

The Benefits of Fencing

Fencing is a sport with a rich history dating back to ancient civilizations, evolving through the Middle Ages and becoming a modern Olympic sport in 1896. It offers a wide range of physical, mental, and social benefits.

Two of the most notable figures in American fencing are **Lee Kiefer** and **Mariel Zagunis**. Lee Kiefer, a three-time Olympic champion in women's foil, has won multiple NCAA and Pan American titles. Her achievements have brought greater visibility to fencing in the United States. Mariel Zagunis, a two-time Olympic champion in individual sabre, was the first American woman to win a gold medal in fencing at the Olympics. She has earned numerous world championship titles and has been a trailblazer in the sport.

Physical Benefits: Fencing is an excellent aerobic exercise that enhances heart health by increasing heart rate and promoting better circulation. The precise movements required in fencing improves hand-eye coordination and overall balance, strengthening core muscles and improving stability. Repetitive lunges, thrusts, and parries build muscle strength, particularly in the legs, arms, and core, while boosting endurance. The sport also requires a wide range of motion, which helps improve flexibility and reduces the risk of injury [2].

Mental Benefits: Fencing is often referred to as "physical chess" because it requires strategic planning and quick decision-making, sharpening cognitive skills. The intense focus required during a bout helps improve concentration, teaching fencers to block out distractions and maintain mental clarity under pressure. Engaging in physical activity like fencing can be a great way to relieve stress, providing an outlet for releasing pent-up energy and emotions, leading to a sense of relaxation and well-being.

Social Benefits: Fencing clubs and competitions offer opportunities to meet new people and build friendships, fostering a sense of community and belonging. The sport emphasizes respect for opponents and adherence to rules, teaching the importance of fair play, integrity, and mutual respect. Mastering the techniques and strategies of fencing can boost self-confidence, with the sense of accomplishment from improving skills and winning bouts contributing to higher self-esteem.

Scholarships and College Opportunities: Fencing can also open doors to higher education. Many universities, including Ivy League schools and top public institutions, offer fencing scholarships at prestigious institutions like Notre Dame, Columbia, Penn State, Princeton, Harvard, St. John's, UPenn, and Ohio State.

Fall 2025
AFTER-SCHOOL FENCING CLASSES
Hyde Park School

- Where:** Hyde Park School
- Grades:** 1st and up (No experience needed) – could be split by age 1-3 grade, 4-6 grade
- When:** Starts 09.15.2025 (September 15) at school 2:15-3:15 – 09.15, 09.29, 10.06, 10.13, 10.20, 10.27, 11.03, 11.10, 11.17 (make-up if some class gets cancelled).
- Deadline:** **09.09.2025 (application)**
- How long:** Eight-week class (8 class)
- Instructor:** The program is under the teaching of Coach Jacek Biesiada, with oversight of the head coach of the Louisville Fencing Center.
- Equipment:** All other equipment (mask, jacket, and practice weapon) will be provided by the club for students.
- Cost:** Beginners first time pay \$160 (\$120 for classes and \$40 for rental of equipment: glove, pants, jacket, and registration fee). Check/venmo to Jacek Biesiada pay by 09.09 We also have available scholarships.
- Forms:** Submit scanned filled forms from attachment to coach (needed for insurance purpose).
- e-Mail:** Important information about pants, t-shirt, glove size, forms, questions
- To enroll:** **Please contact** Coach B: Jacek Biesiada at Jacek.Biesiada1971@gmail.com or Jacek.Biesiada@cchmc.org (the subject line should indicate "Fencing Mt. Washington Recreation Center") about participation, forms, and cost.