

Backyard cutting

The new X1 Curriculum

The what?

Firstly, Let me give you a rundown of how I got here. Having reached the end of the first cutting curriculum, I looked around for more to do. The bottle curriculum is fantastic for giving you a crash course in all the cuts that you're going to need to be familiar with as well as a taster of the more dangerous to perform draw cuts right at the end. I was understandably dissatisfied to find out that no more content was going to be posted.

I am a stickler for routine and structure and so I enjoyed the tier based progress that the course offered. There was in fact an 'advanced' bottle cutting curriculum that had been suggested but it turned out to be just the triple cuts from the mat cutting equivalent. Although balancing 3 bottles on top of one another and then performing triple cuts on them *is* technically possible, it is a lesson in patience to actually attempt. There needed to be something worked out for bottles but it had to be something that offered the next logical step as far as skill was involved. You see the bottle course dealt with single cuts, double cuts, returning cuts and draw cuts, in that order. This was good as like I said, this was done deliberately to teach you all the basics you needed to become halfway proficient with a sword. Thing was, after that it stumbled.

Enter the X-Curriculum.

The X curriculum has been designed by another cutter of considerable skill, the Youtube user [Ninjamixer](#). (I seriously suggest you check out his videos) As I write this, there are I believe three already written segments. These patterns start with newly worked out and more difficult two handed style cuts, the two handed part everyone should be used to by now. It does however end up with reverse grip doubles which are probably completely alien to most people when they start them.

Again, the idea of this course of new material is to teach new techniques, familiarise you with different ways of using the sword and widen the patterns of cuts that you can make. When I first looked properly at the first Freestyle cutting course, the patterns at the end of it looked impossible, in fact the ones halfway through did. They even felt impossible as I first attempted them, but that's something we need to be able to see for what it is. It's a bump in a learning curve, nothing more. Persistence makes all of this learning and demonstrating new skills entirely possible and we owe it to ourselves as cutters to try and do things that haven't been done before or that we didn't think we could do in the first place.

Whats the actual purpose?

Well obviously, learning new cuts is fun and a challenge. That's what we're here for right? We don't do this because we're learning to use a sword in a martial sense, it's not for home defence, we don't collect different coloured belts or anything like that. We're doing it because it's enjoyable to do. But the purpose, intentional or not, behind the X1 Curriculum I believe to be a multifold one.

- It encourages a more ambidextrous approach to cutting in that it has cuts that involve the left and the right hands.
- It trains muscles that you didn't even realise you needed to train
- It puts us outside of our comfort zones and gives us a wider repertoire of cuts to

Page 1 / 2

Backyard cutting

integrate into new cutting patterns as we see fit.

- It is a form of multi-skill training which accelerates any existing cutting practice.

That last one, multi-skill training, I've touched on before, but a quick recap is that mixing up our cuts and trying new things as well as continuing with our existing training has been shown to be effective at allowing our brains to more rapidly take on the new 'material'. That is to say that if you train new skills and mix them up with related but different ones, then you'll retain all this far more readily.

Eventually I believe but have not yet seen, it will lead us to working effectively with two swords as well as one. Now that's as ambitious a target as it will hopefully be impressive an achievement. This journey is going to take a lot of work unless you're already familiar with these new techniques, but because it's broken down into multiple parts, it's something that can be attempted at your own pace with easily recognisable levels of achievement. It's certainly not for beginners, that much is for certain but as long as you're reasonably competent with a sword and want to push the boundaries of what you can do, I wholeheartedly suggest you give it a good look.

Unique solution ID: #1098

Author: The Samurai Workshop

Last update: 2014-07-27 23:40