

How to Sign up for Tournaments and Competitions (A parent's perspective) By Jennifer Hergert

So your child has been fencing for a while now and liking the competition they face on the strip. Now it's time to think about expanding outside of the class and do some tournaments. First, you and your child should be thinking of what the goal is regarding competition. Are they looking to get into the Summer Nationals which is run by USA Fencing? Or are they looking to just gain some experience through local tournaments so your fencer can join the high school team? Depending on the goal, you'll need to sign up for local events or national events.

USA Fencing membership

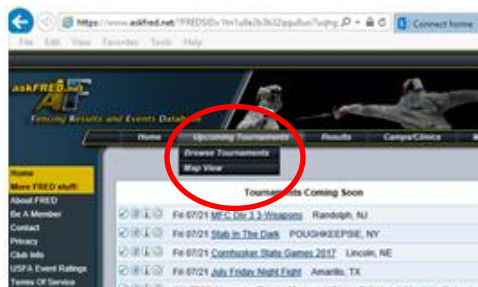
First you need to upgrade your membership from non-competitive (required by the club) to a competitive membership. Without a competitive membership, you can't sign up for local or nationally run tournaments. Fencing in high school is different as membership with USA Fencing is not required, but it is available (see the USA Fencing website regarding their high school membership program).

Website: USAFencing.com

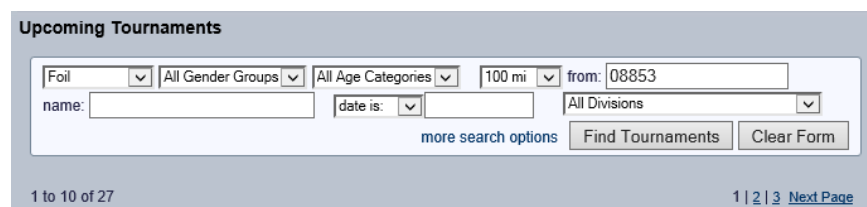
AskFred.net

With the exception of the Summer Nationals or NACs (North American Cups) which are done through USA Fencing website, sign up for tournaments will be through AskFred.net. *Note: Announced in July 2017, registering for regional events will move in October to the USA fencing site. Agreement with AskFred is that registration will also continue until the end of 2017 for these regional events.* A profile is needed to register for tournaments. Credit cards are not stored within your profile so whenever you sign up, make sure you pay the fee at the end otherwise you are not considered registered. Pay attention to the registration deadlines as double fees and triple fees are charged after the regular registration date and it can get costly!

When you first access AskFred, you'll see all the tournaments across the US. To make it easier to find tournaments in your area or a specific type, click on upcoming tournaments and then Browse tournaments.



You can then put a filter to identify specific tournaments you are looking for. Example below is for foil – all gender – all age categories within a specific distance. Hit Find Tournaments and only applicable events will then show.

A screenshot of the 'Upcoming Tournaments' search filter on AskFred.net. The filter is set to 'Foil' for weapon, 'All Gender Groups' for gender, 'All Age Categories' for age, '100 mi' for distance, and '08853' for location. The 'Find Tournaments' button is visible. Below the filter, there is a pagination link '1 | 2 | 3 Next Page'.

Once you've selected a tournament, you can get information as to when, where, check in times, etc. and then register for the event.

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Events to sign up for

Depending on the goal, the events to sign up for are important. If your fencer is new or has not done competition before, local events are good events to start with. It gives them experience without being too intimidating and the attendee field size can be manageable. Look for events based on the distance you are willing to travel.

If you are looking to qualify for the Summer Nationals, you need to target events that are classified as Regional Youth Circuits (RYCs), Super Youth Circuits (SYCs), ROCs (Regional Open Circuits) and Regional Junior, Cadet Circuits (RJCCs). The events you sign up for will be based on the age of the child. RYCs and SYCs are for fencers up to age 14 (see the covered birth years listed by USA Fencing). ROCs are "senior" events (events for age ≥ 13 years) and RJCCs are senior events for under 19 or under 16 (but at least 13 years old). ROC events also have an additional criteria beyond age and it is related to the rating a fencer has (A, B, C, D, E, U).

Qualification for the National Championships aka Summer Nationals (Youth Fencer)

To be able to qualify for the Summer Nationals, there are 2 main ways to qualify.

1. Be nationally ranked on the Youth age group list by earning points at SYCs or NACs;
2. Earn points through the RYCs.

Below is the information as of 8/1/17 from USA Fencing to qualify for Nationals. For the other age categories or Division qualification paths, check USA Fencing for the most-up-to-date information.

Qualification Y10/Y12 to the April NAC

Fencers must fence in at least one Regional or [Super Youth Competition](#) in the current season to be eligible to enter the same category and weapon at the April NAC. RYC event must have at least 2 competitors to fulfill any qualification standards.

Qualification Path to USA Fencing National Championships

Youth 10 National Championship

- A. *Eligibility (age, representation, classification)*

Fencers must meet the birth years in [Table 2.5.1](#), and be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. There are no classification requirements.

- A. *Qualifying Path*

- Be on the Y10 National Point Standings at the regular fee entry deadline **OR**
- Be on the Y10 Regional Youth Point Standings in your region at the regular fee entry deadline **OR**
- Earn at least **60** Y12 Regional Points during the current season (Total points = an athlete's top 3 point results) **OR**
- Participate in a SYC or RYC in the current season

Youth 12 National Championship

- A. *Eligibility (age, representation, classification)*

Subject to the listed exceptions, fencers must meet birth years in [Table 2.5.1](#) and be a U.S citizen or permanent resident. There are no classification requirements.

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A. *Qualification*

When determining qualifications on the top 8 on National Rolling Point Standings, ONLY foreign fencers are skipped.

A. *Qualifying Path*

- Be on the Y12 National Point Standings at the regular fee entry deadline **OR**
- Be in the top 8 of the Y10 National Point Standings at the regular fee entry deadline **OR**
- **OR**
- Earn at least **60** Y12 Regional Points during the current season (Total points = an athlete's top 3 point results) **OR**
- Earn at least **150** Y14 Regional Points during the current season (Total points = an athlete's top 3 point results) **OR**
- Place in the top 25% of the fencer's division's Y14 National Championship qualifying competition

Youth 14 National Championship

A. *Eligibility (age, representation, classification)*

Subject to the listed exceptions, fencers must meet the birth years in [Table 2.5.1](#) and be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident representing the United States. There are no classification requirements.

A. *Qualifying Path*

- Be on the Youth 14 National Point Standings at the regular entry fee deadline **OR**
- Be in the top **16** of the Y12 National Point Standings at the regular entry fee deadline **OR**
- Earn at least **150** Y14 Regional Points during the current season (Total points = an athlete's top 3 point results) **OR**
- Place in the top 25% (round up) of the fencer's division's Y14 National Championship qualifying competition

Example for Meeting Qualification to Summer Nationals

Here is an example for a 12 year old wanting to qualify for the Summer Nationals.

Youth 12 Championships –

Fencers must meet age eligibility above **AND**

- Be on the Y12 National Point Standings at the regular fee entry deadline **OR**
- Earn at least **60** Y12 Regional Points during the current season (Total points = an athlete's top 3 point results) **OR**
- Earn at least **150** Y14 Regional Points during the current season (Total points = an athlete's top 3 point results) **OR**
- Place in the top 25% of the fencer's division's Y14 National Championship qualifying competition

Tournaments the fencer should be signing up for:

- Qualifying through Regional level (NJ is in Region 3): Sign up for RYCs (regional youth circuits) for Y12 and/or Y14 events. Points for Y14 will trickle down to Y12 standings. Regional events awards points for

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every participant and is based on a formula with 1st place getting 100 points and points awarded are based on the total number of participants. The top 3 finishes at regional events will be added so if the fencer amasses at least 60 points for the Y12 RYCs, they are qualified.

- Qualifying through the National Points Standing (NPS): USA Fencing NACs and SYCs are the tournaments used to determine NPS. Only the top 40% of finishers (and there could be a maximum number) earn points. Once you earn points at a NAC or SYC event, the fencer is qualified. It doesn't matter if they are the number 1 ranked Y12 fencer or number 154. Getting on the list because you earned points is the qualification needed. The ranking will be used for seeding at tournaments.
- Qualification through the division qualifiers. The NJ Division runs a qualification tournament for the Summer Nationals generally in April. If the fencer has not qualified yet, here is an opportunity to qualify. The only age category for youth that is held at the qualifier is Y14, so your Y12 fencer will need to fence in the Y14 event and then place in the top 25% of the finishers.

Division I – III: What are these?

So long as the fencer is at least 13 years old, there are senior events referred to as Division 1, Division 1A, Division 2, Division 3. For these tournaments, age of at least 13 is required (unless you have an exceptional 12 year old) as well as their rating level (A, B, C, D, E, U).

- Division 2: Rating of C – U
- Division 3: Rating of D – U

Tournaments for these divisions are called ROCs (Regional Open Circuit). For ROCs and NACs, qualification is based on meeting the age and the rating requirement. See the USA Fencing website for Summer Nationals and July Challenge qualification paths.

Unlike the RYCs, in which to earn points you need to earn within your region, a fencer can go to any region for a ROC to earn points.

Equipment for Tournaments

Before signing up for a tournament, talk to the coach regarding equipment. You'll need to make sure you have the minimum number of equipment and have it checked by the armorer for the non-local tournaments.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Fencers must bring the following to equipment check:

- Mask - 12K punch test; sewn in bib. Conductive Bib in foil is required. Elastic strap at back of mask is required
- Lamé – Foil and saber
- Gloves / sabre cuffs (800N Saber glove is mandatory.
- Full USFA regulation uniform is required to compete:
 - Uniforms (jacket, pants, knee-high socks, fencing glove): Standard fencing uniforms; cannot have any rips, tear, or holes.
 - Names on Uniforms: Not required unless it is a SYC or NAC event
 - Plastrons (underarm protectors)
 - Chest Protector: Required for women
- Blades: Must have at least two working weapons and two body cords / head cords when reporting to the strip.