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ELITE FENCING COACHING

PRIVATE COACHING RESOURCE SERIES

The Complete Guide to Parries

Every Position, Every Weapon



Detailed hand positions, blade angles, riposte paths, and weapon-specific usage
for all eight classical parries.

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A Note from Coach Derek

The parry is the most important defensive skill in fencing. It's the moment where you take control of the bout — stopping the opponent's attack and creating your opportunity to score with the riposte.

But most fencers learn parries poorly. They wave their blade in the general direction of the opponent's attack and hope for the best. A proper parry is precise. The hand rotates to a specific position. The blade deflects the attack along a specific angle. The riposte follows a specific path. Nothing is left to chance.

This guide covers all eight classical parries with exact hand positions using the clock-face system. I'll tell you exactly where your thumb should be, how your hand should rotate, where your blade ends up, and how the riposte follows. I'll also tell you which parries matter most for each weapon, because a foil fencer's parry toolkit looks very different from a saber fencer's.

Learn these positions precisely. Practice them until they're automatic. A fencer with three sharp parries is more dangerous than a fencer with eight sloppy ones.

— Coach Derek

Understanding the Parry System

The eight classical parries protect the eight areas that an attack can target. They are numbered 1 through 8 (sometimes called prime through octave) and are organized by the line they defend: high or low, inside or outside.

The Four Lines

Inside High (Line 4): The area of the target on the inside of the blade (weapon arm side, toward the chest). Defended by parry 4.

Outside High (Line 6): The area of the target on the outside of the blade (away from the weapon arm). Defended by parry 6.

Inside Low (Line 7): The lower inside target, below the weapon hand. Defended by parry 7.

Outside Low (Line 8): The lower outside target, below the weapon hand. Defended by parry 8.

Parries 1, 2, 3, and 5 cover related areas but with different hand positions, and some are specific to certain weapons or tactical situations.

The Clock-Face System

Throughout this guide, hand position is described using a clock face as seen from the fencer's own perspective, looking down at the back of the weapon hand. The thumb position on the grip is the reference point.

12 o'clock: Thumb on top of the grip, pointing straight up.

1 o'clock: Thumb rotated slightly to the outside (standard en garde position for most French grip fencers).

3 o'clock: Thumb rotated fully to the outside (fully pronated hand).

9 o'clock: Thumb rotated fully to the inside (fully supinated hand).

10–11 o'clock: Thumb rotated toward the inside (common pronated position for parry 4).

The terms "pronation" and "supination" describe the rotation of the forearm. Pronation rotates the thumb toward the inside (counterclockwise when looking at the right hand from above). Supination rotates the thumb toward the outside (clockwise). Understanding these rotations is essential for executing parries correctly.

En Garde Position Reference

For a right-handed fencer in standard en garde: the hand is in slight supination with the thumb at approximately 1 o'clock. The blade is angled slightly upward, point aimed at the opponent's chest. The guard is at chest height, roughly centered on the body. The elbow is bent and relaxed, approximately a fist's distance from the body. This is your home position — every parry starts from here and every riposte returns through here.

NOTE: All hand positions in this guide are described for a right-handed fencer. Left-handed fencers should mirror all directions (inside becomes outside, clockwise becomes counterclockwise, etc.).

Parry 4 (Quarte)

Line Defended

Inside high line – protects the chest and torso on the weapon-arm side. This is the most common target in foil and the most frequently used parry in the sport.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), pronate the hand by rotating the forearm counterclockwise. The thumb moves to approximately 10–11 o'clock. The palm turns to face slightly downward and to the inside. The fingers curl around the grip with the index finger and thumb maintaining their pistol-grip position.

The hand moves slightly to the inside (toward the center of your body), crossing the midline by about 2–3 inches. The guard should now cover the inside line, positioned in front of the left side of your chest (for a right-hander). The elbow stays close to the body – the movement is primarily a rotation of the forearm, not a sweeping arm motion.

Blade Position

The blade angles from your guard upward and to the outside, with the point slightly higher than the guard and aimed toward the opponent's outside shoulder. The forte (strong part of the blade near the guard) is what makes contact with the opponent's blade. You are deflecting their blade from your inside line to your outside, catching it with the lower third of your blade.

The Riposte from Parry 4

After taking parry 4, supinate the hand back toward 1 o'clock while extending the arm toward the target. The thumb should return to 1 o'clock as you reach full extension, so the riposte arrives in the outside high line (line 6) of the opponent. The blade follows a natural diagonal path from where the parry landed (inside) to the target (outside). The riposte should be one continuous motion – the moment the parry contacts the opponent's blade, the hand begins rotating back and the arm begins extending.

Common Mistakes

Over-rotation: Pronating past 10 o'clock. This opens the outside line and weakens the riposte. The rotation is subtle – the thumb moves from 1 to 10–11, not all the way to 9.

Big arm motion: Sweeping the entire arm across the body. The parry is a forearm rotation with a small lateral displacement. Keep the elbow close to your body.

Late contact point: Trying to parry with the tip of the blade. Contact must happen on the forte – the lower third. If you parry with the weak part of the blade, the opponent's attack will push through.

Dead hand after parry: Pausing between the parry and the riposte. The parry and riposte are one continuous action. The riposte must be immediate.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Primary parry. Used constantly. The first parry every foil fencer should master. Defends the most attacked line in foil.	Frequently used. Protects the torso but also sets up ripostes to the body. Less dominant than in foil because the entire body is target.	Used occasionally. Protects the chest in saber but parry 3 and parry 5 are more common in saber defense.

Parry 6 (Sixte)

Line Defended

Outside high line — protects the chest and torso on the outside (non-weapon) side. Along with parry 4, this forms the essential parry pair that every fencer must master.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), supinate the hand slightly by rotating the forearm clockwise. The thumb moves to approximately 2 o'clock. The palm faces slightly upward and to the outside. The wrist may lift slightly to keep the point threatening.

The hand moves slightly to the outside (away from the center of your body) by about 2–3 inches. The guard should now cover the outside line, positioned in front of the right side of your chest (for a right-hander). The movement is small and controlled — a slight rotation and lateral shift, not a big sweep.

Blade Position

The blade angles from your guard upward and to the inside, with the point slightly higher than the guard and aimed toward the opponent's inside shoulder. The forte catches the opponent's blade and deflects it from your outside line to your inside. The contact should be firm but not violent — enough to redirect the attack, not enough to lose control of your own blade.

The Riposte from Parry 6

After taking parry 6, maintain the supinated hand position (thumb at 2 o'clock) and extend the arm directly toward the target. The riposte from parry 6 is one of the most natural and direct in fencing — the blade is already aimed toward the opponent, and the extension travels a straight line to their chest. As you reach full extension, the thumb settles at 1–2 o'clock. Many coaches teach this as the “default riposte” because of its speed and directness.

Common Mistakes

Lifting the elbow: Raising the elbow away from the body to create the parry. This creates a gap underneath your arm. Keep the elbow down and close to the body; the parry comes from the forearm rotation and wrist, not from the upper arm.

Pulling the point back: Retracting the point during the parry. Your point should stay threatening throughout — aimed forward and slightly upward, ready for the immediate riposte.

Wide lateral motion: Moving the hand too far to the outside. The parry only needs to cover the outside line, not reach the opponent's blade at full arm extension. A compact parry 6 is faster and creates a shorter riposte path.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Primary parry along with parry 4. The 4-6 combination is the foundation of foil defense. Many fencers maintain a default guard in 6.	Very frequently used. Excellent for protecting the outside body and setting up direct ripostes. Many épée fencers keep their en garde in 6.	Used, but less dominant than parry 3 and parry 5. Can be effective against cuts to the outside flank.

Parry 7 (Septime)

Line Defended

Inside low line — protects the lower torso and belly on the inside. Covers attacks that go under the hand to the low inside target.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), pronate the hand to approximately 10–11 o'clock (similar to parry 4) while simultaneously lowering the hand to approximately hip level. The palm faces down and slightly inward. The key difference from parry 4 is the vertical position of the hand: parry 4 is at chest height, parry 7 is at hip height.

The hand moves to the inside and down, positioning the guard in front of your lower inside target area. The wrist drops so the blade now points downward at approximately a 30–45 degree angle from horizontal, with the point lower than the guard.

Blade Position

The blade angles downward and to the outside, creating a wall that blocks the low inside line. The forte catches the opponent's blade and deflects it down and away. The point is lower than the guard, angled toward the floor rather than toward the opponent.

The Riposte from Parry 7

After taking parry 7, supinate the hand back toward 1 o'clock while lifting the arm and extending toward the target. The riposte travels upward and forward, arcing from the low parry position to the opponent's chest or upper body. This riposte requires more arm motion than the riposte from 4 or 6 because the blade must travel from low to high. The thumb should arrive at 1 o'clock as the arm reaches full extension. Some fencers prefer a riposte to the low line (staying low), especially in épée where the belly and thigh are valid targets.

Common Mistakes

Not dropping low enough: If the hand stays at chest height, you're taking parry 4, not parry 7. The hand must drop to hip level to defend the low line.

Losing point control: When the blade points downward, many fencers lose track of where their point is. The point should be aimed downward and slightly forward, not dangling loosely.

Slow riposte: The upward path from parry 7 to the riposte takes longer than from higher parries. Compensate by starting the riposte the instant the parry contacts. Any delay here is costly.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Used for low-line attacks. Less common than 4 and 6 but essential against opponents who attack below the hand. Important for defending against fleche attacks to the low inside.	Important. Épée fencers frequently attack the low line (belly, hip, thigh), making parry 7 a critical tool. Used more in épée than in any other weapon.	Rarely used. Most saber attacks target above the waist, and the cutting actions favor parries 3 and 5. Parry 7 can defend against rare low thrusts.

Parry 8 (Octave)

Line Defended

Outside low line – protects the lower torso and belly on the outside. Covers attacks that go under the hand to the low outside target.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), supinate the hand slightly to approximately 2 o'clock (similar to parry 6) while lowering the hand to approximately hip level. The palm faces slightly upward and outward. Like parry 7, the key is the vertical drop: parry 6 is at chest height, parry 8 is at hip height.

The hand moves to the outside and down, positioning the guard in front of your lower outside target area. The wrist drops so the blade points downward at approximately a 30–45 degree angle, mirroring parry 7 but on the opposite side.

Blade Position

The blade angles downward and to the inside, creating a wall that blocks the low outside line. The forte catches the opponent's blade and deflects it down and inward. The geometry mirrors parry 7 but covers the opposite side of the low target.

The Riposte from Parry 8

After taking parry 8, maintain supination (thumb at 2 o'clock) and extend upward and forward toward the target. The riposte path is similar to parry 7's but on the outside line. The arm lifts from hip level to chest level while extending, and the thumb arrives at approximately 1–2 o'clock at full extension. In épée, a riposte to the low line (belly, hip, or thigh) is often more effective than traveling upward to the chest.

Common Mistakes

Confusing with parry 2: Parry 8 and parry 2 both defend the low outside area but with different hand positions. Parry 8 is supinated (thumb at 2). Parry 2 is pronated (thumb at 10–11). Know which one you're doing.

Over-extending the arm: Reaching too far to the outside. The parry should protect the target area directly in front of your body. If your arm is fully extended to the side, your riposte path becomes too long.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Occasionally used. Defends against low-line attacks and fleches to the low outside. Less common than 4, 6, or 7 in foil.	Very useful. Pairs with parry 7 to defend the entire low line. Épée fencers who specialize in low-line defense use parry 8 extensively.	Rarely used. Saber's target area is waist-up, so low parries have minimal application.

Parry 1 (Prime)

Line Defended

Inside low line (similar coverage to parry 7, but with a fully pronated hand). Prime is the oldest parry in fencing, derived from the natural downward sweep of a sword. It covers the inside of the body from the waist down.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), fully pronate the hand so the thumb rotates to approximately 9–10 o'clock. The palm faces almost completely downward. Simultaneously, lower the hand and draw it slightly inward across the body. The hand finishes at approximately hip height, inside of center.

The wrist turns over so the blade sweeps from the en garde position downward and inward in an arc. The knuckles face upward and the thumb points toward the inside. This is the most extreme pronation of any standard parry.

Blade Position

The blade sweeps from high to low in a diagonal arc, ending with the point lower than the guard and aimed downward and to the outside. The forte catches the attacking blade and redirects it down and outward. The motion is a sweeping deflection rather than a sharp lateral block.

The Riposte from Parry 1

The riposte from prime typically follows the natural arc of the parry: the blade continues its sweeping motion and curves upward toward the opponent's high line. Supinate the hand back toward 12–1 o'clock as you extend forward and upward. The riposte from prime is slower than from 4 or 6 because of the distance the blade must travel, but it can be powerful and unexpected because opponents rarely prepare for it.

Common Mistakes

Over-sweeping: Making the parry motion too large. Prime should be a controlled rotation, not a wild slash. Keep the elbow as a pivot point.

Opening the high line: While defending low, leaving the chest and high line completely exposed. Be ready to recover quickly to 4 or 6 after the riposte.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Rarely used in modern foil. Occasionally effective as a surprise against low attacks or when caught out of position. Some coaches teach it for completeness but it's not a primary tool.	Occasionally used. Can be effective against attacks to the low inside, but parry 7 is generally preferred for its cleaner riposte path.	Used more in saber than in foil or épée. The sweeping motion of prime can deflect cuts to the flank and inside body. Some saber fencers use it instinctively against deep cuts.

Parry 2 (Seconde)

Line Defended

Outside low line (similar coverage to parry 8, but with a pronated hand). Seconde uses a pronated hand to sweep the blade downward and outward, clearing the low outside target.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), pronate the hand so the thumb rotates to approximately 10–11 o'clock. Lower the hand to hip level while moving it slightly to the outside. The palm faces downward. The forearm rotates inward while the hand drops.

The key distinction from parry 8 is the pronation. In parry 8, the hand is supinated (palm up); in parry 2, the hand is pronated (palm down). This changes the angle of deflection and the mechanics of the riposte.

Blade Position

The blade angles downward and to the outside, with the point below the guard and aimed toward the floor. The forte sweeps the opponent's blade downward and outward. The deflection is more of a pressing motion than a lateral block — you're pushing their blade down rather than to the side.

The Riposte from Parry 2

After seconde, supinate back toward 1 o'clock and extend upward toward the target. The riposte travels from low outside to the opponent's chest. Alternatively, in épée, you can maintain pronation and riposte to the low target (belly or thigh) by simply extending from the parry position. The low-line riposte is faster because the blade doesn't need to change vertical direction.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Rarely used in modern foil. Occasionally seen as a surprise parry against low attacks.	Moderately used. Effective against attacks to the outside low line. Some épée fencers prefer seconde over octave because the pronated hand creates a stronger deflection.	More commonly used than in foil or épée. The pronated position works well with saber's cutting mechanics. Parry 2 can defend against cuts to the flank and low body effectively.

Parry 3 (Tierce)

Line Defended

Outside high line (similar coverage to parry 6, but with a pronated hand). Tierce uses a pronated grip to defend the outside of the chest and the weapon arm.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at 1 o'clock), pronate the hand so the thumb rotates to approximately 10–11 o'clock. The palm faces downward. The hand remains at chest height (unlike parry 2 which drops low). Move the hand slightly to the outside. The difference from parry 6 is entirely in the hand rotation. Parry 6 is supinated (palm up, thumb at 2). Parry 3 is pronated (palm down, thumb at 10–11). Both defend the outside high line, but the mechanics feel different. Parry 3 creates a stronger, more forceful deflection because the pronated position engages the forearm muscles differently.

Blade Position

The blade angles upward and to the inside from a pronated guard position. The forte blocks the outside high line, deflecting the opponent's blade inward and downward. The point stays aimed at the opponent, slightly higher than the guard. Because the hand is pronated, the blade naturally creates a sloped wall that pushes incoming attacks down and away.

The Riposte from Parry 3

After tierce, you have two primary options. First: maintain pronation and extend directly toward the target with the thumb at 10–11 o'clock. This creates a riposte with opposition, keeping your blade pressing against theirs as you extend. Second: supinate back to 1 o'clock and riposte in the classic straight line. The opposition riposte is more secure; the supinated riposte is faster.

Common Mistakes

Confusing with parry 6: The coverage area is similar, but the hand rotation is opposite. If your palm faces up, that's 6. If it faces down, that's 3. Know which you're executing.

Excessive force: Because pronation engages stronger muscles, fencers often hit too hard in parry 3. A parry should deflect, not smash. Over-forceful parries push your own blade out of position for the riposte.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Moderately used. Some national schools (notably the Italian school) favor parry 3 as the default guard position and primary parry. It's less common in French and Hungarian foil traditions, which tend to prefer parry 4 and 6.	Used regularly. The pronated position is natural for the épée grip, and parry 3 provides strong coverage of the outside body and the weapon arm. Many épée fencers alternate between 6 and 3.	Very commonly used. Parry 3 is one of the two primary saber parries (along with parry 5). The pronated hand position works naturally with the saber grip and effectively blocks cuts to the outside cheek, shoulder, and flank.

Parry 5 (Quinte)

Line Defended

The head – specifically the top of the head and mask. Parry 5 is almost exclusively a saber parry, designed to defend against the most common saber attack: the cut to the head.

Hand Position

From en garde (thumb at approximately 12–1 o'clock in saber), raise the hand above your head. The thumb rotates to approximately 9–10 o'clock (full pronation). The palm faces upward toward the ceiling. The hand is positioned above and slightly in front of your forehead, approximately 6–8 inches above the top of the mask.

The elbow bends at approximately 90–120 degrees. The hand should not be directly on top of your head – it's slightly forward so the blade creates an angled roof that deflects the cut forward rather than straight down into your mask.

Blade Position

The blade is roughly horizontal, parallel to the floor, creating a flat roof over your head. The blade extends from your guard across and slightly forward, with the point aimed toward the opponent's outside shoulder. The forte is centered above your head. The blade acts as a shield – the opponent's cut strikes the flat of your blade and is deflected forward and off to the side.

The Riposte from Parry 5

After parry 5, the riposte typically follows as a direct cut to the opponent's head, chest, or flank. Drop the hand forward and down from the parry position, rotating the thumb back toward 12–1 o'clock as you cut toward the target. The riposte from parry 5 can be a head cut (continuing the blade's forward motion), a chest cut (dropping the blade diagonally), or a flank cut (sweeping to the opponent's side). The head cut is the most natural and fastest follow-up.

Common Mistakes

Hand too low: If the hand isn't high enough, the opponent's cut strikes your blade at a weak angle and pushes through to your head. The hand must be clearly above the mask.

Blade not horizontal: If the blade tilts, it creates gaps. The blade should be as close to horizontal as possible to create a flat defensive surface.

Pulling back: Fencers sometimes pull their hand backward when they see the cut coming. This moves the blade behind your head instead of above it. Stay forward.

Late timing: Parry 5 must be established before the opponent's cut arrives. Because the hand travels a long distance (from chest height to above the head), this parry requires early commitment.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Not used. Foil does not permit head attacks, so there is no head parry needed.	Not used. Épée attacks to the head are thrusts, not cuts, and are defended with parry 6 or distance.	Essential. Parry 5 is the single most important saber parry. The head cut is the most common attack in saber, and parry 5 is the primary defense. A saber fencer without a reliable parry 5 cannot compete.

Counter-Parries (Circular Parries)

A counter-parry (or circular parry) is a parry that takes a circular path with the blade, tracing a full circle to end up in the same position it started from. The purpose is to catch the opponent's blade when they disengage around your simple parry.

For example: you attempt parry 4, but the opponent disengages around your blade to attack in the same line. A counter-parry of 4 traces a circle, catches the disengaging blade, and returns to the parry 4 position with the opponent's blade now captured.

How Counter-Parries Work

The hand position and final blade position are identical to the simple parry with the same number. The difference is in the path the blade takes. Instead of moving laterally from one line to another, the blade traces a circle – typically moving down, around, and back up – to intercept the opponent's blade as it attempts to disengage.

The hand rotation is the same as the corresponding simple parry. Counter-4 ends with the thumb at 10–11 o'clock, same as simple parry 4. Counter-6 ends with the thumb at 2 o'clock, same as simple parry 6. The circle is made by the fingers and wrist, not by the arm.

Key Counter-Parries

Counter-4: The blade traces a clockwise circle (for right-handers) starting from the en garde position, sweeping down and to the outside, then back up and to the inside, ending in the parry 4 position. Thumb arrives at 10–11 o'clock. This catches opponents who disengage around a simple parry 4.

Counter-6: The blade traces a counterclockwise circle, sweeping down and to the inside, then back up and to the outside, ending in the parry 6 position. Thumb arrives at 2 o'clock. This catches opponents who disengage around a simple parry 6.

Counter-parries require excellent finger control and precise timing. The circle must be small and fast – a large, slow circle gives the opponent time to complete their disengage. Practice counter-parries with a partner who performs deliberate disengages.

Weapon Usage

FOIL	ÉPÉE	SABER
Very important. Counter-4 and counter-6 are essential tools in foil, where disengages are a fundamental part of the attacking game. Advanced foil fencers use counter-parries constantly.	Used regularly. Counter-parries in épée require more precision because the target is the entire body, but they're effective against opponents who rely on disengages.	Less common. Saber's cutting attacks are harder to disengage around because the edge can score from multiple angles. Simple parries dominate in saber defense.

COACH'S TIP: The counter-parry is the answer to an opponent who disengages around your simple parry every time. If you take parry 4 and they disengage and score, switch to counter-4 the next time. The counter catches the disengage. But if they see your counter-parry coming, they'll attack with a straight thrust into the line you're leaving open. Tactics is about reading which parry the situation demands.

Choosing the Right Parry

Knowing all eight parries is valuable. Knowing which one to use in a given situation is what wins bouts.

The Essential Toolkit by Weapon

Foil: Master parry 4, parry 6, and counter-4 first. These three defend the vast majority of foil attacks. Add parry 7 for low-line defense and parry 8 against opponents who target the low outside. Parries 1, 2, and 3 are supplementary – useful but not essential for most foil fencers.

Épée: Master parry 6, parry 4, parry 7, and parry 8. Because the entire body is target, you need coverage in all four quadrants. Add parry 2 and parry 3 as alternatives. Counter-6 is critical against opponents who attack with disengages. Low-line parries are more important in épée than in any other weapon.

Saber: Master parry 5, parry 3, and parry 4. Parry 5 defends the head (the most common target). Parry 3 defends the outside shoulder and chest. Parry 4 defends the inside chest. Add parry 1 and parry 2 for flank and low-body defense. Parries 6, 7, and 8 have minimal application in saber.

Reading the Attack

The parry you choose should match the attack that's coming. Here's what to look for:

- Where is the opponent's point aimed? That tells you which line they're attacking.
- Is the attack going high or low? High attacks get parried with 4, 6, 3, or 5. Low attacks get 7, 8, 1, or 2.
- Is the attack direct or with a disengage? Direct attacks need simple parries. Disengages need counter-parries.
- In saber: is the opponent cutting or thrusting? Cuts to the head need parry 5. Cuts to the body need parry 3 or 4. Thrusts need parry 4 or 6.

Training Your Parry Selection

- Start with just parry 4 and parry 6. Alternate between them in practice until you can select the correct one by reflex.
- Add parry 7 once 4 and 6 are reliable. Practice defending all three lines.
- Add counter-parries once your simple parries are automatic. Counter-4 and counter-6 are sufficient for most situations.
- For saber: start with parry 5 and parry 3. Add parry 4 once those are solid.
- Practice with a partner who attacks to random lines. You choose the correct parry by reading their attack.



Final Coach's Note

A parry is not a block. It's not a wall you throw up and hope the attack hits. A parry is a precise, controlled action that redirects the opponent's blade and creates an immediate opportunity to score. The hand rotates to a specific position. The blade catches the attack at the forte. The riposte follows without pause.

Start with two parries and make them excellent. Parry 4 and parry 6 for foil and épée. Parry 5 and parry 3 for saber. Master those before adding more. Two sharp parries will serve you better than eight dull ones.

And remember: the parry is only half the action. The riposte is the other half. Every time you practice a parry, practice the riposte that follows it. They are one continuous action, not two separate events. Parry-riposte. One word. One action.

— Coach Derek