

# ODYSSEY

TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THE GREAT GAME

## **WEAPON & ARMOUR SAFETY**

VERSION 1.2

# WEAPON AND ARMOUR SAFETY

## Introduction

Live roleplaying is a safe activity. Compared to a range of sports and outdoor activities it is very low risk. As with all activities having the right equipment and attitude are essential to enjoying the hobby safely.

The most important factor in safe combat is the participant, not the weapon they are using. Everyone attending a Profound Decisions event is required to know how to fight in a safe manner. If you are new to live roleplaying or uncertain what constitutes safe fighting then speak to the staff at GOD (games operation desk) before the event starts and they will arrange a demonstration. Please ensure that you have read the guidelines on safety in combat in the main rulebook.

This guide presents guidelines for weapon and armour safety at Odyssey. These guidelines exist to protect you by preventing dangerous, damaged, badly made or badly repaired equipment being used by anyone in combat. A weapon checker will use these guidelines to make an overall assessment of the safety of a weapon. If a weapon fails a check you may ask for a second opinion.

Weapon and shield sizes are given in the rulebook under the appropriate skill descriptions.

## All weapons

Weapons designed for live roleplaying are commonly constructed from a solid core that is surrounded in high-density foam and then covered with latex. Weapons must meet the following guidelines:

- *The rigidity of the foam must protect the core and must not have degraded and become too soft*
- *The layers of foam must be securely bonded to each other and not be delaminating*
- *The right kind of foam must be used. High-density foam is the basic material and low-density foam must be used appropriately in collapsible tip weapons or in large hammerheads. This stops weapons being too heavy and having too much momentum*
- *The whole length of the core must be held securely in place and must not be moving freely inside the weapon*
- *The tip reinforcement must not be protruding through the surface of the foam*
- *The core of the weapon must be made of an appropriate material such as fibreglass or carbon fibre - not of aluminium, wood or bamboo.*
- *There must not be any protruding hard or sharp objects such as gems or studs*
- *There must be sufficient padding on the tip, guard, pommel and haft.*
- *The handle must be securely attached to the rest of the weapon and must not be loose*
- *The choice of former must be appropriate to the length of the weapon and must not be too heavy and rigid (especially for thrown weapons) or too light making the weapon 'whippy' (long weapons)*

## Spears & javelins

Only spears with a collapsible tip are permitted at Odyssey events. No other design of spear will be allowed on site.

- *Construction must combine a low-density foam tip with a high-density spear head*
- *Specific construction guidelines are presented later in this guide*
- *Javelins are short spears that designed to be thrown and used in melee. You must not throw normal melee weapons.*
- *All spears of javelin length must be suitable for throwing*
- *The weapon core, if it has one, must be appropriate and able to offer some rigidity without excess weight or momentum*
- *Additional weight must not be added for stability or accuracy*

## Missile weapons

These are bows designed to fire an LRP safe arrow. There is no bow competency testing at Profound Decisions events. We require any player using a bow to adhere to the same standards of safety and control as players using melee weapons.

- *The bow string must be in good condition and must not be fraying*
- *The body of the bow, whether wood or fibreglass, must not show signs of cracking*
- *The string notches must not be worn and must be able to hold the string firmly*
- *The draw of a bow must be less than 30 lbs at 28" draw*

## Arrows

As well as checking before the start of the event, we recommend that you check these after each combat, as they may have become damaged. You are not allowed to reuse the same arrow within an arena combat as they can easily become damaged if trodden upon or hit.

- *The shaft must be made of fibreglass or wood. Carbon fibre, aluminium and dowel are not allowed*
- *The shaft must not be cracked or damaged*
- *Flights must be adequate to keep the arrow stable in flight and must be properly attached to the shaft*
- *The shaft must have a proper nock which is securely attached*
- *Arrows must have a maximum draw position of 28" clearly marked if the possible draw length is greater than 28"*
- *The arrow must have some kind of blocker between the shaft and the foam of the arrowhead to stop the shaft pushing through*
- *The head must be securely attached and not move on the shaft*
- *The arrowhead must be at least 50mm (55mm recommended) across and have a circular cross-section*
- *Dome headed arrows are allowed as long as the width of the widest part of the soft foam dome, and the foam behind it are of the appropriate diameter*
- *The soft foam portion of the head must be designed in such a way as to allow it to collapse fully (so there must be no latex within 5-10 mm of the face)*
- *Any gaffer tape used on the arrowhead must not be within 25mm of the face of the arrow*

## Armour

If you are in any doubt about an item of costume or armour then show the item to a weapon checker who can tell you if it is acceptable.

- *Metal armour must be of a grade where it will not tear in use revealing sharp edges*
- *Metal armour must have its edges rounded off in such a way there are no burs or snags which could damage props or players*
- *There must be suitable straps and attachments so armour does not come loose*
- *There must not be any protruding hard or sharp decoration such as spikes that could damage weapons or people*

## Shields

Please take care when using shields in melee combat. You must not use the shield as a weapon.

For events in 2011 you will be able to use shields with a rigid former at Odyssey. Events from 2012 onwards will only allow layered shields that use foam, cloth and leather to balance rigidity and safety, rather than an alternative solid core. Therefore if you are making or buying new shields avoiding solid formers is strongly recommended.

- *A solid former may be used during 2011 events, but shields must preferably be of full-foam construction*
- *If you use a rigid former then there must be at least 6mm of high-density foam on the face and no protruding bolts*
- *The rim must be padded all round. Note that pipe lagging will quickly degrade and will likely be insufficient after a relatively short time*
- *Handles must be securely fixed so that they do not cause the shield to "flap" from the arm/hand*
- *Wing nuts must not be used to secure straps and any protruding bolts must be cut short*

## Battle props

Battle Props are items that are present in combat, but are not used as weapons. As they do not conform to the regulations that govern weapons and shields they must not be used for offence or active defence. As they are likely to be present in combat they must not have any extremely sharp protrusions. Otherwise they must be removed from the combat preferably in an out of the way area.

## Banned items

The following items cannot be used at Odyssey events, either for reasons of safety or because they are unsuitable for the campaign. The traders are permitted to sell these items but only on the condition that they are collected at the end of the event. You must not carry these items on site in an IC area.

- *Real weapons, including bayonets, re-enactment weapons and any sort of non-replica firearm*
- *Spears designed for live roleplaying but without collapsible tips*
- *Crossbows*
- *Flexible weapons such as flails and whips may not be used as weapons*
- *Modern or futuristic items such as chainswords or power armour as well as novelty items such as inflatable hammers and bananas, rubber or plastic combat knives, nerf guns etc.*
- *No fireworks or pyrotechnics of any sort may be brought onto the site without the prior permission of Profound Decisions*
- *Injection-moulded weapons will be treated on a case-by-case basis, as although they tend to soften up with use, some may be too heavy or too hard*

# COLLAPSIBLE TIP SPEARS

Based on designs by Graham from Tallows FX

## Collapsible tips

Collapsible tip weapons have been safely used in UK live roleplaying for many years. At Odyssey events only spears that have collapsible tips are permitted. This means that all spears used in the game may be used for safe, controlled thrusting in combat. In all cases combat must be conducted safely and all weapon blows appropriately judged and executed.

## Making a collapsible tip

Collapsible tip weapons are more complex to construct than normal live roleplaying weapons. They combine the dense foam normally used to make weapons with a section of soft foam that will collapse under force and absorb some of the impact of a blow.

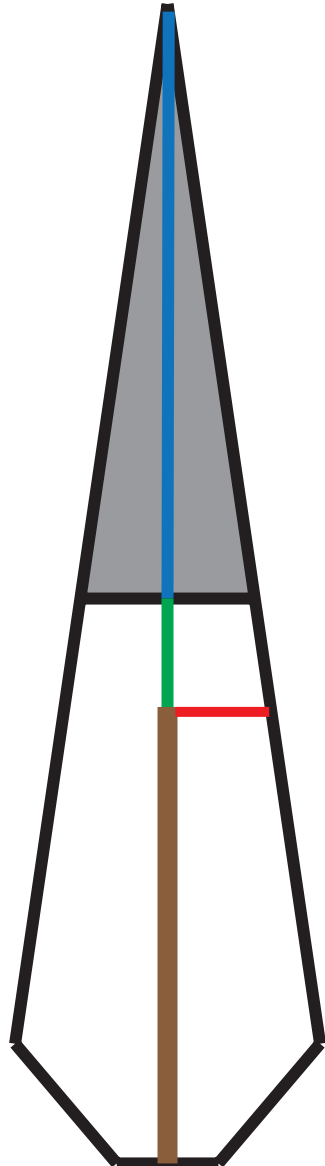
The guidelines presented here cover one method of combining the two kinds of foam and emphasise the reinforcement required. If you are at all concerned over the techniques used then please consult a professional weapons manufacturer for advice.

## Outline dimensions

In the diagram to the right the black outline shows the shape of the spearhead. The top section shaded grey, containing the blue line, is the low-density open-cell furniture foam thrusting tip. The bottom unshaded section, containing the green and red lines and the brown weapon core, is high-density LD45 of similar foam.

The minimum recommended dimensions are:

- End of core to edge of spearhead - Red - 40mm
- End of core to end of high-density foam - Green - 40mm
- Amount of low-density foam - Blue - 155mm



## Requirements

In addition to the minimum dimensions shown above there are a number of construction requirements:

- The end of the core must be appropriately reinforced. This involves a cap of leather and foam attached to the end of the core and additional layers of leather and cloth
- The join between the two types of foam should be reinforced with cloth
- Two airholes must be put into the soft foam head through the latex covering to allow the air to escape if the head is compressed

The following photographs demonstrate these additional techniques.

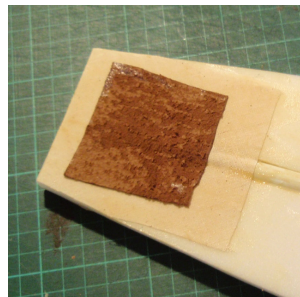
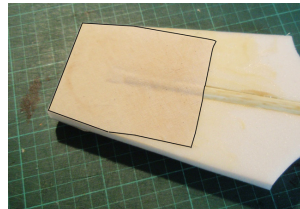
## Preparing the core

First the end of the core should be prepared by rounding the end of any sharp edges, cleaning the core with some thinners, adding a cube of high density foam and then gluing overlapping cloth reinforcing over this.



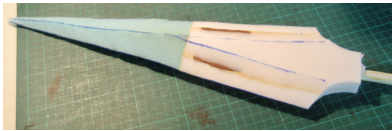
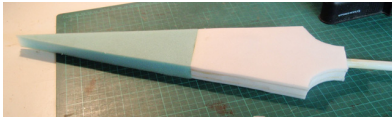
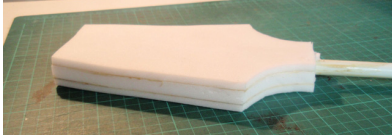
## Positioning the core

The core is glued in a groove in the dense foam head using contact adhesive - don't use hot melt glue as it is too brittle. The dense foam must be the same thickness as the core. This is then covered with overlaid layers of cloth and two-inch square of glove-thickness leather.

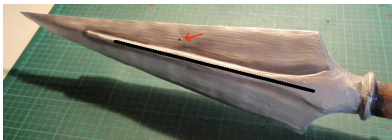


## Adding the soft foam

As with normal weapons making, an additional layer of dense foam completes this part of the head. The next stage is to add the low-density foam tip to the same thickness as the dense foam, carve the blade and then add additional reinforcing cloth at least two inches either side of the join.



The last photograph shows the airhole on the finished weapon and the possible location of a bar of high-density foam along the line of the former across both high- and low-density foam, indicated by the dashed line. Any such foam should be well clear of the tip - certainly no more than half the length of the low-density foam.



The bar going across the dense and soft foam adds to the look of the spearhead but is not necessary to make a safe weapon. It should not be closer than 50mm from the end of the tip.

## Note of caution

Safe construction of collapsible tip spears requires mastery of a range of different materials and techniques. This guide is meant to provide a brief overview of the process only. If you are interested in making your own spear then please talk to one of the many professional LRP traders who will be happy to provide more detailed advice.



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