

INTRO TO LIGHTSABER COMBAT:

Guide to Guards and Basic Strikes

By Carey Martell

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Purpose of this Guide

The material in this book represents a tiny portion of the material featured in my book '[Stunt Lightsaber Combat for Beginners: The Unofficial Guide to Dueling Like a Jedi](#)' which is available for purchase from Amazon at \$9.99 for the Kindle reader or \$19.99 as a paperback.

I have organized this guide as a way to showcase the quality of the instruction featured in my book in the hopes that you will consider purchasing it. The production of books like this require an upfront monetary investment such as for the illustrations and such. It is my goal to produce books that features more advanced techniques and even cover exotic subjects such as how to wield a double-bladed lightsaber. By purchasing the full book you help me produce this new material.

I hope you find the information here useful and that it helps guide your first steps into a larger world.

The Eight Basic Strikes

There are six cuts:

1. Cleave
2. Reverse Cleave
3. Uppercut
4. Reverse Uppercut
5. Middle Cut
6. Reverse Middle Cut.

There are also three basic thrusts:

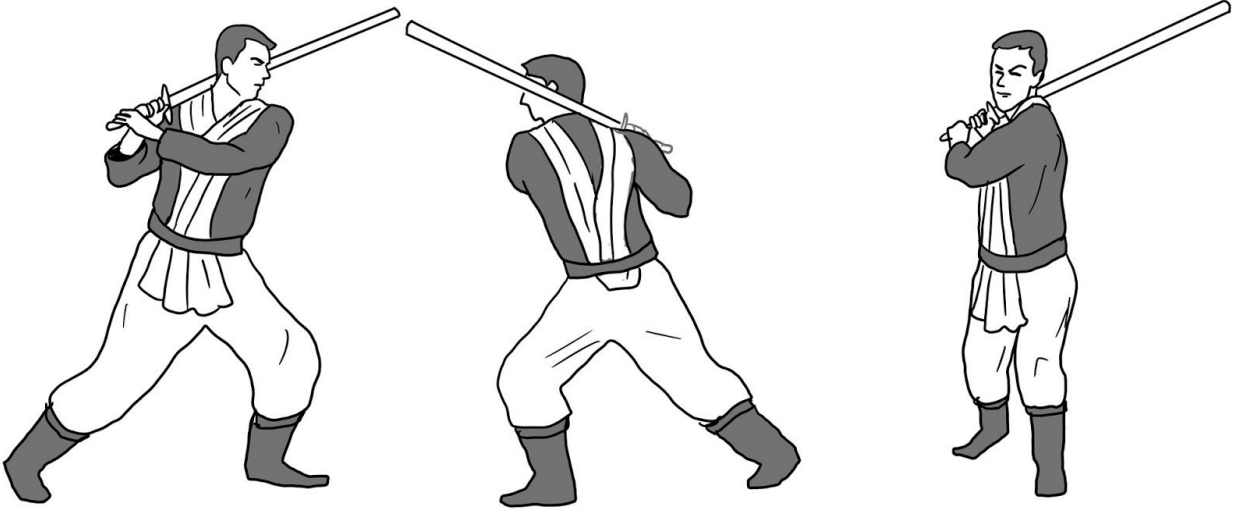
1. High Thrust
2. Middle Thrust
3. Lower Thrust.

These techniques and their related drills are explained in full detail in my book [‘Stunt Lightsaber Combat for Beginners’](#) but they are mentioned here because it is impossible to understand the reason why certain guards position the body if you don’t know what kinds of strikes they are meant to perform.

In this short guide we will only talk about how to perform a Cleave and a False-edge Reverse Uppercut as these two techniques form a basic combination.

The Cleave and the False-edge Reverse Uppercut

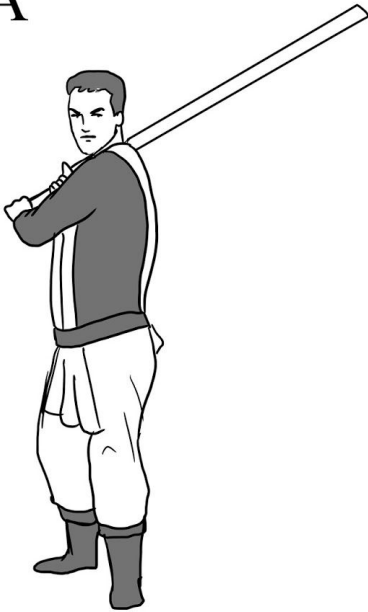
Prepare by holding the saber over your right shoulder, in a relaxed and comfortable way. Mimic the stance you see below.



This is the Power Guard, so called because it is the strongest way to hold the weapon in preparation for a powerful attack, the Cleave, which is a downward stroke of the blade. The Power Guard is similar to how you would hold a baseball bat.

From this position, a slash is very natural to perform.

A

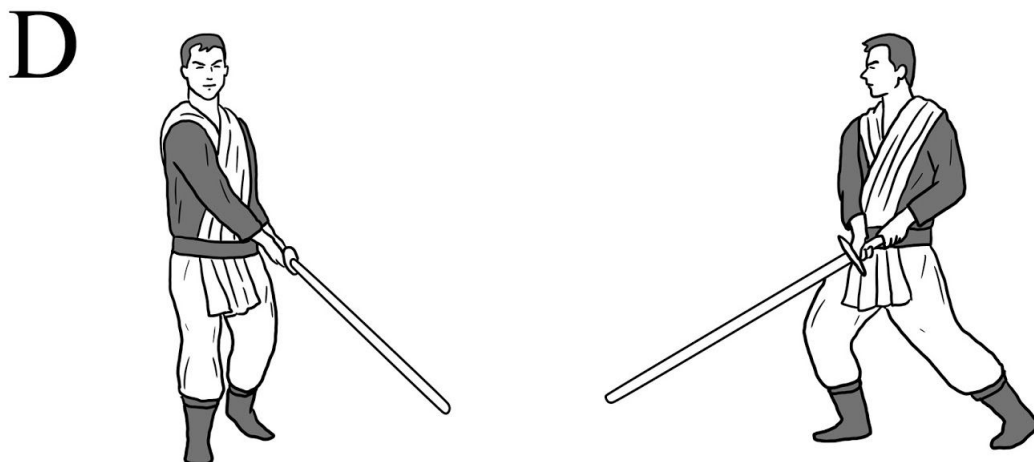
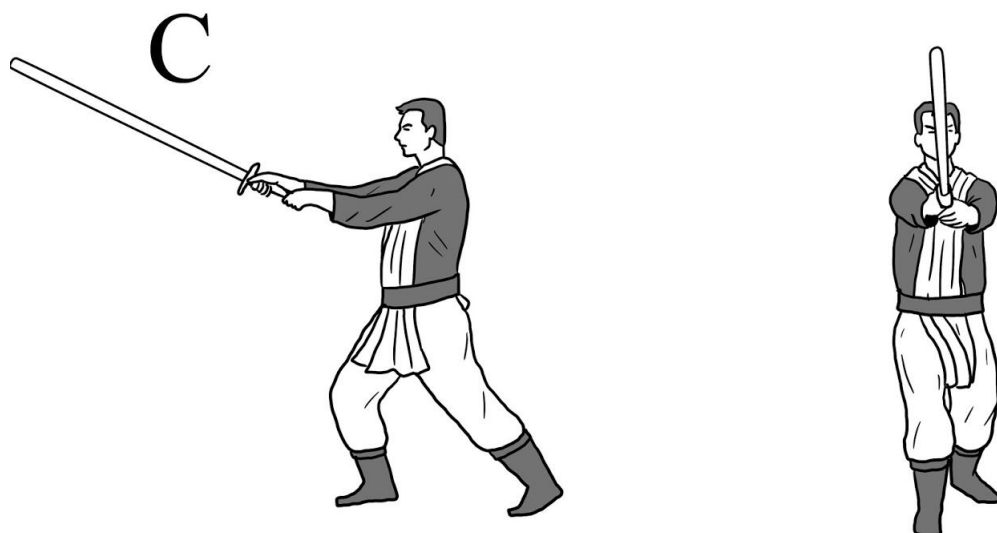


B



A: Stand in Power Guard, with the saber held over the right shoulder;

B: Bring your saber forward, keeping the hilt chest level with the blade's point raised to the sky...



C: ...then perform a Cleave, striking the point through the center-line of your body...

D: ...as the point of your saber descends to a space just above the ground before you.

The strength of the saber's impact is generated by the rotation of the blade as it swings from your shoulder to the most forward position (illustrated in C, above). This is the point at which the blow is strongest.

If the saber were really capable of slashing the opponent, and your opponent were real (rather than imagined) you would find the point of the blade would have cut the opponent in the lower jaw and slash through their chest.

Now that we have performed one Cleave, let's introduce two new terms to you; the Long Guard and the Lower Thrust Guard.

Look at illustration C above, from the example of the Cleave. This position is known as the Long Guard, so called because you are holding the sword a long way from your body (clever, right?).

Next look at illustration D above. This ending position of the Cleave is known as a Lower Thrust Guard, so called because from this position you are best able to perform a thrust and the blade is lowered to the ground.

However, you can perform another technique from the Lower Thrust Guard and it is by using this move we will turn the Cleave into a repeatable drill.

After performing a Cleave and finding yourself in a Lower Thrust Guard (again, look at illustration D above), without turning your blade do the reverse of the Cleave; move the sword up into a Long Guard (illustration C from above) and then back into a Power Guard (illustration A from above).

The technique you've performed is a strike I call a False-edge Reverse Uppercut:

- 'False-edge' because you have struck with the *false-edge* portion of the blade.
- 'Reverse' comes from the fact your attack originated from the side of your body opposite your forward foot (a similar concept as a reverse punch or kick from karate styles). If your attack originated from the same side of your body as your forward foot, it would not be called a 'Reverse' (in this case, it would be simply called a False-edge uppercut).

If it were not obvious, the move is an Uppercut because it is an upward cut of the blade.

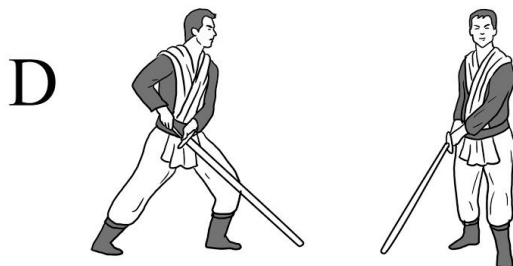
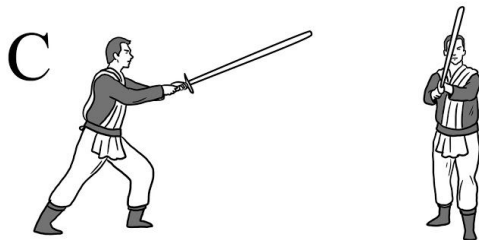
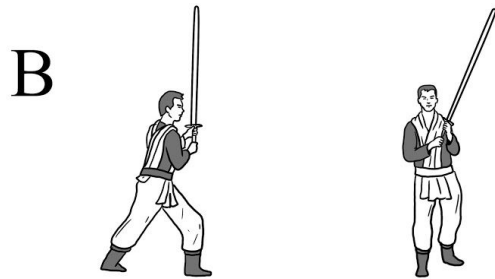
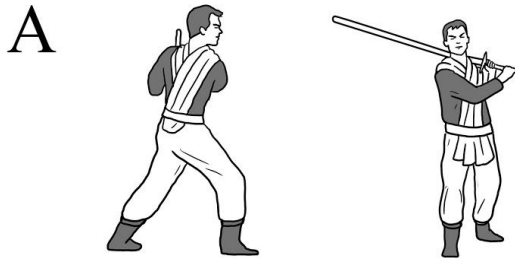
Although this name for the technique might seem a mouthful, it is important to have clear terminology to identify moves so that when several are combined together they are not confused for being the same technique.

Anyway let us now perform a walking drill; perform a series of Cleaves and Uppercuts while continuing to step forward as you did in previous drills. If you run out of room simply turn around and perform some more. Get comfortable with the motion as Cleaves and Uppercuts are staples of saber fighting.

If you are Left-handed this movement may be a little confusing to you, so I have included some instructions:

What is your "Forward foot" and what is the "Reverse" (an attack from the side of your body opposite the foot that is forward; essentially the same side of the body as your rear foot) is the most important thing to consider here.

Due to the way you hold your saber differently than right-handers, you should start in a Power Guard that is left chambered (the saber held over your left shoulder with your left foot forward), and go through to a right chambered Lower Thrust Guard, and then back up again.



*A: The left-handed Student stands in Power Guard (shown from the right and from the front);
B: He initiates his Cleave;*

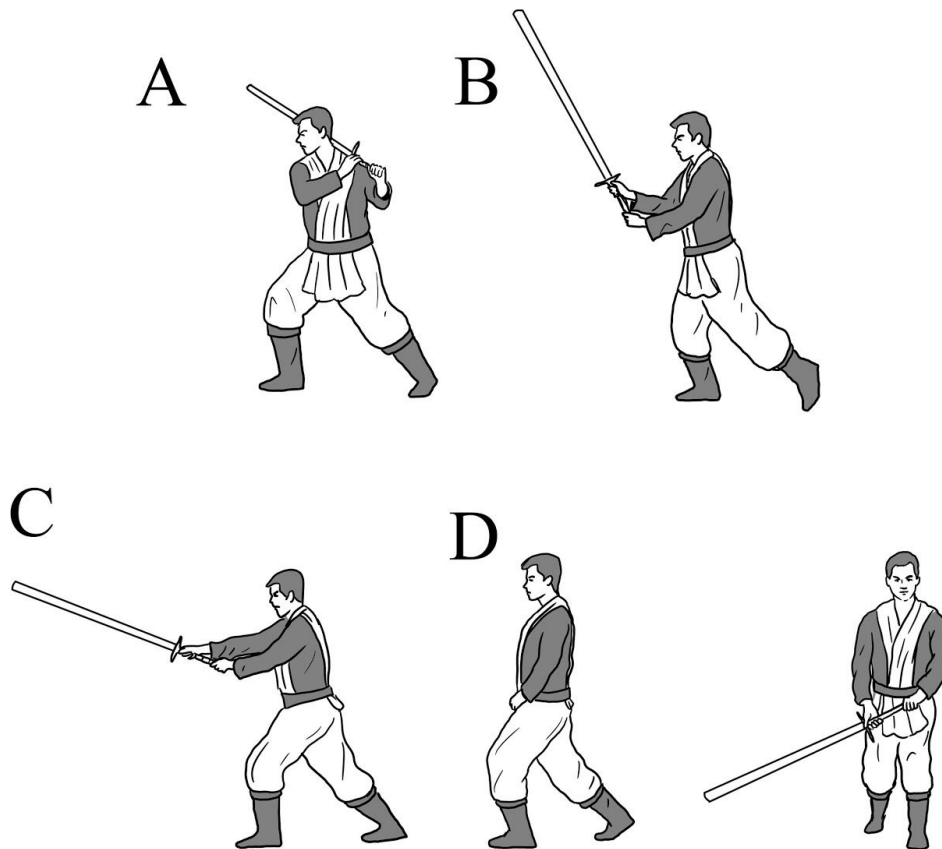
C: Reaching the maximum extension of the blade, he finds himself in Long Guard;

D: Having struck the Student continues the stroke until the point of the blade is directed at the ground. He is now in a Lower Thrust Guard.

While practicing pay careful attention to the positions. Try to mimic the illustrations as closely as possible to maintain good form with the techniques.

Reverse Cleave

To strike a Reverse Cleave, first adopt a left-chambered Power Guard. This is simply a Power Guard with your saber held over your left shoulder. Then perform the technique illustrated below.



A: Stand in Power Guard with your saber chambered over your left shoulder;

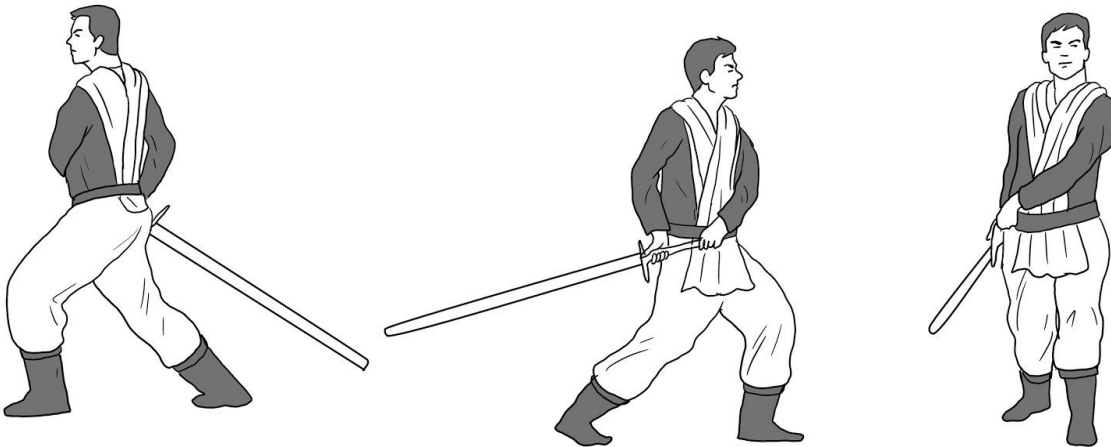
B: Swing your saber forward;

C: As you take a step forward, enter a Long Guard...

D: ...then bring your saber down into a Front Guard (shown from the side and front viewpoint).

This end position in illustration D is called the Front Guard because you are showing the whole front of your body to your opponent.

Alternatively, if you allow the swing of your saber to continue beyond your body until it passes behind you then you would find yourself in what is called the Long Tail Guard.



An example of the Long Tail Guard.

If you raise your saber from the Front Guard back up to a Long Guard you will find that you have performed another False-edge Reverse Uppercut strike, but if you perform an Uppercut from the Long Tail Guard it would be a True-edge Reverse Uppercut, or simply just called a Reverse Uppercut.

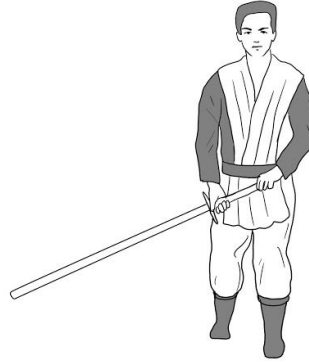
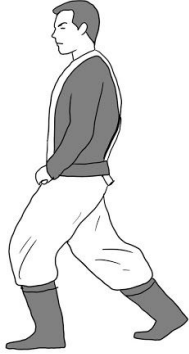
(Generally we only point out the edge of the strike when it is delivered from the false-edge. Strikes delivered with the true-edge are the normal versions of moves).

Anyway, let us talk more in-depth about a False-edge Uppercut from the Front Guard: The important thing to note is with this strike the hand position remains the same with your palms facing the ground, moving from the Front Guard to Long Guard in one quick motion. The blade of your saber should not rotate at all, as that would require you to turn your palms to face the sky, which slows your strike down.

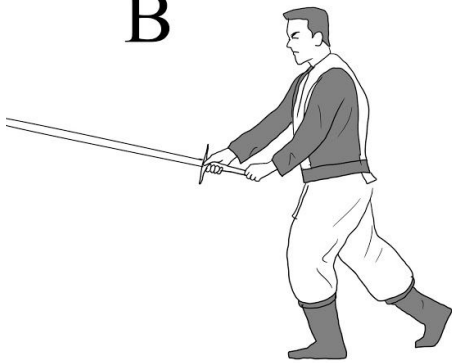
An Uppercut from Long Tail Guard is more powerful than one performed from the Front Guard, but the telegraph from Long Tail Guard is easier for your opponent to avoid or parry. Thus it can be smarter to perform a False-edge Reverse Uppercut to rapidly strike and catch your opponent unaware.

Let's add another step to our walking drill, this time to take us from the Front Guard / Long Tail Guard to a Long Guard.

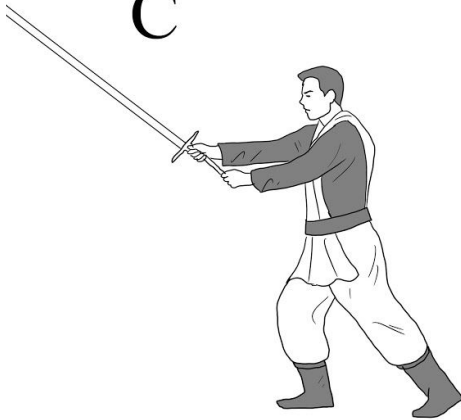
A



B



C



A: Start in Front Guard;

B: Send the point of your saber into a Long Guard...

C: ...as you take a step forward while maintaining your Long Guard, chamber the saber over your left shoulder as a Power Guard (not illustrated, but look on page 30 for the example).

It's worthy to note that placing your saber behind you (such as from Long Guard into Power Guard) should only be done when there is no opponent to face (he's either been defeated by the blow, or you're practising on your own). Otherwise your opponent is likely to strike your face. Practice this drill several times until the moves are familiar.

Conclusion

I hope you have found the instruction in this short guide to be valuable.

You can purchase the full book '[Stunt Lightsaber Combat for Beginners: The Unofficial Guide to Dueling Like a Jedi](http://www.lightsaberbook.com/)' from the website at <http://www.lightsaberbook.com/> .

The book is available from Amazon at \$9.99 for the Kindle reader or \$19.99 as a paperback.

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~Carey Martell

About the Author

Carey Martell has over twenty years of experience in the martial arts, having studied a variety of styles including Taekwondo, Boxing, Combat Hapkido, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, Aikido, Jeet Kune Do and Escrima. He served five years in the US Army from 2000 to 2005 including one tour of duty during Operation Iraqi Freedom. His primary occupation as a soldier was Infantryman and his advanced education included certifications in riot training, close quarters combat and combat lifesaving techniques. He served as his platoon's hand-to-hand combat instructor.

After leaving the military with an honorable discharge he became a digital media expert and is currently Chief Executive Officer of Martell Broadcasting Systems, Inc. Carey formerly served as the Vice President of Thunder TV, the internet television division of Thunder Digital Media.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/therpgfanatic>

Blog: <http://careymartell.com/>

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Martell Books is a book publishing imprint founded in 2015 by Carey Martell as a division of Martell Broadcasting Systems, Inc. The company publishes non-fiction books and videos covering a wide range of specialty topics including (but not limited to):

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