



The Academy of European Swordsmanship

Staff Initiate Study Sheet

Version 2.0

Initiate Responsibilities

Once initiate ranking is achieved, the responsibilities of the student expand beyond merely studying. An initiate is responsible for assisting non-ranked students in their studies **during classes** only (under instructor supervision). As an initiate, you are also a representative of the AES. Therefore, you are expected to wear your uniform to events with other organizations and at all AES events and practises. Other privileges and responsibilities include:

- can participate as a representative of Academy/school or chapter at symposiums, workshops and conferences
- participate in the challenges of students for the playing for the prize of a initiate and savant rank
- participate in the challenges of students for the playing for the prize of a rank in other schools (upon invitation by that school)
- assist in the general operational and administrative aspects of the Academy/school (workshop coordination and setup, equipment administration, etc.)
- can participate in the governing body of the Academy in an advisory capacity or as part of the executive under invitation
- can participate and contribute to research & development projects, under the direction of a senior scholar, savant or higher ranked member
- provide assistance in training classes when called upon by the senior or junior instructor.

For The **Initiate Exam** you will have to demonstrate each of the following:

1. Name the parts of the staff, it's usual form, including length, mass and either circumference or diameter, and describe its place and significance in the historical development of European weapons.
2. Explain the function of a stave as compared to swords and other weapons used in the Western Martial Arts.
3. Name and demonstrate the 5 guard positions named like longsword guards.
4. The methods of movement – step, double-step, cock-step, lunge, pass, and traverse.
5. Demonstrate three times of attack.
6. Name the two main types of attacks.
7. Name the main targets on the body and show a reasonable amount of accuracy when asked to thrust or strike at the primary targets on an immobile target.
8. Demonstrate an attack from each of the 5 guards named in item 3.
9. Demonstrate a defence against attack from each of the 5 guards named in item 3.
10. A flourish containing at least 12 distinct moves, including counters, strikes, and thrusts.
11. You will also have to do a prize play. This is a sparring event where you spar against other members of the group and your instructor to demonstrate control and understanding of the principles of your weapon in application. In the event that a prize play is not practical, you will have to perform several quick, impromptu drills with your instructor and/or more senior students, to demonstrate control and understanding of the techniques in a free-form situation.

Study Sheet

1. *Name the parts of the staff, it's usual form, including length, mass and either circumference or diameter, and describe its place and significance in the historical development of European weapons.*

The staff has a shaft that is between 6' and 9' long, generally between 1.25" and 1.5" in diameter. The middle is the natural balance point of the staff at its centre. The tips are at each end of the staff and can be shod with rings of iron, or, iron rings and pointed spikes. The staff (and spear after it) is among the earliest weapons used in organized warfare with their use as pikes surviving past the adoption of gunpowder in European armies. Today the Swiss Guard at the Vatican uses Halberds in ceremonial drill. Staff fights as a sport survived in England into Victorian times and the Boy Scouts had a Master-at-Arms badge based on simple staff movements in the early part of the 1900's. The staff, as a pole-arm, was a major weapon on the battlefield until replaced by firearms.

2. *Explain the function of a stave as compared to swords and other weapons used in the Western Martial Arts.*

The staff has greater range when compared to edged weapons of any kind except the largest great sword. It can be used to strike as well as thrust but it cannot cut without some form of sharpened tip, such as a spear head. At various times prior to the Renaissance, while swords were illegal to carry in some countries, staves were legal. The staff has been a weapon of choice for travellers for ages.

3. *Name and demonstrate the 5 guard positions named like longsword guards.*

- Vom Tag
- Ochs
- Pflug
- Olber
- Nebenhut

4. *The methods of movement – step, double-step, cock-step, lunge, pass, and traverse.*

- Step – the forward foot moves a step toward the opponent. The feet remain basically in the same stance.
- Passing step – the rear foot moves forward past the front foot changing which foot is forward and which to the rear.
- Cocke-step – an hopping step similar to how a rooster would walk.
- Half/full/double step – this refers to the distance covered by the step, either a normal pace, half a normal pace or twice a normal pace.
- Forward/backwards/traverse – indicates direction of travel with your step. Either forwards, backwards or at an angle to the side if you traverse. The side angle can be steep or shallow as required.

5. *Demonstrate three times of attack.*

- Before [Vor] – taking the initiative and beating your opponent to the first strike.
- During [Im Mitten/Indes] – if your opponent gains the first strike you can use the movement principle of Nachreisen to attack into your opponent's attack and regain the initiative. Your defence becomes your attack.
- After [Nach] – if your opponent gains the first strike you can void and attack after he does into any available opening.

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6. *Name the two main types of attacks.*

- Thrust
- Strike

7. *Name the main targets on the body and show a reasonable amount of accuracy when asked to thrust at the five primary targets on an immobile target.*

- Face (primary)
- Throat (primary)
- Armpits
- Hands (primary)
- Groin (primary)
- All joints (primary)
- Feet

8. *Demonstrate an attack from each of the 5 guards named in item 3.*

Use strikes and thrusts with the three times of attack to demonstrate.

9. *Demonstrate a defence against attack from each of the 5 guards named in item 3.*

Using the time of attack, and the following movement techniques, defend against a staff attack:

- Nachreisen (travelling after) – when your foe attacks you counter-attack into it, or, void and then counter-attack. You strike instantly or your strike after. May also be called next raiding, pursuing, reacting or counter reacting.
- Uberlaufen (over running) – reaching over a low strike with a high attack, often assisted by voiding. The high strike will usually be faster or shorter than the low strike.
- Absetzen (off-setting) – deflecting or turning aside an attacker's blade with a forward spiral motion of your own blade, generally as you conduct a thrust. One could consider this a type of Winden.
- Durchwechsel (changing through) - to shift or change your attack or angle of attack from one opening to another. This can be done from the bind, or by avoiding a bind. Often a thrust is your intended attack.
- Durchlaufen (running through) – advancing under your opponent's high attack in order to slash or wrestle. One hand would reach in while the other holds your sword.
- Einlaufen (running in) – to move quickly forward under your opponent's weapon for closing techniques. It may also signify closing distance with speed and aggression.

10. *A flourish containing at least 12 distinct moves, including counters, hits, and thrusts.*

The flourish should be written down and provided to the testing instructor prior to taking this test.

11. *You will also have to do a prize play.*

This demonstrates your understanding of the above principles in a dynamic situation. This is an enjoyable finish to the test.

Initiate Oath

1. You shall uphold, maintain and keep to your power all such articles as shall be declared unto you by your Provost or Meister.
2. You shall be true student from this day unto the last day of your life, to love the true and hate falsehood, never to rebel and go against any Provost or Master of this science, always to be ruled by your master and the founding masters of this science.
3. You shall not teach this art to anyone until you have attained the ranking which allows for instruction, except under supervision of your Provost or Meister.
4. You shall not compare any other master to disparage his doings, and especially you shall not compare your Meister, under whom you now proceed and of whom you have had your Cunning, neither with Challenge nor with opprobrious words as touching our science in any way.
5. You shall not allow yourself to be abused in any way, but shall defend yourself from injury to the best of your abilities. This being said, you shall not provoke fights or cause fights to be made on your behalf.
6. You shall swear to keep this Initiate's oath in all points now given and declared unto you by me, your Provost or Meister, in the presence of our brethren of this science, by all you hold true and dear.

Credits: v1.0 – Johanus Haidner; v2.0, Johanus Haidner & Vincent Moroz.