

Midrealm Cut-and-Thrust Rules v.1.0

Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay is an advanced authorization specifically intended to allow free-play in the study and recreation of historically documentable unarmored combat styles using the framework of SCA rapier combat. Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay is specifically meant to be inclusive of styles that predate the use of the rapier. Some examples of such combat styles can be found in the works of de Liberi, Vadi, Lichtenauer, Ringneck, Meyer, as well as the more familiar sidesword or rapier masters - Marozzo, D'All Aggochie, Manciolino, Viggiani, Agrippa, DiGrassi, Saviolo, Silver, Capo Ferro, Fabris, Giganti, Caranza, Narvaez, and Saint-Didier.

Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay is first and foremost a training partnership. It establishes the place where the Period Art and Science of Combat combines with what we call 'fighting'. It is a place where the Art is the Fight. Victory is not declared simply by 'who hit whom first' but is realized by how well each participant used his or her knowledge of period technique to strike their partner.

The Rules for Rapier Combat in the Middle Kingdom generally apply to Cut-and-Thrust, with the exception of the following revisions and additions:

1.2.13 BLOW CALLING

A. VALID BLOWS

Valid blows for cut-and-thrust are struck by either thrusting with the point of the blade ("A thrust") or a controlled percussive cut ("a cut"). Percussive cuts must always be delivered with sufficient control so as not to injure the recipient, while still delivering the necessary impact for a valid cut.

B. INVALID BLOWS

1) Push cuts, tip cuts and draw cuts are not valid blows for cut-and-thrust, unless they are reasonable recreations of a documented blow (such as an "abschnitt"). Cut and thrust partners should discuss between themselves the presumed efficacy of cuts with questionable percussion.

2) Chopping or hacking blows are not permitted. Percussive cuts must be delivered with control.

3) Cuts which land "flat" (the edge of the blade does not come in contact with the target) are not valid.

C. JUDGING BLOWS

The VALIDITY of any given blow shall be judged by the recipient of that blow. However, cut-and-thrust participants are always encouraged to discuss questionable blows with each other.

1.3.3 INCAPACITATING BLOWS

Any valid blow to the head, neck, torso, leg, foot, or armpit (to the fencer's hand width down the inner arm) shall be judged INCAPACITATING, rendering the fencer incapable of further combat.

1.3.4 BLOWS TO THE UPPER LIMBS

A valid blow to the hand or arm may, at the mutual agreement of both cut-and-thrust participants, be deemed incapacitating to that limb, without ending the fight. The participant struck in the hand or arm may then continue, without the use of the struck limb.

1.3.5 BLOWS TO THE LOWER LIMBS

Within Cut-and-Thrust combat, a valid blow to the leg or foot shall be judged INCAPACITATING, rendering the fencer incapable of further combat (see 1.3.3).

1.4 MIDDLE KINGDOM RULES FOR MELEES

1.4.9 Percussive cuts may NOT be used in melees. Blades which are approved for cut-and-thrust rapier, but not for heavy rapier, may not be used in melees.

2.1.3 HEAD AND NECK PROTECTION

A. PROTECTING THE HEAD

The front, back, sides and top of the head must be covered by rigid material to below the jawline and below the ears. Standard 12 kg fencing masks are not recommended for cut-and-thrust rapier. If a standard fencing mask is used, it must be supplemented with rigid material on the back of the head.

B. PROTECTING THE FACE

The face must be covered by rigid perforated metal, with holes no larger than 1/8" (3 mm) in diameter with a minimum offset of 3/16" (5 mm), or by a 12 kilogram mesh (e.g. a standard fencing mask).

E. PROTECTING THE THROAT AND NECK

The entire throat, including the cervical vertebrae, shall be covered by rigid material, backed by either puncture resistant material, 1/4" (6 mm) of closed cell foam, or their equivalents.

2.1.4 TORSO PROTECTION

F. ADDITIONAL PROTECTION

Cut-and-thrust participants are encouraged to wear additional rigid or padded material for torso protection. Such protective equipment must not interfere with the participant's ability to call valid blows.

2.1.5 HAND, ARM, LEG AND FOOT PROTECTION

B. ARM AND LEG PROTECTION

Abrasion-resistant material is required on the arms (save as noted above for armpits), legs, and any area not otherwise mentioned in these rules. Elbows and knees must be further protected by a minimum of an athletic pad, 1/4" (6 mm) of closed-cell foam, or equivalent materials.

2.2.2 WEAPONS

A. PERMITTED BLADES

The Middle Kingdom uses 3 classes of rapier blades: fencing-type rapiers, heavy-type rapiers, and cut-and-thrust blades. The edges of all blades must be blunt.

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Cut-and-Thrust blades:

- All cut-and-thrust blades listed in the Rules for Rapier Combat in the Society for Creative Anachronism are legal for use in the Middle Kingdom.

E. FLEXIBILITY OF BLADES

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Cut-and-Thrust blades are tested using the same method as other rapier blades, but may be deemed sufficient so long as the blade (of length greater than 18 inches) flexes at least 1/4" (6 mm).

F. TIPPING BLADES

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Cut-and-Thrust rapiers may instead be tipped with a leather tip, at least 1/2" in diameter, so long as the other tip requirements (including the placement of a rigid blunt object between the end of the rapier and the tip) are met.

2.4.1 REQUIRED PROTECTION

(change graphic to show rigid protection around the entire throat and on the back of the head. Add elbow and knee pads in new shading).

3.1.3 RESTRICTED-WARRANT MARSHALS AND OTHER STAFF

G. CUT-AND-THRUST AUTHORIZING MARSHALS

Any rapier marshal who is authorized for cut-and-thrust may organize and oversee cut-and-thrust activities, upon successful completion of an interview with the Deputy Rapier Marshal for Cut-and-Thrust. An additional warrant is required to authorize new participants for cut-and-thrust. Applicants for this advanced warrant should contact the Deputy Rapier Marshal for Cut-and-Thrust.

All cut-and-thrust authorizing marshals are expected to be able to evaluate not only the safety but also the historic knowledge of an authorization candidate. This does not require that the

authorizing marshal have knowledge of every documented historical system of combat, but rather that the marshal is able to determine when an authorization candidate is speaking outside of his or her actual expertise. In order to demonstrate ability in this regard, applicants for the cut-and-thrust authorizing warrant will, in addition to meeting all of the requirements for a rapier marshal, undergo an oral examination wherein at least one currently warrant cut-and-thrust authorizing marshal shall engage in a role-play scenario with the candidate. The administrator of the test shall play the part of a prospective authorizing candidate, answering the marshal-candidate's questions as normal. The test administrator will include a mix of both accurate and false information regarding historical systems of combat, and shall take note of the prospective marshal's ability to distinguish fact from fiction. A successful marshal candidate will be able to distinguish fact from fiction in at least 70% of all cases.

3.3.4 AUTHORIZATIONS

H. CUT-AND-THRUST AUTHORIZATION

Any Society member residing in the Middle Kingdom may attempt to authorize for cut-and-thrust combat (there is no requirement of prior authorization in any other form of combat). However, cut-and-thrust participants are expected to demonstrate a basic familiarity with at least one system of documented pre-17th century combat (whether I.33, Fiore, Vadi, Tahlhofer, Lichtenauer, Marozzo, Meyer, or any other). At a minimum, the candidate shall be able to demonstrate some guards and attacks from at least one style, school or manual, and should be able to incorporate this familiarity into his or her "free play" with a partner.

Cut-and-Thrust authorization candidates must also have a sponsoring cut-and-thrust marshal. The role of the sponsoring marshal is to advise the candidate as to his or her own readiness to attempt authorization, and to provide initial training and instruction (including the development of a repertoire of documented historical technique).