

## Competition Epee Class - Gear Requirements

*“train like you fight, fight like you train”*

Come to class with the gear you will be competing with. This ensures you are familiar with how your grips, weapons, cords, everything feels and performs. Train with your full uniform on (mask, jacket, plastron, knickers, shoes you will compete with). It will be hot and tiring, best to get used to having everything on now rather than at a tournament. This will make you stronger and improve endurance. You do not need FIE gear to compete in tournaments. The benefit of getting FIE gear later on is a lower total cost of ownership as it lasts longer. FIE jackets and plastrons are also thicker meaning heavier and hotter but less bruising.

### Class requirements:

- Minimum of 1 electric Epee** (Non FIE or FIE)  
You will not be allowed to compete in a tournament without at least 2 Epees. Class is a great place to try out different grips and blades to see what you fight best with.
- Minimum of 1 bodycord**  
Again you need at least two bodycords to enter a competition. Cords wear. Cords are cheap. Get 2. Each brand has its pros and cons. Cheap is ideal to start with. Then figure out what you like in a cord later on before purchasing expensive ones. Trevor (armorer) can likely repair your cords if they get damaged/stop working.
- Mask** (Non FIE or FIE)  
Non fie 3 weapon Epee masks are great to start with and cheaper. FIE masks will last longer but cost \$200+
- Glove**
- Knickers**
- Plastron**
- USAF Competitive membership**  
(standard can be upgraded to competitive before you register for your first tournament. A USAF membership is required to participate in class)

### Tournament Requirements

- 2 Electric Epees
- 2 bodycords
- 1 mask
- 1 plastron
- (chest protector is required for women)
- Jacket
- Knickers
- Knee high socks

## *Good to know info about gear and suppliers*

Non FIE gear is much less expensive than FIE gear, works great, and can be used for tournaments. It will also wear faster. Start with the non FIE and replace after it wears out. Grips can be reused; there is no special grip for Electric. French grips only fit on a full (uncut) blade. Non French grips only fit on cut blades (tang must be cut properly and threaded.)

### **Epee blades:**

- Places like Absolute Fencing, Blue Gauntlet etc are distributors and do not forge their own blades. Blades are purchased and stamped with their logos and marketing.
- Blue and White etc are just coatings for the blades. More aesthetic than anything.
- Flexibility: Medium, Stiff, Soft. Talk to your coach and armorer for details and suggestion
- Blade size will always be #5 (others sizes are not for adults)
- Blade makers (foundries): FOLO (now UNIC), Franchini, Leon Paul, Blaise Freres, Allstar/Uhlmann, StM, Vniti
- You can purchase a bare electric blade, a pre-wired blade (includes tip and is wired up), or a full weapon. Start off with a full weapon or talk to Trevor about customizing. Trevor is also able to wire blades for you and cut tang to the proper length for your preferred grip. It's cheaper to get a bare blade and have Trevor wire it (no charge for service but parts are at cost)
- If purchasing just a blade (wired or not) it will have to be bent properly and if not pre-cut then cut to size for your grip. Trevor can do this for you. If using a French grip your blade does not need to be cut but will need to be bent.
- For tournaments I would stick to the below brands, durability and quality are very important. Breaking a blade in a tournament when you only have two means you're gonna have a bad time.

**BF = Blaise Freres.** This is the most popular foundry for blades. They only make FIE blades. They vary A LOT in flexibility and feel from each batch. If possible pick your blade in person (stands at tournaments)

**LP = Leon Paul.** Leon Paul is a UK brand, pretty pricey but they have their own forge and make great blades. The Non FIE Epee (see Trevor's) is a good price (\$108 for the blade) and is very durable. The Fusion (\$119) and Fusion Pro (\$192) also have a good reputation.

**Allstar / Uhlmann** (same company, different product lines). German company and very popular. Allstar clothing is a more athletic fit than the Uhlmann line. Blades are good quality. Their new Black Predator blade has a great reputation and has become very popular. Allstar gear must be purchased through a shop like AbsoluteFencing or AllianceFencing. They do not sell direct to the US.

**UNIC (FOLO).** Highly recommended by Trevor. They offer free shipping most of the time and are extremely good quality. The F1 is a great non FIE blade and their FIE blade is Trevor's new favorite. Foundry is in Ukraine but production doesn't seem to be an issue.

**StM and Dynamo** are also in Ukraine but due to the war their production has slowed. A lot of shops are hit and miss if they will have StM or Dynamo in stock.

## *Where to buy*

Shipping can be very expensive. Absolute Fencing and Blue Gauntlet advertise good prices but shipping can be pretty high but if you order a lot at once it can be a savings. Don't get their house brand blades for tournaments. They do carry BF and other quality blades though.

### Best places for just blades:

UNIC (FOLO): purchase from their US ebay store for best price. Trevor has purchased from them often and Bogdan (US rep here) is a great guy and easy to work with. If there is any issue at all he will make it right. They sell tips, wires, sockets, wires, and guards as well

[ebay.com/usr/folo.america](https://www.ebay.com/usr/folo.america)

Need A Blade: Best prices for Allstar, Uhlmann, and Black Predator and has free shipping  
[needablade.com](https://www.needablade.com)

- Negrini has a terrible website but good gear
- PBT has a great Plastron that is comfortable
- Leon Paul gear is pricey but very comfortable same goes for Allstar
- When possible opt for the Pro line/superlight/more expensive version Plastrons and Jackets as they will be much lighter and more comfortable while also lasting longer for lower total cost of ownership

**Shoes:** Indoor turf soccer shoes are very similar to fancy fencing shoes but way way cheaper. Court shoes like ones for racquetball are also great. Wear what's comfortable and offers grip

### Where to get gear, weapons, blades, parts, etc

- <https://www.leonpaulusa.com>
  - For top of the line jackets LP & Allstar have amazing reputations. Nigrini is supposed to be the most comfortable but also thin and wears quicker.
- <https://www.absolutefencinggear.com>
  - Great prices and good gear. House blades are not recommended for tournament but they carry BF, Franchini, and StM
- <https://www.ebay.com/usr/folo.america>
- <https://www.blue-gauntlet.com>
- <https://www.alliancefencingequipment.com>
- <https://thefencingpost.com>
  - Carries Allstar, UNIC (FOLO), and BF. Need a blade is free shipping so if you get just a blade it'll cost more here.
- <https://shop.pbtfencing.com>
  - Great customer service. Call them with your measurements and they will make sure you get the exact right size. Ships from Hungary but cost is not bad
- <https://www.negrini.com/en>
- <https://www.carmimari.com>
- <https://www.schermaontc.com/>
- <https://www.prieur-sports.com/en/>
- <https://uhlmann-fechtsport.com/>

## Armorer recommendations for this class

#1) ask every person (and coach) in class what they like and dislike about their weapons. Ask to try it (how does the grip feel in your hand, is it tip heavy, is the balance point comfortable, is your arm getting tired in En Garde?)

#2) same as #1 ask everyone about their jacket, plastron, knickers, helmet, shoes, etc etc

#3) when possible start out with the less expensive blades until you know exactly what you want and need in a weapon. Then once you know what you need, get 2 of them. Same grip etc so when you need to swap em in a tournament it's the exact same. Keep that first cheaper one around for practice and as a backup if the worst happens at a tournament.

### General

- Find a blade you like (wired or unwired whatever fits your budget and preference)
  - If unwired Trevor can wire it (avg cost including all parts is \$25)
- Then find a guard you like (really cheap = sharp edges)
- Then find a grip you like (try out ones in class or see Trevor)
- If you know you will not use a French grip order your blade pre-cut if its no extra charge/cheap

### Blades

- UNIC (FOLO) is the best bang for your buck as they have free shipping and top quality blades. Their FIE blade is Trevor's new favorite. Wired with titanium tip (very light) costs \$175. Their F1 however is only \$60 and is an amazing and light blade that has performed well for Trevor. Ordering it unwired drops it down to \$40 (free shipping) which is cheaper than Absolutes cheapest electric blade with shipping.
- Leon Paul's Standard Epee blade is very durable, has an amazing reputation, and is just about as good as their regular FIE blade (in durability, it's also lighter). Wired it runs \$108 (\$85 unwired). It has a very deep V and handles well especially if you fight on the blade a lot.
- Allstar/Uhlmann blades from Need a Blade.com are BF blades and with the free shipping a great choice for the serious fencer. Can't really get a BF blade wired and to your house for less. (They come with German wiring and tip)
- FIE blades are normally heavier than Non FIE but will last much longer, they also cost way more. If weight is a big item for you

### Blade Tips (fully assembled it's called a point)

- **Use German or English only.** *No French or Italian.* Why? The French and Italian are crap, the barrels are weak and bust and tips are often loose/wobbly with a tendency to loose screws for no reason. Absolute Fencing, FOLO, Allstar etc are all German. The LP English tips are great but pricey. Tip weight can make a big difference. Talk to Trevor about this and to try out different tips

### Other

- Get cheap-ish guards, sockets, bodycords and try them to see what you like and don't like. Then upgrade to clear sockets, lightweight guards, Titanium tips etc