

The History of Lightsaber Combat.

"A lightsaber—any weapon—only achieves worth in how it is wielded—in the effort, the struggle of one who holds it."

—[Kreia](#)^[src]



Jedi Master Kao Cen Darach engaging a Sith Lord Vindican and his apprentice Darth Malgus in lightsaber combat.

Lightsaber combat referred to several schools of martial arts specialized, though not limited to, fighting with a [lightsaber](#). Such fighting forms were required to compensate for or take advantage of the unique attributes of lightsabers, notably the odd balance of the weapon, all of the weight being in the hilt, and the omni-directional cutting edge. The most prominent lightsaber-oriented combat styles were the seven forms of the [Jedi Order](#), though other organizations were known to have developed their own styles and methods, an example being the [Sith](#)-developed [Dun Möch](#) technique.

The various combat forms owed their unique focuses and methods to the eras in which they were created in, as they were oftentimes developed to answer a new generation of weapons technology. For example, the dueling-centric [Makashi](#) form was created during a time when [Dark Jedi](#) and rogue [Force-wielders](#) ran rampant through the galaxy, and [Lightsaber duels](#) became a common occurrence, whereas [Soresu](#) was developed when such confrontations were rare, and Jedi were more likely to confront [Blaster](#)-wielding opponents and gunslingers rather than lightsaber duelists.

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Overview [Edit](#)

"These weapons are not playthings. A lightsaber is a dangerous and destructive instrument, a powerful blade that can strike down an opponent—or a friend, if you're not careful."

—[Luke Skywalker](#) to his students^[src]



Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader duel in Cloud City

Throughout the millennia since the lightsaber's creation, the art of dueling with them developed into seven "classic" forms and numerous other styles. It was difficult to master for a number of reasons, one of them being that all of the weight a [lightsaber](#) had was in its hilt. It had been said that only a [Force-sensitive](#) individual could completely master lightsaber combat. All seven traditional lightsaber forms included the same basic techniques as ancient sword-fighting styles, such as defensive postures, overhand strikes, parries, and counters.^[1]

The lightsaber was a very versatile weapon, owing to its unique lightness and omnidirectional cutting ability. It could be wielded one-handed or with both hands. The Jedi were trained to use the Force as a conduit between the wielder and the weapon. Through this bond in the Force, the blade became an extension of their being; it moved with instinct as though it were a part of the body. The Jedi's attunement to the Force accounted for the almost superhuman agility and reflex illustrated in the use of the lightsaber. Early in the weapon's history, when the Sith were numerous, the art of lightsaber dueling flourished. In later periods though, only rarely would Jedi face an adversary with a weapon capable of repelling a lightsaber.^[1]

Although the blade was weightless, two-handed slashes were the most common movement. This was because momentum was still needed to cut through solid objects, as solid objects were repelled by the blade arc until they were changed to gas or plasma. Therefore, momentum was required to counteract the initial repelling force. The stronger the swing, the faster and easier the blade would cut. If little force was applied to the swing, the repelling force of the blade arc would leave shallow cuts. When two lightsaber blades came in contact with each other, the two repelling forces made the blade appear to be solid. Also, the field that caused the energy to arc back into the blade caused some gyroscopic effects. While technically weightless, the blade still had

some resistance to changes in motion. The slight gyroscopic effects were easily controlled by a trained force user, but could become problematic for the lay person.^[2]

History [Edit](#)

Early developments [Edit](#)

"If you were to face an ancient Sith lord in combat, you would learn that we are as children playing with toys compared to the prowess of the old masters."

—[Kreia](#)^[src]



An early demonstration of lightsaber combat during the [Hundred-Year Darkness](#).

When lightsaber technology was developed to the point where they became a viable weapon, becoming the standard weapon of the Jedi Order by [7,000 BBY](#), a combat form that accounted for the abilities and weaknesses of the weapon was required. [Form I, Shii-Cho](#), was a highly simplistic style, based on age-old fencing principles, and defining the types of attacks, parries, body zones and practice drills that could be utilized with the lightsaber. When Darksiders and fallen Jedi began to arise, lightsaber duels became an almost routine activity, and Shii-Cho was simply not up for the task, as it didn't address lightsaber-to-lightsaber combat. This necessitated the development of Makashi, a precise and efficient fighting form geared towards lightsaber dueling. This style's prevalence during this era produced many of the greatest dueling masters the galaxy had ever seen, a notable being [Tulak Hord](#), a fallen Jedi and one of the early Sith Lords.^{[3][1]}

Makashi was eventually rendered partially obsolete due to the distribution and common usage of blasters and other ranged energy weapons. Due to this, the third form, [Soresu](#), was created. An extrapolation and development of Shii-Cho blast-deflect training, Soresu emphasized defensive coverage, characterized by tight and efficient

movements. A true Form III master was considered invincible. However, the style was not without its detractors, who criticized its focus on defense at the expense of offense. As an answer to the weaknesses of Soresu, [Ataru \(form IV\)](#) and [Shien \(form V\)](#) were developed side by side.^[4] Both were highly aggressive combat forms, the former focusing on speed and agility, the latter on strength and attack moves. Notably, Shien exploited the lightsabers ability to deflect blaster bolts by deliberately deflecting shots towards opponents. Later, a new, more advanced Form V variant known as Djem So was developed, focused on lightsaber dueling.^{[3][5]}



Three Jedi lightsaber instructors active during the First Jedi Purge.

While forms IV and V proved highly effective, many more conservative Jedi were put off by their aggressive focuses, and set to work creating a form that balanced all the other focuses with overall moderation, in better keeping with Jedi philosophy.^[6] The result was the sixth form, [Niman](#).^[1] Developed from the [Jar'Kai dual-blade combat style](#), Niman was a gateway to fantastic lightsaber skill without a focus on power or aggression, though it would ironically become the favored style of the fallen Jedi-turned-Sith Lord [Exar Kun](#), a masterful lightsaber duelist. Due to his obvious skill, Kun came to consider himself the greatest duelist in the galaxy, though he ultimately met his match in the Djem So specialist [Ulic Qel-Droma](#).^{[7][8]} Kun would go on to defeat [Vodo-Siosk Baas](#), the [Jedi battlemaster](#) of the day, and wield one of the earliest [saberstaves](#), creating [the weapon](#) from schematics provided by a [Sith holocron](#).^[3]

By the time of the [First Jedi Purge](#), [Juyo \(form VII\)](#) had been created. An advanced and extremely aggressive form, Juyo required high-level mastery of multiple forms to be studied, as it cut perilously close to Sith intensity of focus on combat ability.^[1] Masters of the form were loath to teach it to those with proven recklessness, and the rarity of practitioners left it in a state of only partial development for millennia. Three of the only known practitioners during this time period were Jedi Council Masters [Vrook Lamar](#), [Zez-Kai Ell](#), [Kavar](#), and [Atris](#).^{[9][10]}

Practice and Training during the Sith Resurgency [Edit](#)

"I know combat forms you've never heard of. I was trained by species you've never seen. I'm more than skilled enough to kill an unconscious man."

"But now I have your measure."

—[Jerbhen Hulis](#) and [Teneb Kel](#)^[src]



Satele Shan and Darth Malgus dueling during the Great Galactic War.

With the advent of the [Great Galactic War](#), and the re-emergence of the old [Sith Empire](#), the Jedi were once again in widespread confrontation with their bitter enemy. During the interim, the Sith Lords retained full access to the traditional forms, and they were in use within the Empire as early as the Jedi Civil War, with such notables as the [Emperor's Wrath Scourge](#) studying Forms VII, IV, and III.^[11] There is little doubt the Sith also used the time to develop their own combat styles, an accomplishment matched by the Jedi with their development of Juyo-Kos, a point of view supported by comments from [Jerbhen Hulis](#) during his brief duel with [Teneb Kel](#).^[12] Notable duelists during this period include [Jaric Kaedan](#), a master of the aforementioned Form VII variant,^[13] and [Orgus Din](#), who attained his advanced skill-level through endless practice in an attempt to compensate for his weak aptitude with the Force.^[14] On the Sith side were [Vindican](#) and [Malgus](#), who were notably the first Sith Lords to cross blades with Jedi in over three hundred years, their opponents being [Kao Cen Darach](#) and future Jedi [Grand Master, Satele Shan](#).^[15]

During the [New Sith Wars](#), a Twi'lek duelist known as [Kas'im](#) rose to prominence among the Sith, becoming the [lightsaber instructor](#) at the [Korriban Academy](#) for the [Brotherhood of Darkness](#). Many of his students would go on to be excellent duelists in their own right, a notable example being [Darth Bane](#). In fact, when Bane and Kas'im [engaged one another](#) after Bane's rebellion against the Brotherhood, Kas'im demonstrated an aptitude for Jar'Kai dual-blade combat, providing him with an edge

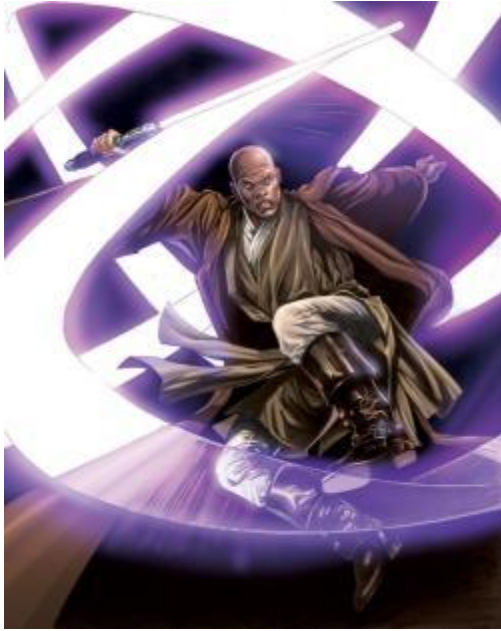
over Bane due to the latter's lack of training against such armament. Bane regarded Kas'im as the finest duelist of the era, possibly the greatest to ever exist thus far, and he only prevailed thanks to his superior grasp of the Force.^[16] Bane later killed Kas'im's Jedi counterpart, [Raskta Lsu](#).^[17]

Post-Ruusan developments [Edit](#)

"It really is appalling how badly the Council has allowed dueling techniques to deteriorate. No style. No elegance."

—Dooku^[src]

With the [Final battle of Ruusan](#), most of the Sith and other Darksider organizations were annihilated or driven into hiding, and Jedi lightsaber combat experienced radical changes as a consequence. The dueling-centric Makashi style was rendered obsolete due to its lack of effectiveness against blaster-wielding opponents, as well as the simple lack of lightsaber-wielding opponents. Thus was the same with the more obscure weapon variants; by [32 BBY](#), the use of [Double-bladed lightsabers](#) in actual combat as opposed to training was practically unheard of.^{[3][18]} Despite this, the era produced one of the greatest lightsaber duelists to ever exist: [Yoda](#). The eventual [Grand Master](#) of the [Jedi Order](#) mastered all seven forms over the course of his nine-hundred year lifespan, but specialized in [Ataru](#), as the style's broad swordplay and heavy use of acrobatics compensated for his lack of height and reach. His fighting form was a masterful demonstration of many of the standard components of Ataru, and was a wonder to behold.^[1]



Mace Windu; creator of the Vaapad technique.

Other great duelists to arise during this period include [Dooku](#), who stubbornly specialized in Makashi, despite the style's apparent obsolence, considering it among the highest of fighting forms;^[19] [Siolo'urmanka](#), who ranked among the greatest Jedi warriors before renouncing the lightsaber and focusing on staff-fighting, which he felt was a "purer" technique;^[20] and [Mace Windu](#). Windu was a [Juyo specialist](#) who was working towards completing the form, as the lack of duelists with the self-control necessary to practice Form VII left it still under development. The result was the Vaapad style, named for a [predator](#) native to the moons of [Sarapin](#). A dangerous style that cut close to the Dark side, it required Jedi to allow themselves to enjoy the thrill of battle, channelling their own fury while feeding off the aggression of the enemy, creating a feedback loop of power. Windu developed the style with the aid of fellow Jedi swordmaster [Sora Bulq](#), and only trained his own padawan, [Depa Billaba](#), in the style. Notably, Bulq taught [Quinlan Vos](#) elements of Vaapad during the amnesiac Jedi's retraining, though he said nothing of the style, and Vos refrained from applying it after learning more of it.^[3]

Among the Sith, [Darth Sidious](#)' apprentice [Darth Maul](#) proved to be an exceptional duelist. One of the most highly trained Sith in the history of the order, Maul was instructed in several obscure combat forms, notably considering himself a master of a corrupt Sith version of Juyo. In addition to his highly developed skills as a martial combatant, Maul also wielded a [double-bladed lightsaber](#).^[1] Creating the weapon after a [failed engagement](#) against Siolo'urmanka drew him to the conclusion that simple one-bladed lightsabers were too limiting, Maul went on to defeat the Jedi with his more

unorthodox armament. The Jedi's inexperience with the weapon and his own skill with it provided Maul with an edge over many of his opponents, and great Jedi swordmasters such as [Anoon Bondara](#) and [Qui-Gon Jinn](#) fell before his blades.^{[20][21]} Maul was only defeated by Jinn's padawan, [Obi-Wan Kenobi](#), when he dropped his guard.^[22]

With Maul dead, Sidious was forced to find a replacement, recruiting Dooku after he left the Jedi Order, while Obi-Wan Kenobi would go on to train [Anakin Skywalker](#), the rising star of the Jedi Order. Skywalker specialized in [Form V](#), as the aggressive fighting form was a good match to his bold, confrontational personality type.^[1] However, Skywalker's rapid advancement only fed his ego, and he came to consider himself a match for Yoda himself. He was given a sobering reminder of how much he still had to learn when Dooku cut off his arm, ending their intense bout.^[23] Kenobi himself specialized in [Soresu](#), adopting the style after coming to the conclusion that Ataru's lack of defensive capabilities resulted in Qui-Gon Jinn's death. While the defensive fighting form stood him in good stead against blaster-wielding opponents, his own confrontation with Dooku went less well, as Dooku's precision bladework simply worked around Kenobi's staunch defense.^{[1][18]}

Developments during the Clone Wars [Edit](#)



Jedi on the battlefield for the first time in centuries.

The [Clone Wars](#) would bring about a multitude of changes in lightsaber combat, as the more moderate forms the Jedi had specialized in for the last millenia proved lacking on the battlefield, calling for specialist combat styles. Notably, all the [Niman](#) practitioners involved in the [Battle of Geonosis](#) perished in combat.^[1] In preparation for the Sith-orchestrated war, Dooku recruited several other duelists into his personal cadre of [Dark Acolytes](#), notables being the fallen Sora Bulq and the Rattataki warlord [Asajj Ventress](#).^[3] Ventress' skills with the lightsaber were sufficient to impress Dooku and Sidious, and

she was provided with further instruction from the former, notably in Makashi lightsaber combat.^[24] Dooku also trained the Kaleesh cyborg [Grievous](#) in lightsaber combat, which Grievous was capable of learning because of the enhanced speed and reflexes of his mechanical body. Grievous would become one of the most prolific [Jedi hunters](#) of the era, collecting their lightsabers as grisly trophies, and defeating such notables as [Ki-Adi-Mundi](#) and [Eeth Koth](#), as well as dueling Mace Windu to a stalemate.^{[25][26][27]} Other great duelists who became casualties of the war include [Sora Bulq](#) and [Depa Billaba](#), leaving Mace Windu as the last master of Vaapad.^[28]

By the end of the war, Dooku and Grievous were slain by Skywalker and Kenobi, respectively. Their vastly increased skill marked them as two of the finest duelists in the Jedi Order, with Dooku crediting Skywalker as the finest Djem So stylist that he had ever seen, and Mace Windu recognizing Kenobi as "the Master of Soresu". Windu's Vaapad style also faced its own ultimate test during his confrontation with Darth Sidious, revealed to be the Republic supreme chancellor [Palpatine](#). Palpatine's advanced combat skills and Dark side powers allowed him to strike down [Agen Kolar](#), [Saesee Tiin](#) and [Kit Fisto](#), all among the greatest duelists produced by the Jedi Order, within seconds. The feedback loop of power formed by Windu's Vaapad left both combatants in a contest of indefinite length, until Windu managed to seize the tactical advantage, disarming Palpatine and defeating the Dark Lord of the Sith. However, Windu's victory wouldn't last long, as Anakin Skywalker intervened, defecting to the Sith and cutting off Windu's sword arm, leaving him vulnerable to Palpatine's Sith powers. Mace Windu, one of the greatest duelists in the Jedi Order, considered second only to Yoda, was dead.^[28]



Obi-Wan Kenobi and Darth Vader facing off in one of the greatest lightsaber duels of their time.

Skywalker, now Darth Vader, would spearhead the [sack of the Jedi Temple](#), personally felling many of the Jedi within, including the children. Even the Jedi swordmaster [Cin](#)

[Drallig](#) was unable to hold out long against Vader's brutal intensity. Vader would only find his match in his former master; Kenobi's mastery of defensive Soresu proved to be the perfect foil to Vader's all out offense. In one of the greatest lightsaber duels of all time, Kenobi would give ground before Darth Vader's relentless attack, guiding the battle to a location of his choice and seizing the tactical advantage. Darth Vader was viciously dismembered by Kenobi, and left to die on the shore of a [Mustafar](#) lava river. He only survived when Palpatine, fresh from his own contest with a now defeated Yoda, rescued him. Realizing that the new Sith Order could not be brought down through martial might, Kenobi and Yoda went into hiding. [\[28\]\[29\]](#)

Developments during the Great Jedi Purge [Edit](#)



Darth Vader, one of the finest lightsaber duelists of the era, would cut down numerous Jedi during the Great Jedi Purge

With the Jedi Order essentially destroyed, lightsaber combat development slowed to a crawl, and most efforts were spearheaded by the Sith. However, the combat forms themselves would still be preserved in surviving records and holocrons, as well as among the Sith. [\[3\]](#) Nonetheless, this time period saw the rise of Darth Vader. Now interred in his cumbersome life-support armor, Vader was forced to customize and adjust his lightsaber technique to compensate. His resulting combat form included elements from numerous techniques of combat, relying on brute force and precision to

counter the more acrobatic fighting forms the Jedi survivors favored. With this unique, though somewhat archaic fighting method, Vader became the most prolific Jedi hunter of the era.^[30] Vader's skills as a duelist would also carry over to several of his apprentices, such as [Starkiller](#) and [Kharys](#). Starkiller practiced Juyo and Soresu, while favoring a Shien-style reversed-grip, and bested such duelists as [Kazdan Paratus](#) and [Shaak Ti](#). Kharys created the [Trispzest](#) fighting style, a combination of traditional [S'kytri](#) aerial dueling and [Form VII lightsaber combat](#).^[31] Starkiller ultimately rebelled against his master, and eventually managed to defeat Vader before perishing in a confrontation with Palpatine.^[5] Starkiller's skillset would carry over to his [clone](#), who was trained by Vader to wield dual-blades. Vader would be defeated by this clone as well. This era also saw the emergence of the [Emperor's Shadow Guard](#) and the [Imperial Saber Guard](#). The Shadow Guardsman favored [Lightsaber pikes](#), and typically operated as Palpatine's enforcers, while the Saber Guardsman were provided with standard lightsabers and were provided with the prerequisite tutoring, and strongly favored [Shien-style reversed grips](#). Both groups were highly effective on the battle field, though considerably less so against trained Jedi duelists, such as Starkiller or his clone.^{[5][32]}

Arguably the greatest lightsaber duelist of his age, [Luke Skywalker](#) was an absolute natural with the weapon. After only a single training session with Obi-Wan Kenobi, Skywalker was already highly competent at blast-deflection, and he improved his technique over the next three years through pure improvisation.^[1] Within months, he was skilled enough to overcome Vader's former student [Kharys](#), a practitioner of Form VII lightsaber combat and creator of the Trispzest style.^{[33][34]} His capabilities were further developed during his training under Yoda, and Skywalker's resulting combat style was an instinctual mimicry of Vader's personalized variation on Form V,^[1] with elements of Ataru and Soresu included.^{[35][36]} By [3 ABY](#), he was able enough to hold his own against Darth Vader, outperforming many of the fully trained Jedi knights the Dark Lord had engaged in the past. Merely a year after this encounter, Skywalker bested Vader with a furious demonstration of his own technique.^[1]

Redevelopment [Edit](#)



Luke Skywalker redeveloped the fighting forms of the Jedi Order with the aid of Corran Horn and Kam Solusar.

Corran Horn: *"The lightsaber, as all of us know, is a very powerful and lethal weapon. My father once said to me that no one ever regretted hitting a target with a stunbolt as opposed to a lethal shot from a blaster. Basic combat training could help us avoid having to use a lightsaber where a less dangerous method might work. Training in that area means we have more options available to us."*

Luke Skywalker: *"These would be defensive techniques"*

Horn: *"They are combat techniques, which can be employed offensively or defensively, just like a lightsaber&hellip It's just an idea."*

Kam Solusar: *"Such training would lay the foundation for any lightsaber training we do later."*

—Corran Horn, Luke Skywalker, and Kam Solusar^[src]

Skywalker would eventually meet his match in [Lumiya](#), a Vader-trained Dark Jedi turned Sith Acolyte.^[3] Lumiya wielded a [unique lightwhip](#) against Luke, with lashes of both energy and metals. As Lumiya noted, Luke's Jedi training only prepared him for a weapon that was either energy or solid, not one that was both. Luke would quickly adapt, constructing a shoto lightsaber and wielding it as a secondary weapon, allowing him to engage the whip's energy tendrils with one blade while shredding the solid ones with the other.^[37] Skywalker would eventually develop to the point where he could compete with the resurrected Palpatine himself in duels, slicing off the Sith Lord's hand.^[38] When Luke set about reestablishing the Jedi Order, he was aided in combat techniques, he was aided by [Kam Solusar](#), who was trained in lightsaber combat by Palpatine's [Dark Side Elite](#), and [Corran Horn](#), a former member of [Corellian Security](#)

[Force](#) who had training in various unarmed combat techniques. It should be noted that many of Skywalker's students were capable of standing toe-to-toe with him, no doubt due to their familiarity with his fighting methods.^[39]

While Luke had been provided with formal training in Ataru by Master Yoda, passing this on to his own students,^[40] the loss of so much knowledge from the old Jedi Order, including many lightsaber combat techniques, forced Luke's new order to essentially start from scratch. Kam Solusar trained the students in the three rings of defense, while Corran Horn trained them in many of CorSec's combat techniques.^[39] The three forms of the Jedi Order were eventually created, each specializing in a different aspect of combat. The [Strong style](#) focused on brute strength and offense, often at the expense of defense. The [Fast style](#) focused on speed and precision, and was especially good for blast-deflection. The [Medium style](#) balanced out between the previous two, and oftentimes acted as a tutorial form, much like Shii-Cho for the old Jedi Order.^{[41][42]} One of the finest students of the academy, [Kyle Katarn](#), practiced all three and eventually attained the rank of [Jedi battlemaster](#). When the seven forms of the original order were rediscovered, Katarn went on to master Djem So as well.^[43]

Over the next century and a half, the various lightsaber fighting forms would experience few major changes, though many masterful duelists would rise to prominence over the years. The [Imperial Knight](#) would develop combat styles unique to their organization, the aggressive [Praetoria Vonil](#) and defensive [Praetoria Ishu](#). However, these two forms were practiced in addition to classical lightsaber forms, and were designed to encourage and focus on teamwork rather than individual prowess.^[44]

Basic Moves and Maneuvers [Edit](#)

"Every feint, every dodge, every block is a trap to the unwary."

—Lightsaber combat tenet^[src]

Body Target Zones [Edit](#)



Shii-Cho body target zones

Many of the basics of lightsaber combat were established by the [Shii-Cho lightsaber form](#), as it was the first form developed, and was specialized towards training individuals in the use of lightsabers.^[1] Attacks and parries in lightsaber combat are described by the body zones they target. In idealized sparring drills, most attacks are executed with horizontal swipes, while parries are carried out with vertical blocks meant to push the point of the enemy's blade away, with the exception of the "Attack 1" and "Parry 1", which are reversed.^[36]

Zone 1:

The Head. A zone 1 attack consists of a vertical chop at the head, with the goal of vertically bisecting the opponent, and the corresponding parry is a horizontal block.^[45] A classic zone 1 attack was typically preceded by a high guard position, though the zone 4 parry position was also used for this purpose.^{[36][46]} The zone 1 parry position was a horizontal guard, with the blade held at head-height and angled across the body.^[45] It was not unheard of for a zone 1 attack to be deflected aside by having a zone 1 parry transition into a zone 2/3 drop parry position.^[29]

Zone 2:

The Right Arm and Side. Zone 2 attacks were horizontal sideswipes, with the corresponding counter being a vertical parry position. Shii-Cho sparring drills had the handle held at waist height with the blade extended upwards, though other combat forms employed drop parries with the handle held high.^[45] Assuming a

humanoid duelist's right arm was his dominant, any strikes against his weapon arm would correspond with Zone 2 attacks.

Zone 3:

The Left Arm and Side. Zone 3 attacks are much the same as zone 2, albeit the directions are reversed.^[45] Assuming a humanoid duelist's left arm was his dominant, any strikes against his weapon arm would correspond with Zone 3 attacks.

Zone 4:

Back. Zone 4 encompasses the entire midsection and torso, but refers specifically to the back. A successful Zone 4 attack is almost always fatal.^[47] As the classic Parry 4 position is a drop parry position with the blade angled downwards behind the duelist's back, the classic Attack 4 is likely a variation on Zone 2 and 3 attacks.^[45] An alternate, albeit more awkward, Parry 4 position has the hilt held behind the back at waist height, with the blade extended upwards.^[48]

Zone 5 / 6:

Zones 5 and 6 referred to the right and left leg, respectively. Zone 5 and 6 attacks were low sideswipes or slashes, while the corresponding defensive positions were drop parries with the hilt held at the waist.^[45]

The Three Rings of Defense [Edit](#)

- **Outer Ring**

The Outer ring of defense relied on grand sweeping blows to attack at range. The wide attacks took longer to deliver, but were very powerful. The Outer ring consisted of four guard positions, all with the blade held diagonally: the upper right, upper left, lower right and lower left.^[39]

- **Middle Ring**

The Middle ring of defense was designed to pick up quicker blows and block them, though it was also effective for blast-deflection. The guard positions all featured the

blade being held at right angles, with the upper and lower guards being horizontal, while the left and right positions being vertical. ^[39]

- **Inner Ring**

The Inner ring was the last line of defense, dangerous to be attacking or defending from. It was proof against lunging attacks, and relied on parries instead of blocks. It had only a single guard position, with the hilt covering the navel. Attacks would be deflected by angling the blades tip and shunting them aside with the lower third of the blade, facilitating a swift counter towards the opponents chest or abdomen. ^[39]

Marks of Contact [Edit](#)



An instructional diagram identifying several marks of contact

All Jedi forms involve the same marks of contact, describing the objectives, maneuvers to use, and the various outcomes that could arise out of a fight involving [lightsabers](#) as weapons. They helped focus a Jedi's attacks and defenses on a few clearer categories, rather than diffusing awareness across an infinite number of possibilities in a duel. ^[1]

- **Sun djem**

The [sun djem](#) was the act of disarming the opponent, the objective usually being not to physically harm him/her.^[1] The classic Shii-Cho move, the *Disarming Slash*, was specialized towards executing the *sun djem*.^[35]

- **Shiim**

The [shiim](#) was a more minute [wound](#) to an opponent by the edge of a lightsaber's blade.^[1] The *shiim* could be applied anywhere on the body, and was not specific to any zone.

- **Cho mai**

The [cho mai](#) was the amputation an opponent's weapon-[hand](#).^[1]

- **Cho sun**

The [cho sun](#) was the amputation an opponent's weapon-[arm](#).^[1]

- **Cho mok**

The [cho mok](#) was the amputation an opponent's [limb](#), such as a humanoid's [arm](#) or [leg](#).^[1]

- **Shiak**

The [shiak](#) was the act of stabbing an opponent.^[1]

- **Sai cha**

The [sai cha](#) was the decapitation of the opponent.^[1] Being a sideswipe at an opponents side and neck, the *sai cha* corresponded with Zone 2 and 3 attacks.^[45]

- **Sai tok**

The [sai tok](#) was the act of cutting an opponent in half, usually separating his or her legs from the [torso](#) at the [waist](#), but vertical bisections corresponding with Zone 1 attacks were not unheard of.^{[1][49][23]}

- **Mou kei**

The [mou kei](#) was an attack that dismembered an opponent through a circular motion of the lightsaber, aimed at the major limbs.^[50] The *mou kei*, being aimed at all major limbs, lashed out at multiple body zones. [Darth Vader](#)'s dismemberment on [Mustafar](#) could be considered a triple *cho mok*, as it amputated both of his legs (zone 5/ 6) and his left arm (zone 3).^[46]

Ready Stances [Edit](#)



The Jedi Ready stance, practically identical to the Ataru guard.

While all the lightsaber forms had their own unique opening and ready stances, a number of positions were standard to lightsaber combat in general.

- **Jedi Ready**

Having much in common with the Ataru guard, the [Jedi ready](#) was the most common stance among Jedi. The dominant foot was held back, with the blade in a vertical parry position on the dominant side.^[45]

- **Defensive Neutral**

The differences between the Defensive Neutral and the Jedi Ready were negligible. The blade was still held in a parry position on the dominant side, though the feet were evenly spaced rather than one held back. This position was intended to provide the maximum amount of blade surface area for blast-deflection, and also to maximize it's visual impact as a warning.^[45]

- **Offensive Neutral**

The feet were evenly spaced, with the blade pointed towards the enemy. The stance was intended to provide the minimum visual blade area for target and tracking. ^[45]

Moves and Maneuvers [Edit](#)



Count Dooku demonstrating the *sai* during his duel with Obi-Wan Kenobi.

- **Jung**

The [Jung](#) was a 180 degree turn. ^[45]

- **Jung ma**

The [Jung ma](#) was a 360 degree spin, used to build momentum for an attack. ^[45]

- **Shun**

The [Shun](#) was a 360 degree spin, during which the lightsaber was held one-handed. ^[45]

- **Sai**

The [Sai](#) was the act of overleaping an attack at the legs. ^[45]

- **Flowing water**

The [Flowing Water](#) cut was a technique based on the principle of using the space created when the opponent withdrew their lightsaber offensively to one's own advantage. As the opponent pulled their lightsaber back from a bind, the user would follow it with their blade, in effect causing the opponent to pull the user's blade into themselves. ^[51]



- **Falling leaf** Falling Leaf in practice.

The [Falling Leaf](#) cut was an ancient move that involved the user spinning and making a fast slash at an opponent standing behind them and then return to face the way they were before the maneuver. It was described as spinning one's feet to "slash from the sky".^[51]

- **Dulon**

The [Dulon](#) was a lightsaber move where the hilt's pommel would be held at one's midsection with the blade thirty degrees up, and would be slashed at high velocity. The name *dulon* also referred to a solo lightsaber training.

- **Kai-kan**

The [Kai-kan](#) was not a maneuver per se, but rather a reenactment of a prior lightsaber duel.^[52]

Form-specific Maneuvers [Edit](#)

As each of the lightsaber combat forms were self-contained martial arts styles, they each possessed moves and maneuvers unique to them.

[Form I: Shii-Cho](#)



The "disarming slash" in practice.

- **Disarming Slash:** A strike directed at the opponent's weapon in an attempt to rip it out of their grasp or destroy it. ^[35]
- **Sarlacc Sweep:** A wide sweeping attack in which the duelist struck against multiple enemies. ^[35]

Form II: Makashi

- **Contentious Opportunity:** A tactic based upon recognizing and exploiting an opening in the opponent's defense before swiftly moving to strike the exposed enemy. ^[35]
- **Makashi Riposte:** A defensive technique where the duelist slightly alters the angle of an opponent's attack before quickly retaliating with a counter strike. ^[35]

Form III: Soresu

- **Circle of Shelter:** A technique where the duelist creates a protected area around themselves and their allies, making it difficult for enemies to penetrate. ^[35]
- **Deflecting Slash:** A technique where the duelist redirects the momentum generated by deflecting an enemy projectile into a slashing attack at an adjacent target. ^[35]

Form IV: Ataru

- **Hawk-Bat Swoop:** Was intended to allow a combatant to quickly strike their opponent without giving them a chance to react. ^[35]
- **Saber Swarm:** Numerous short strikes were aimed at the adversary. ^[35]

Form V: Shien / Djem So

- **Barrier of Blades:** Defended the user from blasterfire and redirected some of the incoming blasts. ^[35]
- **Falling Avalanche:** An overhand power blow that crashed down upon an opponent with incredible force. ^[35]
- **Fluid Riposte:** A smooth transition from parrying an attack to a counterstrike. ^[35]
- **Shien Deflection:** Simultaneously deflect weapons fire and leap towards an opponent. ^[35]

Form VI: Niman



A Selkath Jedi applying the "pushing slash" technique.

- **Draw Closer:** It consisted of the duelist telekinetically seizing an opponent and pulling the enemy into the path of his/her blade. ^[35]
- **Pushing Slash:** The duelist would slash an opponent before blasting him aside with a Force push. ^[35]

Form VII: Juyo / Vaapad

- **Assured Strike:** Trading sheer power for a near-certainty of landing a hit. ^[35]
- **Vornskr's Ferocity:** Involved "ferocious" attacking of an opponent. ^[35]
- **Swift Flank:** The user leaped or dashed around an opponent to make a quick strike. The speed of the maneuver was intended to catch opponents off guard. ^[35]
- **Tempered Aggression:** Used to describe the ferocity of the Vaapad form, but with more control against succumbing to the dark side even in the heat of battle. ^[35]

Sokan

- **High Ground Defense:** Usually involves environment, combatants made use of large amounts of terrain, trying to maneuver their opponents into vulnerable areas during the course of battles that involved Sokan techniques. ^[35]
- **Unhindered Charge:** Rapid movement towards the opponent, ignoring difficult terrain and obstacles. ^[35]

Niman/Jar'Kai



A [Gand](#) Jedi implementing the "Twin Strike".

- **Twin Strike:** A duel-wielding strike that the character simultaneously swings both lightsabers to act as a strong-attack. Both lightsabers meet the target or object. [\[35\]](#)
- **Rising Whirlwind:** A duelist swings his lightsabers about his body, creating a brilliant whirlwind. [\[35\]](#)

[Tràkata](#)

- **Pass The Blade:** The duelist deactivated his blade as he attacks, bypassing the opponent's block before igniting it into the hapless foe. [\[35\]](#)
- **Unbalancing Block:** The duelist caught the opponent's blade with his own before momentarily deactivating it, causing the opponent to stumble and leave himself open. [\[35\]](#)

[Trispzest](#)

- **Spinning attack:** The flying duelist would hover in one spot and spin wildly, lashing out at multiple opponents.

Training Methods [Edit](#)



[Jedi Initiates](#) undergoing early lightsaber training in Shii-Cho

The various lightsaber training methods were largely devised by the Jedi Order, with other organizations borrowing elements for their own use.^[53] Most of the Jedi training elements were established by the [Shii-Cho](#), which would continue to find a niche as a tutorial form.^[1]

In order to teach students to draw upon the Force rather than rely on their senses, early level Shii-Cho blast-deflect training was conducted with a blindfold, forcing the initiate to rely upon his instincts.^[54] Later training was conducted through the use of sequences and [velocities](#), the continuous repetition, making the moves instinctive reflexes. These training regimens were carried over to all following lightsaber combat forms, which used similar methods.^{[1][53]}

Sequences [Edit](#)

➡ *Main article:* [Lightsaber sequence](#)

Sequences were precisely choreographed series of attacks and parries that flowed together smoothly and were used during combat. Each form of lightsaber combat had its own sequences, and there were hundreds of different sequences which could be applied to various combat situations.^[53]

Some believed that using sequences in combat was superior to using individual moves, because taking time to consider and use moves individually in combat was slow and inefficient, and using sequences instead of individualized moves was faster and more fluid, providing significant advantages.^[53]

Sparring [Edit](#)



Lucien Draay demonstrated the "disarming slash" while sparring with [Raana Tey](#) and [Xamar](#).

Sparring was mock combat between two duelists. Sparring sessions provided novices with the opportunity to test their skills against an equal or greater opponent, and learn from their mistakes. Many fully trained duelists would take to frequent sparring sessions with contemporaries to ensure their skills don't atrophy, sometimes opting for training droids in the absence of live sparring partners. ^{[55][53]}

While most sparring matches were relatively free-form, there were certain styles of matches governed by a strict set of rules. These more specialized matches were intended to develop skills in specific ways, such as developing timing or consistency. ^[35]

Dulon [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Dulon](#)

The term "dulon" typically referred to a lightsaber move where the duelist would hold his hilt's pommel would be held at one's midsection with the blade thirty degrees up, and would be slashed at high velocity. However, the term also referred to a solo lightsaber training exercise in which a [Padawan](#) practiced sequences of moves against imaginary opponents.

Velocities [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Velocities](#)



Velocities in practice.

Velocities involved two students practicing sequences of attacks and parries against each other, repeating the same patterns over and over, while constantly increasing the speed of the movements until one opponent got hit, or decided to yield by saying "Solah."^[45]

Twin Suns [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Twin Suns \(sparring technique\)](#)

In this form of practice, two Jedi would use the Force to rise and land like two suns crossing the sky. It required a great mastery in lightsaber combat, high attunement with [the Force](#) and precise timing. This technique required two [Jedi](#) to stand at the opposite ends of an open area. Then the combatants would start running at each other and make a [Force Jump](#) toward the opponent. While in the air the Jedi would activate their [lightsabers](#) and when crossed beside in mid-air, they would strike at one another, trying to harmlessly cut a piece of opponent's clothing and then deactivate the lightsaber before landing on the ground.^[35]

Faalo's cadences [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Faalo's cadences](#)

Faalo's cadences were a series of [lightsaber](#) training techniques developed by the famed [Jedi Master](#), [Vo'ren Faalo](#). In each of Vo'ren Faalo's cadences, the primary practice is to stand in a circle of candles with the ball bearings and attempt to strike the ball bearings without hitting the candles. As the duelist proceeds through each of the cadences, the number of candles would be incrementally increased until the fifth, where the duelist will have achieved such a state of mastery that the candles are unnecessary, as the duelist will simply know when he has performed the sequence correctly.^[35]

Trial of Skill [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Jedi Trials#Trial of Skill](#)



A [Padawan](#) goes head-to-head with a [Sith](#) simulacrum in the Trials Chamber.

"You will need all of your skill to survive."

—[Spirit](#) of [Kento Marek](#), to [his son](#)^[src]

The ***Trial of Skill*** was one of the oldest trials in the battery of tests preferred by the Order. While the test did consist of numerous displays of lightsaber technique, the main thing that the battlemaster looked for when judging a potential Knight was their ability to avoid distraction through self-discipline. Before its formalization, the trial was made up of acrobatic feats, while using the Force to levitate objects in the midst of storms. As the test was incorporated into the more standard academy testing, the High Council required that each participant face off against some form of adversary, though the individual or individuals they faced varied in species or allegiance, and could be made of flesh and blood or a clever simulacrum created from archived data. In some cases, Padawans were forced to compete with the battlemaster in a duel, or even the Grand Master, and outlast their attacks. Other students might face many opponents, some of them attacking with a lightsaber, others manipulating perception or altering the environment in the chamber. Additionally, the Council could opt to use the simulacrum program and send any number of Sith Lords to test the stamina of a young Padawan.^[6]

Individual Fighting Forms [Edit](#)

Seven Forms of the Jedi Order [Edit](#)

Form I: Shii-Cho [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form I: Shii-Cho](#)



Shii-Cho in practice.

"Form I, also called Shii-Cho, requires little explanation, as every Jedi youngling learns the basics of attack, parry, body target zones, and practice drills called velocities."

—Cin Drallig [\[src\]](#)

As the most ancient style of lightsaber combat, Shii-Cho was developed during the transition period from swords to lightsabers. Lightsabers were wielded in a manner similar to swords, so many of the maneuvers, such as attacks or parries, remained unchanged, as the key principles of the old sword-fighting methods continued to be incorporated. The simplicity and persistent methods of the form led it to being dubbed the "Way of the Sarlacc" and the "Determination Form". [\[3\]](#) Shii-Cho swordplay was simplistic and raw. In the hands of a master, the bladework was described as "like watching water flow over the falls." [\[56\]](#) However, less adept practitioners displayed much more basic and somewhat clumsy performance. In combat, Form I encouraged deliberate tactics, calling for continuous, step-by-step advancement while cutting off the opponent's angles. [\[28\]](#) Shii-Cho was specialized towards engaging multiple opponents, the wide, sweeping motions being ideally suited towards attacking numerous adversaries. However, Form I was not as useful against single opponents, as such enemies had complete mobility and could find a weakness in Shii-Cho's comparatively clumsy bladework. [\[9\]](#) Shii-Cho fostered an emotionally-heated mindset, which resulted in the considerable temptation to execute combat with lethal intent, requiring great restraint to exercise the form without going too far. Despite the pull to kill, the style was designed for the purpose of disarming without seriously injuring. [\[57\]](#)[\[1\]](#)

As the most simplistic form, Shii-Cho was the first form taught to initiates within the Jedi Order. Form I training provided the basic knowledge of the sword-fighting principles and blast-deflection skill that was required for practice of all the other forms. [\[1\]](#) In order to

teach students to draw upon the Force rather than rely on their senses, early level Shii-Cho blast-deflect training was conducted with a blindfold, forcing the initiate to rely upon his instincts.^[58] Later training was conducted through the use of sequences and [velocities](#), the continuous repetition making the moves instinctive reflexes. These training regimens were carried over to all following lightsaber combat forms, which used similar methods.^{[1][59]} As Shii-Cho philosophy emphasized victory without injury and as such, the [sun djem](#) mark of contact was traditionally employed by Form I practitioners. Keeping with the use of *sun djem*, one of the attacks utilized by Form I practitioners was referred to as the "Disarming Slash", consisting of a strike directed at the opponent's weapon in an attempt to rip it out of their grasp.^[35]

Form II: Makashi [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form II: Makashi](#)



Makashi in practice.

"Form II, also called Makashi, represents the ultimate refinement of lightsaber-to-lightsaber combat."

—Cin Drallig on Form II^[src]

Makashi was the most dueling-centric of the seven forms, developed during an era where engagements with Darksiders and rogue Jedi became an almost routine activity. Form II's primary purpose was to serve as a counter to [the first form; Shii-Cho](#). Makashi relied on precision swordplay to counter the sweeping movements demonstrated by Shii-Cho, and a heavy focus on protecting one's weapon to avoid being [disarmed](#), the primary goal of Form I.^[1] Form II emphasized fluid motion and anticipation of a weapon being swung at its target, and so required very fluid movements of both the blade and the body. Timing, accuracy, and skill, rather than strength, were relied-upon to defeat one's opponent. With a skilled practitioner, the results were deadly. Makashi users were often elegant, precise, calm, confident to the point of arrogance (as befit [Dooku's](#) personality). Form II users were supremely confident in their chances for victory, and often looked so relaxed when they were fighting they even appeared to be dancing.^[19]

Makashi duelists also trained themselves to avoid enslavement to form, as such enslavement opened the practitioner to be defeated by predictability and the unforeseen.^[25]

Due to Form II's emphasis on blade manipulation, and its many fluid one-handed moves, Makashi practitioners often wielded lightsabers that were specialized for such use. The most prominent weapon for this purpose was the [curved-hilted lightsaber](#). These weapons were used because the curved hilt fit better into the palm, granting better blade control and allowing for greater precision and strength. In addition to this, wielders often created highly decorated weapons, and occasionally included blade-guards, as shown with Dooku's lightsaber. The other, considerably rarer, weapon type was the [Lightfoil](#), a specialized type of lightsaber used by the [Mecrosa Order](#). Original lightfoils were built with small handles for exclusively one-handed usage, and were much better balanced than typical lightsabers, allowing for greater precision.^[60]

Form III: Soresu [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form III: Soresu](#)



Soresu in practice.

"A... defensive technique. But effective. Use it if you do not wish to be hit, or if you are facing many opponents with blasters. With a lightsaber blade and enough skill in deflection, it is an excellent offense against blasters, but in other situations, it merely delays the inevitable."

—Kreia^[src]

The original purpose of the Soresu form was to counter blaster-wielding opponents, as the previous combat styles focused on lightsaber dueling. Becoming the most defensive of the seven forms, Soresu utilized tight moves, subtle dodges and short sweeps designed to provide maximum defensive coverage, leaving the duelist less exposed to ranged fire. Over time, Form III came to transcend this basic origin and become an expression of non-aggressive Jedi philosophy.^{[61][62]} Soresu utilized motions that occurred very close to the body, in an attempt to achieve near-total protection and expend as little energy as possible while executing moves. Form III stressed quick

reflexes and fast positional transition, in order to overcome the rapidity with which a blaster could be fired. This technique minimized the body's exposure, making a well-trained practitioner nearly invincible. Form III involved preparation for prolonged battles where the user observed and learned as much as possible about their opponent's or opponents' technique while engaged in combat. Also, by being more capable in lengthy battles, a Soresu user had the ability to gain control of a combat situation, creating multiple options for the Jedi employing the form. A Form III user could choose to kill, disarm, or even reason with their opponent.^[63]

Truly focused masters of Soresu were very formidable due to their strong defense technique. However, Form III merely facilitated survival rather than victory. Form III initiates were more than capable of defending themselves from attack, but they needed a large amount of experience to learn how to effectively counter-attack and entrap opponents. Masters had to maintain an incredibly strong focus on the center of the combat circle, since the defensive tactics of the form included guards and parries engaged very close to the body. Jedi who left small lapses in their otherwise strong defense left little room to avoid injury.^[36]

Form IV: Ataru [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form IV: Ataru](#)



Ataru in practice.

"Ataru is the name given to the movements of this form - though it is aggressive, it is focused, and its best use is in combat against a single opponent."

—Zez-Kai Ell^[src]

Ataru was an aggressive combat form relying on a combination of power, strength, and speed. Practitioners of Ataru were always on the offensive, attacking with wide, fast, and powerful swings, constantly calling upon [the Force](#) to aid in their movements and attacks. By allowing the Force to flow throughout their body, they could [overcome their](#)

[physical limitations](#) (including old age, as was the case with [Master Yoda](#)) and perform amazing feats of acrobatics, such as somersaults and backflips, not only for attack, but also to evade the attacks and strikes of their opponents.^[64]

The standard components of Form IV focused on application of and smooth transition between the three axes of rotation in a three-dimensional space; the *su ma*. Specifically, the *jung su ma* (spinning), *ton su ma* (somersaults), and *en su ma* (cartwheels). Those who used Form IV could move at high speeds and could rain strong blows, jumping and attacking through the air. Powerful and quick spinning attacks could be utilized from all angles, either from ground or air. A master in Ataru combat could appear like a blur to their opponents, attacking from all directions—from the front, the sides, overhead, or behind. The Force not only allowed them to perform athletic feats not possible otherwise, but it also helped guide their actions and movements in combat. Obi-Wan Kenobi's backflip upon being kicked in the head is a perfect example of a Form IV recovery, redirecting the kinetic energy.^{[64][36]}

Form V: Shien/ Djem So [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form V: Shien / Djem So](#)



Shien in practice.

"Peace through superior firepower"

—Jedi maxim on Form V^[src]

Form V was created by [Form III](#) masters who desired a more offensive style, since the defensive nature of Form III could lead to prolonged combat, sometimes dangerously so. It evolved into an accepted style by combining the defensive maneuvers of Form III with the more aggressive philosophy and tactics of [Form II](#). Form V also required a higher level of physical strength than the other lightsaber forms, due to its focus on complete domination of opponents.^[64] The form was developed alongside [Form IV](#) at a time when the Jedi were increasingly called upon to actively keep the peace.^[3] Form V had two distinct variations: Shien and Djem So.^[3]

Classic Form V, Shien was developed first. Known as the "Perseverance Form", Shien was designed to protect against enemy blaster fire and strikes without compromising one's ability to launch powerful counterattacks. With its focus against blaster fire, Shien kept in mind that [Jedi](#) were often outnumbered by their opponents and needed to defend themselves while retaining offensive capability. However, it lacked effectiveness against single opponents.^[65] Shien practitioners were known to favor, or at least regularly utilize, reversed grips.^[36]

Whereas Shien specialized in blast-deflection, the more advanced Djem So focused on lightsaber dueling.^[66] Utilizing a combination of blocks and parries, a Djem So user maintained a proper foundation in terms of defense against both ranged and melee attacks, but rather than counter only when necessary as per Soresu training regimens, Djem So actively pressed the offense.^[64] Djem So placed a heavy focus on brute strength, utilizing wide, powerful strikes and parries. Power attacks from a Djem So user could even knock an opponent back just through sheer kinetic force, throwing them off balance and leaving them vulnerable to further brute force strikes and power blows that sought not just to penetrate an opponent's defense, but drive them back and leave them unable to counter.^[67]

Form VI: Niman [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form VI: Niman](#)



The Niman *pushing slash* technique.

"Is Form VI the most worthy of study? No, but in general it is the most practical."

—[Cin Drallig](#)^[src]

Niman, the dual-blade style developed by the Royale Macheteros of the Kashi Mer, was named for the dual triumvirate of the [Kashi deities](#). The style was adopted by the

Legions of Lettow, a group of Dark Siders responsible for the First Great Schism of the Jedi Order. After the defeat of the Legion at the hands of the Jedi, Niman was adopted by the Jedi order, eventually being refined into the sixth form of lightsaber combat, referred to by the same name.^[31]

Form VI attempted to balance all elements of lightsaber combat, combining the techniques from Forms that came before into a less intensely demanding combat style. In practice, Form VI was a combination of older forms (Forms I, III, IV, and V), and all of them in moderation. In the blending, much of the individuality was lost, but the strengths were spread evenly, and there was little weakness in it. Due to its "jack-of-all-trades" nature, the success of this form was largely dependent on the practitioner's intuition, improvisation, and creativity in combat rather than the rote responses derived from other forms. This broad generalization made Form VI well suited for diplomats, as they could spend their time training in the areas of politics and negotiation instead of combat training.^[64]

Form VII: Juyo [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Form VII: Juyo / Vaapad](#)



Juyo in practice.

"Six there were for generations of Jedi. The seventh, is not well-known. Powerful form it is. Deadliest of all. But dangerous it is, for its master as well as its opponent. Few have studied. One student alone, to mastery has risen."

—Yoda^[src]

Juyo was described as the most vicious form of **lightsaber combat**, and was said to be filled with both fury and "malignant grace."^[68] The form was given the title of the most difficult and demanding form in all of saber combat.^[3] Skilled combatants with Juyo were said by [Jedi Master Vrook Lamar](#) to be able to "eviscerate a lone enemy." According to the [Sith Lord Darth Traya](#), the form was both chaotic and erratic, with a heavy focus on offense.^[69]

[Jedi battlemaster Cin Drallig](#) listed bold, direct motions as characteristics of Juyo, qualifying them as more open and kinetic than [Form V](#), but with a less elaborate appearance than [Ataru](#). Drallig contrasted the tactics of Juyo as not nearly as graceful or linked as those of Ataru, instead referring to them as "seemingly unconnected staccato sequences." He also listed one of the strengths of the form as its unpredictability. The form was said to necessitate greater energy than Form V, due to a broader wielding of a user's focus and a deeper emotional link. Despite the challenges inherent in the use of the form, it could serve as a pathway to considerable power.^[36]

Vaapad [Edit](#)



[Mace Windu](#) and [Sora Bulq](#), the two creators of Vaapad, [duel](#) each other on [Ruul](#).

"This is called Vaapad, Kar. How many arms do you see?"

—Mace Windu facing Kar Vastor in unarmed combat^[src]

Vaapad was described as more than a fighting style; it was a state of mind that led through the penumbra of the dark side, requiring the user to enjoy the fight, and relish the satisfaction of winning. The practitioner of Vaapad would accept the fury of their opponent, transforming them into one half of a superconducting loop, with the other half being the power of darkness inherent in the opponent.^[3] The form was also mentioned with a cautionary warning by the [Jedi](#) that use of Vaapad led the user perilously close to the dark side due to its focus on physical combat.^[1] Vaapad required a constant and sizable stream of Force use from the user, with a barely contained explosion of Force power essential to all variations of Form VII as another prerequisite for its use. The form's attacks appeared to be unconnected, its motions seemingly unpolished to an untrained observer.^[70]

Three Forms of the New Jedi Order [Edit](#)

Strong Style [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Strong style](#)



[Desann](#) using the strong style against [Kyle Katarn](#).

"Uses powerful strikes to batter through defenses. This style incorporates great range and power, but often leaves the Jedi open to attack"

—Description of the strong style ^{[\[src\]](#)}

The strong style was based primarily on powerful strikes to batter through an opponent's defense, sacrificing speed for unrivaled power. The strong style covered great distance, and was virtually unstoppable unless the opponent responded in kind. Due to its utilization of strength and power, the strong style would cause more damage than many other forms of lightsaber combat, while its range and power made it especially efficient against single opponents who were armed with melee weapons. In lightsaber duels, the powerful strikes of this style could break through lightsaber blocks with relative ease. On rare occasions when a lightsaber lock occurred, a user could usually win the lock by ripping the opponent's blade away, leaving him defenseless. This style was quite destructive, and if the practitioner were presented with an opening, it would almost always cause a devastating blow. ^{[\[41\]](#)[\[42\]](#)}

Being based on slow, powerful swinging attacks, users of the strong style would often leave themselves open to counterattacks and open to [blaster](#) fire. The style could thus be disadvantageous in one-on-one melee combat in terms of speed comparisons against faster opponents, although its range and penetration power could just as easily negate these disadvantages. It was weak against blaster shots, as the stance required that the user shift the blade quite a bit to cover the body. Thus, it was almost solely utilized in lightsaber combat. ^{[\[41\]](#)[\[42\]](#)}

Medium Style [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Medium style](#)



A Jedi using the medium style to dispose of two [Tusken Raiders](#).

An intermediate style between the [fast](#) and the [strong styles](#), the medium style was based on a perfect equilibrium between speed and power. More often than not, the medium style was the first taught to a lightsaber duelist. It was simple in technique, yet more technical and powerful forms could be built from its foundation. ^{[41][42]}

This simplicity was both a strength and weakness. It was an excellent style to fall back onto when nothing else worked, and could provide a respectable offense and defense. It could effectively combat blasters and hold less skilled lightsaber duelist at bay. However, more skilled gunslingers (such as [Boba Fett](#)) or more talented lightsaber duelists (such as [Luke Skywalker](#)) would very rapidly break a medium style defense. The same holds true in offense, as a skilled duelist would rapidly destroy the user's momentum and counterattack. ^{[41][42]}

Fast Style [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Fast style](#)



Two duelists apply dual-bladed variants of the Fast style against one another.

Consisting of short and quick motions with the blade that could be chained and combined almost indefinitely, this style allowed for multiple attacks at an extremely fast pace. Its obvious advantage was that it was efficient in one-on-one combat against slower opponents with lax defenses or many opponents who were not wielding melee weapons, particularly when combined with [Force speed](#). Among all the styles, this style provided the best defense against blaster fire. In lightsaber combat, it was a powerful

defensive technique, as the user could create a very strong defense against multiple opponents or a single, stronger opponent. ^{[41][42]}

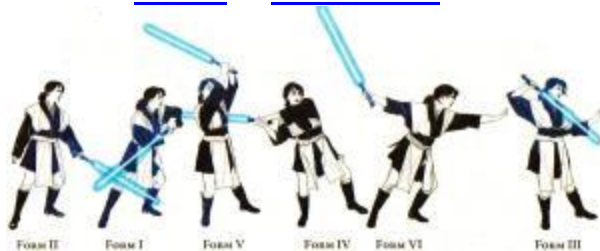
Relying primarily on speed and multiple attacks, the disadvantages of the fast style were equally obvious. Firstly, its use of fast strikes limited the amount of power that was put into a blow, making it easy for a strike to be parried or overpowered. Secondly, its range was considerably short, making it a less effective offense against a wide-spread of multiple opponents. Third, the fast style's defenses could quickly be broken through if an opponent was much more physically powerful than the user. Since the blade was kept so close to the body, a strong, cunning opponent will simply hammer the user's blade in the hopes that the practitioner would tire and leave themselves open. ^{[41][42]}

Other Fighting Forms and Styles [Edit](#)

The Unorthodox and Hybrid Fighting Methods [Edit](#)

"Stop using the standard attacks, use the unorthodox!"

—[Dooku](#) to [Grievous](#)^[src]



A duelist applies moves from multiple fighting forms as part of a personalized, hybrid fighting style.

There were many fighting styles that predated or coexisted with the classic Jedi forms that were adopted by individual Jedi duelists. In fact, study into some of these more esoteric fighting forms, such as Sokan or mounted lightsaber combat, were made available within the Temple walls. Also, Jedi were encouraged to develop hybrid fighting forms, or to study alternate fighting styles to back up their primary. Such fighting forms have taken many shapes, from simple personalized variations of other styles, to advanced hybrid fighting forms. For example, Niman practitioners were encouraged to study Soresu, the pure root of Form VI. Obi-Wan Kenobi began studying Soresu to compensate for the defensive weaknesses of Ataru, though he eventually switched entirely to the former. ^{[6][52]}

However, other duelists discouraged such hybrid methods, a notable being Dooku. While Dooku advocated the application of unorthodox maneuvers, he focused exclusively on Makashi, and referred to hybrid duelists as mere "dabblers" lacking mastery. He even went so far as to smear [Jedi battlemasters](#) for this, maintaining that their attempts to master multiple combat forms was taking on too much, and they could still be beaten by a specialist in a single form.^[6] One of the facts supporting this viewpoint was the death of Battlemaster [Cin Drallig](#) at the hands of [Darth Vader](#), a Form V specialist.^[28]

Trispzest [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Trispzest](#)

"You could be the finest warrior in creation—on the ground—but now you are in my element!"

—Kharys^[src]

A combination of elements of Form VII and traditional [S'kytri](#) aerial dueling, Trispzest was a type of aerial lightsaber combat originally developed by the airborne [Force-sensitive Majestrix](#) of [Skye](#), [Kharys](#). Trispzest, which meant *heart palpitation* in the [S'kytric language](#), would allow the combatant to utilize the advantages of flying in battle against grounded units—whom the S'kytri would derogatively refer to as "walkers". In Trispzest emphasis was placed on the use of the [sai cha](#) technique to decapitate "walkers."^[31]

Trispzest had many advantages, but one fatal weakness, as the combatant was open to attacks from directly below him or her by grounded units. Kyle Katarn took advantage of this weakness when, dropping to the ground and lunging his lightsaber upwards as Maw passed over him, he injured Maw during a duel on [Ruusan](#).^[71]

Tràkata [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Tràkata](#)



Tràkata in practice.

The Tràkata style was based around the unique ability of lightsabers to turn on and off, activating and deactivating the blade in the heat of combat to slip past enemy defenses, or trick them into over-extending themselves. Philosophically, Tràkata involved practical combat and deception, rather than the more traditional single-minded and determined tactics that were the hallmarks of the Jedi and Sith. Sith had difficulty applying this style, as their power came from passion and rage rather than level-headed tactical ingenuity, and the Jedi refrained from this style due to their unwillingness to rely on deception. Also, deactivating one's lightsaber during combat offered greater control over the Force due to the removed distraction.^[72]

Sokan [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Sokan](#)

"It's over, Anakin. I have the high ground!"

—[Obi-Wan Kenobi](#) to [Darth Vader](#)^[src]

For the most part, Sokan was a principle of lightsaber combat, rather than a true form. Developed by the ancient [Jedi Knights](#) during the [Great Hyperspace War](#), Sokan teaching revolved around using the environment itself to gain a tactical advantage in combat. Sokan was based around out-maneuvering opponents, using quick tumbling and jumping movements to close the distance and facilitate swift strokes towards the opponent's vital areas. Terrain was heavily relied on for this purpose, and allowed for great speed and mobility, and also facilitated self-defense. Prior to the Clone Wars, Sokan practitioners integrated highly kinetic elements of [Ataru](#) with their ancient Sokan techniques to create a blend of styles that relied upon agility.^[31]

Mounted Lightsaber Combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Mounted lightsaber combat](#)



[Jedi Jaden Korr](#) applying Mounted lightsaber combat from the back of a [Tauntaun](#).

"Mount them."

—Obi-Wan Kenobi^{[\[src\]](#)}

In this type of combat, the duelist was limited to fighting one-handed, as the other hand was needed for steering the mount. As the duelist would have a height advantage over the opponent, attacks while mounted typically consisted of low lunges and diagonal slashes and arcs. The prime advantage of this type of fighting is the high advantage and the speed offered by the mount, though conversely the duelist had to devote effort towards protecting the mount, and if its alive, effort has to exerted to keep it calm in the heat of battle.^{[\[42\]](#)[\[73\]](#)}

Telekinetic Lightsaber Combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Telekinesis#Lightsaber combat](#)

"The power of energy over matter...and mind over both."

—Luke Skywalker^{[\[src\]](#)}

Telekinetic lightsaber combat was the art and practice of wielding one's lightsaber with Force-based telekinesis. It was extremely difficult, and required great aptitude in such applications of the Force. The primary advantages of such a fighting form were obvious; range ceased to be an issue, and the option of wielding numerous lightsabers simultaneously became viable.^{[\[9\]](#)}

The most basic application of telekinetis in lightsaber combat was the saber throw. Using the Force to guide the lightsabers arc through the air, users could throw their lightsabers in a boomerang fashion, cutting apart obstacles and surprising foes.^{[\[74\]](#)} More adept users of such a technique could hurl their lightsabers across great distances, make mid-air course-corrections, or simply allow their lightsaber to hover in place.^{[\[75\]](#)}

Dun Möch [Edit](#)

⇒ Main article: [Dun Möch](#)

"Make him doubt himself, his beliefs, or his intentions. Such things disrupt connections to the Force—and death soon follows."

—[HK-47](#) to the [Jedi Exile](#), on how to defeat [Darth Sion](#)^[src]



[Darth Vader](#) using Dun Möch against [his son](#).

Dun Möch was a traditional Sith tactic based around psychological warfare. Primarily, the practitioner relied on taunts that exposed an opponents inner doubts and weaknesses, disrupting their concentration.^[64] Correctly executing Dun Möch required great patience, a rare trait of the Sith during the time of the Brotherhood of Darkness. This need for patience was exhibited by [Darth Bane](#) during his duel with the [Zabrak Sirak](#) during a combat training session at the [Sith academy](#) on [Korriban](#). He exhibited patience by drawing out the battle and demoralized his opponent by withholding striking a final blow and capitalizing on his mistakes. Sirak's inexperience with long duels was being used against him by Bane and thus was slowly fatigued. Instead he allowed the tantalizing closeness of Sirak's defeat build his vengeance before unleashing it with a strong enough blow to disarm him and end the duel. Lightsaber combat instructor and Blademaster [Kas'im](#) commended Bane's use of Dun Möch and declared it a valuable lesson to all of the other students at the conclusion of the fight.^[76]

"Form Zero" [Edit](#)

⇒ Main article: [Form "Zero"](#)

"Remember, your lightsaber is an invaluable tool. Even when inactive, it can defuse a potentially volatile situation. Trust me on that."

—[Kyle Katarn](#)^[src]

Form "Zero", while not an actual form of **lightsaber combat** per se but rather an ethical principle, was the idea that [Jedi](#) should know when to use their [lightsaber](#) and when to find an alternative means of solving a problem. This idea was defined by [Jedi](#)

[Master Yoda](#) to address the need of the Jedi to restrain themselves when tempted to use "aggressive negotiations," and instead use another well-developed Jedi [skill](#), such as the Jedi [mind trick](#). This was a form used to arrive at a solution without resorting to violence; one that was favored by [Felanil Baaks](#).^[31]

Lus-ma [Edit](#)

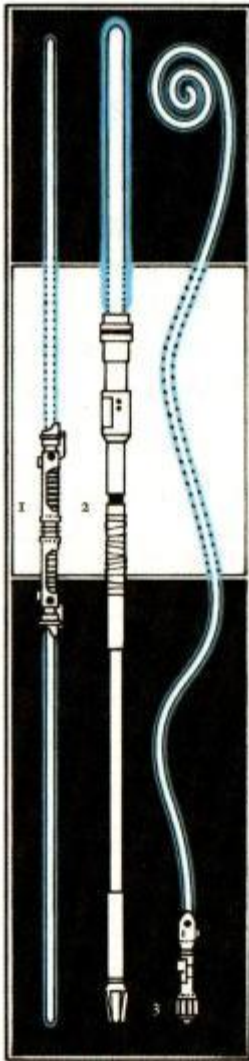
➡ Main article: [Lus-ma](#)

"..; Soresu answered by Lus-ma..."

—[Dooku](#) comments an application of Lus-ma by [Grievous](#) and his [IG-100 MagnaGuards](#) during a sparring match.^[src]

An obscure lightsaber technique, Lus-ma was one of the fighting forms that Count [Dooku](#) trained [Grievous](#) and his [IG-100 MagnaGuards](#) in. Beyond the fact that one of these initiates used Lus-ma to counter a Soresu move, next to nothing is known of the style.^[25]

Weapon-specific Fighting Forms [Edit](#)



Three of the weapon variants that required dedicated fighting forms.

Due to the incredible variations in lightsaber technology, and the various specialized weapons available, fighting and training methods for the use of these various implements were required. Most weapon variations were fairly minute changes in the size and shape of the lightsaber hilt, with the affects on combat being negligible. [Curved-hilt lightsabers](#) and [Lightfoils](#) allowed for greater precision and easier one-handed wielding, while [Long-handle lightsabers](#) allowed for improved leverage and power. [Dual-phase lightsabers](#) allowed for rapid changes in blade-length, and could be used to surprise enemies, but required no dedicated methods of specialized training beyond personal familiarity. ^[35]

However, other variations on armament, such as double-bladed lightsabers or the wielding of dual-blades, required intense specialized training due to the difficulty in using such weapons.

Jar'Kai (dual-blade) combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Niman/Jar'Kai](#)



The Dark Jedi [Boc Aseca](#) utilizing Jar'Kai against [Kyle Katarn](#).

"Perhaps you would like to learn something before you die. The use of two blades, one to support the other, can be traced back thousands of years and was common to both of our species. The invention of lightsabers has done nothing to lessen the effectiveness of this strategy—as you are about to learn."

—[Boc Aseca](#) to [Kyle Katarn](#)^[src]

The Jar'Kai style developed by the Yovshin Swordsmen was named for a [city](#) on [Atrisia](#). The city of Jar'Kai was also the site where the original [Jar'Kai dueling sabers](#) were crafted. These weapons were utilized by the Yovshin and were designed for the express purpose of being dual-wielded. Niman, the dual-blade style developed by the Royale Macheteros of the Kashi Mer, was named for the dual triumvirate of the [Kashi deities](#). The style was adopted by the Legions of Lettow, a group of Dark Siders responsible for the First Great Schism of the Jedi Order. After the defeat of the Legion at the hands of the Jedi, Niman was adopted by the Jedi order, eventually being refined into the sixth form of lightsaber combat, referred to by the same name. Both styles predated the invention and usage of lightsabers, but being designed to be practiced with swords, they

were easily adapted. In addition, the word "Jar'Kai" became a blanket term for dual-blade combat in general, leading to the birth of the term "Jar'Kai tactic", which was to simply employ two blades in combat, regardless of whether one had received training in any dual-blade fighting style.^[31]

Dual-blade fighters, whether classical Niman duelists or individuals applying the Jar'Kai tactic, were able to maintain a strong offense, as the speed of attack that two blades allowed would overwhelm most opponents. A typical maneuver was to continually attack with one blade while relying on the other for defensive coverage, ensuring that the duelist could keep up his guard even as he attacked. However, it was common that both blades be used for offensive purposes, keeping up a continuous wave-front assault. Though a complete fighting system in and of itself, Jar'Kai was easily adapted to other styles. After beginning her tutelage under [Darth Tyranus](#), Asajj Ventress quickly applied [Makashi](#) techniques to her practice of Jar'Kai. As Makashi was Tyranus's favored form, Jedi Master [Luminara Unduli](#) was able to recognize his training techniques in Asajj's fighting abilities, stating as much. [Mace Windu](#) also infused Jar'Kai tactics into his own [Vaapad](#) style while on a mission on [Haruun Kal](#), his former apprentice; [Depa Billaba](#); doing likewise.^{[77][78]}

Double-bladed lightsaber combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Double-bladed lightsaber](#)



Darth Maul applying double-bladed lightsaber

combat.

"In combat, your mind tries to keep track of each blade separately, effectively doubling the number of possibilities. But the two blades are connected: by knowing the location of one, you are automatically aware of the location of the other. In actual practice, the double-bladed lightsaber is more limited than the traditional lightsaber. It can do more damage, but it is less precise. It requires longer, sweeping movements that don't transition well into a quick stab or thrust. Because the weapon is difficult to master, however, few among the Jedi-or even the Sith-understand it. They don't know how to attack or defend effectively against it. That gives those of us who use it an advantage over most of our opponents."

—Blademaster [Kas'im](#)^[src]

The primary purpose of the double-bladed lightsaber was to allow for a faster rate of attack, unleashing a rapid assault with only a minimum of movement, "more slaughter per swing" as some put it. Saberstaffs were also excellent defensive weapons, as the doubled length of the weapon provided more surface area for deflecting and parrying.^[79] In addition to the practical benefits of the weapon, it also possessed a great psychological impact. The dual-blades increased the visual impact of the weapon, and in combat, opponents would intuitively try to track the blades separately rather than as a single weapon, overwhelming them.^[53]

However, despite all of the advantages offered by the weapon, its weaknesses were equally obvious. Special training was required to wield the weapon effectively, with those attempting to use it without such discipline likely to bisect or impale themselves.^[3] The techniques employable with a double-bladed lightsaber were extremely limited, as the second blade rendered many positions and movements impossible to execute, or required the wielder to twist himself awkwardly around the weapon to do so. Many techniques required the user to perform elaborate flourishes in order to move the staff around their body, leaving them open, and any sort of fighting method that focused on power or penetration was difficult to apply.^{[53][80]} Also, the enlarged hilt common to most double-bladed lightsabers presented a large target, difficult to defend. Opponents would often attempt to employ the *sun djem* contact mark, with even experienced saberstaff wielders being vulnerable to this tactic.^[80]

Lightsaber pike combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Lightsaber pike](#)



[Kazdan Paratus](#) utilizing his lightsaber pike in combat against [Galen Marek](#).

Resembling an ancient pole-arm in many respects, the primary purpose of the lightsaber pike was to allow vastly increased range. The primary feature of the weapon was the long shaft that the lightsaber was mounted on, which was machined from a lightsaber-resistant alloy, such as [phrik](#). The shaft provided several advantages: drastically increased range, use as a close-quarters defensive weapon, with the large surface area of the shaft being used to block enemy strikes, and the improved leverage granted by such a large handle, allowing wielders to dole out devastating power attacks.^{[35][81]}

However, like the double-bladed lightsaber, the weaknesses of such a weapon and the associated combat styles were obvious. The long shaft made many positions and movements awkward, sometimes impossible, to execute, it did not transition well between thrusts and slashes, and required plenty of open space to wield properly.^[81]

Lightwhip combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Lightwhip](#)



[Githany](#) utilizing a lightwhip in combat.

"That combination is what defeated him. His Jedi training had prepared him for an energy weapon, or a solid one. Not one that was both at once."

—Lumiya, explaining the advantages of her whip ^[src]

Wielded in the same manner as a proper whip, the lightwhip was a rare and exotic weapon, an unfamiliar occurrence among traditional duelists. Due to this, lightwhip wielders enjoyed a considerable amount of leverage over opponents. ^[82] Along with its rarity, lightwhips also featured copious range, the long, flexible energy strand allowing the wielder to attack from a range of several meters. ^[37] The weapon was also difficult to defend against, as it could simply flex around an opponent's blade when he attempted to parry. ^[83] When multiple tassels were included, the whip was able to overwhelm the defenses of enemies by attacking them from all sides. ^[37]

However, lightwhips featured just as many drawbacks as advantages. The lightwhip blade was difficult to control, able to just as easily maim an untrained wielder as an opponent, and was weaker than the standard lightsaber blade. ^[35] It needed to be swung wide to gain momentum for attack, and it was difficult to use defensively as flexible tassels are not well suited for parrying, leaving the wielder vulnerable to both great speed and brute force. ^[84] In fact, lightwhip blades were even known to short out violently when struck with enough force. ^[37]

Unarmed Combat [Edit](#)

➡ Main article: [Unarmed combat](#)



[Darth Vader](#) and [Obi-Wan Kenobi](#) engage in unarmed combat.

"You were at Galidraan...tell me, how did one mere man kill so many of your kind?"

"With his bare hands."

—Darth Sidious and Darth Tyrannus, speaking about Jango Fett^{[\[src\]](#)}

As the various forms of lightsaber combat were all fully developed martial art forms, they were not limited to use with the lightsaber, and unarmed combat training was standard among many Force-based organizations.^{[\[85\]](#)} Most [species](#) were known to engage in this kind of combat, and a number of [sentient](#) species and cultures also developed it into different martial arts proper; just as the various lightsaber combat forms could be applied unarmed, so to could many of these unarmed combat styles be applied with the lightsaber. [Darth Maul](#) and [Anoon Bondara](#) were both students of the [Teräs Kāsi](#) martial art, developed by the [Followers of Palawa](#), who became accomplished lightsaber duelists.^{[\[21\]](#)[\[86\]](#)} The [Echani martial art](#) was an unarmed combat discipline known to be taught to military special forces throughout [the galaxy](#), and may have been taught to [Meetra Surik](#).^{[\[9\]](#)}

During duels, such physical attacks were applied with astonishing regularity, oftentimes with the goal of disorienting an opponent prior to a finishing attack. As disarming was a common goal in lightsaber duels, it was not unheard of for both opponents to lose their weapons, causing the fight to degenerate into a brawl. In fact, fighters have been known to draw on the Force to augment their speed and strength, allowing them to unleash powerful hits that threw opponents across the room, or literally tear them limb from limb.^{[\[87\]](#)[\[88\]](#)}

Behind the scenes [Edit](#)



Early concept art of the lightsaber, depicting lightsaber combat.

Lightsabers, and by extension lightsaber combat, were inspired by the pirate and romantic films of the 1940s, which heavily featured rapier fencing and the like. In keeping with these romanticized depictions of fighting, the lightsabers were intended to represent the honor and chivalry inherent in the Jedi. Jedi were initially conceived as fighting with swords, but George Lucas wanted to provide them with a technological edge, and created the lightsaber. His rationale was that in an era of energy weapons, lightsabers could be used to deflect the rays, giving birth to the idea of blast-deflection. Lucas wanted the earliest lightsaber duels to feature a very oriental-style of fencing, reminiscent of [Japanese](#) fighting styles, which involved a great deal of honor and spirituality.^[89]

The original lightsaber duel in [Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope](#) was choreographed by [Peter Diamond](#). According to Diamond, George Lucas wanted a broadsword-dueling style of fighting, with a touch of Japanese [Kendo](#) included. All of the fighting moves in the duel were two-handed strokes, in keeping with Lucas' initial concept that lightsabers were incredibly heavy and difficult to handle. Also, due to the brittleness of the stunt blades used during this fight, which were little more than wooden dowels, Diamond was forced to instruct [Alec Guinness](#) and [David Prowse](#) to stop their blades before contact due to their fragility.^[90]



Mark Hamill and Bob Anderson during filming of the lightsaber duel in Return of the Jedi.

As the Star Wars saga carried on, Lucas rethought the fighting styles. He decided to make them "faster and more intense", symbolizing Luke Skywalker's increasing mastery of the weapon. One-handed fighting methods resembling European rapier fencing came to be included. The choreography of the duels in [The Empire Strikes Back](#) and [Return of the Jedi](#) was also used to show Luke Skywalker's development as a character. In *The Empire Strikes Back*, [Mark Hamill](#) was choreographed to show Luke Skywalker fighting as hard as he was able against the bitter enemy of Darth Vader, though the duel in *Return of the Jedi* was more centered on the emotional context of the fight.^[89] Also, due to David Prowse's tendency to break the prop lightsaber blades during the filming of *A New Hope*, all of Darth Vader's fight scenes had [Bob Anderson](#) acting as Prowse's fighting double.^[91]



[Ray Park](#) and stunt doubles on set practicing their duel.

When the Star Wars prequel trilogy began filming, Peter Diamond was replaced by [Nick Gillard](#), who completely rethought the Jedi fighting styles. George Lucas envisioned that during this time period, the Jedi had reached their peak in terms of martial arts development, so the choreography had to be a great deal faster and more sophisticated.^[89] Gillard wanted to convey the sense that the Jedi had studied every single style of swordplay available, his idea being that *since they had chosen such a short-range weapon, they would have to be so good if they're up against ray guns and lasers*. Gillard choreographed the duels as what he described as "a chessgame played at a thousand miles an hour", with every move being analogous to a check. Aiding Gillard was the martial artist [Ray Park](#), who portrayed [Darth Maul](#), and helped train [Liam Neeson](#) and [Ewan McGregor](#).^{[92][93]}

Due to his age and consequent lack of mobility, [Christopher Lee](#) was replaced by stunt double [Kyle Rowling](#) for [Count Dooku](#)'s more complex dueling shots. However, Lee was able to perform some of the moves, particularly during the close-up shots. [Star Wars Episode II](#) was also the first Star Wars film to feature a large number of Jedi in a battlefield situation. To create this, numerous martial artists were hired and filmed either individually or in small groups in front of a blue screen. All the footage was then

compiled and edited into vignettes that were composited into either footage of the Arena model, or a computer-generated background.^{[94][95]} Similarly to Christopher Lee, [Ian McDiarmid](#) was also replaced by his stunt double due his age, though he also performed certain moves on the close-up shots.^[96]

The seven forms of lightsaber combat received their first description and elaboration in the [Fightsaber: Jedi Lightsaber Combat](#) article released in [Star Wars Insider 62](#). While these fighting styles would be mentioned and used in [Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic II: The Sith Lords](#), [Star Wars: Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast](#) and it's [sequel](#), [Jedi Academy](#) would instead use the three styles; Fast, Medium, and Strong. While each of these forms had strong parallels to the Three Rings of Defense described in the [1998 expanded universe novel I, Jedi](#), they may be little more than game mechanics.