Weapons D6 / Lightsaber shoto

Name: Lightsaber shoto
Type: Melee Weapon
Scale: Character
Skill: Lightsaber; Lightsaber shoto
Cost: Unavailable for sale
Availability: 4, X
Difficulty: Moderate (+1D to Parry skill rolls, -1D to attack skill rolls)
Damage: 4D

Description: The lightsaber shoto, commonly referred to as simply shotos, but also known as short lightsabers or lightdaggers, were essentially miniaturized lightsabers, whose purpose was primarily to serve as an off-hand weapon for those duelists seeking to employ the twin-bladed technique of Jar'Kai, but were also utilized by those Jedi and Sith whose diminutive stature made wielding full sized lightsabers impractical, or, in some cases, impossible.

Technically the lightsaber shoto was nothing more than a scaled version of its larger sibling, and differed very little in its internal mechanism and construction. Generally speaking a shoto would be half the size of a standard lightsaber in both blade and grip length, and usually featured hilts that were considerably slimmer and more streamlined to allow for maximum dexterity.

Although relatively rare in comparison with common lightsabers, shotos were in great vogue during the Jedi Civil War, to the point where a standard design was adopted, and saw considerable usage, particularly among the Dark Jedi of Revan and Malak’s empire, who wielded shotos with blades of crimson or violet. Like their more traditional counterparts, these sabers were constructed by hand, and were as unique as the individuals who wielded them. Shotos that followed this basic blueprint all shared several common traits, including conical shaped pommels, ringed handgrips and cylindrical emitter shrouds with a pair of wide vertical slits down either side.

Typically a duelist seeking to incorporate a shoto into their arsenal would recreate their original lightsaber in miniature for the sake of convenience and familiarity, although many also opted to make their second blade a different color from that of their primary weapon.

The primary purpose of a shoto in lightsaber combat was to counter attacks by an opponent's weapon while freeing the primary lightsaber for a return strike. To this end, shoto wielders were required to become proficient in the lightsaber techniques of Jar'Kai in order to reduce risk of injury

to themselves due to the increased dexterity needed to master the use of both blades simultaneously. Masters of this technique could deliver a high number of attacks in a very short time, potentially overpowering opponents quickly rather than engaging in a protracted duel. Shotos were also used to counter lightwhips.

Some ambitious duelists took this strategy a step further by dispensing with the use of a regular lightsaber entirely, and instead wielding two shotos simultaneously. By doing so a combatant sacrificed reach and leverage in exchange for unparalleled speed, dexterity and range of motion. It is worth noting that any handicap inherent in this form could be compensated for with sufficient knowledge of Ataru, whose acrobatic maneuvers could be used to regain the ground automatically lost when shortening one's own blades. The renowned Jedi Master and High Council member during the Old Sith Wars Vandar Tokare was a prolific applicant of this technique, as was the Dathomirian Dark Acolyte Saato.

For some, however, the use of a shoto is not a choice, but a necessity. Throughout history many diminutive individuals both Jedi and Sith have adopted the shoto due to the physical impracticality of wielding a full-scale lightsaber. The Jedi Grand Master Yoda, for example wielded a shoto as his primary weapon, as did his contemporary Yaddle and the ancient Sith Acolyte Toki Tollivar.

Unlike a normal-sized lightsaber, the lightsaber shoto was crafted so that it could be used effectively as a thrown weapon.

The first shotos, referred to as short lightsabers, were introduced during the Old Sith Wars; one of the most notable users of this secondary blade was the ancient Jedi Master Kavar, who used a matched lightsaber and shoto with blue beams. Uthar Wynn's Sith apprentice and deputy at the Sith academy on Korriban, Yuthura Ban, wielded a red-bladed shoto as her primary weapon. The Sith Lord Freedon Nadd's lightsaber was a bronze-bladed shoto, which was later taken from his tomb on Dxun by a strike team sent by Meetra Surik.

During the Clone Wars era, the rebellious Jedi Master Sora Bulq carried a shoto of the same color as his standard lightsaber which he used in a duel against the Jedi Master, Mace Windu. Jedi Knight Anakin Skywalker's Padawan Ahsoka Tano wielded a yellowish-green shoto.

The Grand Master of the New Jedi Order, Luke Skywalker, constructed one during the Galactic Civil War to counter the unusual nature of his opponent, Lumiya's, lightwhip.

The Dark Jedi Picaroon C. Boodle's and the Jedi Grand Master Yoda's lightsabers were small enough that they may actually have been technically classifiable as a shoto, though they were not used as such. During the Swarm War, the Dark Jedi Lomi Plo also used a shoto in her duel against Jacen Solo and Luke Skywalker.

When Luke Skywalker became aware of the re-emergence of Lumiya during the events of the Second Galactic Civil War, he had his wife Mara Jade construct a shoto. Shotos were considered an essential item to have when fighting a lightwhip because they countered the advantage that the lightwhip had: the ability to go in more than one direction. Mara Jade constructed a shoto with a blue blade, while Luke's shoto had a red blade.

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