

# Sword Sparring Equipment Guide

There's no getting around the fact that this gear is expensive. Depending on your budget you can take a variety of approaches to gearing up.

**You do not have to purchase sparring gear.** Also, for class safety, I will limit free sparring and intensity levels based on the equipment you are using. If you want to swing freely with a partner you will need the appropriate gear. For solo practice and controlled partner drills this equipment is not necessary.

Depending on the specific equipment you choose, a full set will come out between \$300-\$750. All of these items can be purchased separately, so you can start with a few basics and build up as you go (and if you think it is worth it to you).

**Stage 1, sufficient for drills** – Gloves, forearm protection, (eye protection)

**Stage 2, needed for controlled sparring** – Chest protector, Mask, (and gorget if no fencing jacket)

**Stage 3, needed for full sparring** – Fencing jacket, shin/knee guards, upper arm protection, groin protection

The following gear list is available from Purpleheart Armory ([woodenswords.com](http://woodenswords.com)) in Houston. The gear is good quality and I can confidently recommend them and their products. There are other suppliers out there, but not that many and I can't give you any assurances about the quality and effectiveness of what you will get.

One low cost option is Superior Fencing ([supfen.com](http://supfen.com)) out of Pakistan. They are a low cost knock-off operation. Their gear is roughly half the price. I have heard from folks who have used this gear that it is 'better than half as good'. That is, its not as good, but good for the money. Worth considering if you have a tight budget but still want to gear up.

Another option to consider is substituting a motorcycle jacket for fencing gear. They are available quite cheaply, some students in San Antonio got \$50 jackets that are working quite well. They have hard plastic plates on the chest, arms and back.

*\*\*My recommendations in the list below are listed like this! Italics and asterisks*

## Mask

[https://www.woodenswords.com/HEMA\\_Masks\\_s/1924.htm](https://www.woodenswords.com/HEMA_Masks_s/1924.htm)

Coach's mask adds an extra layer of padding- nice but not necessary, also it is a bit warmer. The removable liner seems optional but worth it to me as you will be sweating inside the mask, can be removed and washed periodically.

- Absolute Force Basic Fencing Mask \$88
- *\*\*Basic with removable liner \$94*
- AF Coach's mask \$113
- Coach w removable liner \$118

## Gloves / Arm Protection

- *\*\*Red Dragon Gloves \$99*
- *\*\*Economy Forearm/Elbow Guards short \$49*
- Encased Forearm/Elbow Guard Set V3 (optional upgrade) \$75
- Shoulder and Upper Arm with Straps (optional, but useful) \$44
- Gabriel Finger Gloves 2.0.3 \$340 (the luxury option, way better than red dragons)

## Torso protection

[https://www.woodenswords.com/category\\_s/2257.htm](https://www.woodenswords.com/category_s/2257.htm)

- *\*\*PBT Extended Chest Protector \$35 (worn under jacket or in place of jacket)*
- AF Chest Protector \$30 (almost as good, \$5 cheaper, less coverage)

[https://www.woodenswords.com/category\\_s/2258.htm](https://www.woodenswords.com/category_s/2258.htm)

- *\*\*SPES Officers Jacket 350N \$229 (I would consider the arming strap addition and plates made for arm protection on this jacket)*
- Any fencing jacket with 350N rating works many options here and w other stores

Optional neck protection, jacket and mask make this one unnecessary.

- PHA Gorget Basic \$34 (only needed if you do not have a jacket)

## Extras

[https://www.woodenswords.com/Shin\\_Guards\\_s/1929.htm](https://www.woodenswords.com/Shin_Guards_s/1929.htm)

- *\*\*Full Shin and Knee Guards (Knapper) \$58 (I'm happy w these, but they're nothing special)*
- Shin / knee guards – many available, can substitute hockey/lacross gear. \$30-80
- Our normal sparring leg gear w added knee guards would work
- Groin cup – Internal or external. Optional as always.

## Motocross Jacket

This is a possible substitute for fencing jacket and arm protection. Not made for sword sparring (obviously), but not a bad option for a starter set. Other similar options are also available on Amazon, etc. \$60

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0B9JMVF2G/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_search\\_asin\\_title?ie=UTF8&th=1&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0B9JMVF2G/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&th=1&psc=1)