



The strip, or piste, is 14 meters long and 1.5 to 2 meters wide. The strip is bisected by a center line and the guard lines are each drawn 2 meters from the center line. The last 2 meters of the strip are visibly marked.

The fencer who crosses the rear limit of the strip with both feet is counted as having been hit and a touch is awarded to his opponent.

Crossing the lateral boundary with one or both feet before passing the opponent results in an immediate "Halt!" with a ground penalty. The opponent gains one meter of ground from where the "Halt!" was called and the fencer at fault must retire to a safe distance even if doing so puts him off the rear limit of the piste. Safe distance is such that when the two fencers come on guard with weapons extended their points do not cross.

No touch may be scored BY a fencer who is off the strip. A touch may be scored ON a fencer who is off the strip provided it is an immediate riposte or a simple attack already in progress.

At epee, in the case of a double hit, the touch scored by the fencer who is off the piste with both feet is annulled and the touch scored by the opponent is awarded, even if the opponent is only on the piste with one foot, so long as his action started before the "Halt!"

Leaving the strip to avoid being touched results in an immediate yellow card, followed by a red card on repetition of the offence.

When the "Halt!" is called and a touch or penalty is NOT awarded, both fencers must give ground equally until safe distance has been reached. In the event that one fencer has fleched or caused corps' a corps or a reversal of the fencers, the fencer at fault must give ground while the fencer who sustains the fleche or corps' a corps **holds his/her ground.**

In the event that a halt is called with the fencer in the last 2 meters of ground, the fencer may be forced to give ground until he is at the rear limit but may not be placed off the rear limit of the piste **unless** he has already left the side of the piste with one or both feet. At that point the opponent must give as much ground as necessary to achieve safe distance before the command to fence is given.

If the fencer has one foot off the rear limit when the halt is called he remains with one foot on and one foot behind the rear limit while the opponent adjusts to safe distance.

Falling no longer results in a penalty; however, dangerous or out-of-control actions still do so and a touch scored with loss of balance is annulled.