

Simple Rules for Two Duelling Figures

by Michael Barlow

Ever need to settle a matter between gentlemen by yourself? These simple rules require two figures, a very small playing area, these rules and three six-sided dice (3d6).

There isn't a turn sequence per se; figures are always engaged; the duel continues until one duellist is knocked down for the coup de grace, or cowardly retreats out of bounds.

Or, you can play for points – first duellist to score 6 points wins the match: advancing your Opponent to his end is worth 1 point, Out of Bounds is worth 2 points, and knocking him down is worth 3 points.

The duelling area is represented by a single line of 6 squares beyond which is Out of Bounds. Duellist Start facing, engaged, en garde, in the middle 2 squares.

Roll 1d6 per duellist each turn. Compare the die results; the higher result, A, minus the lower result, B, will be a number between 0 & 5. The higher roller is the Proponent, who Attacks (except when Opponent parries). If tied (0), both duellists Attack, but the duellist judged to be in a more advantageous position will roll first.

The 3rd die is now rolled and read as a Even or Odd result. Move the figures using those instructions. On the table, “Advances” are small, 1 square moves; “Rushes” are grand, 2 square moves.

<i>A - B</i>	<i>Attack</i>	3 rd die is Even	3 rd die is Odd
0	<i>Beat</i>	Advance	Block
1	<i>Cut</i>	Block	Parry
2	<i>Thrust</i>	Parry	Touch
3	<i>Lunge</i>	Touch	Retreat
4	<i>Fleche</i>	Retreat	Disengage
5	<i>Balestra</i>	Disengage	Denouement

Advance: Proponent pushes Opponent backwards with an Advance.

Block: Attack deflected, no touch.

Parry: Opponent blocks and makes the next Attack, regardless of results.

Touch: Roll again. Even: Denouement. Odd: Advance.

Retreat: Opponent Rushes backwards; Proponent Rushes forwards.

Disengage: Proponent Rushes past Opponent & both swing around to re-engage.

Denouement: Proponent knocks down Opponent.

Example of how to use the rules and the table:

Note: figures are Irregular Miniatures 42mm Marlburians.

2 Fencers meet for a serious duel (not for points). The duellist in the green jerkin rolls a 4; the other duellist a 1. The green duellist lunges at his opponent.



A third die is rolled; it is a 3, so red jerkin retreats!



Almost out of bounds, the duellist in the red jerkin needs a lucky break. The dice are rolled again. Green rolls a 6, Red a 4. Green thrusts his blade. The third die is rolled. Even! Red parries and will get the next attack – saved from the brink? Only the next rolls will tell.



Variants:

If you want a less dynamic duel, use 1d4 for both duellists, so that the fencing moves will be limited to Beat, Cut, Thrust, and Lunge.

If you want one duellist to have considerably poorer skill, use a d4 against a d6.

If you want more control for one of the duellists and a less random game, roll 2 dice and choose the best result to use against his one roll.

Finally, if you actually have a live opponent, alternate each turn who has the extra die roll, who gets the advantage.

Attack Notes:

Beating deliberately attacks the Opponent's blade to test his mettle, speed, and skill.

A *Cut* is a simple overhand slashing attack that attempts to contact the Opponent over his guard, but is easily defended.

A *Thrust* is a quick point-first stabbing motion, awkward for the Opponent to beat aside with his blade.

A *Lunge* combines a large step with a *Thrust* as a stronger attack, very difficult to beat aside. I have given Thrusts and Lunges similar chance of success of knocking down the Opponent, but only a Thrust can hope to be parried to regain the initiative.

A *Fleche* (Arrow) is an advancing *Thrust*, blade arm fixed extended. It is useful for getting your opponent to move, but not to be considered as an attack.

A *Balestra* is a sudden terrifying flying Lunge where both feet leave the floor. I made it the rarest fencing move, with the best chance knocking the Opponent down.