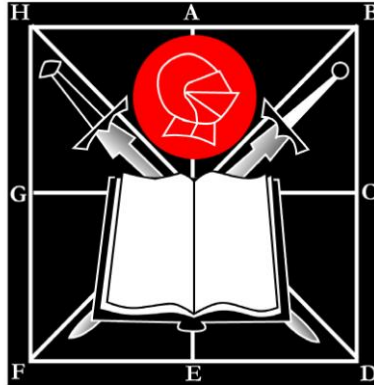


# Higgins Armory Museum



## Academy of the Sword/Sword Guild

The Higgins Armory **Academy of the Sword** is a world-class program that studies, teaches, and demonstrates historical martial arts. The Academy offers formal instruction in a variety of historical combat forms, and supports ongoing research in the field through the **Sword Guild**, the volunteer-based research arm of the program.

For current Academy course offerings, see [www.higgins.org](http://www.higgins.org). The Sword Guild meets on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month. **Saturday practices** are run on a collegial and volunteer basis, and participants should expect to take the initiative in the development of their own skills.

Sword Guild participants are required to be **museum members**, and to pass a **safety test**. People who have not passed the safety test may participate by invitation of one of the Academy instructors.

Participants in Academy activities are advised to subscribe to the Sword Guild **email list** (contact: Bill Short, [info1@higginssword.org](mailto:info1@higginssword.org)). Meeting schedules will sometimes vary, and this list is the best way to keep informed. A variety of relevant information and resources are also available on the Guild website, [www.higginssword.org](http://www.higginssword.org).

New participants are welcome to borrow **equipment** from the museum, but continuing participants should plan to acquire their own equipment. See the lists of equipment and suppliers on the following pages.

Current Academy instructors are Jeffrey Forgeng, Kenneth Mondschein, Mark Millman, and Bill Short.

## EQUIPMENT LIST

Senior Guild members often have a lot of experience with various types of equipment and suppliers—it is always worth talking to them as you start to plan out your purchases.

### ***Basic light equipment***

The following items are required if you want to take part in any non-choreographed martial arts with weapons like the rapier.

*Fencing gloves.* Remember to get a pair – fencing gloves are normally sold singly. A decent cheap option is the Absolute Fencing Standard 3-Weapon Washable (\$20 a pair). For a higher-quality option, American Fencers Supply carries the #146A Armor Two padded, washable glove (\$50 a pair). For a reasonably historical-looking type, Sullivan Glove Company offers the #860D Classic Glove (\$55 a pair; [www.sullivanglove.com](http://www.sullivanglove.com)).

*3-weapon fencing mask.* A decent cheap option is the Absolute Fencing 3-Weapon Mask with Removable Bib (\$60). For a high-quality, extremely strong mask, Triplette Competition Arms offers their #2001 TCA FIE Mask with removable bib liner (\$158).

*Padded fencing jacket.* A decent cheap option is the Absolute Fencing Unisex Jacket without the cuissard (\$44). For a higher-quality choice, American Fencers Supply has a limited selection of men's and women's padded jackets, available with and without cuissards (jackets with cuissards can be cut to waist length; ask when ordering).

*Cup* for men.

*Chest protector* for women. Absolute Fencing carries them (\$25).

### ***Basic heavy equipment***

These items are required if you want to take part in any non-choreographed martial arts with weapons like the longsword.

*Heavy gloves.* Lacrosse gloves or Kevlar reinforced gloves.

*3-weapon fencing mask.* See above.

*Padded fencing jacket.* See above.

*Cup* for men, *chest protector* for women. See above.

### ***Supplementary light equipment***

These additional items are required if you want to fence competitively with weapons like the rapier.

*Chest protector.* Absolute Fencing (\$25).

*Neck guard.* Hockey neck guards will work fine (\$20), or you can get a gorget from [thatguysproducts.com](http://thatguysproducts.com) (\$90).

*Elbow Protectors.* Absolute Fencing Leather Elbow Protector (under Coaching equipment) (\$16)

*Padded plastron.* (\$29 American Fencer's Supply)

*Leather mask cover.* (\$28 Absolute Fencing)

*Underarm protectors.* Not strictly necessary, but improves safety. (\$15 Absolute Fencing.)

## ***Supplementary heavy equipment***

These additional items are required if you want to fence competitively with weapons like the longsword.

*Heavy mask with rear protection.* These can be had from [thatguysproducts.com](http://thatguysproducts.com) (\$300)

*Kneepads and forearm protectors* (any sporting goods store)

*Chest protector.* Absolute Fencing (\$25).

*Neck guard.* Hockey neck guards will work fine (\$20), or you can get a gorget from [thatguysproducts.com](http://thatguysproducts.com) (\$90).

*Shoulder pads.* These can be had in models made for hockey and other sports.

## ***Other equipment***

If you are taking part in the weeknight Salle, you should think about getting:

*Black knickers or trousers* (available from Triplette or Zen Warrior)

*Black socks*

We also recommend the Adidas Samba as an excellent shoe for fencing. Martial arts shoes are a possible alternative.

## ***Weapons***

These come in many varieties to suit all tastes and interests. The best starting place is probably to look at ones that people in the group already own, and figure out which best suits your needs. A few suggestions are below.

*Longswords.* The Hanwei fencing longswords are the best option for training weapons. Available at a discount from CAS Iberia (see Suppliers).

*Rapiers.* These come in many varieties. The Hanwei rapiers will be the best bargain; higher-end options include Dennis Graves, Darkwood, and Tom Fiocchi.

*Italian foils.* Worth owning if you are studying the rapier seriously. Available from the Fencing Post.

*Sabers.* The Hanwei Pecoraro is good for training, and comes at a discount through CAS Iberia.

*Cannes and bâtons.* These French martial arts weapons are excellent training for the longsword and single-hand sword. Available from [www.sport7boxe.fr](http://www.sport7boxe.fr).

## SUPPLIERS

### Martial Arts Equipment

**Absolute Fencing.** [www.absolutefencinggear.com](http://www.absolutefencinggear.com) Inexpensive and fair quality. The Guild has a club discount; ask Ken Mondschein about ordering.

**American Fencers Supply.** [www.amfence.com](http://www.amfence.com) Has good gear and classical weapons. Do not purchase their historical weapons.

**Cavalier Attitude.** [www.cavalierattitude.com](http://www.cavalierattitude.com) Oversize fencing bags

**The Fencing Post.** [www.thefencingpost.com](http://www.thefencingpost.com) Vendor of classical weapons

**Triplette Competition Arms/Zen Warrior Armory.** [www.triplette.com](http://www.triplette.com);

[www.zenwarriorarmory.com](http://www.zenwarriorarmory.com). Sister companies with slightly different product lines; it is possible to order from both at once. Have colored knickers and other gear. Do not purchase their historical weapons

### Weapons

**Darkwood Armory.** [www.darkwoodarmory.com](http://www.darkwoodarmory.com). Produces excellent blades and very good swords

**Tom Fiocchi.** [www.fiocchisword.net](http://www.fiocchisword.net). Excellent smallswords and other gear

**Dennis Graves/No Quarter Arms.** [www.noquarterarms.com](http://www.noquarterarms.com). Probably the best reproduction sword cutler working today

**Macdonald Armories.** [www.historicalfencing.org/Macdonaldarmory/index.htm](http://www.historicalfencing.org/Macdonaldarmory/index.htm). Excellent weapons, but lengthy wait time

**Therion Arms.** [www.therionarms.com](http://www.therionarms.com). Vendor of Hanwei weapons and many miscellaneous items. A little more expensive than other outlets, but he's a good guy and has excellent customer service.

**Kult of Athena.** [www.kultofathena.com](http://www.kultofathena.com). Carries similar materials to Therion, but prices tend to be better, sometimes even below wholesale rates.

**CAS Iberia.** [www.casiberia.com](http://www.casiberia.com). Vendor of Hanwei weapons. Guild demonstrators get a 25% discount if ordering through the museum. Contact Jeffrey Forgeng for details.

**Arms and Armour.** [www.armor.com](http://www.armor.com) Carries museum-quality reproductions.

**Purpleheart Armory.** [www.woodenswords.com](http://www.woodenswords.com). Wooden practice weapons of various types.

**Hickory Arms/Marc Bernier.** [www.hickoryarmsonline.com](http://www.hickoryarmsonline.com). Wooden practice weapons; Guild members get a 10% discount.

## **Costume**

**Historic Enterprises.** [www.historicenterprises.com](http://www.historicenterprises.com). Guild demonstrators receive a 20% discount. Contact Jeffrey Forgeng to verify whether you are on their demonstrators list.

**The Quartermaster General.** [www.thequartermastergeneral.com](http://www.thequartermastergeneral.com). Good supplier of costume for 17th and 18th century.

**Syke's Sutlery.** <http://sykesutler.home.att.net>. Carries 17th-century gear.

**Revival Clothing.** [www.revivalclothing.com](http://www.revivalclothing.com). Carries medieval costume, including padded arming coats.