Air Force and Space Force Junior ROTC

INTRODUCTION TO DRILL AND CEREMONIES

SABER/SWORD MANUAL OF ARMS AND ARCHES

AFJROTC Drill and Ceremony Pamphlet

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INTRODUCTION TO DRILL AND CEREMONIES

SABERS/SWORDS MANUAL OF ARMS AND ARCHES

This pamphlet will provide instructors and cadets with the appropriate techniques to carry a Saber/Sword, using the Manual of Arms. This publication will also provide the sequencing of how to perform a Saber/Sword arch. A Saber/Sword arch is designed to add military professionalism and décor to an event at a variety of ceremonies. This publication was derived from instruction in the Army TC 3-21.5 and the United States Air Force Honor Guard Manual.

If you have any questions regarding this publication, please send correspondence to jrotc.ldr@au.af.edu.

MANUAL OF ARMS – SABER/SWORD

The saber is worn by cadet commanders while participating in ceremonies with cadets under arms. It is carried on the left side of the body attached to the belt by the scabbard chain with the guard of the saber to the rear.

1. Nomenclature.

The blade is approximately 31-inches long. Figure 1 shows the nomenclature for pertinent parts of the Saber/Sword and scabbard. Units may use the Air Force Saber, Army 1902 Sabers, Army 1840 Swords or facsimiles of any Saber/Sword listed above.

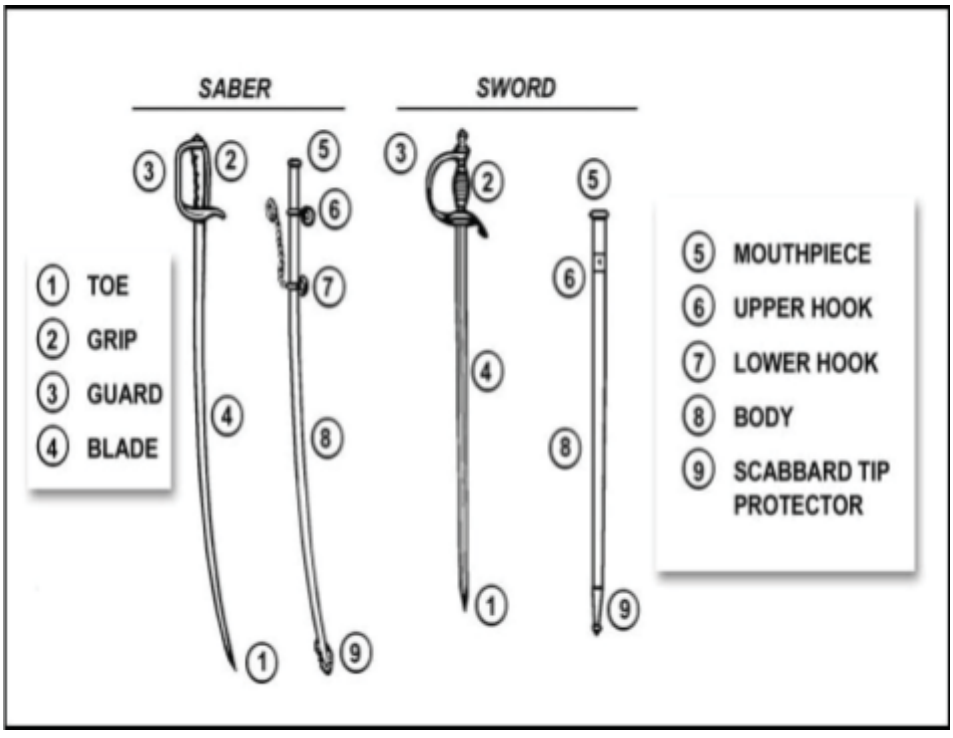

Figure 1. Nomenclature, Saber/Sword

2. Standing Manual Of Arms.

Execute Standing with the saber/sword using the following procedures:

2.1. **Attention.** This is the position before the command **Draw, SABER/SWORD** and after the command **Return, SABER/SWORD.** The hands are behind the trouser seams and the thumbs touch the first joint of the forefingers (Figure 2).

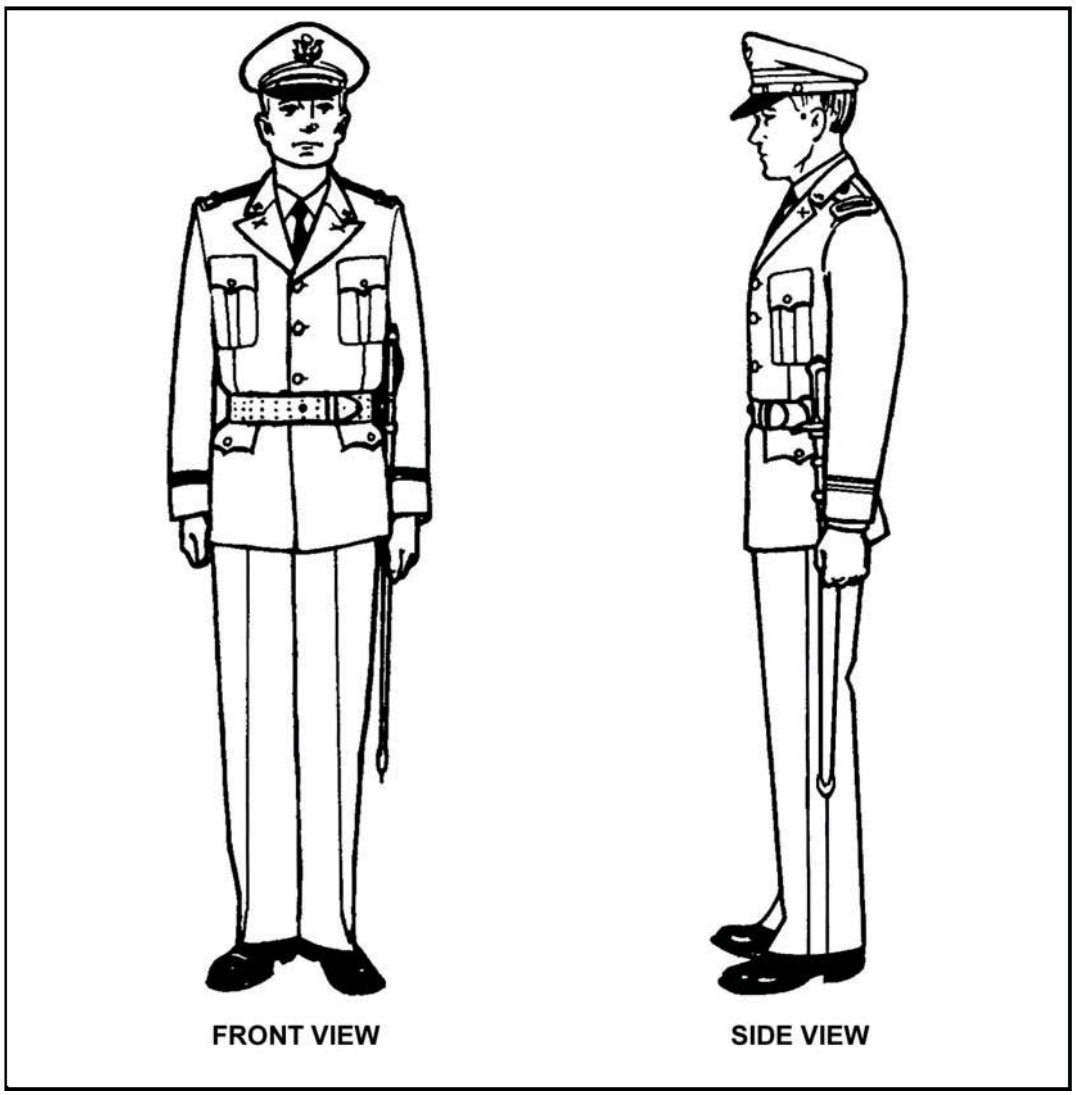

Figure 2. Position of Attention

3. Draw Saber/Sword. Figure 3 shows the sequence for executing Draw Saber/Sword.

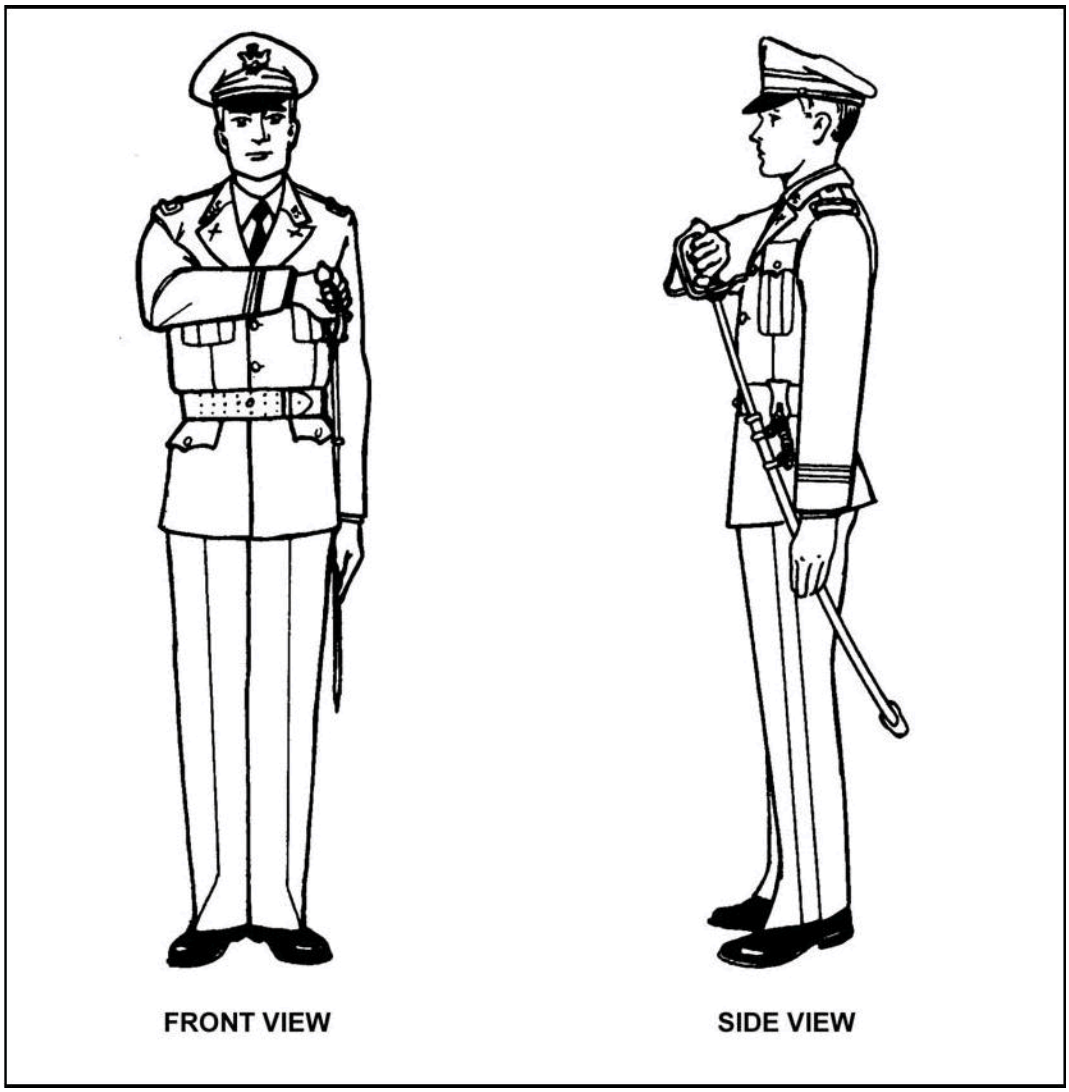

Figure 3. Draw Saber/Sword

3.1. At the preparatory command **Draw,** grasp the scabbard with the left hand turning the scabbard clockwise 180 degrees, tilting it forward to form an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Take the Saber/Sword grip in the right hand and pull the saber about 6-inches from the scabbard. The right forearm should now be roughly parallel to the ground.

3.2. On the command of execution **SABER/SWORD,** the Saber/Sword is pulled out of the scabbard and held in the position of Carry Saber/Sword. The Saber/Sword should be held with the inner blade-edge riding in a vertical position along the forward tip of the right shoulder (Figure 4).

4. Carry Saber/Sword.

The Carry Saber/Sword position is assumed under the following situations:

- To give commands.
- To change positions.
- By cadets when officially addressing (or when officially addressed by) another cadet, if the saber is drawn.
- Before returning the Saber/Sword to the scabbard.
- At the preparatory command for (and while marching at) quick time.

4.1. At Carry Saber/Sword (Figure 4), the cadet is at the Position of Attention. The Saber/Sword is held in the right hand; the wrist is as straight as possible with the thumb along the seam of the trouser leg. The point of the blade rests inside the point of the shoulder and not along the arm. The Saber/Sword is held in this position by the thumb and forefinger grasping the grip, and it is steadied with the second finger behind the grip.

4.2. Present Saber/Sword may be executed from the carry when serving in the capacity of commander of troops or serving in a command that is not part of a larger unit. On the preparatory command of **Present**, the Saber/Sword is brought to a position (at the rate, of two counts) approximately 4-inches from the nose so that the tip of the Saber/Sword is 6-inches from the vertical – count, 1 (Figure 5). At the command of execution **ARMS,** the right hand is lowered (at the rate of two counts) with the flat of the blade upward, the thumb extended on the left side of the grip - count 2, (Figure 5), and the tip of the Saber/Sword about 6-inches from the marching surface.

4.3. On the command **Order ARMS,** the Saber/Sword is returned to the position of Carry Saber/Sword.

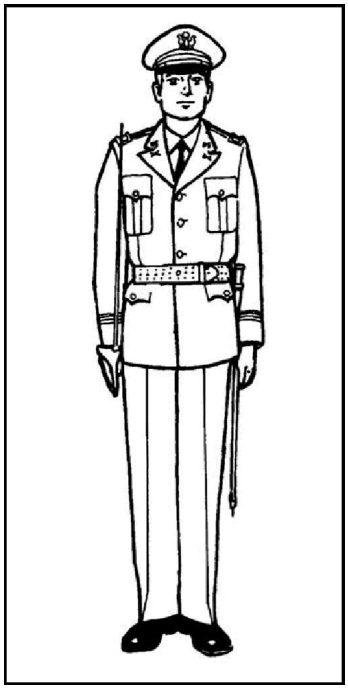

Figure 4. Carry Saber/Sword

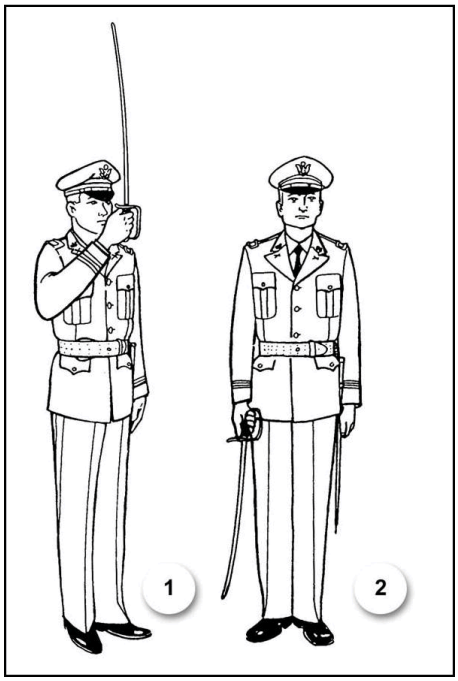

Figure 5. Present Saber/Sword

5. Parade Rest.

5.1. Parade Rest is assumed without moving the Saber/Sword from the Order Arms position. At the command of execution, the left foot is moved about 12-inches to the left (of the right foot), and the left hand is placed in the small of the back, fingers extended and joined, palm to the rear (Figure 6). At the command of execution **ATTENTION,** the left hand and foot are returned to the Position of Attention.

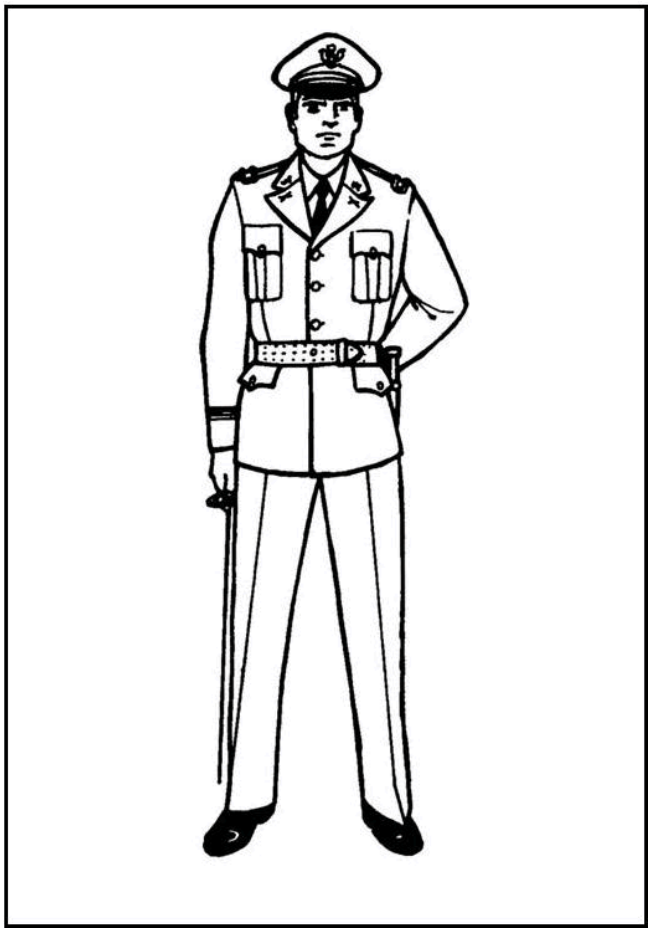

Figure 6. Parade Rest

NOTE: Whenever the Saber/Sword is at the Order Arms position the Saber/Sword is straight, not at an angle inward or outward in relationship to the body.

6. **Return Saber/Sword.** This movement is executed from Carry Saber/Sword in three counts.

6.1. At the preparatory command **Return** of the command**, Return, SABER/SWORD,** the Saber/Sword is brought to a vertical position, (1, Figure 7). The forearm (wrist) is held parallel to the marching surface about 3-inches from the body; the guard is pointed to the left.

6.2. At the command of execution **SABER/SWORD,** three actions take place simultaneously: the Saber/Sword is pivoted downward toward the guard, at the same time grasp the scabbard with the left hand just above the upper brass ring mounting. Tilt it forward and turn it clockwise 180 degrees. The scabbard should form a 45-degree angle with the ground, and the Saber/Sword bearer turns his head to the left and, looks down to observe the mouthpiece of the scabbard (the shoulders remain squared to the front and level). As smoothly and as quickly as possible, the saber (sword) is inserted into the Scabbard and stopped so that about 12-inches of the blade is showing; the right forearm (wrist) is horizontal to the marching surface and 3-inches from the body (2, Figure 7).

6.3. At the command of execution **CUT** of the command **Ready, CUT**, the Saber/Sword is thrust smartly into the scabbard, the scabbard is rotated so that its tip is forward, and the Saber/Sword bearer comes to Attention (3, Figure 7).

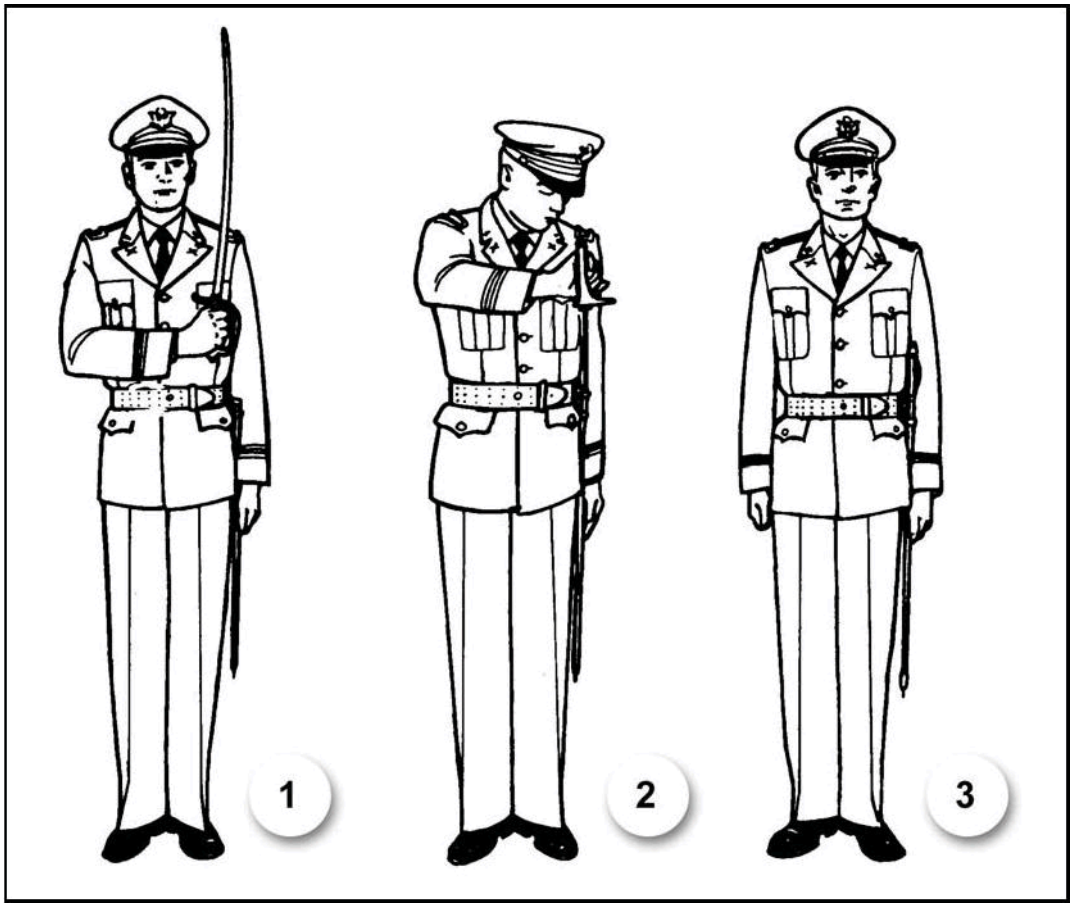

Figure 7. Return Saber/Sword

7. Marching Manual Of Arms.

7.1. While marching, the Saber/Sword is carried with the inner blade edge riding in a vertical position along the forward tip of the right shoulder (Figure 8).

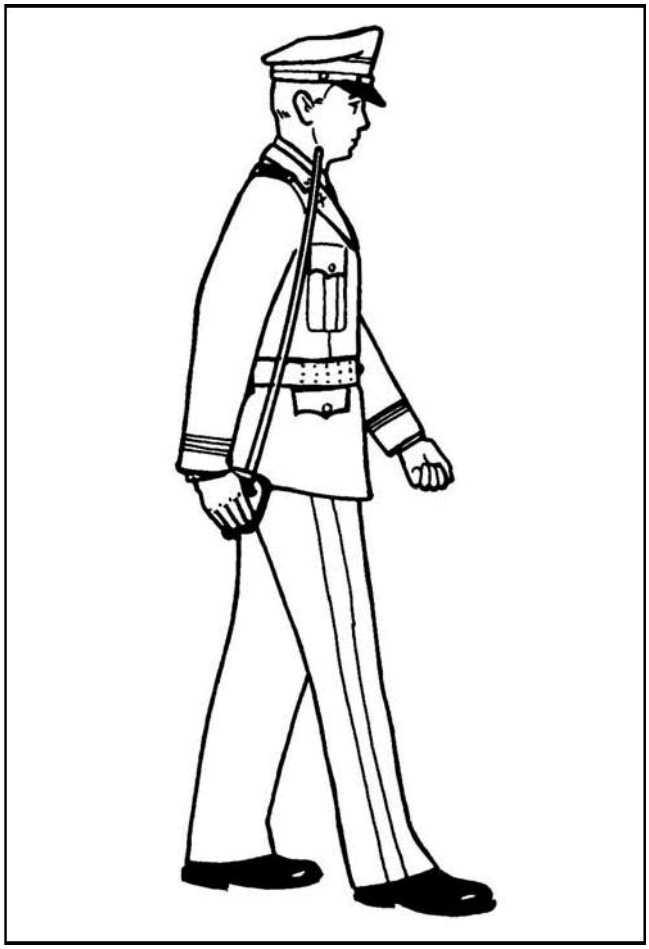

Figure 8. Marching position

7. **Eyes Right While Marching.**

7.1. The command **Eyes, RIGHT** is executed while marching at Carry Saber/Sword. The command **Ready** is given as the right foot strikes the marching surface (no action is taken). The second time the right foot strikes the marching surface, the command **Eyes** is given and the Saber/Sword is brought to the position (count one position) of Present Arms. No action is taken the third time the right foot strikes the marching surface. The fourth time the right foot strikes the marching surface, the command **Right** is given. As the foot strikes the marching surface, the head is turned sharply to the right at a 45-degree angle, and the Saber/Sword is brought downward (Figure 9).

NOTE: The initial preparatory command **Ready** is only used when marching with a guidon bearer.

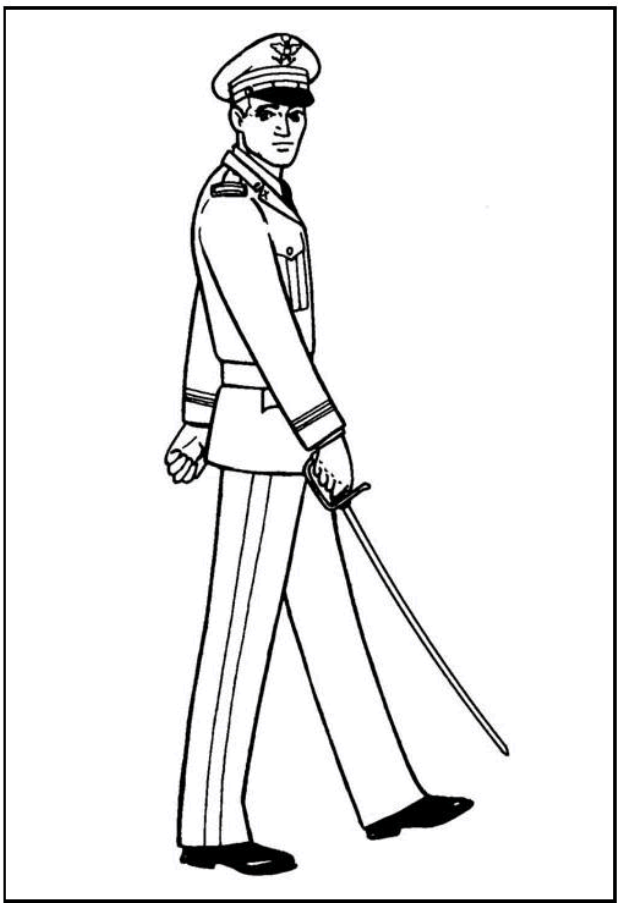

Figure 9. Eyes Right while marching

7.2. While marching at Present Saber/Sword, the right arm is swung naturally (6-inches to the front and 3-inches to the rear) in a vertical plane, flexing the wrist to keep the tip of the blade level (about 6-inches) above the marching surface. This requires extending the wrist on the forward movement and elevating the wrist on the rearward movement.

7.3. The command **Ready, FRONT** is executed as follows: The command **Ready** is given as the right foot strikes the marching surface (no action is taken). The second time the right foot strikes the marching surface, a second command **Ready** is given (again, no action is taken). The Saber/Sword is returned to the Order position while maintaining the arm swing as the right foot strikes the marching surface the third time. The fourth time the right foot strikes the marching surface the command **FRONT** is given. The head is turned sharply to the front as the right foot strikes the marching surface and the Saber/Sword is returned to the carry position the next time the left foot strikes the marching surface.

8. **PORT ARMS.**

8.1. Port Arms (Figure 10) is executed on the preparatory command **Double Time** of the command **Double Time, MARCH.** This position is assumed only from the position of Carry Saber/Sword. The right arm swings naturally across and 6-inches in front of the body. The Saber/Sword is canted 45-degrees from the vertical with the guard pointed to the left. The left hand grasps the scabbard.

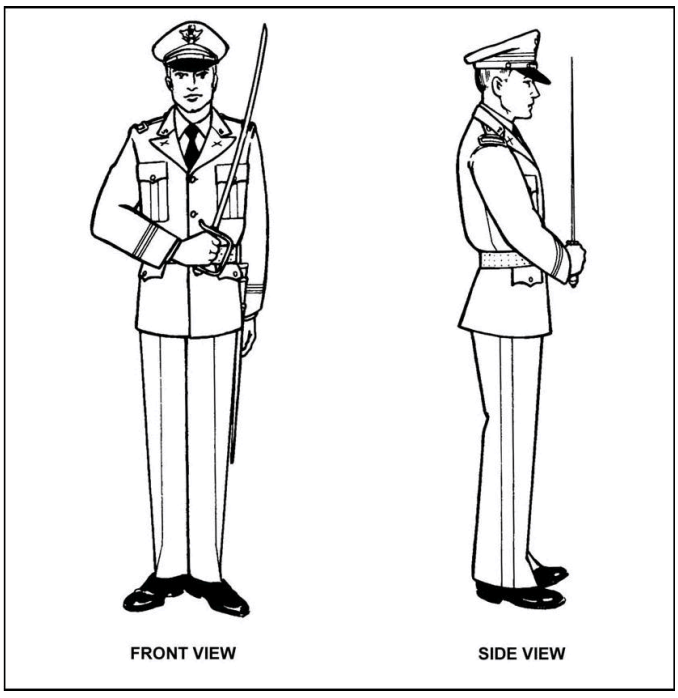

Figure 10. Port Arms

SABER/SWORD ARCHES

9. General Information.

9.1. Personnel:

9.1.1. Saber/Sword cadets (8). All cadets will bear a Saber/Sword.

NOTE: If there is not enough room to accommodate eight cadets then the number may be reduced. **The number of cordon cadets will NOT exceed eight.**

9.2. Purpose.

9.2.1. The purpose of a Saber/Sword arch is designed to add military professionalism and décor to the event.

9.2.2. The location will vary. **If indoors, hats will ALWAYS be worn**.

9.2.3. Saber/Sword arches can be used for a variety of ceremonies. Sword/saber arch will only be used for ceremonies recognizing multiple individuals (examples include: graduations and awards banquets).

9.3. General Rules for Saber/Sword Arches.

9.3.1. The arch is formed in two equal lines; the cadet in charge (CIC) may be positioned on the outside of either line and centered. When the arch enters the performance area the team will be formed up, tallest to shortest.

NOTE: Tallest cadets on the side the Honoree(s) will be starting from.

9.3.2. The distance between the two elements depends on the available room. The distance between the cadets of each element is at least an arm length distance and should be at least adequate for those who are walking through the arch to pass safely.

9.3.3. Distance can be adjusted in relationship to the performance area to achieve symmetrical spacing using prepositioned marks on the floor.

9.4. Saber/Sword Arch Sequence.

9.4.1. The arch enters the performance area, tall to short, and at the position of Carry Saber/Sword.

9.4.2.1. There WILL be arm swing with the Saber/Sword. Arm swing will be 6-inches to the front and 3-inches to the rear.

9.4.2. The arch picks up an automatic **Mark Time** on the marks and then halts.

9.4.3. The CIC gives the commands, **Center, FACE** followed by **Dress Center, DRESS.**

9.4.3.1. On the command **DRESS**, the arch cadets execute a head snap down and make small adjustments to center on the mark.

9.4.3.2. The CIC gives the command **Ready, TWO.** The arch cadets snap their head towards the two tallest individuals.

NOTE: The two taller individuals will snap their heads to the front.

9.4.3.3. The CIC gives the next command **Ready, FRONT.** The arch cadets snap their heads to the front.

NOTE: The two taller individuals will stand fast.

9.4.4. Upon cue or advancement of the honorees, the CIC gives the command **Form, ARCH**.

9.4.4.1. The arch cadets form the arch by extending their right arm, forming a straight line with their arm and the saber/sword. The saber/sword is at a 45-degree upward angle.

9.4.5. Once all honorees have exited the arch, the CIC gives the command **Order, ARCH.**

9.4.5.1. Arch cadets return to the position of Carry saber/sword.

9.4.6. CIC gives the command **Ready, FACE**. Arch cadets face in the direction they entered.

9.4.7. CIC gives the command **Forward, MARCH**. Cadets march to a predetermined location.

10. Other Information

10.1. Sabers/Swords maybe used by drill team commanders as an alternative means of arms, in lieu of a drill rifle, while performing armed drill.

10.1. Sabers/Swords may not be used in lieu of rifles while performing Color Guard details.

BANNED ACTIONS
(currently policy for all AFJROTC/SFJROTC units)

Due to safety concerns, cadets **using Sabers/Swords must have a firm grasp on and control of the Saber/Sword at all times**. Cadets are not permitted to flip, toss and/or palm spin the Saber/Sword at any time. Routines using Sabers/Swords must be designed with safety in mind and adhere to this policy.