

What is Western Swordsmanship Technique & Research?

Since ancient times, the warrior has played a prominent part in European history and literature. Yet little exists about the *techniques* used in combat before the 13th century. A great deal of material has survived since the late medieval period. These early texts describe systematic combat techniques for swords and other weapons, and they are all that remain of these arts. Master-to-pupil instruction in *western* fighting arts did not survive through the ages, as did many *eastern* martial arts. Today, no one can say he/she was taught the art of German longsword by a lineage of masters dating back to the 13th century. Therefore, *western swordsmanship*, as a martial art, must be reconstructed through research and interpretation.

Western Swordsmanship Technique & Research (WSTR) is a group of enthusiasts who study and train in these martial techniques.



Our basic/beginner longsword session (Wed, from 6:30-7:30) concentrates on the basic elements of longsword: guards and stances, cutting, fundamental techniques, and five specialized cuts. Students learn the techniques and practice them in drills. The session rotates through techniques weekly so someone attending 6 straight weeks would get an introduction to all the basic techniques (note this is introduction only, not mastery of these skills). Those who skip a few will usually get some one-to-one attention from senior students to catch up and get everything needed. Students will test into advanced classes in 7-10 weeks depending on attendance and skill.

Arts of a 14th Century German Sword Master



The techniques studied by WSTR are attributed to Johannes Liechtenauer, a 14th century German sword master. His system of combat influenced European swordsmanship for more than 200 years, especially in Germany. The techniques have been interpreted from actual manuscripts dating back as early as 1389. Liechtenauer taught a variety of weapon arts. WSTR members begin their studies with the longsword. As members become more advanced, their study expands to complex combinations, tactics, and other weapon skills.



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