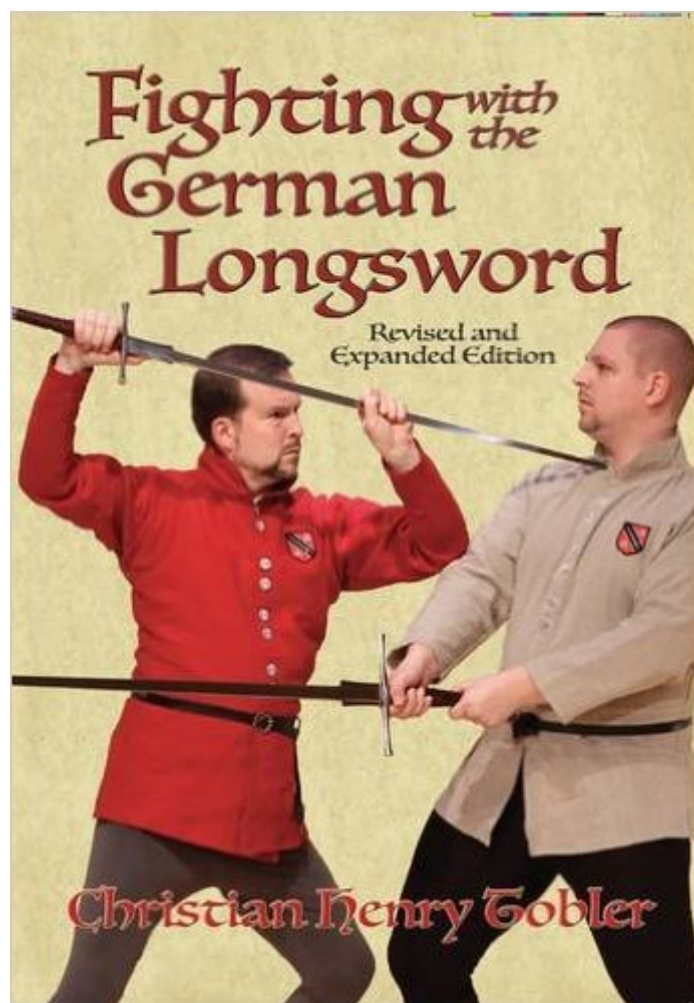


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# Fighting With The German Longsword



## Synopsis

Recorded over six centuries ago, the teachings of the 14th-century Master-at-Arms Johannes Liechtenauer have been given new life by a world-wide community of modern swordsmen and women, fascinated by the elegance, efficiency and depth of his unique martial art. Christian Henry Tobler was one of the pioneers in reviving the medieval Master's art, creating the first, published syllabus for training with the two-handed longsword back in 2004. This fully rewritten, revised and expanded edition brings to bear a decade of refinement, creating a definitive, "how to" guide for students. Beginning with a short historical overview of the art, Mr. Tobler teaches stance, footwork, methods for gripping the sword, and step-by-step instructions for executing the core techniques of the Liechtenauer tradition. Additional chapters introduce students to wrestling, spear and armoured combat; demonstrating the art's depth and breadth. Heavily photo-illustrated, the book also makes use of decision-trees and training drills to aid in learning. Used as a complete, self-contained course, or a primer for studying the original medieval works themselves, this unique book will be invaluable to martial artists, reenactors, medieval historians, or anyone who has ever wondered "how did knights fight?"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you have ever wondered, "Can I learn to fight with a Longsword" this is the book for you. Christian Tobler answers that question with a definitive "yes" and backs up his assertion with an incredibly clear and precise teaching manual. "Fighting" opens with a discussion and explanation of the knightly art of defense and provides grounding in the masters of the art. However, he moves quickly

on to modern considerations of safety and practice tools. This is invaluable information for the modern practitioner of the art, as until now the only way to determine what tools one should invest in were internet searches and guesswork. Then we enter, as students, into the meat of the work, which is practical information on the art. The basics of footwork, balance and timing are not neglected or assumed, but are explored with depth, as are the Guards and Wounders. From there, the manual moves through the Five Master Strikes, Wrestling, Winding and finally, though the main focus of the manual is on unarmored combat, ending with Armored Combat. The uniqueness of this manual is in its teaching ability. Each concept is presented first theoretically, and then is followed up on with drills to physically impart the concept to the student. It's not just a read-along where you spend your time imagining someone else performing the technique, but rather a book which encourages you to get a partner, grab a waster, and try out the techniques for yourself. Finally, most chapters wrap up the techniques with a decision-tree, further reinforcing the use of each technique in its proper place. This means that each technique is presented at least three different ways, aiding the student in his learning process.

There have been a number of books in recent years that have addressed the use of the European longsword, but very few have taken a specific historical martial art, picked it apart, and presented it in a clear, logical way, as Christian Tobler does here in *Fighting with the German Longsword*. This is not just an collection of techniques from German masters in the Liechtanauer tradition of fighting: It is a how to guide, one that presents the basics of footwork and body mechanics, and building off them with the core concepts and techniques to embody the reader with a good sense of the foundation of this system. One of the really excellent things about this book is that a complete novice can read it and grasp the concepts easily, while a seasoned practitioner can still read it from cover to cover and learn from it. Fundamental concepts such as distance and timing are discussed, primary and secondary guards, feeling your opponent's actions through the blade, and understanding the five master strikes. While the majority of the book is focused on fighting without armor, it does go into armored fighting as well, and there is even a small section on spear, which helps illustrate key longsword concepts such as winding. There is also a section showing major concepts in unarmed fighting, as this forms the basis of much of the longsword. Christian Tobler is also to be commended for his honest approach to research. The text is full of examples of where the techniques came from out of period manuscripts, and Christian clearly admits where he has stepped in to fill in some of the blanks that are not explicitly clear in the original texts.

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