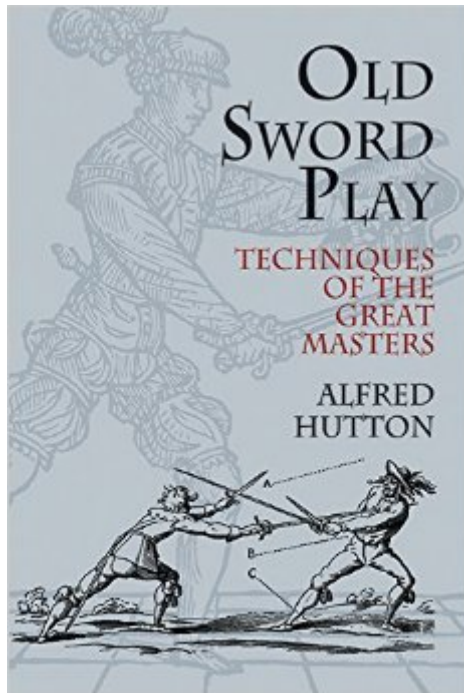


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# Old Sword Play: Techniques Of The Great Masters (Dover Military History, Weapons, Armor)



## Synopsis

Anyone interested in historical weapons or the art of fencing will want to own this classic study of swordsmanship in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Written in the late nineteenth century by a British officer, antiquarian, and noted scholar of the sword, the work was intended to provide military men with essential training in the art and science of fencing. Drawing upon the methods used by master swordsmen over three centuries, Hutton presented the tactics of the ancient masters in a form comprehensible to swordsmen of his own day. His extensive, detailed instructions cover the use of the two-hand sword, rapier and dagger, broadsword and buckler, rapier and cloak, and dagger and cloak. Complemented by nearly 60 illustrations, including instructive diagrams and rare woodcuts of classic fencing positions, this excellent introduction and its valuable information will be welcomed by scholars, theatrical directors, and sword-play enthusiasts alike. The book will also appeal to general audiences and anyone interested in an ancient form of self-defense still regarded by many as an art form and recreational pursuit.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Reading Hutton is always interesting, as he is such a pivotal individual in fencing's transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. "Old Sword-Play" gives us a look at fencing's early stages of development. For the fencer, it is good to know one's origins. As the author of "The Art and Science of Fencing," and "The Inner Game of Fencing," and the editor/publisher of FENCERS QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, I recommend this book.

I am glad that I got this book. Beware that this book does not teach techniques congruent with standard competition European fencing. This book has a focus that one will not find in a traditional European Fencing class or club. The book contains many of the wood-cuts inspired by the "old-world" masters. I was pleased to find such topics as Two-hand sword; Rapier and dagger; Rapier and cloak; and particularly "the Case of Rapiers." This book is for the person with the experience to decypher the techniques stated, and put to use in a Renaissance combat situation. This book is not for stage-play; re-enactments; or a competition fencer. This book is a direct reprint of Alfred Hutton's 1892 work and requires swordsmanship experience to apply. I'm glad I got it, but would be hard pressed to recommend it to everyone.

Here are sword techniques of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenthcenturies for everyone. Hutton addresses the common techniques of these periods clearly and in enough detail that someone with even a basic knowledge of fencing can follow him. The two-handed sword, rapier and dagger, broadsword and buckler, rapier and cloak, dagger and cloak, the case of rapiers, and a variety of techniques for disarming a swordsman are described in detail. I'm somewhat interested in the two-handed sword, the pairs of weapons, and the blade and shield arrangements, but the disarms are very interesting. They could be better illustrated, but the text is clear enough to follow the movements. A note for kendoka; the section on two-handed sword techniques might be familiar to you. I find it very interesting how closely the European techniques mirror the Japanese techniques. Unlike Hutton's earlier work *Cold Steel: The Art of Fencing with the Sabre* (Dover Books on History, Political and Social Science) this book would have little if any benefit for modern fencers. But any one interested in older sword technique, or someone who is looking to broaden their horizons in combative disciplines could enjoy it. A great piece of history, and potentially some fun in the salle d'armes or dojo. E. M. Van Court

Capt Alfred Hutton was one of a handful of men of his day who had an abiding interest in the techniques of historical swordsmanship. He was a sabre fencing instructor in the Royal Army and a member of the Bartitsu club along with Egerton Castle and Arthur Conan Doyle. The work of Hutton, Castle, and men like them were forerunners of today's worldwide interest in what are now being referred to as the 'European Martial Arts.' This book is a good place to start.

Great material from a historical perspective. Can't comment on practicalities but it seems like

historically accurate instructions with some comments on practicalities of real combat compared to competitive sword moves. A good source for historical writing I think.

Alfred Hutton's *Old Sword Play*, I would describe as a gloss of duelling styles as they changed over time with the change of the duelling weapon. While it's useful for quickly and efficiently ingraining the basics of the weapons and their play with spartan pragmatism compared to, say, Castle's *Schools and Masters of Defence*.

It's a great book but there is a cheaper edition available on here:<http://www..com/Old-Sword-Play-Techniques-Masters/dp/1507652216> I don't know why it doesn't show up when you use their search engine.

as an avid Case of Rapiers practitioner, I was only expecting to utilize a small portion of this text. But in no time at all I found myself looking into every chapter and using it to help my friends further their own studies. It breaks down the styles into fairly easy to follow terms (as much as any other manual I have seen) and is easy to learn from. I really have no complaints other than wishing it were a bit more in depth, but it is perfectly fine as it is.

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