

# Eastside Fechtverein

## “Verhaltensregeln”

### Code of Conduct

In the interest of maintaining a culture of safety and mutual respect for those inside and outside of Eastside Fechtverein Historical European Martial Arts (known hereafter as Eastside F.v.) all members and prospective members are to abide by the Code of Conduct. Martial arts training is potentially dangerous and can only be done safely in an environment of mutual trust. Failure or refusal to respect the Code may result in dismissal from Eastside F.v., even without prior warnings.

#### **General Precepts:**

- 1.) All individuals participating in Eastside F.v. training, practices, or events will regard, speak to, and address one another respectfully at all times. Insulting or disrespectful language, in particular language disparaging an individual's immutable characteristics (ethnic or racial background, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) will not be tolerated.
- 2.) Eastside F.v. often conducts training in mixed-use venues, often in the proximity of the very young and their parents. Foul language tarnishes the reputation of the club and is to be avoided.
- 3.) All participants must be 16 years of age or older and must also have signed the “Eastside F.v. Liability Waiver”. Participants under the age of 18 years of age must have this waiver also signed by a legal adult guardian.
- 4.) Participants who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be barred from practice indefinitely.
- 5.) When the instructor is speaking or demonstrating, participants are to give their full attention. Practice weapons are to be held with the point downward and off the ground during this time.
- 6.) Though practice weapons are blunt and designed with safety in mind, participants should treat them as if they were sharp and pointed.
- 7.) Our training weapons, though safe, can still damage flooring and walls. Please be respectful of our host venue by avoiding resting the point of sword trainers on the floor or leaning on them. Do your best not to make contact with the floor, walls, beams, or pillars. Be aware of your surroundings and do not attempt to perform actions faster or harder than your ability allows.

- 8.) When training weapons are being employed, regardless of type, participants are to be aware of the point at all times. Participants must respect a two-foot “exclusion zone” around the face of their training partner. This means that the tip of no weapon, whether dagger, sword, staff, or halberd may be held in front of or pass within two feet of a participant’s face *unless they are wearing approved face and head protection* (i.e. a fencing mask in good condition).
- 9.) All participants must wear the recommended protective gear as directed by the instructor. The level of protective equipment may change depending on the activity, so participants must pay close attention and follow directives of the instructor in this regard. Personal protective equipment (equipment not provided by Eastside F.v.) must be inspected and approved by the instructor before use.
- 10.) It is a common part of many of our drills to make contact with your partner’s mask with practice weapons, but control is the mark of a competent martial artist.
  - a.) Participants must ensure that they are imparting the minimal amount of force on their training partners required to accomplish the goal of the drill or exercise.
  - b.) When in doubt, verbally check whether your training partner is comfortable with the level of force you are using.
  - c.) Cuts or thrusts to unprotected parts of the body shall be pulled just before contact.
  - d.) No tolerance will be shown for strikes against another participant whose intent appears to be to injure.
  - e.) Strikes in anger will likewise not be tolerated.
  - f.) Participants may be ejected without prior warning from any given training session if the above precepts are not *strictly* respected.
- 11.) Before beginning a partner drill, rendering a weapon salute, fist bump, hand shake, or even simple eye contact is customary. Be absolutely certain that your partner fully understands the drill and is ready to begin.
- 12.) If a participant is unsure of how to proceed or has a question about the current activity, they are encouraged to ask for clarification from the instructor as soon as possible. We encourage discussion and lots of questions!

### **Sparring precepts:**

Sparring, otherwise known in the HEMA community as Freeplay, is defined here as mutually competitive, relatively unstructured fencing or grappling. Further restrictions, rules, or stipulations may apply at the instructor’s discretion.

1. Only students with a firm grasp on the basics, have earned trust with the instructor and their peers, and who possess excellent control shall be allowed to participate in sparring.
2. Sparring shall only be conducted under the supervision and explicit approval of the head instructor. Participants who wish to spar should inform the instructor to get verbal approval.

3. Appropriate protective equipment must be worn at all times when sparring. Before commencing sparring, the instructor shall inspect each fighter's equipment to ensure its good condition and suitability. The minimum protective equipment is dependent on the training weapons employed:
  - a. **For foam "boffers", leather dussack, or synthetic dagger:**
    - i. Fencing mask
    - ii. Gorget
    - iii. Groin protection for males required, though recommended for females
    - iv. Light gloves recommended, but not required
  - b. **For synthetic and steel swords, or any polearm simulators**
    - i. Fencing mask with padded overlay and rigid protection for the back of the head
    - ii. Gorget
    - iii. Fencing jacket with appropriate level of padding
    - iv. Approved fencing gloves that provide rigid protection to the wrist, hand, and fingers
    - v. Rigid elbow cups
    - vi. Rigid forearm protection (can be integrated into gloves or gauntlets)
    - vii. Groin protection, regardless of sex
    - viii. Rigid knee and shin protection
    - ix. No exposed skin for steel
    - x. Rigid chest protection recommended, but not required
4. Sparring will be only allowed during certain class times, generally in the last 20 - 30 minutes when the head instructor or observers can be free to give attention to supervision.
5. When two participants spar, there will always be a third individual observing. The Observer must be the instructor or a tenured club member.
6. Though the Observer is chiefly responsible for identifying safety risks and equipment malfunctions/ deficiencies, all class participants and club members share responsibility in calling out potential risks or unsafe behaviors.
7. When sparring in "full kit" (see above), it is often difficult for fighters to hear the commands of an Observer or the warnings of an observing class member. Observers must project loudly enough to be clearly heard by fighters.
  - a. Sparring will only commence once both fighters have rendered a salute or respectful acknowledgement to their opponent and the Observer has shouted "*Fight!*"
  - b. The Observer, any fighter, or any observing class member shall call out "*Gear!*" loudly if a gear malfunction or deficiency is identified. Fighters are to separate immediately, orient the points of their weapons toward the ground, and wait for the Observer to assist them.

- c. The call of “*Halt!*” should otherwise be used by the Observer, any fighter, or any bystander who identifies a safety issue or needs for the action to cease for any reason. Fighters are to separate immediately, orient the points of their weapons toward the ground, and wait for the Observer’s explicit permission to resume sparring.
8. No closed-fist strikes (punches), elbow strikes, headbutts, knee strikes, or kicks will be allowed to any part of the body. Pushes and shoves with open hands are allowed as long as they are done with control. Gentle strikes with the pommel of a sword are likewise allowed, given that they are done with appropriate control.
9. **Grappling “at the arms”, takedowns, and throws:**
  - a. **Grappling “at the arms”**, defined here as manipulating an opponent’s arms, hands, or weapon with your own arms, hands, or weapons, is allowed unless otherwise specified. This does not apply to any joint locks or techniques that involve turning an opponent’s limbs in a way that is likely to incur injury. These techniques are strictly forbidden.
  - b. **Takedowns**, defined here as techniques that land your opponent on the floor, are **ONLY** permitted by fighters with **explicit verbal approval from both parties prior to sparring taking place**. Takedowns include simple trips, sweeps, arm drags, etc.
  - c. **Throws**, defined here as grappling techniques that lift or throw the opponent over the level of the hip are **not allowed** unless specifically allowed by the instructor. These are potentially highly risky techniques and appropriate flooring and high competence are essential to perform these safely.
10. **Often, sparring will be restricted by additional stipulations as set by the instructor, an Observer, or by an individual student’s reasonable requests. These extra restrictions will be respected in addition to the precepts above.**
11. If you are in any way unsure as to whether you are ready for freeplay/ sparring, or if you have any questions about these rules, please contact the instructor.