



MAWE TRAINING GUIDE

Sparring Zones, Safety Standards & Instructional Protocols

Martial Arts of West End — Instructor Reference Manual

1. MAWE Sparring Philosophy

Sparring at MAWE is a *progressive, safety-first* training method designed to build real-world timing, distance control, and confidence. Staff must reinforce that sparring is:

- **Controlled, not competitive**
- **Educational, not intimidating**
- **Partner-based, not opponent-based**
- **Focused on long-term development, not short-term “wins”**

We train with the mindset:

20% Power, 100% Intensity, 100% Control

2. Universal Teaching Standards (All Levels)

Every instructor must reinforce:

FAST Formula

Form → Accuracy → Speed → Timing

Students must earn speed — never start with it.

Partner Preservation

“Protect your partner so you can both improve.”

Get In. Get Out. Guard Up.

Always teach an entry, an exit, and a defensive recovery.

85/15 Rule

85% drills / 15% light sparring in a structured, coached environment.

3-Person Safety Zones

Used in freestyle and advanced sparring:

1. **Active Student**
2. **Training Partner**
3. **Safety Coach** (instructor, assistant, or parent helper)

3. Junior Sparring Zones

A. JUNIOR BASIC ZONE (Yellow–Purple)

Instructional Focus

- Fun, confidence, and foundational mechanics
- Footwork, stance, pad-hitting accuracy
- Minimal freestyle — Mostly drills and controlled partner work

Required drills for every class

1. **Pad Work**
 - Jab, cross, front kick, round kick basics
 - Clean technique > speed
2. **Defensive Reactions**
 - Light straight/circular punches to teach parry, cover, and slip
3. **Combo of the Day (COD)** using MAWE's 5-Step Method:
 - **In-form practice**
 - **Directional changes**
 - **Partner drills**
 - **Team challenges**
 - **Pads/bags/body shields**

Coaching Notes

- Keep energy high and drills simple
- Celebrate small wins
- Praise control over power

B. JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE ZONE (Blue–Brown)

Instructional Focus

- Defense to offense
- Timing and controlled counterattacks
- Reading simple patterns

Required elements

- COD using the 5-Step Teaching Method
- Partner drills that teach offensive AND defensive sides
- Add pre-set counterstrikes when control is demonstrated

Coaching Notes

- Watch for excessive power — intervene quickly
- Reinforce “touch sparring” mindset
- Use frequent partner rotation to reduce anxiety

C. JUNIOR ADVANCED ZONE (Red Stripe–Black Stripe)

Instructional Focus

- Creative countering
- Higher pace, clean technique
- Structure + freestyle introduction

Required elements

- COD + student-selected counters
- Fast moving, high energy rounds
- Introduce freestyle in **3-person safety teams**

Coaching Notes

- Stop rounds immediately if contact becomes excessive
- Make students coach each other when appropriate
- Train students to be leaders, not “beaters”

4. Adult Sparring Zones

A. ADULT BASIC ZONE

Instructional Focus

- Foundation, safety, confidence
- Technical boxing/kickboxing mechanics
- Community building & partner comfort

Required drills

- Stance, movement, guard discipline
- Basic boxing combos + kickboxing foundations
- Partner patterns
- Frequent partner rotation

Coaching Notes

- Adults carry tension — constantly remind them to relax
- Never throw new students into live sparring
- ALWAYS check gear and guard position

B. ADULT INTERMEDIATE / ADVANCED ZONE

Instructional Focus

- Flow, decision-making, pace management
- Multi-strike combos
- Offensive/defensive drilling

Required drills

- Offense/defense
- Multi-level combinations
- Controlled intensity sparring (20/100 rule)

Coaching Notes

- Watch for ego; redirect to “partner preservation”
- Pair higher belts with developing students
- Maintain technical sparring—not brawling

5. Instructor Responsibilities During Sparring

Before Sparring

- Check gear, mouthguards, shin guards
- Re-explain the 20/100 rule
- Divide the room into safe lanes or zones
- Assign safety coaches for advanced rounds

During Sparring

- Constantly walk the floor
- Verbally coach rhythm: “Slow it down,” “Control,” “Touch, don’t hit.”
- Stop rounds instantly if:
 - Power exceeds 20%
 - A student becomes emotional or overwhelmed
 - A partner mismatch becomes unsafe

After Sparring

- Praise composure and control first
- Review what went well + one focus point
- Celebrate partner respect above all else

6. Red Flags Requiring Immediate Instructor Intervention

- Excessive power
- Wild techniques (spinning without control, jumping without balance)
- Students trying to “win” instead of learn
- Frustration, tears, or fear
- Students ignoring the exit strategy
- Any head contact above light touch (juniors)
- Disrespectful behavior or ego-driven actions

7. MAWE Culture Reminder for Staff

Our advanced students must be the rising tide that lifts all boats.

Every Instructor/High Belt member is responsible for:

- Modeling humility and control
- Reinforcing mentorship culture
- Protecting students physically and emotionally
- Rewarding effort, not just outcome
- Keeping sparring safe, structured, and confidence-building

Sparring should end with smiles, not stress.