

# The General Rules of Don Alvaro Guerra De La Vega

An Excerpt From:  
De La Vega, D. Alvaro Guerra. *Comprensión de la Destreza*  
Seville. Imp. de E. Rasco. 1895 pp.28-29

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## Translator's Notes:

In this present version, I have highlighted important terms both in the transcribed segments, and in their translated form, for ease of comparison. This emphasis is wholly mine, and does not appear in the source text. Where I have clarified the grammar of the verbatim translation, or provided my own interpretation of a word, I have used square parentheses [like so] to quarantine my opinions.

*This translation presupposes that the student has a basic knowledge of common terms in La Verdadera Destreza.*

## Translator's note on Atajo:

The precise definition of Atajo, and which specific techniques and positions fall under that category, is a subject of some debate in the canon of La Verdadera Destreza's foundational sources. This is especially frustrating since Atajo is more or less the central tactical concept of LVD. Because I specifically sought out the Reglas Generales for their simplicity and brevity, I have here elected to use the word "Control."

## REGLAS GENERALES/GENERAL RULES

En cualquier postura que se ponga el **diestro** ha de **atajar** la del contrario.

In any posture that the **diestrx** places themselves, they ought to **control** the [sword] of the enemy.

Cualquier herida hecha sin atajo es **falsa**.

Any wound delivered without control is **false**.

Toda postura está sujeta á **atajo**.

Every posture is subject to **control**.

**Ángulo recto** sirve para reducirse.

[The] **Right angle** serves to **reduce**.

**Ángulo obtuso** para **sujetar** la espada del contrario.

[The] **Obtuse angle** [is] for **subjecting** the sword of the enemy.

Hanse de considerar tres **planos**.

El primer plano, de los hombros arriba.

El segundo, de los hombros á la cintura.

El tercero, de la cintura á los pies.

Three **planes** ought to be considered.

The first plane, from the shoulders up.

The second, from shoulders to waist.

The third, from the waist to the feet.

El primero se defiende con la **guarnición**.

El segundo con la **fuerza** de la espada.

El tercero con la **flaqueza**, incluyendo la espada del contrario para que venga á su fuerza.

The first is defended with the **hilt**.

The second with the **strong** of the sword.

The third with the **weak**, including [/gathering] the sword of the enemy to bring it to one's strong.

Guarnición alta, **punta** baja. Guarnición baja, punta alta.

Hilt high, **point** low. Hilt low, point high.

Al que estuviere de perfil, buscarle el **medio proporcional** por cualquier lado.

Against someone who's on profile, seek the **medio proporcional** on either side.

Al que estuviere de **cuadrado**, acometerle siempre desde el medio proporcional.

Against someone who's **squared up**, **attack** [them] always from the medio proporcional.

El **medio** para la distancia se ha de considerar por la espada del contrario.

The distance of the **medio** [de Proporción] is based on the sword of the enemy.

Por cualquier lado que elijas el medio proporcional, ponte de cuadrado.

Whichever side you choose for your medio proporcional, square up.

Por la **jurisdicción de la espada**, aunque sea hiriendo ó acometiendo perfectamente, nunca te profiles.

In the **jurisdiction of the sword**, even if it is to deliver the perfect attack, you must never profile yourself.

**Por la del cuerpo**, cuando te muevas á herir ó á hacer acometimiento perfecto, siempre te has de perfilar.

**In that [jurisdiction] of the body**, when you move to deliver the perfect attack, you must always profile yourself.

Nunca hagas **acometimiento** que no sea perfecto.

Never make an **attack** that isn't perfect.

Nunca has de estar fijo sobre ambos pies; el uno ha de estar pronto, y casi sin tocar en el suelo, para gozar con más aptitud de la **disposición** que el contrario te diere de entrar al **extremo propincuo**, ó el que **apropiarse**, ó para hacer un **extremo** que muchas veces conviene y, hecho en tiempo, es bonísimo para las veras.

You should never be firmly on both feet; one should be held lightly, barely touching the ground, so that you can better capitalize on the [opportunities of] **disposition** that the enemy gives you upon entering the **near extreme**, or that which is **appropriated**, or to create an **extreme** which is often convenient and, made in time, is truly wonderful.

Siempre has de tener la espada **inquieta**, porque parándote das disposición, y en la misma inquietud conseguirás que el contrario te dé á tí la **disposición**.

Always keep [your] sword **restless**, because in stopping yourself you provide **disposition**, and in that same restlessness, you'll find that the enemy will provide you the disposition.

Nunca te **desagregues** de la espada del contrario sin contacto.

Never **disengage** from the enemy's blade without contact.

Finalmente, el batallar con diferentes personas es lo principal, porque el entendimiento vence con la razón, y lo práctico, con la ejecución, obrando pies, manos y cuerpo lo que dictan las demostraciones.

Finally, fighting with different people is the key, because understanding comes with reason and skill with repetition, commanding feet, hands, and body [in] what the **demonstrations** tell us.