

# Backyard cutting

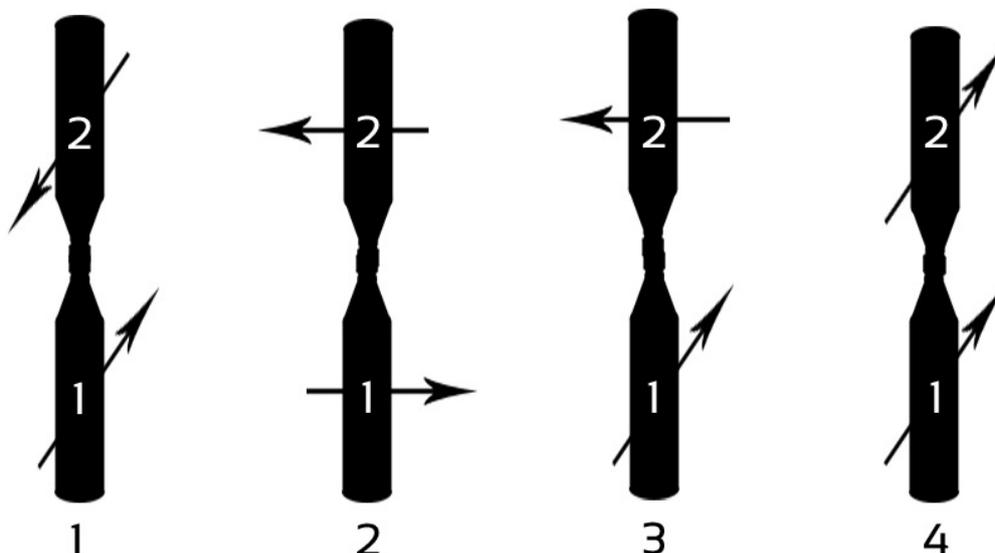
## The "Freestyle Cutting" curriculum

Ok, so I talk a lot about how you should go about doing certain cuts and how you should keep your sword sharp and so on but not that much about how to get down to business and do some actual cutting. I think that everyone approaches this in their own way and at their own pace. This is important because you don't want to be doing anything that you don't feel comfortable with, however I also however feel that sometimes a little push outside of your comfort zone can be beneficial to your training regime.

In a very similar way one of the many 'backyard cutters' groups, there is also the freestyle cutters of which I myself am a member. \*Before anyone says anything, the FSC is an open and non affiliated group in every way, it doesn't cost and being a member is and should be its own reward. ;) As a group, the FSC is geared more towards pushing the boundaries of competitive cutting, training as smartly as possible and trying new and more difficult cuts requiring higher levels of skill. There are members sat at every tier of this invisible skill tree if you will, some just starting and some are like wizards or something. me? I'm pretty much average but the idea as I've said is to get better by learning and learning from others.

To get to the point, if you were not already aware there does exist a 'curriculum' of cuts that as an aspiring or accomplished cutter you can attempt to complete. The main curriculum is split into 4 sections, each getting more and more difficult and geared towards training certain movements into your muscle memory. As well as this it helps you develop the strength that you will need in your arms, wrist and your core muscles if you want to carry on afterwards and take all this to the next level.

### Grade 4B



Performed from the draw

*some cuts from the last part of the curriculum*

It is an intrinsically helpful set of cuts that with the possible exception of the very first part are deceptively difficult to do but I myself have found to be incredibly useful. I would be nowhere near as confident with a sword in my hands right now if I had not decided to set about completing these cuts and I suggest as strongly as I can that you at the very least take a look at

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them yourself. Although the cuts require different sets of movements depending on how far along you are, the basic purpose seems to be to help you with your edge alignment, tip acceleration, stopping distance, body movement, target tracking as well as your overall confidence with the blade, the importance of which cannot be overstated.

At first glance, it doesn't look that difficult but let me tell you, it took me a year and a half to be able to learn every skill that I'd need in order to complete this curriculum. I looked at it and allocated myself 4-5 months to be able to do it. It turns out it looks easy, but easy it aint. You need to take your time, pay attention to your body and learn safely. You need to go about this is at your own pace, paying attention to all the things you'll need to improve on and improve on them as you go. The curriculum is structured in such a way that as you improve and complete a section, the next part will still push you onwards, forcing you to increase your skillset.

After you've completed this, I guarantee you'll have come a long way with your skill but as we know, what seems like a long way is but a step in a long journey. It's an essential part but it's only the beginning.

If you want to check out the Freestyle Cutting group, it's here; <http://www.freestylecutting.com>

*\* There are many tools out there available to you as a cutter, and some are worth mentioning. That's all I'm doing here. There are undoubtedly other groups doing similar things but this is the one I've had experience with. I can't speak for the others and to say that one course of learning is better or worse than another without having seen and experienced both is silly. There's always plenty to learn. Get out there and find out for yourself! ;)*

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