

# Empire of Medieval Pursuits Conventions of Combat

The pursuit of excellence in combat arts was central to virtually every ancient culture as its future often depended on its warriors. Throughout the history of armored combat, non-lethal war games have been considered an essential element of training those warriors. The EMP is no different and endeavors to foster those traditions and skills in the relative safety of a Behordium like tradition. The EMP provides a loosely structured environment for its adherents to expand their knowledge and skills at “combat”. Hereafter are the current rules and guidelines for combat with the Empire of Medieval Pursuits.

## 1. Conventions of Combat:

- a. Each combatant is primarily responsible for his own safety and secondarily in care of all other combatants.
- b. Injuries are never solely the responsibility of the aggressor but a combination of the injured and injurious parties’ skill and intent.
- c. If a combatant is found to be a danger to others through either a lack of skill or malicious intent then the appropriate authority shall sanction them.
  - i. Appropriate authority is defined as the Crown, the Hosting Lord, any present Lord of the Realm, officers appointed by the above authorities to act in their stead. Further known as the Crown or its representative.

## 2. General Requirements:

- a. Each fighter, recognizing and embracing the possibilities of physical injury to him or herself in such combat, shall assume unto himself or herself all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat.
- b. Other participants shall likewise recognize the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat, and shall assume the liability for their own safety.
- c. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate armor and weapons standards of the Empire for the chosen style of combat and shall not engage in combat until they have satisfied themselves that their armor and weapons are within those standards and are suitable for battle.
- d. No participant shall engage in combat unless and until he or she has inspected the field of combat and satisfied himself or herself that it is suitable for combat.
- e. All participants shall inspect their armor, weapons, and field to verify satisfactory protection and condition before engaging in combat.
- f. No one is required to engage in combat should he or she prefer not to do so.

## 3. The Crown or their representative may bar any weapon, armor, or individual from the field of combat.

- a. Should the Crown's representative bar any weapon or armor, an appeal may be made to the next level of authority up to the Crown itself to allow the weapon or armor.
4. No combatant may bear any weapon onto the field while participating in combat that does not conform to EMP combat standards for the type of combat they are participating in.
5. Weapons and Armor must meet the requirements set forth by the type of combat in each type of combat's respective rules.
  - a. While some armor may meet requirements of multiple types of combat (for instance, a particular gorget may be suitable for cut and thrust, steel, and rattan combat) it is the sole responsibility of the participant to ensure that their armor meets these requirements. .
  - b. Cold Steel brand and other plastic, rubber, or wood sparring weapons are forbidden from all forms of combat.
  - c. Metal weapons are only authorized for steel combat or cut and thrust.
6. Behavior on the field:
  - a. Engaging in any Empire combat activity with the deliberate intent to inflict egregious harm on another is strictly forbidden.
  - b. Striking an opponent with excessive force is forbidden.
  - c. Striking a substantively helpless opponent is forbidden.
  - d. All fighters shall heed the commands of the Crown's representative on the field, or risk being subject to disciplinary action.
  - e. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper at all times.
  - f. Should any participant lose control of their behavior; they will be given a warning from the Crown or its representative.
    - i. Should a warned participant lose their composure a second time, they will be suspended for the rest of the event by the Crown or its representative.
    - ii. Should a pattern of bad behavior become apparent, formal disciplinary measures, up to and including revoking membership privileges, will be taken.
  - g. Upon hearing the call of "HOLD" all fighting shall IMMEDIATELY stop.
  - h. The representative of the Crown may call "HOLD" for any reason (ie: armor failure, weapon failure, perceived danger to combatants or bystanders).
  - i. A combatant may call "HOLD" for any reason, but in doing so places himself at the mercy of his opponent.
    - i. By stopping the combat he is in effect yielding and it is up to the discretion of his opponent to choose whether to resume the contest.
  - j. A participant shall not enter the lists or engage in any form of EMP combat activity while impaired by alcohol or drugs (including, but not limited to: drugs

prescribed by a licensed health care provider, over the counter medications, and illegal controlled substances).

7. Target Area definitions for any EMP combat unless otherwise defined within that styles rule set.
  - a. Torso: All of the body (excluding the head and arms) above the points of the hips including the groin, shoulder blades and the area between the neck and the shoulders will be considered part of the torso.
  - b. Face: the area between the chin and the middle of the forehead and between the ear openings.
  - c. Head: The whole head and neck except the face as defined above.
  - d. Legs: The leg from one inch above ankle to a line even with the bottom of the hip socket. The feet and ankles shall not be considered a legal target unless they are used in an offensive manner, such as delivering a kick or other offensive maneuver.
    - i. In such an instance, participants are encouraged to wear armor to protect the appendage.
    - ii. Participants are reminded of the delicate nature of the foot and ankle when attacking them and should be cognizant of the force of their blows.
    - iii. It is the sole responsibility of the participant to protect these delicate joints.
  - e.
  - f. Arms: From the shoulder to one inch above the wrist.
  - g. Hands: the area from one inch above the wrist to the end of the digits.
8. The Use of Weapons
  - a. Weapons shall be used in accordance with their design and no part of a weapon not specifically designed for striking an opponent shall be used to do so.
    - i. Striking with metal pommels, cross guards, or shield edges is forbidden unless otherwise stated within a rule set.
  - b. Only weapons designed and approved for thrusting may be used for that purpose.
  - c. A shield may be used to displace, deflect, or immobilize an opponent, so long as such use does not substantially endanger the safety of the combatants.
    - i. Deliberately striking an opponent's head, limbs, or body with the edge of a shield is allowed .
  - d. Combatants may not use a bow, crossbow or any other device for a melee weapon or for defense unless it meets all other requirements of a melee weapon. (ie. A combatant could not swing a bow with the intent to strike another combatant unless it met all other requirements for a melee weapon)
9. Acknowledgement of Blows for any EMP combat unless otherwise defined within the styles rule set. These blows(or strikes) are to be divided into three categories

- a. Substantive (i.e.: debilitating/fight ending) are those that a combatant judges would have either stunned, incapacitated, or outright killed them in the course of a battle using actual weapons.
    - i. Must be delivered to the head, neck, torso, or groin.
    - ii. Blows that inflict some measure of pain or cause loss of breath
    - iii. Blows that stop the forward motion of the combatant
    - iv. Blows which impress the combatant upon whom they are struck
    - v. Blows that are anywhere close to the threshold of which a combatant desires to receive blows should be counted as a “substantive” blow.
    - vi. Blows delivered to less armored vital regions that would be considered fight ending(i.e. knife point to the armpit)
  - b. Telling (i.e.: wounding/counting) are those that the combatant can detect but do not measure up to the standard described as a substantive blows.
    - i. Blows struck to the target areas described above
    - ii. Blows that are not overly glancing or weak
  - c. Minor (i.e.: ineffectual/weak) are those that a combatant judges would be ineffective in the course of a battle using actual weapons.
    - i. Any blow that is glancing or does not carry enough kinetic impact to be noticed.
    - ii. Minor blows do not count towards the tell.
    - iii. When a blow is judged to be ineffectual it is in effect requesting the opponent to strike harder.
10. In a standard tournament, skirmish, or war, victory is determined by any of several conditions, hereafter known as the “Tell”.
- a. A combatant honorably yields the fight when he has received a predetermined number of telling blows from active combatants(friend or foe) or a substantive blow.
    - i. The standard Tell within the EMP is 3 telling blows. This may be modified so long as participants agree to vary the standard tell to suit their own training needs.
  - b. When judging the effect of blows, all fighters are presumed to be wearing “armor as worn”.
    - i. Under this standard, a blow to the face of a fighter with an open face bar grill would be tolled as if one level more debilitating than to other portions of the head or body (i.e. a minor blow would be counted as telling, and a telling blow as substantive).
  - c. Any blow thrown at an opponent who is prone or has more than two primary points of contact with the ground should be limited to the force of a telling blow but will always be counted as a substantive blow regardless of actual impact.

- i. This should be accompanied by the loud and clear declaration of “dead on the ground”
- d. Any blow thrown at an opponent who is unaware of the impending shot should be limited to the force of a telling blow.
  - i. In a situation where an opponent is unaware of your presence, you may instead of delivering a telling blow, control the opponent by laying your weapon across their eye line or over their shoulder and declare “death from behind!” in a loud voice. This will be counted as a substantive blow regardless of impact or location.

11. Body to Body Contact:

- a. Body to Body contact is defined as all forms of grappling, sweeps, throws, and strikes designed to unbalance or disorient an opponent or otherwise interfere with his ability to do battle.
- b. Grapples may be initiated and maintained against any weapon or any legal target with the exception of the torsions involving all joints, or the head.
- c. Submission locks and holds are strictly prohibited.
- d. Strikes with armored extremities may be used to to unbalance or disorient an opponent. Examples include
  - i. Basket hilts
  - ii. Gauntlets
  - iii. Sabatons
  - iv. Elbow/knee cops
  - v. Shields designed to be safe for body contact.
- e. Body to body contact strikes should be counted as “Minor” blows to the tell.
  - i. Against an open face helm, these strikes would be treated as one degree more severe(Minor to Telling)
  - ii. A combatant may always call their tells in a manner they wish to ensure safety(taking a solid strike as substantial even though rules lay them at minor)
- f. There may never be more than 3 participants involved in a grapple.