

Olympic Sparring Rules

Protective Equipment

All competitors must wear the following mandatory equipment during Olympic sparring matches:

- **Chest Protector:** An Olympic-style trunk protector is required.
- **Headgear:** Competitors must wear headgear that corresponds to their team color (blue or red). Other headgear is not permitted unless it is religious wear that does not obstruct the opponent.
- **Shin and Instep Protectors:** These must be white and worn underneath the dobok (taekwondo uniform).
- **Forearm Protectors:** Also white and worn underneath the dobok.
- **Mouth Guard:** Any color except solid red; special mouth guards are required for athletes with braces.
- **Groin Protection:** Mandatory for males and optional for females, worn inside the dobok.

Match Structure

- **Rounds:** Matches typically consist of two rounds for colored belts (60-90 seconds each) and two to three rounds for black belts (2-3 minutes each), with a 30-60 second rest between rounds.
- **Competition Area:** The competition ring is usually 26ft by 26ft.

Scoring

Points are awarded for legal techniques delivered to the torso and head. The scoring system includes:

- **1 point** for punches to the trunk protector.
- **2 points** for kicks to the trunk protector.
- **3 points** for kicks to the head.
- **4 points** for turning kicks to the trunk.
- **5 points** for valid turning kicks to the head.

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- An electronic scoring system (PSS) is often used to confirm points scored based on the impact detected by sensors in the protective gear.

Conduct and Penalties

Competitors must adhere to strict conduct rules, including bowing to the referee and opponent before matches.

Penalties can be issued for illegal techniques, unsportsmanlike conduct, or failure to comply with the referee's commands. A gam-jeom (penalty point) may be awarded for infractions such as punching to the face or kicking below the waist.

These rules ensure that Olympic sparring is conducted safely and fairly, promoting skill and sportsmanship among competitors. For more detailed information, you can refer to the official guidelines provided by organizations like World Taekwondo and the AAU.