

XVI. Demo Policy

1. A demo (“demonstration”) is an organized educational effort to teach and/or display activities of pre-17th century life, intended to spur historical interest in general, and SCA interest in particular, to the general public. Demos are an important way of introducing ourselves to the community, fulfilling our organizational mission of education, and possibly finding new recruits for the SCA. However, not all demos are the type that result in new members. An elementary school demo is fun, but the likelihood of recruiting new members is low. A university or Renaissance Fair demo is more likely to attract new members but does not necessarily contain the educational community-relations value of a school demo. Both are important, and a group should find a balance between them.
2. In order to be covered by SCA insurance, demos must be approved by the sponsoring group’s Seneschal, and the branch may restrict who may represent them to the public. Restricting participation should be done with extreme caution and care. A demo may also be an “event” if it meets the requirements for an event as outlined in Corpora and Corporate Policy.⁶⁶ At any demo, at least one paid SCA member must be present and in charge of the demo.
3. Demos where there are no combat-related activities do not require waivers unless they are held as part of an SCA “event”. Therefore, if there is no combat, and the demo is not held at an SCA event, waivers are not required. When required, waivers may be completed individually, or a roster waiver may be used. It is not required that spectators at demos sign waivers, as long as they don’t become participants.
4. As with all martial activities, an authorized marshal for whatever forms are being displayed must be present if there is fighting at a demo. SCA combatants must be authorized in that weapons form or style to perform at the demo.⁶⁷
5. Demo organizers must pay particular attention to site/host restrictions regarding SCA and steel weapons and activities. In general, it is not a good idea to allow the general public to handle steel weapons at a demo, and steel weapons must never be left unattended. SCA weapons must never be left unattended and in plain sight and access of the public. (They may be stored unattended in tents, trucks, etc.)
6. Since observers of SCA demos are generally not familiar with SCA combat activities, special care for safety must be taken. Boundary ropes are strongly recommended, and sufficient safety personnel must be provided to ensure safety of combatants and observers.
7. A participant of the SCA may not hit a member of the public with any weapon regardless of whether the member of the public is in armor and gives consent. Adult members of the public who wish to try armored or rapier combat should be referred to the nearest SCA group for instruction.
8. With specific safety restrictions, supervised children age 12 and under may hit an armored SCA fighter with foam weapons only, not rattan weapons. Waivers are not needed from the parents of children who take part in “fight-a-knight” activities. Minimum safety standards include keeping unarmored observers at least 10 feet away from the armored fighter and child. Individual Kingdoms may make more restrictive policies.
9. Whenever a demo is held with children present, a minimum of two unrelated adults must also attend that demo (the “two-deep” rule). “Children” refers to anyone under the age of legal majority.
10. No one may bring weapons of any kind onto the grounds of a school without prior knowledge and consent of the school officials.
11. There is no SCA policy that prohibits an SCA group from charging a “demo” fee to the organization requesting the demo. However, most groups accept donations rather than charging a set fee. With either a donation or a “demo” fee, all monies should be in the form of a check, payable to “SCA, Inc., [group name]”. Under no circumstances should an individual receive cash, or a check made out to them personally. SCA site fees may not be charged at a demo unless the demo is held as part of an SCA event. Outside the USA, payment should be made to the branch by the appropriate means if checks are not relevant.
12. Assuming appropriate safety precautions are in place, and with any necessary instruction, participation is a highly effective method of educating the demo guests—and fun for both the SCA member and guest.