

What Classification of Fencer Am I?

For the purposes of competition, fencers are classified in several ways:

- By their rating (A, B, C, D, E, or U)
- By their age (as determined by their birth year)
- By Gender – male or female

This paper addresses how to tell what a fencer's classification is by age (birth year) and what that means.

First of all, a fencer's "age", in USFA parlance is determined by their **birth year**, **not their actual birth date***. The table below shows the age classification of fencers for the 2011-2012 season:

Fencer's Birth Year (or birth date falls in for veterans)	Age Classification	Can fence in...
2001 or later	Y10	Any Y10 or Y12 event (subject to gender and rating specification)
1999 or 2000	Y12	Any Y12 or Y14 event (subject to gender and rating specification)
1997 or 1998	Y14	Any Y14 event or any senior event (subject to gender and rating specification)
1998 or earlier (Y14s may fence in Senior events)	Senior	Any Senior event (subject to gender and rating specification)
1995-1998	Cadet (U17)	Cadet (U17) events or any senior event (subject to gender and rating specification)
1992-1998	Junior (U20)	Junior (U20) events or any senior event (subject to gender and rating specification)
1971 or earlier	Veteran (V40)	Any Veteran event (V40) (subject to gender and rating specification)
Born 9/2/1952 – 9/1/1962	Veteran (V50)	Any Veteran event (V40, V50) (subject to gender and rating specification)

Born Before 9/2/1952	Veteran (V60)	Any Veteran event (V40, V50, V60) (subject to gender and rating specification)
Born Before 9/2/1942	Veteran (V70)	Any Veteran event (subject to gender and rating specification)

A couple of examples:

- John Smith was born December 1, 1998 He starts the 2011-2012 season (August 1, 2011) and is only 12 years old. However, because he was born in 1998, he is considered a Y14 fencer, and is eligible to fence in Y14 and senior events, even though he is 12 years old. He is NOT eligible to fence in Y12 events, even though he is 12 years old.
- Patty Johnson was born February 14, 1999, in March of 2012 (2011-2012 season), she is 13 years old, but because her birth year is 1999, she is a Y12 fencer, and can fence in Y12 and Y14 events only. She is NOT eligible to fence up to senior events, even though she is 13 years old.

Classification by Events is a little different but follows the same rules. For the 2011-2012 Season:

A Y10 event can be fenced by anyone born 2001 or later

A Y12 event can be fenced by anyone born 1999 - 2002 (since Y10s can fence up)

A Y14 event can be fenced by anyone born 1997 – 2000 (Y10s may not compete)

A senior event can be fenced by anyone born 1998 or earlier (including Y14s)

A veteran event, V40, can be fenced by anyone born 1971 or earlier

Of course, all events are still subject to gender and rating specification. For example, a D & Under Men's Epee event is for Males, with a D, E, or U rating, born 1998 or earlier.

* Except for veterans