

3. The Step Lunge

In this video the fencer is introduced to the step lunge and the necessary coordination with the hand.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUvpRnxqu50&list=PLW9OQerjy9W3kizillfQ6wokHKCpTU05Y&index=8>

Note the importance of turning the cutting edge of the blade towards the target first. In this example it is to head, but it might be to any other part of the target as appropriate or desirable at any given time e.g. to avoid having the blade taken on preparation. Is this a feint? Well, it could be. If the defender parry's too early, the finish will be in flank or chest. But let's get the basic technique right first.

The coach starts with the blade quite far forward and as he brings his arm back, it invites the step from the fencer and they can then finish if in distance. The action of the coach's blade will be mirrored by the fencer who will move and finish in synch with the coach. In the video, the coach describes this as if he is "pulling" the fencer forward. Again, precision is preferred over power.

At 2min 50secs, the idea of movement is introduced. Notice how the coach achieves this, by having his arm long and diagonally across the body. I think of this like a no-entry sign, so long as the blade is in this position, the fencer won't attack. But when the coach "pulls" the fencer, they should attack, preceded with a turn of the cutting edge towards the target.

At 3min 40secs, an important point is made that the coaching signal to attack MUST be relative to the distance relationship between the coach and fencer. The coach gives two examples of what a bad signal will look like. Neither of them are relevant to the distance relationship and will lead to mistakes from the fencer in a competitive situation if they train in this way. There is a great deal of responsibility on the coach here to keep the distance correct.

In this next video you can see how strong and clear each distance unit is when the coach educator demonstrates. But when the trainee coach takes over, it is also clear what poor distance control from the coach can lead to.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNTDc2a_yng&list=PLW9OQerjy9W3kizillfQ6wokHKCpTU05Y&index=9

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