



USA
FENCING

STARTING A COLLEGIATE FENCING CLUB

Are you a fencer and want to fence at your college? Have you considered starting a club? Starting a club can be a challenge, but this guide has the information and helpful contacts you need to start a collegiate fencing club

RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS CLUB SPORTS REQUIREMENTS

To begin a new athletic club at most colleges, several requirements must be met. Each institution has different requirements for a new club sport application to be considered. These requirements can be found on the institution's website (generally: navigate to the institution's home website > enter in search bar "club sports"> find verbiage similar to "Start a new club" > look for a document or website page dictating the necessary steps to creating a club at the institution). **If you have trouble locating these requirements, please contact Bob Bodor at b.bodor@usafencing.org**

Most institutions have several common requirements (with some variations). These requirements are listed below to give an idea of what will be necessary to create a collegiate fencing club:

Register with a National Governing Body or League:

Many institutions require that the formation of a new club cannot happen until that club is registered with a National Governing Body or a League. Obtaining a Club Membership with USA Fencing will satisfy this requirement and give your club access to other benefits. To register your club with USA Fencing, see the **Secure a USA Fencing Membership** section below.

Meet and Maintain a Minimum Number of Competitors:

Institutions require a minimum number of members in order to form a new athletic club. Before beginning the process of applying for a new athletic club, make sure there are enough supporters to meet the minimum number of members. Some institutions require a certain

number of staff members to be a part of the club as well. Be sure to read your institution's membership requirements before beginning your application.

Suitable Equipment and Facilities Must Be Available:

Institutions will most likely not consider an application unless the applicant can demonstrate that they have the necessary equipment and facilities to meet and hold practices and competitions.

Requirements vary at each institution. Understanding your respective institutions requirements will make applying to become a new club easier.

APPLY TO FORM CLUB SPORT AT INSTITUTION

Once all the requirements have been researched and met, begin the application process. This process can take time, so be patient. Institutions have many steps that go into creating a new athletic club. Face-to-face meetings may be necessary along with substantial proof of meeting the institution's specified requirements.

SECURE A USA FENCING CLUB MEMBERSHIP

A club membership gives clubs access to benefits that make club formation and club management easier. To see a full list of benefits, click [here](#).

There are 3 steps to securing a club membership:

1. **Select a membership type:** When registering with USA Fencing, clubs have the choice to be an Affiliate Club or a Member Club. The description of included benefits for Member Clubs and Affiliate Clubs are listed below:

Member Clubs: Cost \$625	Affiliate Clubs: Cost \$50
• Website leasing • Right to field a team at National Championships • Access to USA Fencing insurance • \$1 million General Liability Coverage • \$3 million Umbrella Insurance * All members and participants of USA Fencing Member Clubs must be individual members of USA Fencing.	• Website leasing • Right to field a team at National Championships • No access to USA Fencing Insurance * If Affiliate Club membership type is selected, the club is responsible for obtaining insurance.

2. **Fill out Club Membership Application:** Once a club membership type has been selected, click [here](#) to fill out the Club Membership Application.

3. **Send completed Club Membership Application to USA Fencing National Office:** The completed membership application may be EMAILED (www.usafencing.org), FAXED (*Fax: 719-325-8998*), or MAILED (*4065 Sinton Road, Suite 140, Colorado Springs, CO 80907*) to the USA Fencing National Office.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGIATE FENCING CLUB

Here are some useful tips to forming and managing a successful collegiate fencing club:

1. How One Club Got Started:

Need some guidance? Click [here](#) to see one story of “How One Club Got Started” by Henry Fiorentini, who started the Blade Masters club in a junior high school near Chicago.

2. Find a Coach Who Can Commit to the Long-Term Success of the Program:

A coach can strongly influence a new club. Find a coach who is committed to bettering the club and its members as well as someone who will develop the desired culture of the club.

3. Develop a Leadership System:

For example: A direct democracy in which the club members vote on who they think should fill the positions necessary to running a club (President, Treasurer, Secretary, etc.)

4. Build Up Club Membership:

Continuing to grow membership numbers is vital to club success. Listed below are a few ways to increase club membership:

1. Advertise the club at beginning-of-the-year orientation events.
2. Create social media platforms (such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) to advertise the new club.
3. Put up flyers (see example by clicking [here](#)).
4. Accept everyone who wants to join (BUT have no tolerance for antisocial behavior).

5. Reach Out to Nearby Fencing Clubs:

Reach out to nearby fencing clubs and ask for contacts that can help with fencing equipment and resources that may be difficult to attain.

6. Join a Conference or League:

Here is a list of collegiate fencing conferences in the United States:

Conferences
Midwest - Midwest Fencing Conference
New England Intercollegiate Fencing (NEIFC)
Baltimore-Washington Collegiate Fencing Conference (BWCFC)
Southwest Intercollegiate Fencing Association (SWIFA)
Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Fencing Association (MACFA)
Southern Intercollegiate Fencing Association (SIFA)
Intercollegiate Fencing Conference of Southern California (IFCSC)
Northeast - Northeast Fencing Conference (NEFC)

7. Build a Website:

Build a website where club information can be easily accessed. This can be a good place to advertise the club and provide contact information for club leaders.

ESTABLISH SAFESPORT POLICIES

USA Fencing is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes' physical, emotional, and social development and ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

As a new club, SafeSport policies will allow athletes and coaches to maintain a safe and healthy environment for competition to take place. Click [here](#) to learn more about SafeSport policies and click [here](#) for resources to help increase your awareness and provide you with tools to protect our athletes and create a positive sport experience.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Below are people you can contact with any questions regarding the formation of a collegiate fencing club:

Bob Bodor, Director of Member Services: b.bodor@usafencing.org

Christine Strong-Simmons, Senior Director of Operations & Regional Tournament Contact:
c.simmons@usafencing.org

Contact Current Collegiate Clubs: Click [here](#) to see a map of existing collegiate fencing clubs. Find one close to your institution and reach out to them with questions.