

FAQ



How can I contact the US Fencing Association?

United States Fencing Association
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Your fax is busy, not working, etc., what should I do?

Keep trying. The fax receives an incredible volume of paper around a deadline. Yours is just one among the hundreds that are being sent. If you entering a tournament, and you can avoid waiting until the last minute to send your entry, you will be much better off. **Remember to always request confirmation of receipt by including a confirmation of fax receipt to be faxed back, or by enclosing a self-addressed-stamped postcard to be returned as confirmation of receipt!**

I am having trouble contacting someone in the office.

Please leave a message on that person's voice mail. Be patient. He or she will return your call. We have 20,000 USFA members and 9 people working in the office. Please do not call everyone else in the office and leave messages for them also. That will lead to multiple phone calls back to you, after your question has been answered. This is frustrating for you and those returning your calls.

I need to talk to someone in the office, and I cannot reach him or her.

Call the number again; this time choose option zero. Explain your situation to the Administrative Assistant, and ask her to connect you. The person you are trying to reach may be in a meeting, or away from his or her desk for the moment, or most likely, on the phone with someone else.

The information on my membership card/data correction form is incorrect

Please either return the data correction form by fax or mail, or contact us at the phone number or email address above.

I have lost my membership card, how do I get a new one?

Please contact us at the phone number or email address above. There is a fee of \$10 to replace the card.

How can I get more information on fencing?

Please visit us on the web at www.usfencing.org.

How can I get more information on fencing in my area?

[Click Here to find a place to fence where you live](#)

[How do I sign up for a National tournament?](#)

If you do not already have an entry form, download the entry form; fill it out; send it in with payment.

[What about smaller, regional events?](#)

Please visit the website for your Section or Division.

[Did you get my entry?](#)

This is a popular question, especially around deadline time. You can answer this question yourself by including a cover page to be faxed back, requesting confirmation of receipt, or by enclosing a self-addressed-stamped postcard to be returned as confirmation of receipt. When you get that confirmation of receipt; you will know that we have received your entry/application. Note that our stamped confirmation is the only acceptable proof of receipt.

[Do you know the start times for \[fill in the blank\] tournament?](#)

As soon as we know these, they are posted on our website. If they are not posted, we have yet to receive them from our Tournament Committee. Questions about this process may be referred to Tournament Services.

[I haven't received my confirmation for \[fill in the blank\] tournament?](#)

Chances are it is in the mail en route to you as you are reading this. If you are concerned that there may have been an error in the process, please contact us at the phone number or email address above. We would be happy to send you another packet via fax or email.

[Am I or is my son or daughter eligible for \[fill in the blank\] tournament?](#)

Eligibility requirements for each tournament are clearly printed on the entry forms. Questions about eligibility for international competitions should be referred to Corinne Greenman. Questions about eligibility for national competitions can be directed to Christy Simmons.

[Do I need to qualify to fence in a North American Cup \(NAC\)?](#)

You need to meet the age and eligibility requirements for the tournament that you wish to enter. These requirements may be found on the second page of the NAC entry form.

[How can I fence in the Junior Olympics?](#)

In order to fence in the JOs you must qualify. Qualification paths are listed in the Athlete Handbook, which is available free to download on our website, or printed from our office for a small fee.

[How can I fence in the Summer Nationals?](#)

In order to fence in the Summer Nationals you must qualify. Qualification paths are listed in the Athlete Handbook, which is available free to download on our website, or printed from our office for a small fee.



What is a classification?

A classification is a letter from A to E (with A being the highest) that is earned in competition. The classification reflects the skill level of a fencer. A classification includes the letter assigned as well as the year in which it was last earned, for example "A02", which would be an A earned in 2002. Classifications are valid for four years, at which point they revert to the next lowest letter, or unclassified, "U", if the classification has not been re-earned within the four-year period.



How can I earn a classification?

You can earn a classification at most USFA sanctioned National, Regional, or Local tournaments. USFA sanctioned means that the National Office, a USFA section, or a USFA division is conducting the tournament. You can the event requirements for awarding classifications in the Athlete Handbook, which is available free to download on our website, or printed from our office for a small fee



Why hasn't my classification changed?

We haven't received the results from that tournament. The division, or bout committee chair of that tournament needs to send us the results for verification, and then we will change it. We change classifications only when we have official results justifying the change.



Where can I find the answers to the Referee study guide?

The simple answer is "in the rule book." The Fencing Officials Commission (FOC) designed the study guide, intentionally omitting the answers from the guide. The idea is that if you don't know the answer, you should look it up in the rule book. And if you DO know the answer, double-check yourself against the rule book.



Who do I talk to about my referee rating?

The Fencing Officials Commission (FOC) is the group that conducts all testing for referee ratings. The FOC has established a web site with answers to questions regarding referee ratings and tests. Their website is available at <http://www.fencingofficials.org>.



Is my [fill in the blank] handle illegal?

This question is very difficult to answer in that there are just too many variables. Different vendors give the same handle different names and the size of the handle in relation to the size of the fencer's hand also determines if a handle is legal. Yes, a specific handle that is perfectly legal for one fencer might be illegal for someone else.

Many people think that the rules concerning various types of grips are not very clear. The three main reasons for this are: 1, People don't know the rules. 2, The rules are all too frequently ignored. 3, Vendors sell illegal handles. One should be aware that just because some vendor sells a handle or just because a referee allows someone to fence with a handle does not make that handle legal. [Click here to download the rule book.](#)

If you look in the Rules Book at Article m.4, 6, you will find that the handle with attachments that does not allow the thumb to be 2 cm or less from the guard is illegal for that fencer. (Now you can understand that a handle could be perfectly legal for someone with a very large hand while it would be illegal for someone with a very small hand.) Does your pronged handle allow you to hold it in more than one position (without going into some sort of contortions)? If so, it is illegal. If there are prongs that would allow you to hold it as you would hold a "French" handle with a finger hooked around a prong so that your thumb would be more than 2 cm from the guard, it is illegal.

The use of a strap to assist in holding the weapon has caused some confusion. If one has a legal orthopedic grip (including the Italian grip), one may use a strap. If one is using a French grip, one may not use a strap. (The applicable rules follow.) The basic concept here is that if one wishes to have a weapon that will allow for longer reach (French handle), one may not have a device (strap) that will give the user added strength.

The main rules that govern grips are:

t.16: With all three weapons, defense must be effected exclusively with the guard and the blade used either separately or together. If the handle has no special device or attachment or special shape (e.g. orthopedic), a fencer may hold it in any way he or she wishes and he or she may also alter the position of his hand on the handle during a bout. However, the weapon must not be - either permanently or temporarily, in an open or disguised manner - transformed into a throwing weapon; it must be used without the hand leaving the hilt...

m.4: 1. The maximum length of the grip in foil and epee is 20 cm, measured between lines B and E, and 18 cm, measured between lines B and D. In saber the maximum length of the grip is 17 cm (see Figures 8, 9 and 13, pp. 86, 89, 94).

2. The grip must be able to pass through the same gauge as the guard. It must be so made that normally it cannot injure either the user or the opponent.

3. All types of hilts are allowed providing that they conform to the regulations which have been framed with a view to placing the various types of weapons on the same footing. However, at epee, orthopedic grips, whether metal or not, may not be covered with leather or any material which could hide wires or switches.

4. The grip must not include any device which assists the fencer to use it as a throwing weapon.

5. The grip must not include any device which can increase in any way the protection afforded to the hand or wrist of the fencer by the guard: a cross bar or electric socket which extends beyond the edge of the guard is expressly forbidden.

6. If the grip (or glove) includes any device or attachment or has a special shape (orthopedic) which fixes the position of the hand on the grip, the grip must conform to the following conditions. (a) It must determine and fix one position only for the hand on the grip. (b) When the hand occupies this one position on the grip, the extremity of the thumb when completely extended must not be more than 2 cm from the inner surface of the guard.



Can I register online?

Yes, online registration is available for those over the age of 13.