

Compound Attack – an attack with one or more feints to draw the opponent's parry, which is then deceived (trompement) opening the line for the final attack.

The key is that the feint(s) must be convincing enough for the opponent to react – so point coming threatening close with extending arm. However, attacker must remain just out of distance or it is a failed attack, not a feint. Typically, the feint is used to distract opponent while gaining distance and the initiative with the final line of attack coming as a surprise. Need to develop an idea of opponent's preferred parry given the stimulus, so parry can be deceived.

Compound attacks can be two-time, progressive or broken time, but in any event the point is travelling fastest as the hit is made (so ideally accelerating throughout the move).

One-Two

One-two – a compound attack consisting of a feint of disengage attack, to draw a simple parry, which is then disengaged for the hit.

Technique

- Best started from an engagement or near-engagement with opponent covered.
- Disengage to open line while straightening arm and threatening target. This feint must be convincing as an attack to be defended.
- Opponent parries (simple, as expected), and attacker disengages and hits while all the time moving the point forward.
- The second disengage (and hit) is accelerated.

Variants – from different engagements or near-engagements such a quarte v sixte (same handed fencers).

- ❖ Practice: Right- and left-hand fencers, both in sixte, with opponent covered. So attacker disengages and attacks, drawing lateral parry, followed by a disengage and hit.

Doublé

Doublé – a compound attack consisting of a feint of disengage attack, to draw a counter parry, which is then deceived by a counter-disengage.

Technique

- Best started from an engagement or near-engagement with opponent covered.
- Disengage to open line while straightening arm and threatening target. This feint must be convincing as an attack to be defended.
- Opponent parries (circular, as expected), and attacker counter-disengages and hits while all the time moving the point forward.
- The counter-disengage (and hit) is accelerated.

Variants – from different near-engagements such a quarte v sixte (same handed fencers).

- ❖ Practice: Right- and left-hand fencers, both in sixte, with opponent covered. Attacker disengages and attacks, drawing counter parry, followed by an accelerating counter-disengage and hit.

Feint Direct

Compound attack begins with a simple feint direct and, depending on the expected parry or other action provoked, the attack is completed into the opening (or open) line.

Example: Attacker starts with a slow step forward and, simultaneous with back-foot completing the step, the arm is extended apparently attacking the wrist. The final action depends on action of defender:

- Choice A: Defender parries counter-sixte. Attacker counter-disengages and lunges with acceleration. Lunge to body if defender is static and lunge to arm if opponent is stepping back.
- Choice B: Defender parries simple. Attacker disengages and lunges with acceleration. Lunge to body if defender is static and lunge to arm if opponent is stepping back.
- Choice C: Defender extends arm for stop hit. Attacker can now flèche with opposition (if guard on outside of opponent's) or counter parry and riposte with lunge (if guard is inside that of opponent's).
- Choice D: Defender does nothing or steps back slowly. Attacker can now remise, redouble, or reprise from this advanced position with the advantages of proximity and surprise.
- Choice E: Defender steps back quickly. Attacker abandons attack, content with the gain of space. The compound attack can now be renewed if desired.

Variants – attacker feints attack to knee or foot.

There is a phenomenon, the 'psychological refractory period', where someone who reacts to a stimulus will be slower to react to a second stimulus if it occurs within about ¼ second. This is exploited in compound attacks, once the second action is near-immediate to start of opponent's reaction. It is also very effective when the opponent suppresses an instinctive reaction – so broken time direct attacks to an opponent wanting to parry-riposte.