



**SABER KIDS CURRICULUM
AND
STUDENT MANUAL**



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Sources are referenced in apendix.

SABER KIDS:

This is an abridged curriculum for children 12 years and younger based on the Saber Legends curriculum. It is designed to be fun and challenging while developing important skills and discipline on our young students. It is primarily an exercise and sword technique class, but the main goal is to have fun.

Since the class is designed for younger students, only an abridged version of form 1 (Shii Cho) is taught. More emphasis is put on technique, discipline, drills and games.

FOREWORD:

As we embark in this journey about swords, fantasy and sport, i think a little context is necessary to fully understand this crazy passion we have with a light sword from a long time ago, in a galaxy far away.

My love affair with swords started long before I ever held one in my hands. As children we used to grab sticks on the yard and pretend they where the swords of heroes from movies and cartoons we loved. From the Thundercats' Sword of Omens, to Excalibur and the brave knights who wielded such swords, we were mystified by purity and honor that the legends of such weapons embodied. But none held more renown than the mighty katana, the sword of the samurai, a symbol of honor, tradition and bravery the likes of which the world has not seen since.

Then, came George Lucas with his fantastic tales of space monks and their light swords in a story from "A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away..." and we were immediately in love with it.

I speak in plural when I talk about the history of Saber Legends because this is hardly a one man show. It is the love child of my siblings (Roberto Andino, Victor Andino, Ginny Andino and myself).

Our first real experience with martial arts came when we started taking karate lessons as teenagers in the University of Puerto Rico in 1994. Victor was the first to start, and out of curiosity (plus a desire to not get beat up by our youngest sibling) the rest of us followed suit. What followed was a love affair with martial arts that would follow us the rest of our adult lives. This love affair continues to the point that Victor and I became martial arts instructors, Roberto followed a military career and Ginny collects all kinds of swords and mystical knives.

By 2015 I already owned my own studio where Victor and I taught a regular karate class and had a traditional Japanese sword practice once a week (Iaido and Kenjutsu) as taught by our late teacher Hanshi Guillermo a. Garcia. But interest in Japanese sword was hard to instill in new practitioners and we had few friends with which we could practice seriously at the level we wanted.

Roberto having followed a military career was stationed in Canada working with NORAD. He told us about this group called River City Jedi which was basically a group of sword enthusiasts and Star Wars nerds that got together to practice, exercise and compete in swordplay but using the lightsaber. We were sold instantly. But, living in Puerto Rico, where would we find such a group? We immediately started researching and looking for local groups we could join but there were none to be found. In our research, Roberto introduced us to the curriculum that the River City Jedi based their practice on; the TPLA (terra prime light armory) and their headmaster Chad William Ironmonger (legally, Chad W. Eisner, or, Master Nonymous) and his system for teaching lightsaber combat. We also came across various international groups to include Ludosport, Lightspeed Academy, and The Saber Legion to name a few, but none had representation in Puerto Rico.

That's when Victor and I decided to "bite the blasterbolt" and start our own. This was long before such hybrid sports had gained mainstream exposure. Fully aware that the traditional martial arts community would question the validity of such an endeavor, others would mock us and many serious martial artists would label us as a joke, we decided to start our group with integrity and seriousness, bringing to the table our knowledge and experience from Japanese martial arts and Olympic Fencing. That methodical, disciplined and sincere approach paid dividends.

The group took root and pretty soon it was one of the largest classes being taught at the studio.

Since then we have gotten national and international recognition. The Combat Lightsaber sport has gained international recognition as a legitimate "combat sport" by the French Fencing Federation. Saber Legends has furthered the sport in Puerto Rico, being invited to various fan fests to showcase and teach lightsaber combat and at various martial arts events and being named charter representatives for Puerto Rico in The Saber Legion.

THE LIGHTSABER / L.E.D. SABER

No, we are not crazy, and are fully aware that the technology to create a working lightsaber is only viable in our wildest science fiction fantasies (and that might be a good thing, given the potential and possibly self destructive possibilities of such a weapon for the wielder).

The lightsaber we use is also known as a L.E.D. (Light-Emitting Diode) saber. Basically a high intensity flashlight with a polycarbonate (high strength plastic) tube attached to its business end, a "glowstick sword" proxy if you will; but it is there where its versatility and beauty reside. Suddenly you can have any sword you fancy in the palm of your hand. With this training device you can have experienced fencers practice against one another regardless of their background. Dissimilar styles and pedigrees can practice with one another free of the politics that traditional sword schools entail. And you can have complete newbies just walk in and enjoy the sport without feeling overwhelmed by their lack of ability compared to more seasoned swordsmen.

Pair that with a good dose of fan lore and fantasy adopted from that very famous science fiction "space opera" fantasy universe and you have an activity that anyone can enjoy regardless of their age, gender or physical condition.

And thus SaberLegends was born.

There are many companies out there that make combat worthy LED sabers. You can check the appendix on this book for references to some of them. But one thing is constant: It is a training weapon and in class we treat it as such. It is not a toy to be played with and it is a tool to be taken care of and treated with respect.

For this there are certain rules that have been placed in order to keep practices safe and fun for all.



RULES: SAFETY FIRST!

You should not touch or handle a lightsaber that does not belong to you unless explicitly authorized by the owner of said saber.

During class sabers are to be used only in the manner authorized by the instructor.

Sabers with sound should be muted or muffled during class

Weapons other than LED sabers (Bokken, Shinai, wooden staffs, boffers etc) will only be used at the discretion of the lead instructor

Sparring and contact should be done only when wearing appropriate protective gear and under the supervision of an instructor.

Equipment should be well maintained. No broken blades, blades without tips or hilts with leaking batteries should be used for practice.

Same goes for protective gear. Protective gear should be in good repair, fit properly and be worn correctly for practice. Your instructor will teach you the proper wear of protective gear during the course of the class.

PHYSICAL TRAINING AND BODY CONDITIONING

Sword play is a physical activity. As such the body should be ready for the physical exertion that embarking in such a practice entails. You should consult your doctor if you have any preexisting condition that might affect you. You should always let the instructor know of any conditions you might have even after being cleared by a Dr. So they know to respond accordingly in the event of an emergency.

That being said, lightsaber training is supposed to be fun, and anyone can benefit from the physical activities and conditioning that comes with it. As such we have devised a set of games that are tailored to prepare the body for such work. Every class should start with a warm-up routine to include one or more of these.

For Saber Kids all exercise sessions should be led by an instructor and should not exceed 15-20min. A water break should be offered after the exercise session.

CROSSFIT DICE.

The exercise dice (or "The Holocron of Pain" as we named ours), are a great way to get the group engaged into doing the physical exercises for class. Depending on the amount of people, each takes a turn rolling the dice and everyone has to do the exercise to the best of their abilities. There are many different dice out there and the more varied you have the more interesting the game becomes. There is no requirement to finish such exercises as long as you give it your best effort.

YOGA

Yoga is a great way to prepare the body and mind for saber training. Yoga combines stretching and body-weight challenging poses to strengthen and increase the body's flexibility. You don't have to be a yoga instructor or avid practitioner just learn a basic flow and repeat it ten to fifteen times.

SABER CALISTHENICS

Just like regular calisthenics, just holding your saber while you do them. These are to include cardio, strength and stretching exercises to prepare the body for sabering. Keep in mind that the goal is to warm-up and strengthen the body for the upcoming sabering session so don't over-do it. These might include head shoulder and hip rotations, push-ups, burpees, sit-ups, crunches, jumping jacks, running in place, calf lifts, squats and stretching exercises.

STRAIGHT-UP WORKOUT SESSION

The goal is to keep it varied and fun. Do whatever exercise routine interests you as long as you are doing the exercises correctly and avoiding injury. Want to try Tae-Bo, aerobics, Zumba, weight lifting? Go for it!



RULES AND GAMES

KING OF THE HILL (KOTH)

Our rules are as follows:

Matches can be scored as first blood, or timed matches up to 3 pts. The winner stays to fight another round and is the current KotH. Everyone else lines up in a cue to challenge the KotH. The vanquished can rejoin the cue at the back of the line, or choose to sit it out. Each round is worth 2 tournament points to the winner, and 1 tournament point to the vanquished. There are 2 winners at the end of the contest: last man standing (or KotH for that day), and Winner with the most accumulated points. It is possible to win just by facing the most opponents even if you don't win a match.

For short practices, where standing is not important, the last man standing can be used to determine the winner of the game, foregoing the points system.

TAG, YOU'RE IT. (SABER KIDS)

Opponents start in their marks with one of them being it (attacking side). The other opponent defends until he is tagged and becomes it. This resets the match. The match goes on till a fixed number of exchanges. Because of the nature of this game, there is no winner or loser since both participants end up with the same number of hits, but it forces one participant to concentrate on defense while the other to concentrate on offence.

SCORING TARGETS: (CAN BE USED AS SCORING GAMES AS WELL)

The head hunt - Only clean headshots count for points, 1 point per hit, can reset after each point or run a tally to a time limit

Hand hunt - Only strikes to the wrist, cutting off the entire hand are scored, 1 point per hit, can reset after each point or run a tally to a time limit

Body hunt - elbows and inward, knees and upward to include center trunk. are scored at 1 point. Forearms and shins dont count. Headshots and groin -1 point down to zero

LARP- Extremities hit means you lose the use of that extremity until a point is scored but do not grant points, head and body hits score a point and re-set the encounter.



SCORING SCHEMA:

First blood- there are occasions where both opponents will complete a technique that results in a successful strike (for example one opponent goes for a head shot while the other simultaneously attempts a body shot) in this case, whoever touched first would in theory have incapacitated the opponent, therefore only the first hit is scored. This makes for very aggressive swordplay and simple scorekeeping, albeit at the expense of parrying finesse

Right-of-way: Whoever initiates a strike first (by "chambering" or drawing back the saber behind their centerline) has "right of way" for that strike, and the opponent must either block, parry or evade the strike in order to cancel that right of way. Right of way is determined for each strike, and only the opponent with right of way can score successful strikes, so simultaneous strikes only benefit the opponent who gained right of way. This is more challenging to score/referee, but forces opponents to exercise their defense in an intentional fashion.

BLASTER DEFLECTION

Blaster deflection is a fun way to develop reflexes and situational awareness. It is also great and whimsical way to take a break from the more serious aspects of sabering.

The defendant must stay within a demarked circle (hoola hoop) while the attacker shoots from a static position usually 15 feet away. Safety goggles must be worn by the defendant and low velocity foam dart guns (nerf™). If the attacker hits his mark they earn 1 point. If they miss the defendant gains 1 point. If the defendant steps outside the circle the attacker gains 1 point. If the defendant manages to hit the dart mid air with his saber he gains 2 points. The match ends at 10 points.



SABER BASICS

GRIP (HOLDING YOUR SABER)

Two handed grip: The saber is held with two hands the leading hand as close to the emitter and center of balance of the blade as possible and the off-hand as far back in the hilt as possible to maximize torque and blade control.

Single handed grip: The sager is held with a single hand usually your dominant hand and as close to the emitter or enter of balance as possible. The grip should be firm but relaxed in order to allow for flexibility of the wrist.

STANCES

Stances are the different postures to assume while holding your saber. They are not meant to be static positions but rather the correct body alignment to transition to while executing a technique.

ACCELERATIONS

Accelerations are offensive movements executed with the saber. These can be cuts, slashes, thrusts or touches meant to make contact with an opponent.

PARRIES

Parries are defensive movements meant to stop the opponent's blade from making contact. They are meant to present a barrier that stops the movements of the opponent's blade and impede its continuing motion towards its intended target.

DEFLECTIONS

Just like parries, deflections are defensive movements but instead of stopping the opponents blade they are meant to redirect their blades arc of movement in a direction in which it is no longer a threat.

RELOCITIES

Velocities are choreographed exercises usually with 2 participants to develop a specific skill. They are a set of drills meant to practice a combination of accelerations, parries, deflections and footwork. They also develop timing, distance and awareness of your opponent.

DULON

A Dulon is a set of choreographed movements designed for 1 participant. In it not only are the accelerations, parries, deflections, stances and movements incorporated, but also the methodology and strategy of the style it portrays.



GUARDS

Your guard is your posture the way you prepare for a confrontation. Each has its purpose and its usefulness. Being used correctly they allow you to position yourself for combat and employ a technique to control distance, timing and the positioning of the blades, not only of yourself but of your opponent as well.

7 GATES, 8 RIPOSTES, 1 LIGHTSABER

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SABERING BASICS:
7 GATES, 8 RIPOSTES, 1 LIGHTSABER
BY ANTHONY IGLESIAS, TPLA KNIGHT

7		
2	○	1
4	○	3
6	○	5

7 GATES
OPPONENT IS FACING YOU

↔ **Roof** ↔

↔ **Umbrella** ↔

↔ **Mid Wall** ↔

↔ **Low Wall** ↔

8 RIPOSTES
(2 PER LEVEL)

MOVEMENT DIRECTIONS
7 = TOP (FOR STRIKES)
7 = FRONT (FOR STEPS)
8 = SHIAK



FORM 1: SHII CHO (ABRIGGED SABER KIDS)

"It is simple, and its simplicity is strength."

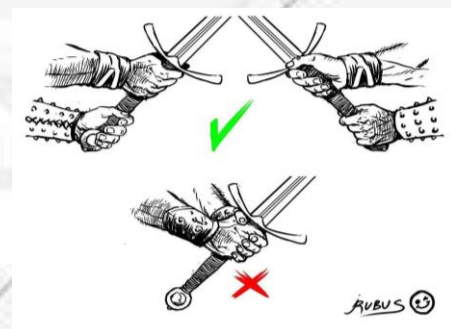
Form I, also known as Shii-Cho, The Way of the Sarlacc, or The Determination Form, was the first of the seven forms of lightsaber combat. This combat form was developed during the transitional period within the Jedi Order from ancient metal swords to more contemporary lightsabers. Shii-Cho was intended to cater to these new weapons, establishing the basic motions and target zones utilized with a lightsaber. As Shii-Cho was effectively an experimental combat form, and was created prior to the emergence of Dark Jedi and Sith Lords, it did not address the issue of lightsaber-to-lightsaber combat, and was quickly replaced by Form II. Despite this, Shii-Cho continued to find a niche as a training form, with almost every Jedi duelist receiving some instruction in it, and including elements in their own combat styles. Shii-Cho was considered an effective fall-back option when no other form or combat style would do.

In combat, Form I lightsaber combat was wild and raw, relying on deliberate tactics and being primarily aimed towards disarming rather than injuring foes, in keeping with Jedi philosophy. Basic initiates in the style demonstrated rather clumsy performance, though in the hands of a master, Shii-Cho was fluid but highly randomized and unpredictable

In the real world, form I is based primarily in Kendo and Japanese sword styles. Its main philosophy is line advancement in formation warfare and as such it is designed to overwhelm the opponent with forward movement in order to neutralize him.

GRIP (HOLDING YOUR SABER)

The saber is held with two hands the leading hand as close to the emitter and center of balance of the blade as possible and the off-hand as far back in the hilt as possible to maximize torque and blade control. This is not to say that there are no one handed techniques in Shii Cho, but primarily it is a two handed style.



STANCES

Front stance (Front leaning stance) feet are shoulder width apart pointed forward. Strong leg slightly bent and forward, holding about 2/3 of your body weight. Support leg slightly back with a relaxed knee (do not lock your knees, you'll need them to move)

Front Stance

Front Guard



Front Guard (Back Stance) similar to the front stance, but now the weight is 2/3 on the back leg and that back leg is pointed to the side instead of towards your opponent



Dewback rider (horse stance) Feet parallel and slightly wider than shoulder width apart. knees slightly bent as in a horseback riding stance. Kneed should be over, or slightly behind your toes and pushed slightly outwards (as if there was a horse or a Dewback between them that you are riding)

Oh... and this is what a Dewback looks like:



STEPS

Hut step - from a front stance, step forward with your trailing leg to end on a front stance with that leg now becoming the leading leg to advance. Ensure your head and body remain level as you transition throughout the step. Reverse the process to step back (retreat)



Hut slide - From a front stance, push off from the rear leg as you lift the weight off of the leading leg to slide forward. Head and body remain level throughout the slide and you finish on the same front stance as you started. This can be done with either leg leading. To retreat lift the weight off of the trailing leg, and push off with the leading leg to slide backwards.

Three phase step - Similar to the Hutt Step, but emphasize that the feet pass right next to each other (feet together transition stance) it creates 3 distinct phases to the step: (starting Front Stance, feet together transition stance, ending front stance with the opposite leg leading) again, head and body remain at the same level throughout the step, and this step can be done stepping directly forward, or exaggerating the diagonal direction of the movements to create oblique lateral angles as you step forwards or backwards.

GUARDS

Visual Comparison of the Kamae of Japanese Kenjitsu to the 5 Basic Guards of Medieval European Longsword



Gedan no Kamae



Alber (Fool's Guard) - German



Chudan no Kamae



Pflug (Plow) - German

Porto di Ferro Mezzanna
(Middle Iron Door) - Italian

Posta Breve
(Short Guard) - Italian



Jodan no Kamae



Vom Tag (From the Roof) - German



Waki no Kamae



Nebenhut (Near Ward) - German

Posta di Falcone
(Guard of the Hawk) - Italian

Posta di Coda Lunga
(Guard of the Long Tail) - Italian



Kasumi no Kamae



Ochs (Ox) - German

Posta di vera Finestra
(Guard of the True Window) - Italian

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GUARDS

Your guard is your posture the way you prepare for a confrontation. Each has its purpose and its usefulness. Being used correctly they allow you to position yourself for combat and employ a technique to control distance, timing and the positioning of the blades, not only of yourself but of your opponent as well.

Mid guard



Mid guard is the basic guard in form I. It is meant to control the distance from the opponent while closing off any advancement or attack angles. The saber should be presented in front of you without over extending it. The tip should be aimed at your opponent's center mass (between the throat and above the waist, though some prefer pointing the blade tip at the opponent's face in order to hide the length of your blade).

Great care should be taken to keep the center line. Controlling the center line means controlling the angles of attack. While holding a correct mid-guard your opponent can not advance without putting himself at risk.



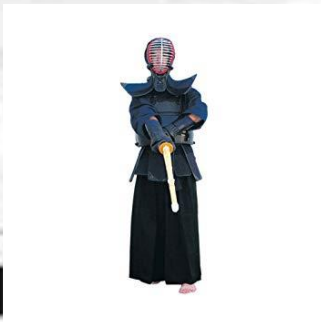
High guard

High guard is the most aggressive of all Shiji Cho guards. It presents an apparent open target on the body while keeping the blade ready for immediate action on defense and or attack. Fast reflexes and a strategy are needed to master fighting from such a stance. It can also be used defensively against an opponent favoring head shots.



Low guard

Low guard is the most defensive of the basic stances giving an apparent open target to the face and torso while keeping your own blade between you and your opponent. Just like mid guard great care should be taken to keep control of the center line while preparing you for an under-the-hand counter attack.



Jedi guard



Known in Japanese as "Hazo no kamae" and in European fencing as the "nobleman's guard" this guard presents as a ready mans guard. Combining the aggressiveness of the high guard with the versatility of the mid guard but it does not provide the protection of the center line the other guards have. It should only be used if you have a plan...

ACCELERATIONS (CUTS AND ATTACKS)

Cho: Short, controlled cut from a drawn back "chamber/wind-up" behind the body's centerline. cut terminates with the blade parallel to the floor and tip still pointed towards opponent. Can be a vertical or diagonal cut.

Sai: Long cut with a follow-through. Puts entire body's weight and power behind the cut, starts at the "chamber" but continues the cut until the blade is pointed towards the ground and past behind the body's centerline. normally a diagonal cut across the body

Shimm: Short "tap" with the tip of the blade to selected targets

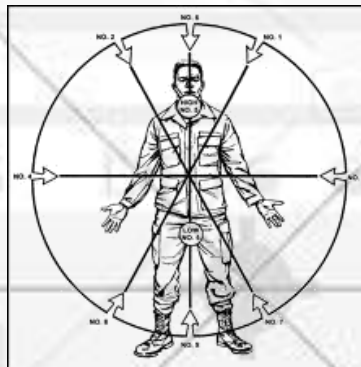
Shiak: Stab with the tip of the blade

Honor sash: Combines the "umbrella guard block" with a Sai strike in one continuous diagonal motion cutting from one target shoulder to the opposite hip

Sarlak Sweep: Brings the blade up from the ground and behind the body and up into an upwards cut, can be vertical or diagonal.

Sun djem sai cha: "Destroy the weapon" a cut or attack to the opponent's lightsaber hilt; it is normally a horizontal cut across the body. can be used to hit the lightsaber hilt, to cut across the body's midsection (like Kenobi did to Darth Maul) or aiming higher to decapitate at the neck.

The eight angles of attack



PARRIES AND DEFLECTIONS

Guard shift: Shifting any of the guards left or right as to deflect or block the path of the opposing blade.

High block: lifting the saber above the head with the blade parallel to the floor horizontally as to protect the head from a downward strike.

TARGET ZONES

Zone 1 head high

Zone 2 lead (strong) arm

Zone 3 off (support) arm

RELOCITIES

Raftar wheel: A combination of Umbrella defence against cho strike to zone 1 alternating between the partners. This is based in the Jumbi Undo exercise form Japanese Kenjutsu.

DULON

Tpla shii cho 1st trayjectory

Tpla shii cho

1. 1st trayjectory
 - a. Salute
 - b. Step front R, Honor sash (L)
 - c. Step front L, Honor sash (R)
 - d. Step front R, Sun Djem sai cha (R)

- e. Step front L, Sun Djem sai cha (L)
- f. Step front R, Sarlac Sweep (R)
- g. Step front L, Sarlac Sweep (L)
- h. Step front R, High guard
- i. Slide front, Sai zone 1

Bokuto New York Ryu kendo kata (Nihon Kendo Waza)

1. Ipon waza; (men, kote, do, tsuki)
2. Ni dan waza; kote, men
3. Harai waza; harai kote
4. Tsuba serai waza, Men tsuba serai do
5. Nuki waza; Men nuki do
6. Suriage waza; kote suriage men
7. Dehana waza; debana kote
8. Kaeshi wasza; men kaeshi do
9. Ushi otoshi waza; men ushi otoshi men

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<http://www.academiedesabrelaser.fr/>

Novastar and Cain saber system DVD's

<https://www.fx-sabers.com/forum/index.php?topic=23857.0>

DVD

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Lightspeed league

www.lightspeed-saber.com

Ludosport

usa.ludosport.net

Seito Kan

www.seitokan.org

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