy leather gorget, its equivalent or better.
 - i. The gorget shall at a minimum be constructed from untreated heavy leather at least ¼ inch thick, the equivalent, or superior materials such as ABS plastic, Kydex plastic, aluminum, or steel.
 - c. The groin must be covered by a minimum of rigid material (e.g., a gender appropriate hockey, soccer, karate, boxing, or baseball cup, is recommended),

worn in a manner designed to hold the armor in place during normal combat situations.

- d. The torso must be covered by a puncture-resistant vest.
 - e. Hands must be covered by a minimum of leather dueling gloves that extend at least 2in beyond the wrist.
7. Armor Standards for Rigid Cut and Thrust (Arming Sword, Longsword, etc)
- a. Head and Face shall be covered by a minimum of a three weapons mask, its equivalent, or better must be worn.
 - i. The face must be covered by either 12 Kg mesh (standard three weapons mask mesh), it's equivalent or better.
 - 1. The face mask must be capable of passing a 12 Kg pressure test administered by a standard 12K mask tester without deforming, spreading apart or significantly flexing
 - ii. . Openings in mesh shall be no larger than 1/8" or 3mm wide.
 - iii. Perforated metal shall have a minimum off set of 3/16" or 5mm.
 - iv. All masks or helmets must be in good repair with no significant rust, dents, mesh that has been stressed apart, or broken weld points, etc.
 - v. The Back of the head and neck must be protected by heavy leather, its equivalent or better.
 - b. Neck shall be covered by a heavy leather gorget, its equivalent or better.
 - i. The gorget shall at a minimum be constructed from untreated heavy leather at least ¼ inch thick, the equivalent, or superior materials such as ABS plastic, Kydex plastic, aluminum, or steel.
 - c. The groin must be covered by a minimum of rigid material (e.g., a gender appropriate hockey, soccer, karate, boxing, or baseball cup, is recommended), worn in a manner designed to hold the armor in place during normal combat situations.
 - d. The Torso must be covered in a padded gambeson or its equivalent or better, that extends beyond the tip of the shoulder to the ball of the hip must be worn.
 - e. Eblows must be covered on all points by rigid armor.
 - i. ABS Plastic, its equivalent, or superior material
 - f. Knees must be covered on all points by rigid armor.
 - i. ABS Plastic, its equivalent, or superior material
 - g. Hands must covered beyond the rist by rigid material
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