

# **Diploma Boxing: Rules and Explanations**



**Swedish  
Boxing Federation**

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# What is Diploma Boxing?

**Diploma Boxing is a ramification of boxing, with modified rules for boys and girls between the age of 10-15 years. With this approach, we have the opportunity:**

- To** teach and foster skilled boxers
- To** strive for a retainment of our 10-15-year-old boxers
- To** attract and recruit youths into boxing, in competition with other types of sports
- To** broaden Swedish boxing
- To** raise the sport, and create PR to present the sport in an attractive way.
- To** create a large and broad youth activity in different clubs
- To** create a safe technique for the boxer, so that she/he will be able to become a brave boxer
- To** recruit parents and families to be a part of the club/association
- To** physically strengthen, and to socially and mentally support youths in their age of maturity

### Weight division:

Under 28 kg – Light micro weight  
-“- 30 kg – Micro weight  
-“- 32 kg – Light atomic weight  
-“- 34 kg – Atomic weight  
-“- 36 kg – Light molecule weight  
-“- 38 kg – Molecule weight  
-“- 40 kg – Light gnat weight  
-“- 42 kg – Gnat weight  
-“- 44 kg – Light midge weight  
-“- 46 kg – Midge weight  
-“- 48 kg – Light flyweight  
-“- 50 kg – Flyweight  
-“- 52 kg – Light bantamweight  
-“- 54 kg – Bantamweight  
-“- 57 kg – Featherweight  
-“- 60 kg – Lightweight  
-“- 63 kg – Light welter  
-“- 66 kg – Welterweight  
-“- 70 kg – Light middleweight  
-“- 75 kg – Middleweight  
-“- 80 kg – Light heavyweight  
-“- 86 kg – Heavyweight  
-“- +86 kg – Super heavyweight

It is possible to continue the weight classes under 28 kg – with an interval of 2 kg.

### Competition division:

Class C: 10-11 years. Min. 10 years old.  
Class B: 12-13 years.  
Class A: 14 – not yet 15 years old.

#### Time of the rounds:

C – boys/girls: 3 x 1 min  
B – boys/girls: 3 x 1,5 min  
A – boys/girls: 3 x 2 min

To receive a diploma the requirement of 27 points must be reached.

After 5 diploma bouts with 27 points the boxer will be awarded with a bronze mark.

After 5 diploma bouts with 31 points the boxer will be awarded with a silver mark.

After 5 diploma bouts and 35 points the boxer will be awarded with a gold mark.

The boxers may go two bouts/day **max!**  
During a tournament, the boxer who receives most points from the judges will advance in the competition.

## Officials

The referee must have a valid license to be a referee.

The judges must have passed coach course step I, or the r/j course.

Diploma boxing is evaluated by three judges that gives points between 1 to 5 in every round, half points can also be given.

Supervisors should be present, they have the right to request the referee to stop a fight – if he/she finds it necessary.

Physicians, or paramedics **must** be present during bigger events or tournaments.

Physicians, or paramedics **should** be present during smaller events or tournaments.

Diploma boxing shall, under no circumstances, become too rough. If any of the boxers aims for a very forceful hit, the boxer should receive a reprimand from the referee. If the boxer keeps aiming for a forceful hit, he/she should receive a warning and point (-s) will be deducted by each judge in the boxers' protocol and be marked with "1". If the boxer, despite warnings, keeps fighting to rough the boxer should be disqualified. In addition, no points will be given to the disqualified boxer, while the opponent will receive points until the round when the fight is stopped.

Overaged boxers can be allowed to fight in other competitions than Diploma Swedish Championship (DSM), but are not allowed to have fought a real fight i.e. AOB. In DSM only approved certified diploma r/j can attend as referees and judges.

## The referee

- Must have a valid license to referee
- Must be well aware of the rules specific to Diploma Boxing
- Fights that tends to be too rough must be constrained, and if that does not help stopped. The judges then count the points that has been given until that moment. If this happens the referee should have the ability to decide if the boxers are beginners, or almost established boxers (Please ask)
- When a boxer seemingly aims with force, a reprimand shall be given. If the boxer does not take this into consideration, and keeps aiming with the same force the boxer shall be disqualified. In this case the boxer will not receive any points, whilst the opponent will be assessed. A boxer should not be frightened into resignation
- Whispers from seconds from the ring corner during the fight should not be severely looked upon if used to curb violent fighting or other cases of rule breaking.
- In diploma boxing it is perfectly fine to speak to the boxer when giving the reprimand. This might help the boxer to understand why the reprimand was given.
- Be observant to the fights eventualities.
- The referee does not hand out warnings concerning rule breaking just like that, but if one boxer – or both – cannot control their boxing, the fight might as well be disrupted, and the points will be counted to determine the winner.
- If a boxer gives up a fight, he/she will not receive any points.
- The referee can naturally disqualify a boxer for unsportsmanlike behaviour.
- The referee shall re-count the protocols.
- The referee should not function in the boxing ring for more than 5 fights in a row.

## Judges

- Must have passed a coach trainer program, or a judge's course (preferably both), in other cases he/she should be informed about how a protocol is passed, and how diploma boxing is judged.
- At DSM the judge is chosen by the diploma boxing committee.
- Shall be neutral when judging a fight, and may not give any advice to the boxers during the fight.
- Do not have the ability to give personal warnings to the boxers. Judges should only issue warnings when signed from the referee, and only in the case of a violent fight (the judges do not have the ability to X this one). As a result, one point will be deducted from the total score, and will be marked with a 1.
- Scratches and misalignment in protocols is crossed with only **one line** and the judge signs next to it.

## Second

- Should inform and prepare the boxer
- Ensure that the boxer is faced from the ring during breaks
- Must leave the ring with no delay during breaks, and stay by the floor at the boxers' corner. The second can use a "helping-second" who are not allowed into the ring.
- Are not allowed to talk, shout or give advice to the boxer during a fight. The second is only allowed to calm the boxer, and give defensive advices ("Move", "Move your feet", "Guard yourself", "Take it easy") other advices can be giving during breaks.

- Should share the overall responsibility of the bout with the referee and judges, in their difficult task.

### Explanation of terms

“Rough Boxing” is the same as:

- Using excessive force in every punch (the boxer gathers force for the punch by enhancing force using his/her arms, or tries to punch hard in every situation)
- Punch hard (A technical driven boxer can do a loose punch but still a hard one due to his/her skills. Or if he/she uses opponents’ mistakes for own advantage)
- Rush against the opponent, or after him/her
- Push the opponent to absolute passivity
- Through a threatening behaviour intimidate the opponent into advantages

### A good impression is comparable to

- Box fluid and technical
- Show off skills (The boxer uses a broad register, but does not hit hard or get carried away)
- Adjust ones’ boxing to the opponents
- Not practice “shadow boxing” (punches shall hit opponent, without causing him/her to surrender)

### Overall impression

- The judges assess the different situations individually, but for example are especially observant to the boxers’ punches and its balance and proper distance (when assessing punches)

### Judging

1	point	Totally inadequate
1,5	- “ -	Failed
2	- “ -	Not passed
2,5	- “ -	Almost passed
3	- “ -	Passed
3,5	- “ -	Slightly above passed
4	- “ -	Passed with distinction
4,5	- “ -	Almost perfect
5	- “ -	The perfect diploma boxer

If the result ends with the same points for the two boxers you should give the boxer who has showed best discipline in his/her behaviour a “+”. If this is too difficult to distinguish which boxer should receive “+”, it should be given to the boxer that showed best technique in his/her defence.

After summing up, half points are raised by the competition management and documented in the “starting book” as even points.

If one of the boxers gives up, this boxer should not receive any points.

Boxers that have been disqualified due to rough boxing, or unsportsmanlike behaviour should not receive any points.

### Diploma boxing investigation 1990

The investigation group has consisted of Bo Bergman – Sätters BK, Peter Wallin – Carlshamns BK, Bengt Forsell – Guldstadens BK, Åke Johansson – BK Falken and Tomas Andersson – Angered BC.

## **The investigations conclusion**

During this working process concerning the investigation of diploma boxing the group discussed with each other, and other leaders linked to the cause, different issues regarding diploma boxing and its structure. The group concluded that there are no specific actions to be made to improve the structure and rules in diploma boxing. However, there are some details the group wish to readjust. The rules speak loud and clear how these details should be issued.

### **Specifically**

**Diploma boxing, may under no circumstances becomes too rough. Rough boxing must be dismissed and strained.**

The purpose with diploma boxing is to; with a soft and human manner teach youths to box. The most important thing is to grade boxers' technical skills and to enhance the importance of personal development. It is not important how hard a boxer can punch, or how physically strong they are.

However, the group has two requests concerning changes:

#### **Point 1:**

We want to settle a finer scale point system where we believe in a simplified and more fair judgement. It is our opinion that the point system, for a long time, has been to "unrefined". Therefore, we propose that it should be possible to add half points into the already consisting scale. If so, the scale would be as follow; "1 – 1,5 – 2 – 2,5 – 3 – 3,5 – 4 – 4,5 – 5".

We do not want to revise the consisting point scale because we believe that the worth of approved and the diploma is too established (3 = approved, and 27 points = diploma). We believe that it would be a shame to change the existing system, but the possibility to give half points would result in what we strive for – a more nuanced point scale that would make the scoring fairer, and we would also be able to keep the existing system.

This could for example result in the following:

Judges give points and writes them down to sum up, for example  $2,5 - 2 - 3 = 7,5$ . We assume that all judges give the same points, and that the competition management adds the judges' results –  $7,5 \times 3 = 22,5$  points which rounds up to the closest even number – 23 points.

#### **Point 2:**

The judges should firstly look to the overall impression of the boxing, and that is also what should be evaluated. As it stands today a lot of the judges are focusing on just one thing, and therefore fails to see the bigger picture in a bout. It is the meaning of the investigation that in order to assess a boxer's level of technique and style the judges must be able to focus on not only isolated bits of technique. They should also be able to assess the boxer and his/her overall technique and style.

### **Changes at DSM:**

At each DSM a 2-hour briefing of rules and standards of assessment should be held, for both participating referees, judges and coaches. This will be as mandatory for the referees and coaches, as the weigh-in and the draw is for the participating boxers.

We also recommend judges, referees and coaches to have a briefing, although not as long, when participating in smaller competitions.

Our wish is that this booklet we have produced is used as a guideline at those briefings.

## **Criteria for diploma boxing:**

### **1-point level – severely lacking in skills:**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** The diploma boxer should not have participated in this competition. It is apparent that the boxer needs way more practice.

**Repertoire of punches:** Mostly just wild swings and impure punches, nothing more. Always goes for a rough punch.

**Guarding and evading:** Virtually non-existent, cannot keep track of his/her hands, diving and turning away and so forth.

**Balance and footwork:** The boxer cannot decide which foot is supposed to be in front of the other, is tripping over himself/herself and has difficulties keeping balance.

### **1,5-point level – the failed boxer.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** Now it shows that the boxer has received training and is somewhat skilled. Even if it most of the time turns into uncontrolled boxing, especially in pressured situations.

**Repertoire of punches:** Mostly just left-hand jabs, or attempts to left-hand jabs. If there are attempts to right-hand punches, those punches generally are unclean and desperate – misbalanced and/or with the wrong distance. The boxer usually only goes for rough punches.

**Guarding and evade:** The boxer is trying to keep his/her hands up for protection, but loses the guard and control in pressured situations, or at a feint from the opponent. Does not even know how to evade an attack.

**Balance and footwork:** The boxer is trying to keep his/her feet in check, but in a pressured situation it falls apart, and all evidence of what the boxer has learnt is gone.

### **2-point level – not passed.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** Now it seems as if the boxer can box. Still, the overall impression is that the boxer is stiff, clumsy and a bit immature. It can still result in uncontrolled boxing in some situations.

**Repertoire of punches:** Knows how to jab. The boxer is trying, on occasions, to use a right-left combination. It shows that the boxer has knowledge about what it is all about, even if it not always works. The boxer is a bit single-minded and tends to fall back into an uncontrolled style of boxing. In addition, the boxer has trouble finding the right distance in a fight.

**Guarding and evade:** The boxer is keeping his/her hands up well but gets hit too easily. The boxer still has tendencies for wanting to turn away, or dive away when he/she is pressured.

**Balance and footwork:** The boxer is reasonably good at keeping track of his/her feet and stance. Usually evades only to one side, and has difficulties finding the correct distance. Follows the opponent instead of limiting the space in the ring. When the boxer punches he/she is unbalanced.

### **2,5-point level – almost passed.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** Now it looks like boxing but the boxer is still making too much mistakes or throwing punches too hard. There is a lack of control in certain situations.

**Repertoire of punches:** Can use his/her left well, tries to hit left-right combinations. A bit too much unclean punches or a bit single-minded boxing. The boxer still uses more force than technique in his/her boxing, and has difficulties in finding the right distance.

**Guarding and evading:** Now it looks like the boxer can keep his guard up, but the boxer is still being hit too easily, even if he/she is trying to guard himself/herself. Sometimes the boxer becomes too passive and locked in position, especially in pressured situations.

**Balance and footwork:** Good stance but the movement is stiff and jerky and a bit one-sided i.e. constantly moves either to the left or to the right. The boxer is too easily caught which may lead the boxer into stopping and forgetting himself/herself, especially regarding balance and footwork.

### **3-point level – the passed diploma boxer.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** It looks like boxing. This boxer knows the basics and manages to keep a decent style even in tight or pressured situations. The boxer always tries to box whatever happens in the bout. There might still, however, occur some smaller - or even larger errors, at times. The boxer still has good coordination and flow in his/her boxing.

**Repertoire of punches:** The boxer knows how to use left-right combinations in a clean way, without putting too much force into his/her punches. He/she should be able to jab and always try to be within the right distance in relation to the opponent. Does not need to, or might not be able to, show much more skill.

**Guarding and evading:** If the boxer all the time, regardless of situation, tries to keep his guard, even if he/she struggles to keep up, the boxer should pass. The boxer might have difficulties keeping up, but should still pass if this is not due to outright faulty actions from the boxer.

**Balance and footwork:** The boxer keeps a good distance between his/her feet, and the weight distribution is good and even. The boxer has decent balance when throwing punches, and when moving, can use his/her feet to remove himself/herself from pressured situations. The boxer might have trouble with switching pace, and might be a little too one-sided, i.e. moves to either left or right, with no variation, and lacklustre in his/her movement.

### **3,5-point level – slightly above passed.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** The boxer has now reached the level of skill and knowledge that he/she has begun to try out some of the more difficult techniques. Here you might see a boxer trying to guard himself/herself by stopping his/her opponent during an attack with a "stop-left" against the head or body, or you might see a boxer try to punch a "two-punch" combination using only one hand.

**Repertoire of punches:** The boxer is now adept at using all the skills for the 3-point level very well, and in addition has begun to try out some more difficult techniques, e.g. combinations involving multiple punches. For example, left-right-left punch against the head or the body with straight punches or left-right-left hook.

If a boxer should receive a warning or reprimand from the referee for impure punches, or punches that are too rough, it might be tolerated. If a boxer receives more warnings during the same fight the boxer should not be in this points category.

However, this does not mean that the boxer should be punished and dropped down below the level of "passed", just because he/she tries more difficult techniques. Of course, this is applicable if the boxer is deemed to be adept at using the techniques that are required for reaching the point level of "passed" (3 points).

**Guarding and evading:** The boxer uses both hands and feet well to guard himself/herself even if he/she sometimes might be hit a little too easy. The boxer has begun to block the opponents punches and tries to use that to his/her advantage, tries to land a punch, and is able to move away quickly before getting himself/herself into a pressured situation.

**Balance and footwork:** Correct distance between the feet and a good balance. The boxer might be moving around too much to one side, and might sometimes be a bit too far away from his/her opponent. The boxer is always trying to maintain, or find the distance in relation to the opponent. He/she also tries to limit the space for his/her opponent when the opponent is withdrawing from the fight.

### **4-point level – passed with distinction.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** The boxer has almost everything that we require from a complete boxer. He/she might make one or two mistakes or misjudgements, but overall, he/she is very comfortable with all techniques. Most of the boxing is done at the correct distance and in close quarters without depending on the opponent too much.

**Repertoire of punches:** In this level the demands on the boxer to master the basic techniques, such as jabs and straight punches in combination, are very high. At the same time, we want to see counters to the opponents' punches, upper-cuts, hooks against the body and so forth. At least we want to see serious attempts of using these techniques in their boxing. The boxer is adept at using combinations of multiple punches, tries to vary his/her boxing against the head and body of the opponent. When he/she blocks punches from his/her opponent, he/she instantly tries to use that to his/her own advantage. Might sometimes become a bit one-sided i.e. uses the same punches, the same attacks and counters etc.

In a close-fought and intense bout the boxer sometimes uses excessive force. On this level a boxer is adept at controlling the force of his/her punches when he/she faces an opponent that is less skilled.

**Guarding and evading:** Limber and relaxed body position, notices and reads the punches in time, looks to close with the opponent and tries to clinch in intense situations. On this level the boxer tries to duck and roll away from difficulties and you will never see him/her running away in panic, even if the boxer is being hit.

**Balance and footwork:** Good balance and correct distance between the feet. Can limit space in the ring for his/her opponent and mostly keeps the correct distance. He/she is now able to switch pace and direction well, although he/she might still drift towards one direction more than the other but the movement is now on a satisfying level.

#### **4,5-point level – almost perfect.**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** If this boxer had been 15 years old we would not have hesitated to let him/her box in a real bout. The boxer is so skilled and experienced in this level. He/she might not receive full marks because of some tiny mistakes in an otherwise perfect work around the ring, or the opponent might have been severely less skilled than the boxer.

**Repertoire of punches:** The boxer boxes with both hands, uses combinations with multiple punches, hooks, uppercuts and straight punches against both the head and the body of the opponent. Sometimes, on singular occasions, the punch might be too hard or sometimes too unclean.

**Guarding and evading:** The boxer can read the intentions of his/her opponent. Can guard himself/herself by only using his/her feet if he/she wishes.

Is always able to slide away or close with the opponent if he/she gets pressured, can duck and roll from situations or clinches with efficiency. Might sometimes be hit too easily due to negligence or pure sloppiness.

**Balance and footwork:** Very good balance, can switch pace and direction with ease. Always finds the right distance and can, with ease, seriously limit the movement space in the ring to his/her opponent. Might sometimes, on singular occasions, fall in to the behaviour of constantly moving just to one side.

#### **5-point level – the perfect diploma boxer!**

**Overall impression of the boxer:** An absolute joy to watch! The boxer has everything we could ever ask for in a diploma boxer. The boxer boxes in every situation and never uses force when trading punches with the opponent.

**Repertoire of punches:** The boxer can use all kinds of punches and always varies his/her boxing as much as possible.

**Guarding and evading:** Keeps his/her guard very well, hands are always in place even if it is just enough to read the opponent and move out of the situation. Duck and rolls just as much as needed.

**Balance and footwork:** Really, really good balance, switches pace and constantly varies his/her movements. If the boxer faces an opponent that is physically stronger he/she can, just by changing and increasing pace in his/her movement, disrupt his/her opponent so that the opponent is unable to find the right distance.

## **The history of diploma boxing.**

In 1969 the Swedish parliament decided that it was not allowed to box in "real" bouts before the age of 17. Before the age of 17 you were able to show your skill, style and technique as a boxer and obtain a badge, "Stilmärket".

In the beginning of the 1970s Sten F. Berglund presented a draft for rules and structure for diploma boxing.

In the end of the 1970s the first series for diploma boxing started, thanks to a fantastic work, mainly by Walter Rämö.

In 1979 the first national championship in diploma boxing ("Riksmästerskapen", as they were called) was held in Eskilstuna.

In 1981 the first diploma boxing course was held. The first international match diploma boxing was also held this year. Sweden met Finland in Helsinki and 52 boxers competed in 26 weight classes.

In 1988 the Swedish Boxing Federation authorised an investigation team, comprised of Bo Bergman (Sätters BK), Peter Wallin (Carlshamns BK), Bengt Forsell (Guldstadens BK), Åke Johansson (BK Falken) and Tommy Andersson (Angered BC), to oversee and update the rules and framework for diploma boxing.

In 1990 the team presented their thoughts concerning diploma boxing and improvements to the rules, which were approved at the annual meeting of the Swedish Boxing Federation.

In the year 1992 a conference was held in Nyköping, Sweden. "Riksmästerskapen" changed name, and instead became "Diplom SM", this change was approved at the annual meeting of the Swedish Boxing Federation.

In 1993 discussions were held between representatives from Finland, Norway and Sweden, concerning diploma boxing.

In 2003 an official rule book for diploma boxing is published by the committee for diploma boxing in Sweden.