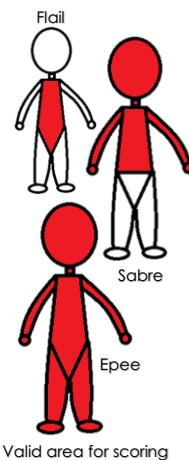
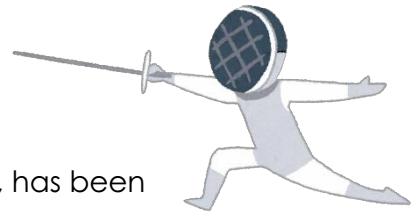


## Fencing

Lightning fast attacks, intricate footwork, and high-tech equipment make for one of the Olympics' most iconic events, fencing. Fencing, which is based on the swordsmanship of knights, has been held as an organized sport since the 1600s, and has been a part of the Olympics since the first Olympics in Athens.

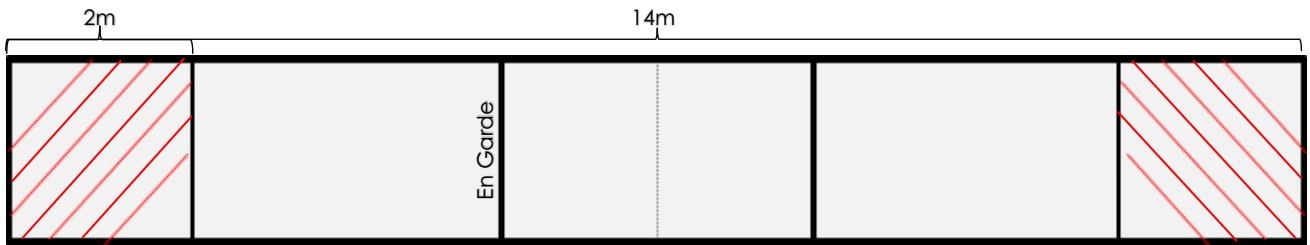


Fencing is comprised of three events, sabre, epee, and foil. Epee and foil only allow thrusting attacks, but in the sabre event, cutting is also allowed. The shape of the sword varies between the 3 practices. The main difference, however, lies in which part of the body earn the attacker points when struck. In flail only the upper body, not including the arms, head, and neck is valid. In sabre, the entire body from the stomach and up is valid for scoring. Finally, in epee, a hit anywhere on the body will earn points. In the Olympics and other large tournaments, the equipment used by the athletes contains sensors that indicate where a hit was landed.

Individual matches consist of three sets of three minutes. The first athlete to score 15 points, or the athlete with the most points at the end of the three sets is the winner. Team events consist of nine sets of three minutes, and use a round-robin format. The first team to reach 45 points, or the team with the most points when time runs out is the winner.

Flail and sabre events use a priority system for scoring. The athlete who moves to attack first receives priority over their opponent, and in the case that both athletes score a hit, the athlete with priority receives the point. In epee, there is no priority system, so in this case both athletes receive a point, or "touch."

There are many different techniques used in fencing, such as the defensive "parry" technique, in which the defender reflects the opponent's attack, and usually follows up with a counter-attack, or "riposte." If an athlete performs a riposte, they receive priority and have a chance to score.



Fencing matches take place on a “piste,” a long narrow court measuring 14m long and between 1.5 and 2 meters wide. In the middle is the center line, back from the center line is the “en garde” line from which the match starts, and on either end is a 2 meter long area that warns the athlete that they are near the end of the piste. If an athlete exits the piste on either side, their opponent is given a 1 meter advantage. If they exit the piste at the end, the opponent is awarded a point.

Japanese fencing has become very strong in recent years. In the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Yuki Ota secured Japan's first Olympic fencing medal, and since then young fencing prodigies have begun to appear in greater numbers, eyeing glory at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Among these up-and-coming athletes are Toyohashi natives Santa and Nichika Ota. Nichika competes in the epee event and Santa competes in sabre. Olympic qualifications will be determined by the world rankings. Let's show the Ota siblings our support in their journey to Tokyo!

Traditionally France, Italy, Russia, and Hungary are the strongest nations when it comes to fencing, but Toyohashi's Host Town partner-nation, Germany, is also quite strong. Max Hartung has won gold three times at the World Cup, and currently sits at number 2 in the sabre world rankings. Leonie Ebert currently sits in 9<sup>th</sup> in the women's foil world rankings. Germany has a chance to take multiple medals this year, so show them your support!