

Beat – a sudden strike of the opponent's blade.

The beat tells how firm or weak opponent's grip is and, if by surprise, shows an instinctive reaction (e.g. extension, parry, oppose the beat, step back). It might unsettle beginners, provoking them to attack. It can be used as a sort of parry with detachment on induced attacks.

4 versions: Beat direct; Change-beat direct; Beat disengage; Change-beat disengage. Each can be executed on different sides of blade – top, underneath, side, or somewhere in-between.

Beat Direct

Beat direct: used to knock the blade aside to reveal part of target to hit. Target is generally wrist or forearm.

Technique

- No preparation – ensure blade is in correct place before action.
- Point moves in a 'V' to target – so always moving forward.
- Beat occurs about half-way down opponent's blade, and then point accelerates to target.
- The beat is crisp, produced by flexing the wrist (or hand grip), and gets a springboard launch to help accelerate the point.

Variants – beat on top, on side, on underneath of opponent's blade.

- ❖ Practice 1: Beat direct to wrist/forearm on extension.
- ❖ Practice 2: Beat direct to wrist/forearm on lunge.
- ❖ Practice 3: Beat direct to wrist/forearm on step-lunge. Slow step (so opponents will step back slowly) into a fast lunge. Note that the beat is simultaneous with back foot landing and lunge starting.
- ❖ Practice 4: Beat direct to body (or arm) on flèche.

For each practice 1-4 now try with movement, reducing time window for student to exercise the stroke by being at correct distance/blade presented only briefly. Applying increased pressure until fight mode. Correct faults as they occur.

Change-Beat

Change Beat: a beat on the opposite side of the opponent's blade, knocking the blade aside to reveal part of the target.

Technique

- No preparation – ensure blade is in correct place before action.
- A circular action (or feint beat-direct with disengage) to beat opponent's blade on opposite side, but point moving forward always.
- Beat occurs about half-way down opponent's blade, and then point accelerates to target.
- The beat is crisp, produced by flexing the wrist (or hand grip), and gets a springboard launch to help accelerate the point.

Variants – beat on top, on side, on underneath of opponent's blade.

- ❖ Practice 1: Change-beat to wrist/forearm on extension.
- ❖ Practice 2: Change-beat to wrist/forearm on lunge.
- ❖ Practice 3: Change-beat to wrist/forearm on step-lunge. Slow step (so opponents will step back slowly) into a fast lunge. Note that the change-beat is simultaneous with back foot landing and lunge starting.

As before, now practice 1-3 with movement, reducing time window for student to exercise the stroke. Correct faults as they occur.

Beat Disengage

Suppose earlier in bout you observed that the opponent's reaction to the beat is to push against it – shown by a swing of the blade after the beat. This quickly closes the target for a beat-direct but opens it for a beat disengage attack...

Beat disengage: a beat followed by a disengage attack when the reaction of the opponent on the beat is to parry laterally or oppose beat.

Follow technique and practices for beat direct but now with beat disengage attack.

Change-Beat Disengage

Suppose earlier in bout you observed the opponent's reaction to the change-beat is to push against it – shown by a swing of the blade after the beat. This quickly closes the target for a change-beat-direct but opens it for a change-beat disengage attack...

Change-beat disengage: a change-beat followed by a disengage attack when the reaction of the opponent on the beat is to parry laterally or oppose beat.

Follow technique and practices for change-beat but now with change-beat disengage attack.