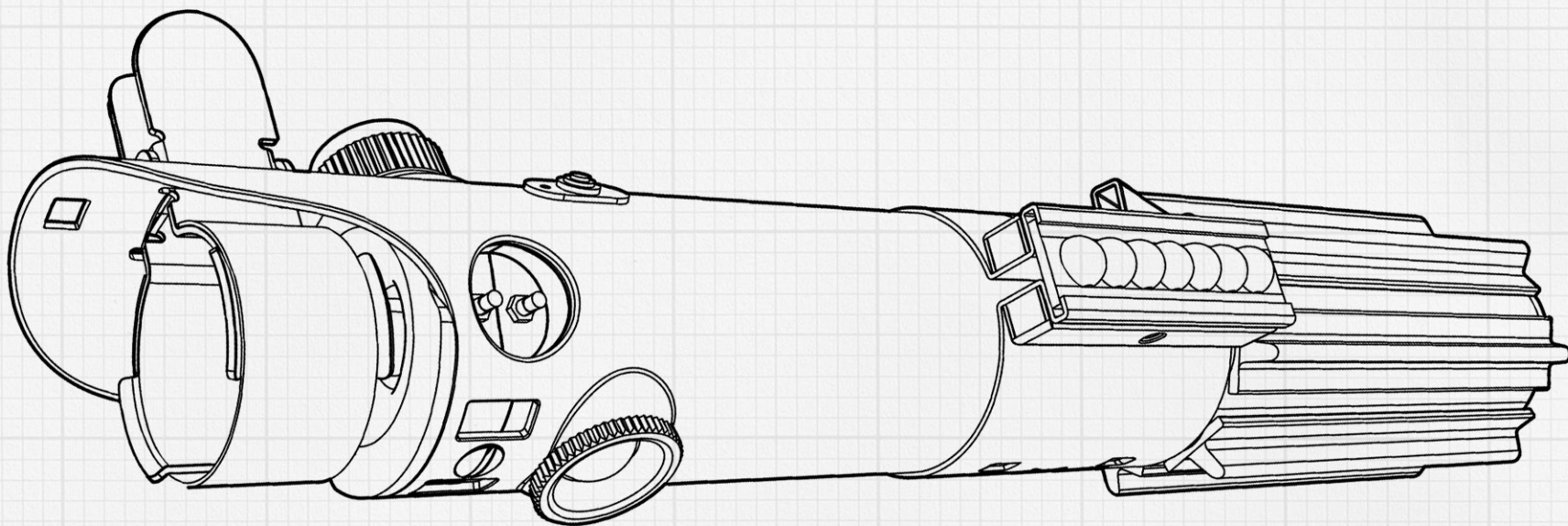
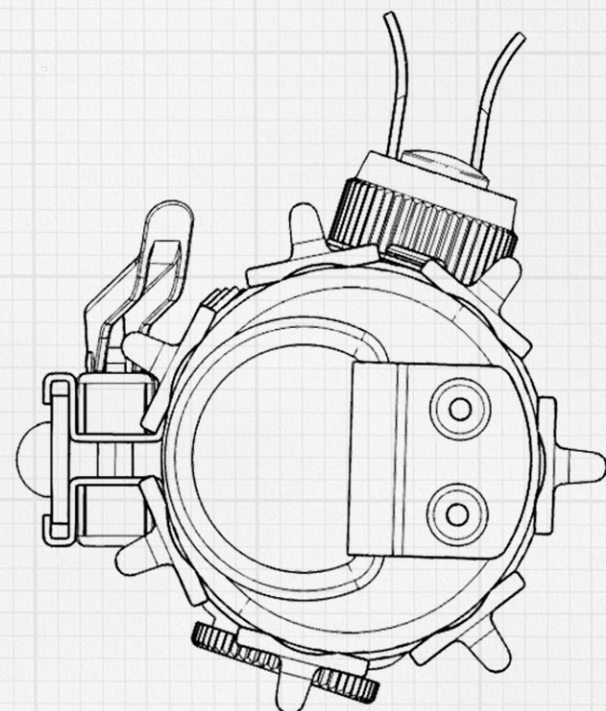
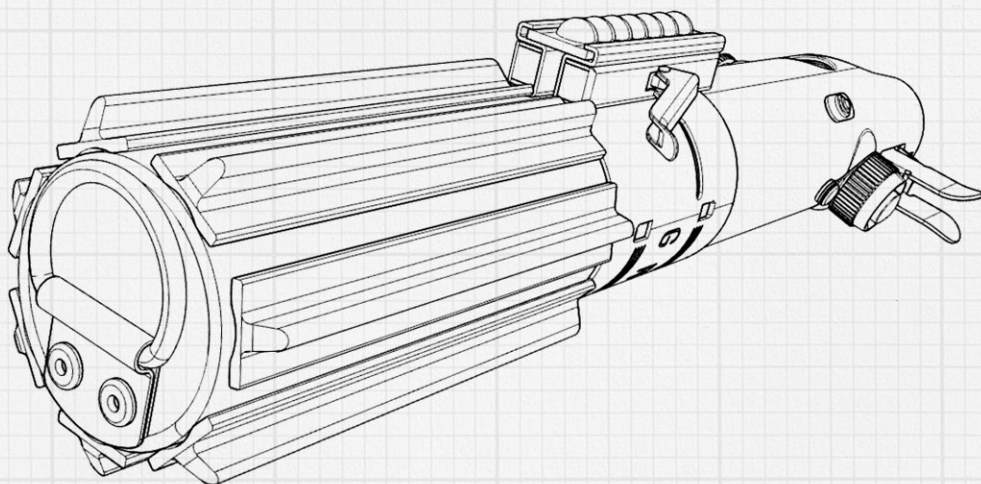




STAR WARS™

THE COMPLETE
LIGHTSABER
PROP GUIDE



WRITTEN AND DESIGNED BY
SETH M. SHERWOOD

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WARNING!

Please take all of the information presented here with a grain of
salt. While many mysteries have been solved, and much of the
information accompanies photographic evidence, there are many
unknowns surrounding the OT props.

While I strive for accuracy, many theories are debated, and some-
times we are forced to take guesses and make suppositions, both
of which may lead to things being less than true.

Please keep this in mind as you read.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4	THE PREQUEL TRILOGY LIGHTSABERS	59
Glossary of Common Terms	5	TPM Qui-Gon, Obi-Wan, Darth Maul, Clan Sabers	60
THE SKYWALKER LIGHTSABER	6	AOTC Anakin, Dooku, Mace	61
Overview	7	AOTC Younglings, Jedi Army	62
A New Hope - Hero	8	ROTS Anakin, Obi-Wan, Vader	63
A New Hope - Hero Blueprint	9	ROTS Palpatine, Greivous	64
A New Hope - Stunt	10	THE SEQUEL TRILOGY LIGHTSABERS	65
Empire Strikes Back - Hero (Hoth)	11	TFA Kylo Ren, Padawan flashback	66
Empire Strikes Back - Hero (Dagobah)	12	TLJ Kylo Ren, Ben Solo	67
Empire Strikes Back - Hero (Bespin)	13	TROS Rey, Dark Rey, Kylo Ren	68
Empire Strikes Back - Idealized Blueprint	14	TROS Leia Organa	69
Empire Strikes Back - Stunts (Bladed)	15	TROS Leia Organa Blueprint	70
Empire Strikes Back - Stunts (Bladed/Soft)	16	CANON FAN-MADE LIGHTSABERS	71
Empire Strikes Back - Stunts (Short)	17	Yoda's Lightsaber	72
Empire Strikes Back - Stunt (Severed Hand)	18	Mara Jade / Even Piell's Lightsabers	73
The Force Awakens - Hero (Rey / Finn)	19	APOCRYPHAL LIGHTSABERS	74
The Force Awakens - Rey / Finn Blueprint	20	A New Hope - Elstree Lightsaber	75
The Force Awakens - Hero (Maz)	21	A New Hope - Vader Promotional Kobold	76
The Force Awakens - Maz Blueprint	22	Holiday Special - Luke Hero	77
The Force Awakens - Stunts	23	The Ranch Saber	78
The Last Jedi - Hero	24	Pipe Stunt	79
The Last Jedi - Stunts	25	The Barbican	80
The Last Jedi - Damaged	26	The Bunny / Promotional Lightsabers	81
The Rise of Skywalker - Hero	27	The Strobonar	82
The Rise of Skywalker - Stunt	28	Gary Kurtz Graflexes	83
The Rise of Skywalker - Hero Blueprint	29	Luke False Hero Lightsabers	84
Prop Lineage Chart	30	Roger Christian Graflexes	85
DARTH VADER'S LIGHTSABER	31	The Force Awakens - Luke Hero	86
Overview	32	The Last Jedi - Luke Hero	87
A New Hope - Hero (Silver Bars)	33	Visual Dictionary Lightsabers	88
A New Hope - Hero (Black Bars)	34	APPENDIX	89
A New Hope - Stunt	35	Rivets vs. Screws: Fight!	90
Empire Strikes Back / Return of the Jedi - Hero	36	Clamp Card Guide	91
Empire Strikes Back - Hero Blueprint	37	The Graflex 3 Cell	92
Empire Strikes Back - Stunt	38	The MPP Microflash	93
Return of the Jedi - Stunt (MPP)	39	Real World Parts	94
Return of the Jedi - Stunt (MoM)	40	Image Gallery	95
Return of the Jedi - Stunt (Severed Hand)	41	Acknowledgments	103
Rogue One - Hero	42	Conclusion and Version Change-log	104
Prop Lineage Chart	43		
OBI-WAN KENOBI'S LIGHTSABER	44		
Overview	45		
A New Hope - Hero	46		
A New Hope - Stunts	47		
Prop Lineage Chart	48		
LUKE SKYWALKER'S JEDI LIGHTSABER	49		
Overview	50		
Return of the Jedi - Hero (ISYHCANL)	51		
Return of the Jedi - Hero (V2)	52		
Return of the Jedi - V2 Blueprint	53		
Return of the Jedi - Stunt (V3)	54		
Return of the Jedi - Stunt (Yuma)	55		
Return of the Jedi - Stunt (Resin)	56		
The Last Jedi - Hero	57		
Prop Lineage Chart	58		



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to identify all the known lightsaber props, explain their reason for being, reveal their origin, and delve into their individual parts and construction for your own reproduction purposes.

This is NOT an in-universe guide to lightsabers. There will be no talk of clan-sabers, blade colors, kiber crystals, Jedi trials, lightsaber combat forms, character bios, or anything of that nature.

Narratively speaking, the Star Wars Original Trilogy presents us with only FOUR actual lightsabers:

[The Skywalker lightsaber](#)
[Darth Vader's lightsaber](#)
[Obi-Wan Kenobi's lightsaber](#)
[Luke Skywalker's Jedi lightsaber](#)

Between those four in-story lightsabers, there are over 40 individual variants.

How does that happen? Because there are two important details to always consider when examining props. These two things are very important to keep in mind, as it explains why examining these props and presenting evidence as to how they were made is an organic, and on-going process for prop fans.

First, on set, the goal is always to be fast and cheap. A prop enthusiast will spend top dollar and put in hours of work to make a lovingly recreated piece, but on an actual production, things are often banged together with whatever is available. Minor fixes were often made along the way, and never intended to be seen— especially during the time of the OT when they had no idea that us common folk would one day be able to pause a film in HD to look at details.

Second, everything is made in multiples. Props break, they get misplaced, they might be needed in two different locations, they might get taken by some angry producer and sold later at auction for \$240k. The point is— every single prop likely has a twin, if not a triplet. Add this to rule one, and you have twins that are fraternal, not identical.

Sometimes props meant to be replicas for the same usage may have their own minor differences. Whenever one of these shows up somewhere, it throws the prop community into chaos trying to place where it may have been used. There are even some instances of props being made AFTER production has ended for promotional usage.

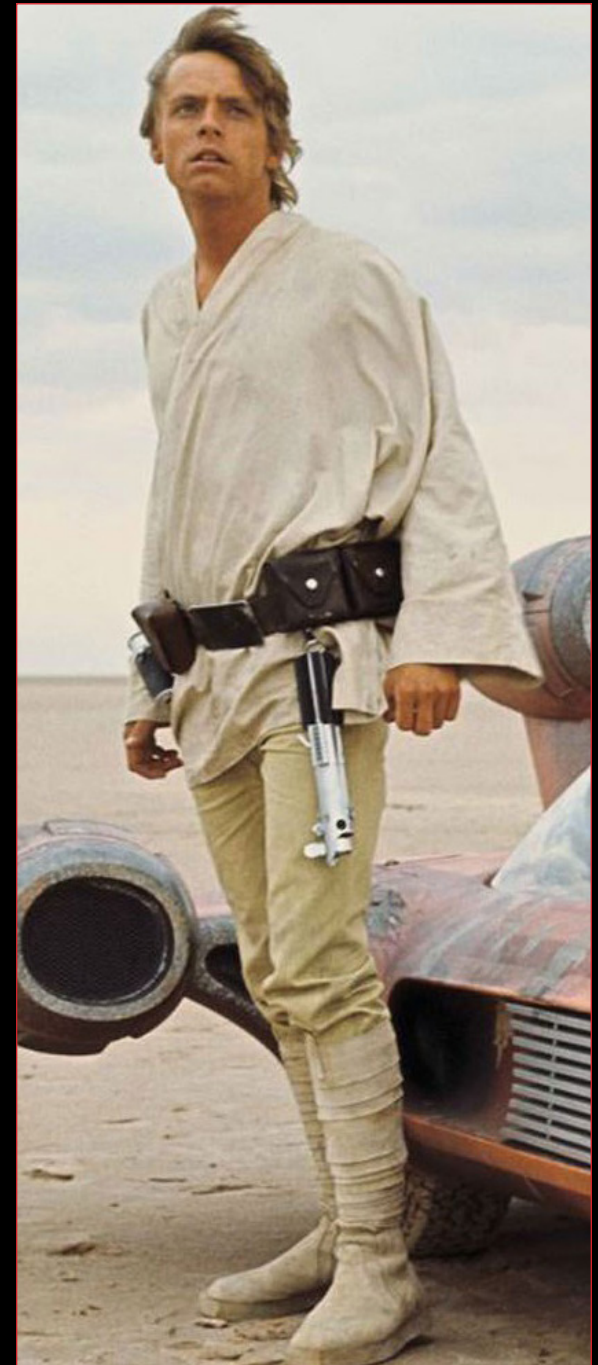
There are also sections dedicated to the Prequel trilogy lightsabers, as well as the Sequel trilogy lightsabers. The prequel trilogy lightsabers don't have a very confusing lineage. They were designed and built in-house from scratch. There is no scavenger hunt needed for real-world parts.

Similarly, the sequel trilogy (Graflex aside) seems to be headed down the same road. The days of using photo gear and military scrap are sadly gone. While those sabers are documented here, the vast majority of this book covers the Original Trilogy sabers as they were crafted from found items.

Most of the information is based on actual photographic proof, or the words of people who have physically handled the props.

Please read the acknowledgments page at the end of this guide. I am merely organizing the hard work and research of dozens of people whom deserve all the real credit.

Also, again, please note-- most images in this guide are taken from copyrighted material and presented here only as reference to the text. This book is not, and never will be for sale or profit. Any image may be redacted upon request.



GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

Star Wars has a lexicon all its own-- as do both Hollywood and the prop community. As such, talking about lightsabers involves a vernacular that is a combination of all three which can be confusing to newcomers. As a result, there are some specific terms used when discussing lightsaber props:

Belt-hanger: a hero saber worn on a character's belt.

Bladed Stunt: a saber prop rigged with a "blade" for use in the duel scenes that will be rotoscoped in post; also called a "duel stunt."

Bubbles: an LED magnification strip, found in pre-LCD calculators; a bubble strip is used in some lightsaber designs

Clamp Card: A trimmed strip of a circuit board slid inside the clamp box on some models of lightsaber.

Control Box: (activation box, clamp box) a lightsaber's boxy control surface, made standard by all three ANH sabers using camera mounting clamps in their design.

Electronic Stunt: Used in the Sequel trilogy-- these stunt sabers are light-up dueling sabers with softer dummy features for the handles.

Emitter: An in-world lightsaber part, where the blade is projected from.

Found-part: a piece of a prop that was recycled from a real-world object. Most of the OT props were a collection of found-parts.

"Gag" Stunt: A gag is SFX talk for a practical on-set, in-camera effect. Star Wars makes use of the "hand gag" during lightsabers duels whens somebody loses a hand.

Greeblies: a word coined by George Lucas, referring to the extra rough and sometimes random bits and pieces added to models and props in an effort to defy the "smooth" aesthetics of sci-fi at the time ANH was made; greeblies are the root of the "used universe" that helped define Star Wars.

Hero: the version of any prop that is meant for close-up shots. It looks functional and detailed, and in some cases may have working parts, lights, etc.

Knurling: an etched pattern added to an object to create a tactile edge or surface, very common to metal knobs, often like the edge of a coin.

PCB: printed circuit board; a very common component in pretty much any electronic device. Several lightsabers make use of cut section of the edge connector portion.

Pommel: sword terminology, the butt end of a saber.

Resin Stunt: most all of the "soft" sabers used in filming the saga were made of resin; these were used as belt hangers when the actors or stunt-persons must jump or fall, and ideally when the sabers were dropped or thrown (but that's not always the practice).

Scratch-made: a piece, or in some cases, an entire prop, made from scratch via a variety of machining processes; classic methods include various types of mold-making, lathing, cnc'ing, milling, and casting; modern advancements added 3D printing to the mix.

Shared-Stunt: An older term applied to three specific stunt sabers that served double duty. The Luke/Vader stunt saber from ANH, and the two Obi-Wan ANH / Luke ROTJ stunt sabers that have become more commonly known as the V2 and V3.

Short-bladed Stunt: a stunt with a much shorter blade. This is used in instances where the saber was being used in action with other performers, but not during a duel.

Shroud: technically a part of the MPP camera flash, it has become short-hand for the top piece of Vader's lightsaber.

Stunt: a version of a prop meant for less discerning views, usually in conjunction with some form of ac-

tion where the prop may be damaged or must be made "safe" for whatever is happening on camera. Usually stunt items are made of rubber, wood, or resin.

LIST OF COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

ANH: A New Hope

ESB: Empire Strikes Back

ROTJ: Return of the Jedi

TPM: The Phantom Menace

AOTC: Attack of the Clones

ROTS: Revenge of the Sith

TFA: The Force Awakens

R1: Rogue One

TLJ: The Last Jedi

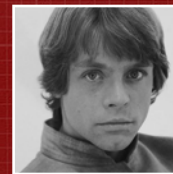
TROS: The Rise of Skywalker

OT: Original Trilogy

PT: Prequel Trilogy

ST: Sequel Trilogy

BTS: Behind the scenes



Fan build and photo by RPF member Matty Matt

THE SKYWALKER LIGHTSABER

THE SKYWALKER LIGHTSABER



There's no question that the Skywalker lightsaber is one of the most iconic props in cinema.

Often referred to as "The Graflex" (named for the real world item it was based on), this lightsaber is the one that most frequently captures the imagination while driving eBay auctions into the stratosphere.

ANH // Created by Roger Christian, production designer and set decorator for ANH, this is the lightsaber Obi-Wan gives to Luke, it having once belonged to his father.

Christian has gone on record saying that they struggled to find a lightsaber handle that felt unique and other-worldly. The simple cylindrical designs by Ralph McQuarrie didn't feel right. Lucas was ultimately pleased when he was presented with what became the on-screen hero.

Christian has said "several" Graflexes were acquired, two allegedly received the hero treatment, while the others served as a source for back-up parts and stunt saber details. One of the heroes has a serial number stamped into a clamp rail. The only detail that changes from scene to scene is the position of the clamp, (see next page.)

ESB // Looking to recreate Luke's lightsaber, the production team for Empire Strikes Back returned to the well and used the same kind of parts as ANH, with some minor variations. Some changes seem to be geared toward idealizing the prop to look less like an Earth-object, while others were made for pragmatic reasons.

Like the original, the basis of this saber is the Graflex camera flash. It would seem as if production had several Graflex parts to work with for both belt-hangers and stunt work.

Despite that, their supply was not unlimited. It would seem as if parts were swapped and repairs were made in the harsh environments that the props were subjected to-- be it freezing cold, or submerged in a faux swamp. This happened throughout production making it very hard to track specific versions as pieces of both heroes and stunts were frequently swapped.

Entries follow for each of the three key locations of the film, where the appearance of the belt-hanger has noted changes. While there's no concrete proof, it would seem, over all, there are at least two primary hero sabers in ESB, likely three, with parts being

swapped with at least two different stunt sabers, a short bladed and long bladed. (See individual entries for clarity).

TFA // While the sequel trilogy team seems to be scratch-building their original lightsabers, the key story point involving the Skywalker lightsaber was thankfully driven home by using actual Graflexes.

The end result turns out to be a hybrid of details from the ANH and ESB versions combined into one. There are two distinct hero versions in the film, with only minor differences.

TLJ // While the Last Jedi is commendable for not creating yet more variations of the Graflex, (the hero appears mostly identical to how it is in TFA), the hero is not always used when it should be. With an all new set of stunt sabers, with many variations, that were not roto-ed out or replaced in the final cut.

TROS // Reflecting the damage inflicted in TLJ, for its return, the lightsaber was rebuilt with an all-new clamp design that was a departure from the original. For the first time in the saga's history, this iteration of the lightsaber makes use of fan designed and built parts.

AKA: LUKE ANH
 FILM: A NEW HOPE
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

The Graflex is a vintage 3 “D” cell camera flash, meant to be mounted on the side of a 4x5 view camera, (see appendix for details on The Graflex).

Standard features of the flash that remained as part of the prop include:

- A red trigger button on the back side
 - The “bunny ear” bulb holder
 - A power slide switch
 - The “glass eye” preview lamp on the front side
 - The “beer tab” bracket that is pinned to the back to keep the button from falling off when unscrewed
 - A central box clamp used to hold its two halves together, a washer normally under the lever is missing
- Parts added to complete the prop include:
- A magnification bubble strip from a Texas Instrument Exactra 19 or 20 LED calculator, either slid into the central clamp or pinched into place
 - Seven “T-Track” strips used for a grip, 3 5/8” long, with their ends tapered at roughly a 30° angle
 - A d-ring to the bottom, held in place with two 3mm pop rivets

- Two pairs of pop rivets, between the grips, at the base of the flash; one pair is 3mm the other 2.4mm; working theory is they mount an inner support for the d-ring

NOTES

The clamp tends to change orientation between scenes shot in the UK, scenes shot in the U.S.,

and promotional photoshoots. It is not known if the screen-used hero and the promo saber are the same, but many of their details match up. Promo shots have the clamp at three o'clock. The most common seen orientation on screen is with the clamp at the nine o'clock position when looking down the saber from the bottom, bunny ears set at twelve. The clamp lever is sometimes seen pressed fully down, while most times it sits open and high.

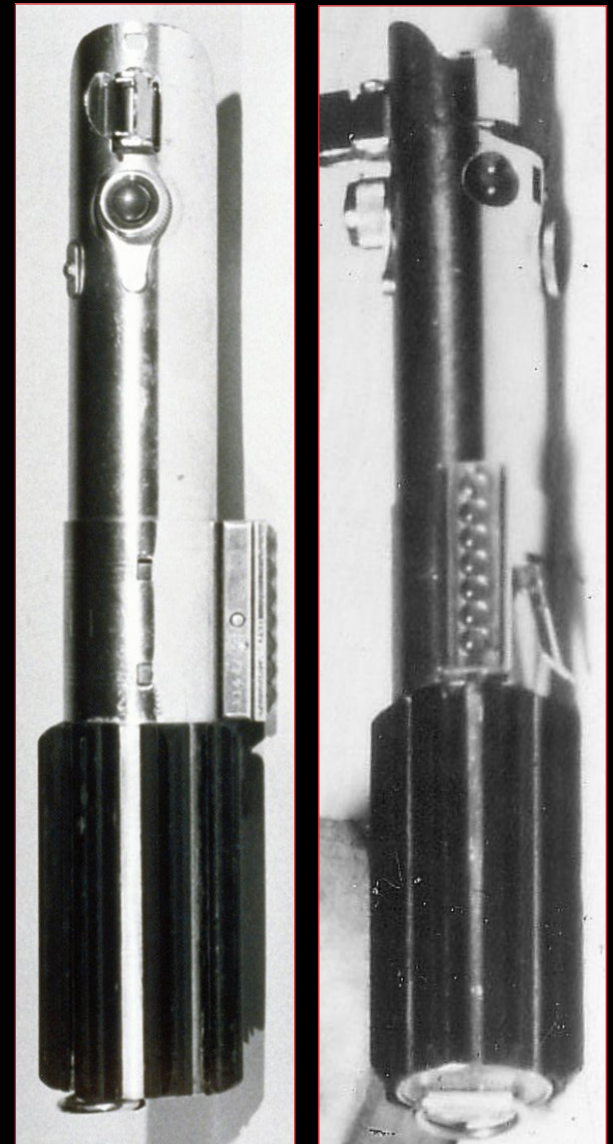
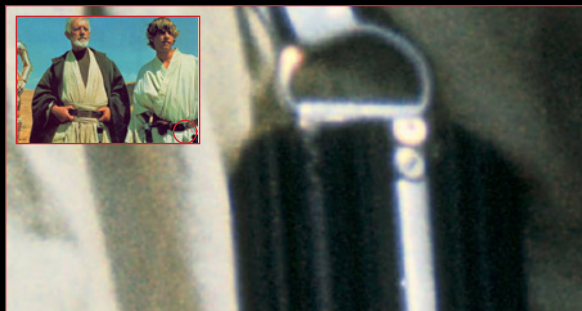
The T-Track material is kitchen guide-runner, most commonly used for cabinet door slide-tracks, or drawer rails in the 70s. While seemingly ubiquitous at the time, to date, no one has found an exact match in terms of size, profile, and color.

The T-Track has been said to be hard plastic, rubber, and metal depending on the source. Hard plastic holds favor.

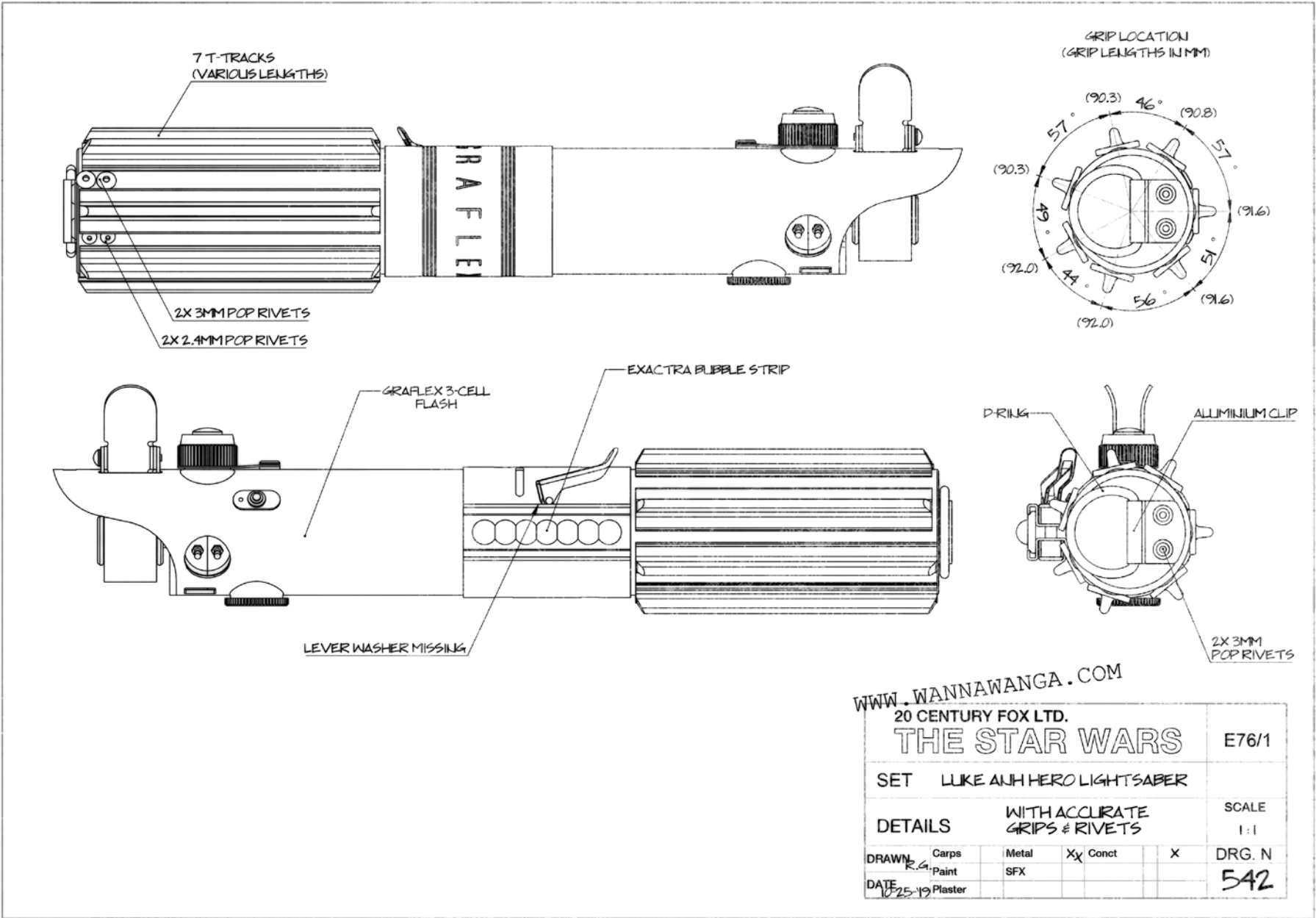
The endcap is obscured, so it is unknown which Graflex model is used. The glass eye lamp shape suggests an early Folmer brand version.

“114A/63” is stamped into threaded clamp sidebar. This has been determined to be the RAF inventory number given to Graflex flashes in service during World War Two.

Most of these details are determined from promotional images. There is a single embargoed BTS image that shows hero to have the rivets and d-ring details that tells us the same prop was used on-screen and for the promo photo shoots.



AKA: LUKE ANH
FILM: A NEW HOPE
TYPE: BELT-HANGER



AKA: ANH LUKE STUNT / LUKE/VADER SHARED STUNT
FILM: A NEW HOPE (ON SCREEN) / EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (BTS)
TYPE: MOTORIZED BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

Many different effects were tried to get the iconic glowing blade of a lightsaber. For the filming of ANH the effect was initially going to be practical. This would be achieved by the dueling rod being coated in reflective movie screen material, and set into a small motor that would spin the rod. With the right application of light, this made the rod seem as though it was filled with flickering light.

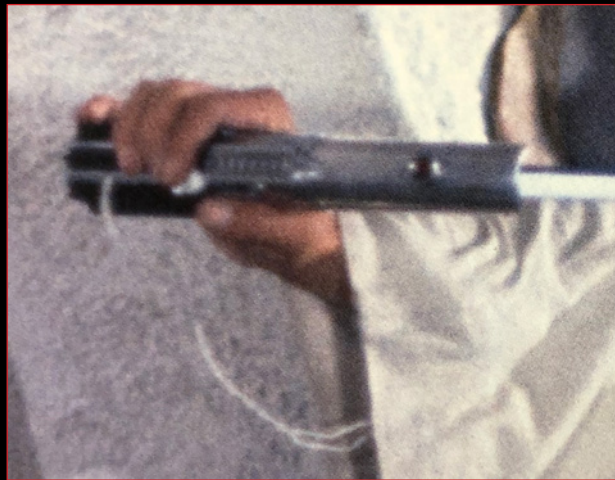
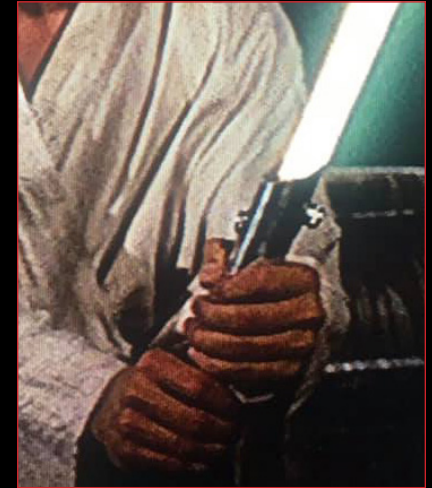
Building a rig with this in mind, a simple tube was cut in the rough shape of a Graflex with the motor assembly inside. It was given a button knob from an older style Graflex (identified by a strip of knurling instead of the usual full knurling), a glass eye, grips, and a clamp to resemble the Graflex, but no bunny ears.

The motor was powered by an external battery and in some scenes, notably when Luke first ignites it, the cables to the battery can be seen in his sleeve. This would power a solid central core to rotate inside the hilt. The blades were then mounted inside this core.

NOTES

This stunt unit played double duty, serving also as Vader's stunt saber after a quick paint-job. It is sometimes referred to as the "Luke/Vader Shared Stunt."

It was also used in ESB as a rehearsal saber with flat grips, with the internal motor removed.



AKA: LUKE ESB / LUKE ESB HOTH
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

While each of the three key locations in ESB show minor differences in the prop, the base version is the same as the ANH prop, with these minor changes:

- The eye has been replaced by a second button
- The bubblestrip has been replaced by a trimmed strip of a PCB edge connector from a circuit board suspected to be a HP-44 Bus Type or an Otis Elevator board with thin silver traces and wide gold leads; the wide gold leads point toward the clamp lever
- The “beer tab” has been removed
- A 1/2” strip of mylar/chrome tape surrounds the clamp, covering the Graflex logo
- A belt-hanger assembly that is made from a clip off a flashgun known as the Kobold with a D-Ring; the assembly is attached to the bottom using two rivets
- Six “T-Track” grips, the ends are NOT angled. The grips are also notched near the bottom to make room for small pan-head screws to keep the grips in place.

NOTES

In EXTERIOR scenes shot on location in Norway, the screws are silver. For all INTERNAL ESB scenes shot on stages in London, the screws are black.

For at least a decade there has been a debate of whether these are screws or rivets. (See appendix for more detail).



AKA: DAGOBAB SABER / LUKE ESB DAGOBAB
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

Once Luke reaches Dagobah the saber is noticeably different. Perhaps it is prop failure due to the change in location, or environment, or simply a mistake on the part of the propmaster. While mostly the same as the Hoth version, there is one minor difference:

- Tiny screws have been added to the top of the grips, to the right of the T-Track fin

Between the cold of Norway, and the humidity of the Dagobah set (not to mention Luke actually being fully submerged with a saber) grips staying on continued to be an issue. These screws were likely added to alleviate this problem.

There is another difference to the saber in some shots:

- The original hole for the red button is empty, (the second red button remains in the lamp socket)

NOTES

Matching grip shapes/placement imply that at least the lower half of this saber is used as part of the “Ranch Saber” (see apocryphal lightsabers section).

In production stills, when Luke enters the cave, the saber can be seen with two buttons, as on Hoth and Bespin. (photo bottom left)

This variant also features an upper body Allen-head socket, indicating it was also a bladed-stunt. (photo bottom center).

While this means there was more than one belt-hanger on the Dagobah sets, for the sake of clarity, the version missing a button is generally referred to as the Dagobah saber as it is the one that appears on-screen. It is unclear if the two-button version appears in the film outside of promo images.



AKA: LUKE ESB BESPIN / LUKE ESB HERO
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

Upon arrival at Bespin we are treated with one of the most clear images of the lightsaber in the film.

Most consider the “R2 bump” image to be the key image in determining the most idealized version of a belt-hanger hero for ESB.

All the key details as seen on Hoth are here, the grip screws are clearly visible, and completely black.

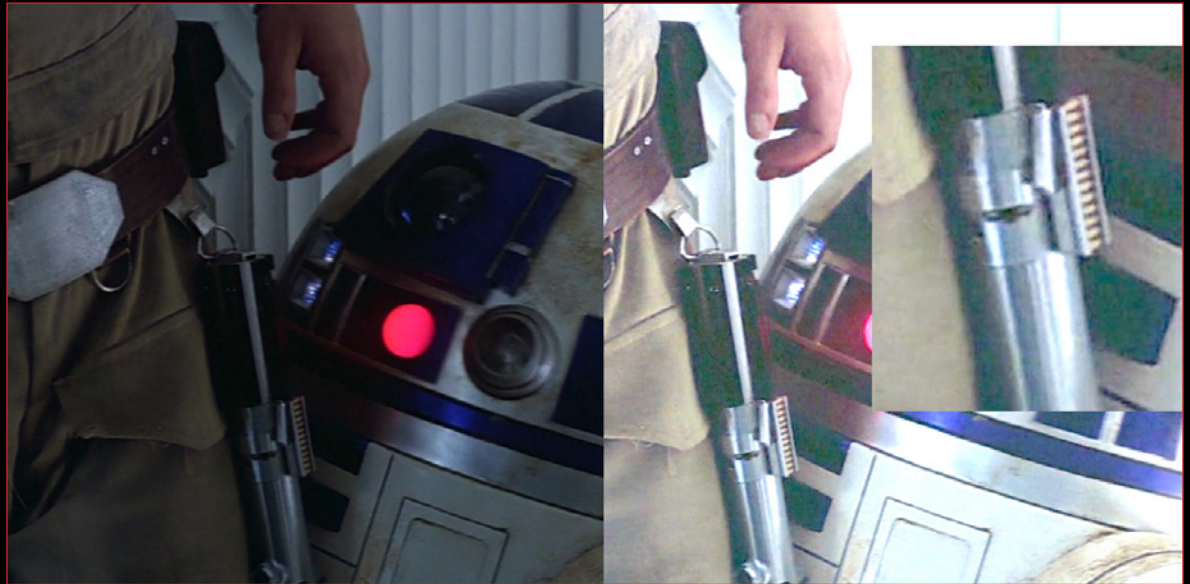
It is not clear if the tiny upper screws are on the grips or not. While the official word from JW Rinzler’s Making of The Empire Strikes Back book indicates Dagobah was shot last, others who have seen call sheets say otherwise. The screws were added for Dagobah, so depending on the shooting order, they may or may not be present in Bespin scenes.

This is also the most clear image of what appears to be a small black clamp screw, though it could also simply be that the hole for the clamp screw is corroded black.

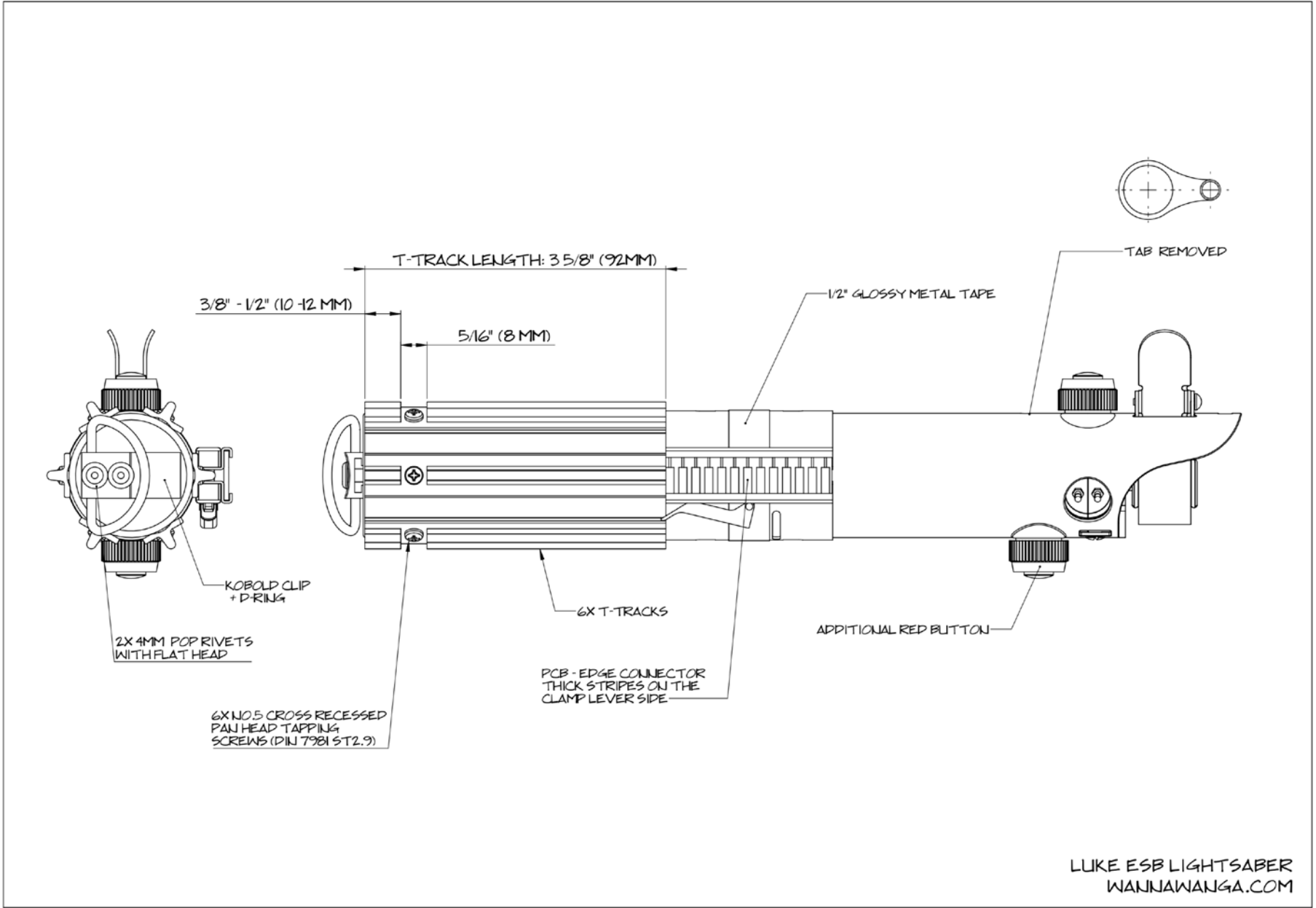
NOTES

This saber was also used for the official promo images, where a damaged grip can be seen in some instances.

The Bespin version is the one most often being referenced when the term ESB hero is used. It is the version of the prop in which all the pieces are in place, and tends to be the one used for replicas and representation in other media.



AKA: LUKE ESB BESPIN / LUKE ESB HERO
FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
TYPE: BELT-HANGER



AKA: LUKE ESB STUNT
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: DUELING BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

When ANH was in post, the lightsaber effect we have come to know was added via rotoscoping. Given that this only needed the guide of the dueling rod, the on-set use of the motorized spinning blade gag was dropped. As the guts of a Graflex are easily removed, their bodies could be adapted for stunt work.

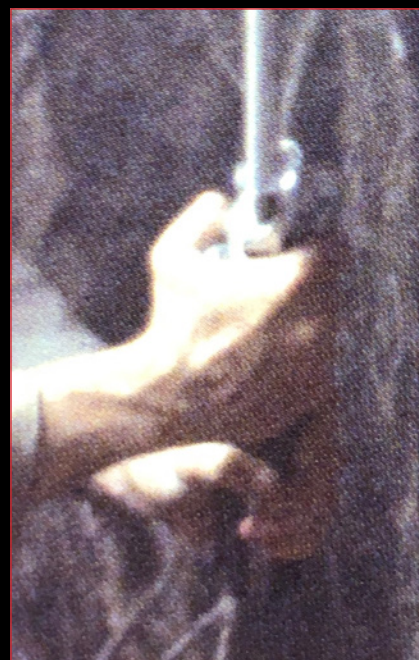
Three variants of the dueling saber can be spotted. The first two appear mostly in BTS footage, one used in the cave sequence, and one wielded by Bob Anderson during the duel.

Both of these bladed stunts appear to have lower profile t-tracks, and the button knob behind the bunny ears uses the old-style thin-knurled strip button under the bunny ears.

The one used by Anderson is missing the bunny ears, and the lower button has the full knurling.

NOTES

Again, with the hot-swapping of parts in ESB, it's impossible to say how many stunt sabers there were. The thin-knurled strip button is seen on other stunt sabers, so it is possible the one used by Anderson here was also used as a short-blade stunt.



AKA: LUKE ESB STUNT
FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
TYPE: SOFT GRIP BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

Mark Hamill has frequently noted that the t-track was unforgiving, and that he was provided with a soft-grip.

These dueling sabers make use of a wider grip that is likely foam or rubber, and the clamp area is wrapped in gaffers tape.

The wide grips can be seen clearly here. Also note, again, that the bunny ears are present in some shots, but not others.



AKA: THE WAMPA CAVE SABER
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: SHORT-BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

For use in scenes where the saber was active, but not engaged in a duel, (against the Wampa and in cut scenes of Luke saber-training with Yoda for example), a shorter blade would be used for the safety of the other performers and camera crew.

Like the R2 Bump photo, many saber details have been derived from the close up Wampa cave image. While the recent revelation that this is in fact a stunt saber may technically disqualify it from determining hero details, given that the stunt sabers were also using Graflex as a base and many of the same details were added, it is still a valuable reference.

Thanks to the Wampa cave stunt, we know at least some of the models used were stamped as "The Folmer Graflex Corp."

(See appendix for Graflex flashgun specifics).

NOTES

These bladed stunts also appear to be the only ESB sabers with the beer tab intact.

The t-track seen on this saber varies in shape and profile size, lending credence to the notion that more than one type/brand of t-track was used by the prop department.



AKA: ESB SEVERED HAND SABER
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: GAG/STUNT

DETAILS

Rigged specifically for when Luke loses his hand, this is a Graflex upper body mounted on a Kobold flash with its knurling machined away. Both halves are mounted inside a fake hand.

Given there was a fall and squibs involved, these were most likely made from spare parts in the shop. The Bunny ears, second button (or lamp), d-ring assembly, and clamp are all absent.

Other parts include:

- Intact Beer tab
- Knurled cone knobs in the ports
- A Clamp box that resembles an over-sized Kobold clip, an unknown part
- Faux red button that is potentially the red lens from a Kobold flash
- What looks to be seven un-notched grips, unless the spacing is off.

NOTES

The 7 grips on the Kobold lower half might indicate that this piece may be left over from the ANH production. We do know that the bladed stunt sabers from ANH were all saved.



AKA: TFA REY / TFA FINN
 FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

The Force Awakens presents The Skywalker Lightsaber with details of both ANH and ESB. Like ANH and ESB, vintage Graflex flashes were used. The exact model is unknown as the bottom stamp is obscured.

The upper half retains the basic Graflex features:

- The red trigger button on the back side
- The “bunny ear” bulb holder
- The power slide switch
- The “beer tab” bracket

The lower half more resembles the ESB heroes:

- The clamp is in the 3 o’clock position
- The Graflex logo is hidden by a thin metal card that covers the entire clamp while replicating the stamped lines and punched holes
- The Kobold / D-ring assembly is mounted with two rivets on the bottom; the Kobold is scratch made, not a vintage, as evidenced by the lack of extra holes

And some items are uniquely modified:

- The glass eye has had its knurling sanded to smooth brass
- The clamp card is semi-transparent and has a unique design emulating a PCB card
- Between the d-ring assembly and endcap, a featureless cover hides the Graflex model stamp, either a metal disc, or foil tape
- Six T-Track grips attached with metal colored 3mm rivets (see Maz Box entry for grip notes/details)

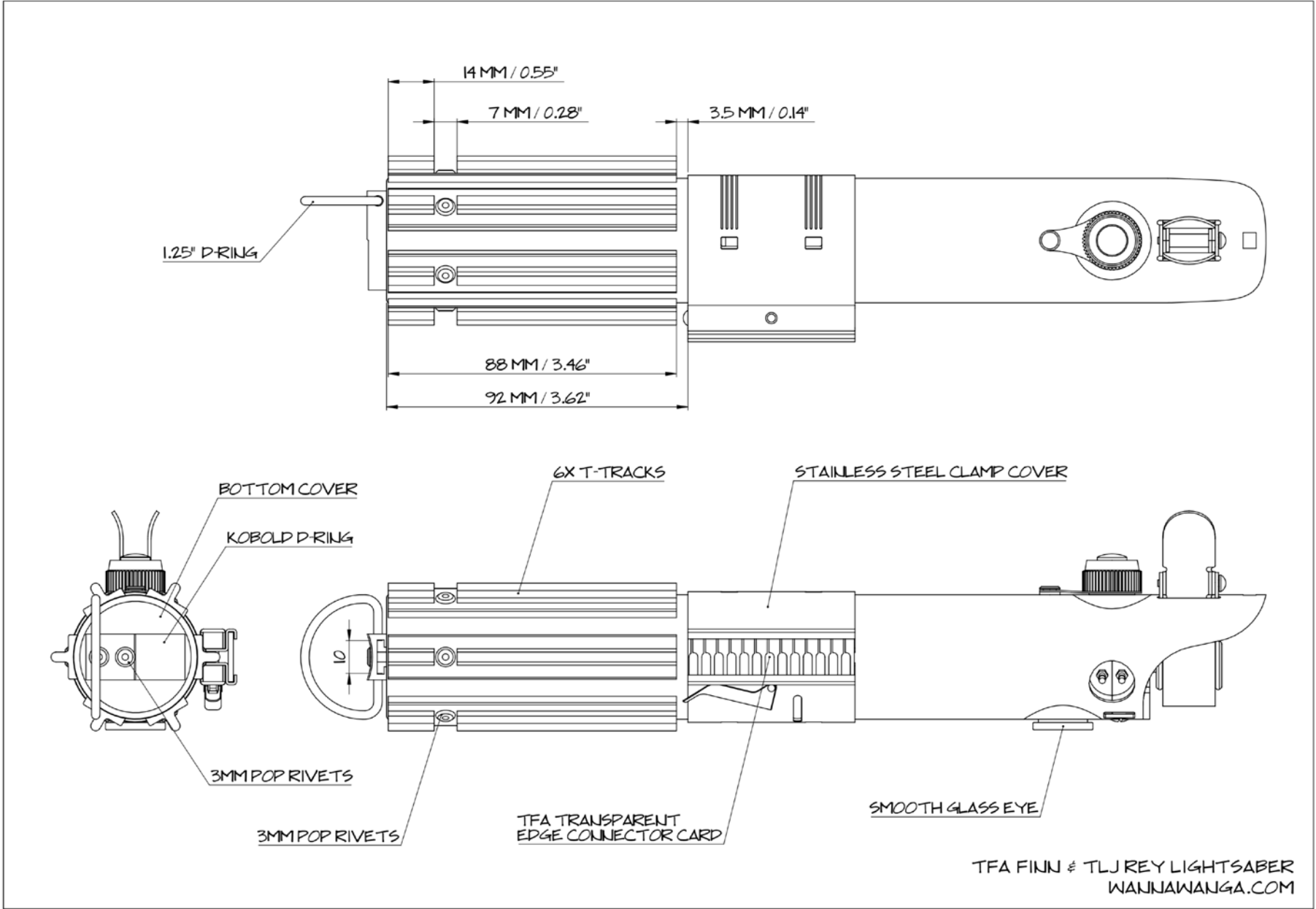
NOTES

TFA has two separate hero lightsabers. This, the first, is the most-used version. It is wielded by Finn outside of Maz’s castle, it accompanies Rey on Starkiller Base, and is presented to Luke on Ach-To at the end of the film

Official sources claim this saber was also the primary belt hanger for TLJ.



AKA: TFA REY / TFA FINN
FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: BELT-HANGER



AKA: MAZ BOX / MAZ CASTLE
FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: BELT-HANGER / CLOSE UP HERO

DETAILS

The second TFA hero is only seen inside of Maz's Castle, during the scene in which it is first revealed.

Also based on a vintage, the singular difference is that the grips on this saber float on the lower half, leaving a small gap below the clamp, and up from the bottom of the saber.

The TFA T-Tracks were scratch-made by production. 3D printed masters were made which were then used to make resin casts.

The grips themselves have the notches cut to slightly different sizes between the two heroes. While in the box, most other details are obscured, but it is safe to assume they are the same as the other versions.

Grip measurements for the Rey / Finn are 88mm long, the notch being 7.4mm and starting 13mm up from the bottom. The top of the grips are 3.5 mm from the clamp.

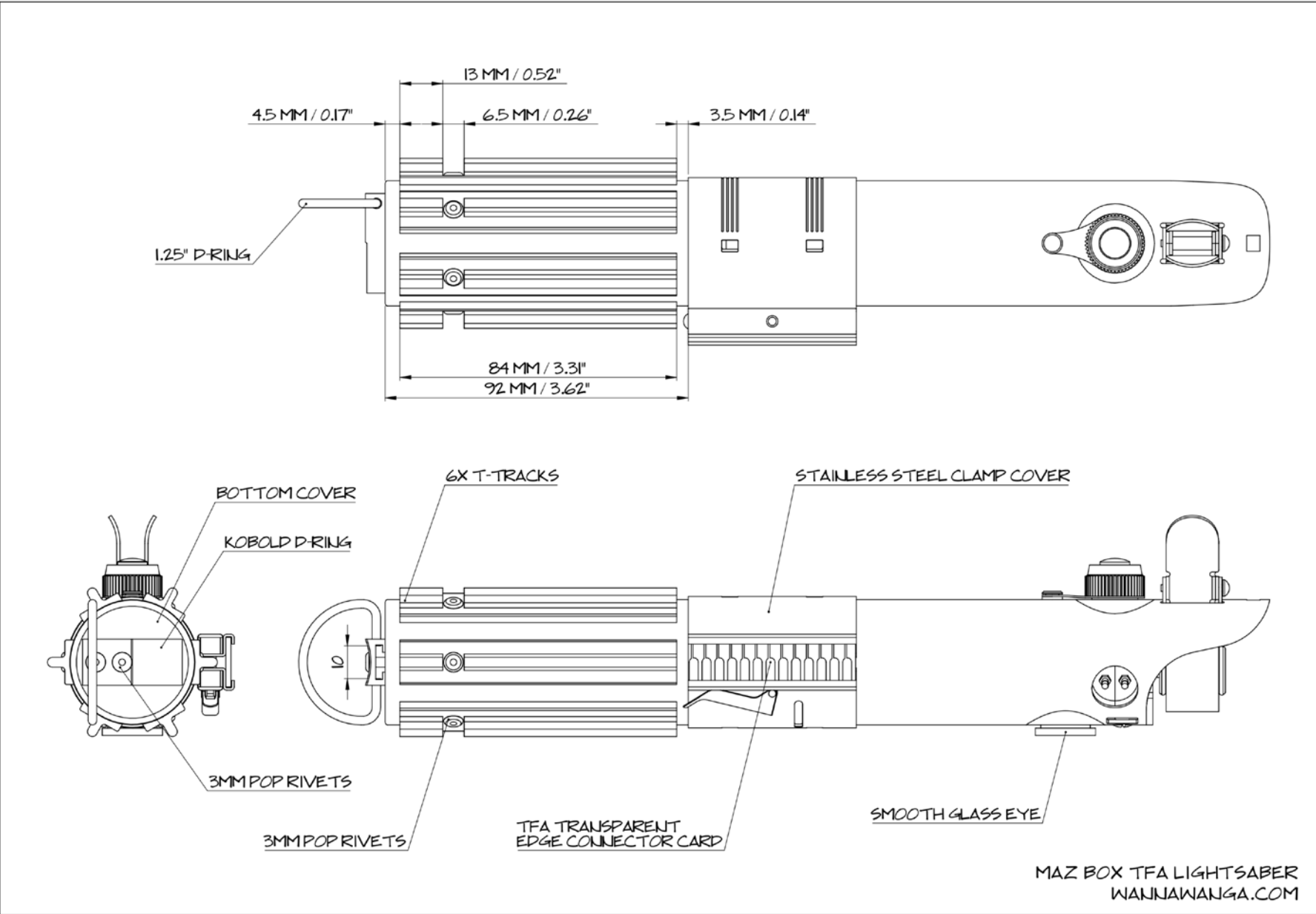
For the Maz Box version, the grips are 84mm, with a notch size of 6.5mm, 13mm up from the bottom. The grips float, 2.5mm down from the clamp, 4.5mm up from the base.

NOTES

Rivets are used to attach the grips, but as is tradition, this is a source of some debate due to display versions made by the same prop company used hex-head button screws.



AKA: MAZ BOX / MAZ CASTLE
FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: BELT-HANGER / CLOSE UP HERO



AKA: TFA SOFT STUNTS / TFA DUELING STUNTS
FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: ELECTRONIC BLADED STUNTS

DETAILS

There were two models of stunt saber used in TFA, and very little about them has come to light. These stunt sabers mark the first time that an official production has employed technology developed by lightsaber enthusiasts.

From the start, the plan was to create dueling sabers that lit up, and cast light— as the electronic saber community knows is now commonplace.

Version one appears to be made out of vintage Graflexes with the addition of the LED blade. This one can be spotted onscreen a few times when the angle favors an antenna on the base of the hilt for transmitting XML data for motion tracking. The grips on these are shorter, like the Maz box variant.

Version two was a simple tube housing the same electronics package with a padded fabric covering that was detailed to resemble the Graflex. Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, and Adam Driver have all gone on record saying that the sabers are actually very difficult to duel with.

NOTES

These “soft” stunt sabers can be spotted in a few shots as well by looking for an extra thick clamp section. While the soft versions were used for much of the duels in wide shots, it’s safe to assume they did not have the detail needed for close ups and medium shots.

It can be assumed there were multiple versions of all of these stunts.



AKA: TLJ REY / TLJ GRAFLEX HERO

FILM: THE LAST JEDI

TYPE: BELT-HANGER / CLOSE UP HERO

DETAILS

As stated in the overview, the TLJ version of The Skywalker Lightsaber is virtually unchanged from the primary TFA hero. The parts are identical and official sources claim the hero prop seen here is the same prop used as the primary hero in TFA.

TLJ offers more dedicated shots, close-ups, and inserts of the Skywalker Lightsaber than any other film.

NOTES

One minor noted difference between scenes-- in some shots, the glass eye seems to be fully screwed in, while in others, it sets out rather far.

The overall finish of the saber appears to be much more polished than any other appearance. This could be due to the props having been physically polished or buffed, maybe even re-plated.

TLJ makes **HEAVY** use of digital retouching and enhancement throughout the film, so it is also possible that shots of the TLJ Graflex are digitally cleaned up either with roto touch ups, or adjustments made in the color grading process.



AKA: TLJ STUNT(S)
FILM: THE LAST JEDI
TYPE: ELECTRONIC BLADED STUNTS

DETAILS

Much like TFA, the stunt sabers used in TLJ made use of LED dueling blades to cast light and color in-scene. The technology is much the same, though advancements and changes were made in the interest of comfort and safety of the performers and stunt team. There are multiple versions of stunt sabers seen in TLJ that fall into two camps: detailed, and simplified.

For the detailed stunts, the blade and electronics are built into an actual Graflex. Some models have a custom low profile clamp box. All use lower profile grips for comfort. Sometimes these grips appear to be a single 3D printed piece that slips over the base of the saber, others appear to be rubbery t-track with extra notches.

It is possible that the glass eye on the detailed Graflex-based stunts work as some form of blade retention screw as they often appear to be sticking out. This model also has the same style XML antenna as the TFA stunts.

The simplified stunts hark back to ANH. They are simply a tube designed to hold the blade and electronics with faux Graflex details to be seen from a distance. There are many variations seen on screen and during rehearsals, and likely suit different needs for different shots.

NOTES

For Luke's over-the-shoulder toss on Ach-To, a painted resin cast stunt was used. It appears to have shorter grips, so it may be cast from the TFA "Maz Box" saber.

There are more instances of the stunts being mistakenly used in shots meant for hero belt-hangers, (both onscreen and in promo work), than any other SW film.



AKA: BROKE-FLEX
 FILM: THE LAST JEDI
 TYPE: DAMAGED / REVEAL

DETAILS

A popular trend within the lightsaber prop community is creating a “reveal” saber-- one that shows the inner workings.

Given that a lightsaber is a fictional device, it has become a free for all for artistic interpretation of just how such a weapon could work.

The first semi-canon look at the inside of the lightsaber came from the first Visual Dictionary, where Don Bies created a cutaway of a Graflex. While never canonized in a film, this became the benchmark for what would turn into an entire movement.

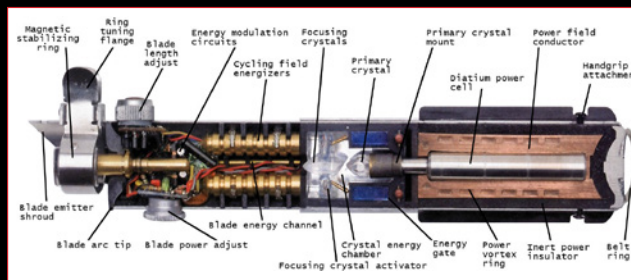
While seen in The Clone Wars and Rebels, the first filmic view of a lightsabers internals came in The Last Jedi, at the cost of the Skywalker lightsaber.

The layout of elements is clearly influenced by the original image from the Visual Dictionary.

NOTES

The physical prop was created with an actual vintage Graflex, though the onscreen version has been digitally retouched and enhanced. You can make out the floating off-post lever and clamp card bars.

Technically, some of the guts of Anakin's lightsaber can be seen in AOTC when it is cut in half.



AKA: FIXED-FLEX
 FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

With some severe alterations in the form of in-story repair work to reverse the damage done in TLJ, The Skywalker Lightsaber makes one final appearance in the saga.

While it follows the same cues as most Graflex-based sabers before it, here are the notable differences:

- no d-ring or kobold
- five of the grips are resin, with the sixth, opposite of the clamp box, cast in metal; this single grip has a slit in its shape to function as a belt-clip, and it is held in place with an additional set of four tiny screws at each corner
- an all-new scratch-made clamp section with a custom edge card and box, and a leather wrap similar to what Rey wears on her arms.
- a glass eye with the knurling intact
- damage in the form of scorches and/or weld marks extending from the clamp toward the emitter

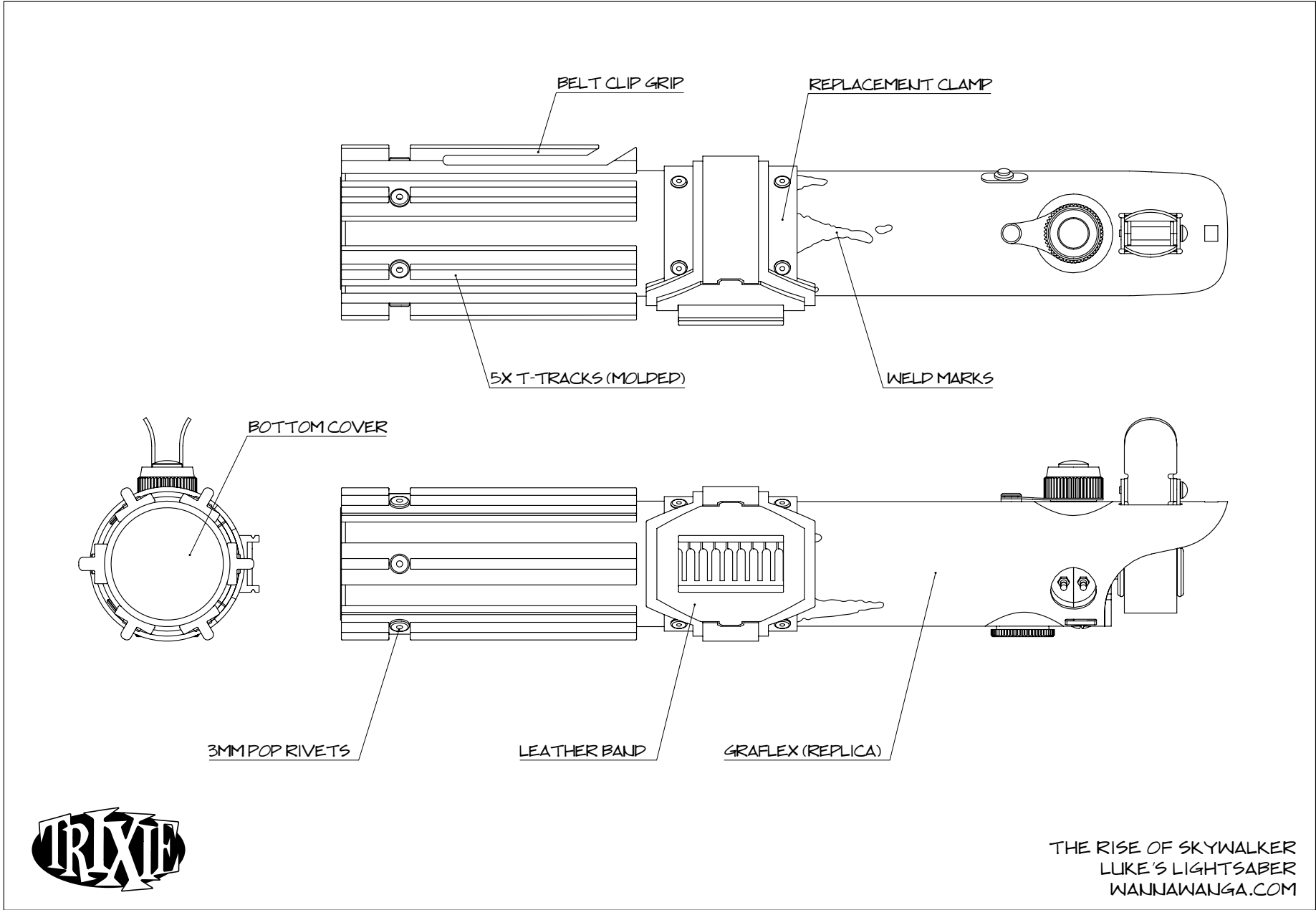


NOTES

Unlike previous films, the hero belt-hangers in TROS were not made from vintage Graflex, but from Roman's Empire Graflex replica.



AKA: FIXED-FLEX
FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
TYPE: BELT-HANGER



AKA: TROS-STUNT(S)
FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
TYPE: ELECTRONIC BLADES STUNT / SOFT STUNT

DETAILS

As with all films, there are a variety of stunt sabers depending upon particular needs. As of the time of this publication, individual stunts are still being scouted.

As state on previous page, KR Sabers provided blade plugs, so we know that at least some detailed stunt sabers were built off Roman replicas.

Other variations that have been spotted:

First, a bladed-stunt, which can be identified by it's low-profile grips, a feature common to all the ST Gra-flex stunts.

Second, while being used as a belt-hanger, looks to be a resin stunt, with extra wide grips.

While it is possible this is a trick of the light. It's also perhaps that the belt hanging grip is extra-wide for support, and we are seeing it at an odd angle.

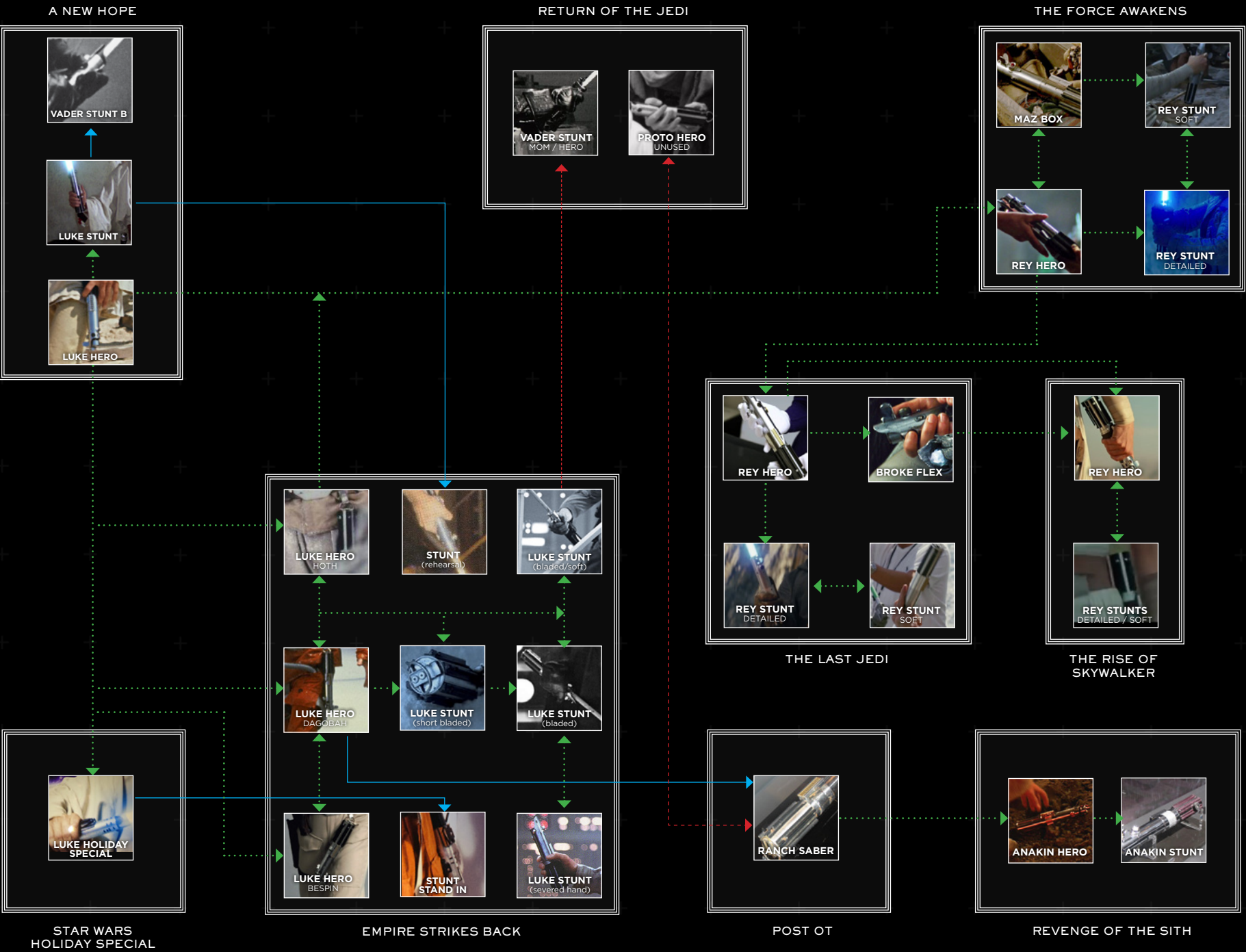
A stunt that has replaced the beer tab rivet with a tiny button head hex screw, possibly for use as FX blade retention.

And as with the previous two films, a detailed stunt with an antenna in the base for the transmission of movement data for FX purposes. In this case however, the antennae is recessed into a small hole.

The blade plugs are the work of KR Sabers, which implies that possibly the belt-hangers would be able to do minor stunt-work with blades being easily inserted, likely for ignition scenes.



ACTUAL PROP (CONFIRMED) —————→
ACTUAL PROP (THEORETICAL) - - - - -→
BASIS FOR→





Fan Build by Erick Lopez

DARTH VADER'S LIGHTSABER

DARTH VADER'S LIGHTSABER



Original ESB Hero I Photo by The Prop Store



Almost as iconic as the Skywalker saber, and an even more rare (and more expensive) score to find in the real world, Vader's lightsaber has the most confusing lineage given how many of its variations have been officially recreated as replicas and toys.

ANH // Darth Vader's lightsaber was developed by following the logic of the Graflex. If one camera flash had the perfect look— then why wouldn't another? The British-made MPP Microflash functioned just as the Graflex did in real life. While the story of its genesis is unknown, one can assume that its black and chrome look must have seemed like a perfect fit for Vader on first sight.

There are TWO known belthangers in ANH.

ESB // There is little information about the amount of props used in production (we can count at least one hero and one bladed stunt).

On the upside, the hero is one of the few OT belthangers that still exists to this day.

ROTJ // While barely seen on screen, rare promotional images confirm that the belt-hanger in ROTJ was the same used in ESB.

What is often considered the hero for ROTJ is actually a bladed stunt only used in a few shots of the final film.

RI // Seen even less than in ROTJ, Vader's saber in this film is the most memorable scene from the movie... too bad they used the wrong one.

Original ESB Hero I Photo by The Prop Store



AKA: VADER ANH / SILVER BARS

FILM: A NEW HOPE

TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

The MPP underwent a nearly identical transformation as the Graflex. (See appendix for MPP information).

Several of the standard MPP features remain:

- The angled “shroud” headpiece and thumbscrew
- The clamp, with silver sidebars, and inner sleeve
- The bulb-release and flash button assembly

Details that were added:

- A d-ring to the shroud
- An Exactra strip, shaved to five and 3/4 bubbles
- Seven “T-Track” strips used for a grip, 3 5/8” long, with their ends tapered at roughly a 30° angle

NOTES

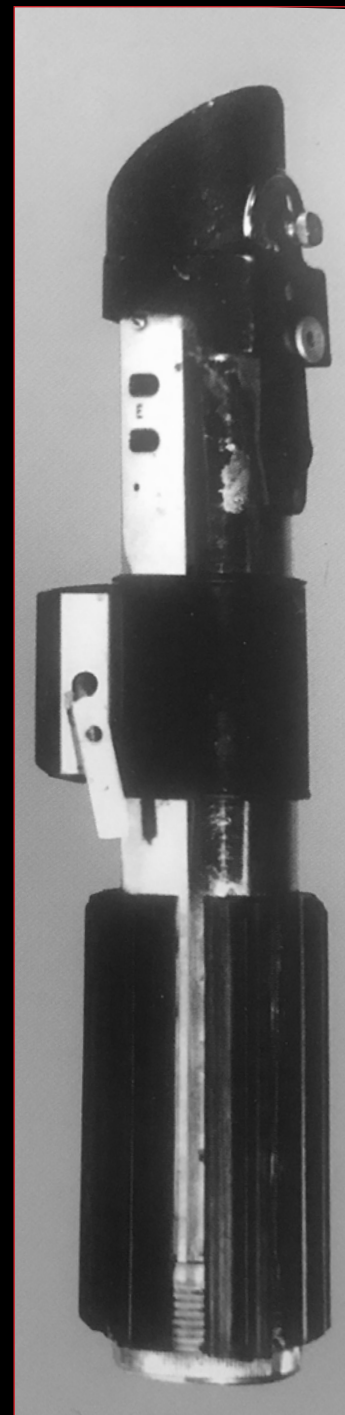
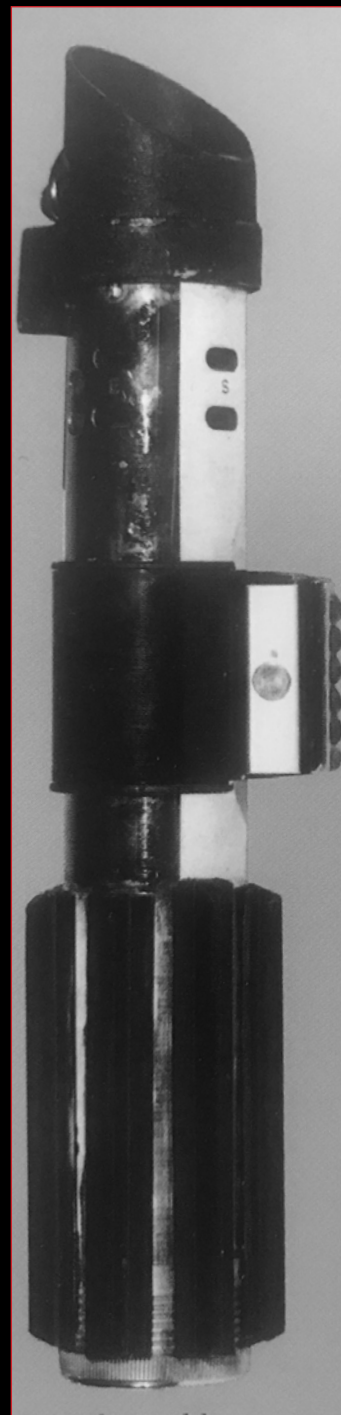
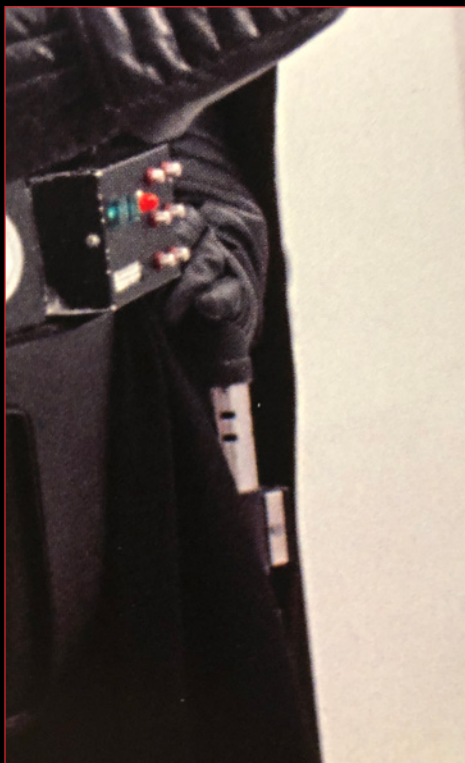
The clamp lever post is missing. An angled and bent nail is used to pin the clamp tight. The lever is glued to the nail.

The position of the clamp box is a minor debate. With the thumbscrew at the 12 o'clock position, the best Known image of the prop places the box at the 5 o'clock angle. Most fan and official recreations place it at the 6 o'clock position.

Some versions of the MPP clamp are unable to close down enough to grip a bubble strip. To remedy this, the ESB and second ANH hero both make use of an Exactra PCB. It is not verified if this variant has a PCB under the bubbles, but it is possible, if not likely.

The “silver bars” nickname comes from the chrome sidebars on the clamp.

This version is most easily seen in scenes set aboard the Tantive IV.



AKA: VADER ANH V2 / BLACK BARS
FILM: A NEW HOPE
TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

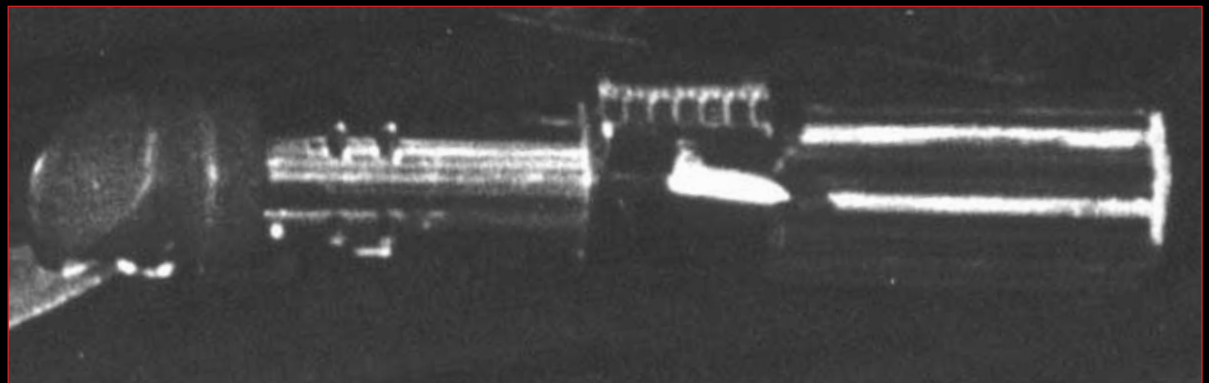
Nearly identical to the first hero, the “black bars” saber has just a few differences:

- The clamp lever is undamaged and is on the opposite side of the box when compared to the silver bars
- Instead of calculator bubbles, there is an Exactra PCB card with LEDs
- The clamp itself on this version is seated lower on the body, closer to the grips

NOTES

This version is best spotted during Leia's interrogation scene.

The PCB is from an Exactra calculator. It's also possible bubbles were on this saber, but lost at some point.



AKA: VADER STUNT(S) / LUKE/VADER SHARED STUNT
FILM: A NEW HOPE
TYPE: BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

Vader had his own dedicated stunt saber designed for ANH. Like the Graflex-based stunt saber it was a custom recreation with an MPP clamp and T-Track grips. It can be spotted in BTS images via the square block detail slipped onto the head to make it better resemble the MPP shroud.

For some reason, likely malfunction, it was only used briefly, and possibly not even onscreen. It is seen in BTS images clearly, identified by its custom shroud.

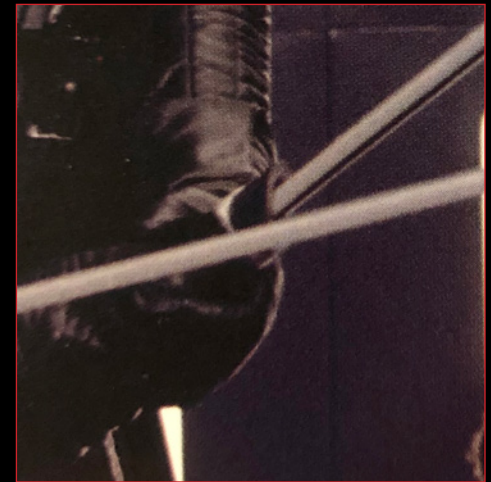
Most of the duel in ANH features Luke's stunt saber altered to look like an MPP. A quick and simple alteration was made— the tip was painted black.

This is frequently referred to as the "Luke/Vader shared stunt."

NOTES

Vader's unused dedicated stunt would have a life beyond ANH as a rehearsal/stunt saber in ESB and ROTJ, and later as "The Barbican" (see apocryphal lightsabers section).

On this page: screen-used Luke/Vader shared on the left, Vader's dedicated stunt on the right.



AKA: VADER ESB

FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK / RETURN OF THE JEDI

TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

Like ANH, the hero was based on the MPP flash unit, retaining the same key parts. The alterations to the prop were the same as the ANH versions, save for the following changes:

- An Exactra PCB under the bubbles
- Wires added to the side ports
- The clamp lever is missing, though its post and washer remain, holding the clamp together
- Six non-angled grips that run from clamp to base

As for the varying MPP details, here are key features used for this belt hanger:

- 3 engraved lines on endcap.
- Larger "B" port
- Flat screws on bulb release
- Shroud itself is thick-walled steel
- The knurling on the shroud knob is diamond shaped
- The interior clamp walls are narrow and angled in

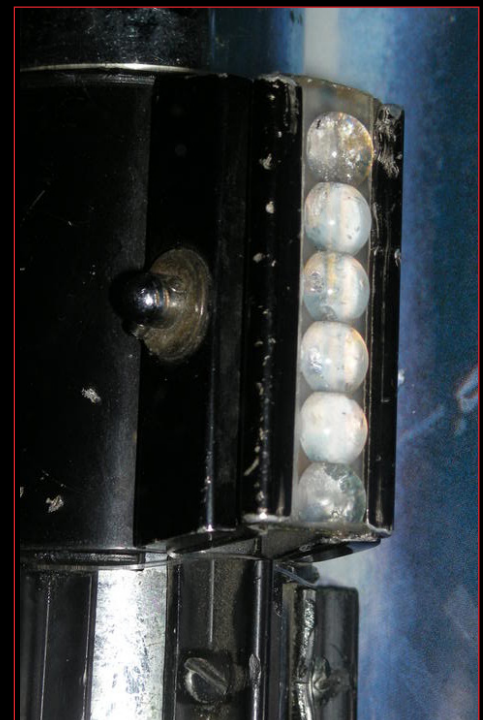
NOTES

This saber is easily spotted frequently in ESB. It is also used as the belt-hanger in ROTJ, but it is only briefly seen onscreen. It can be more easily identified in ROTJ promo materials.

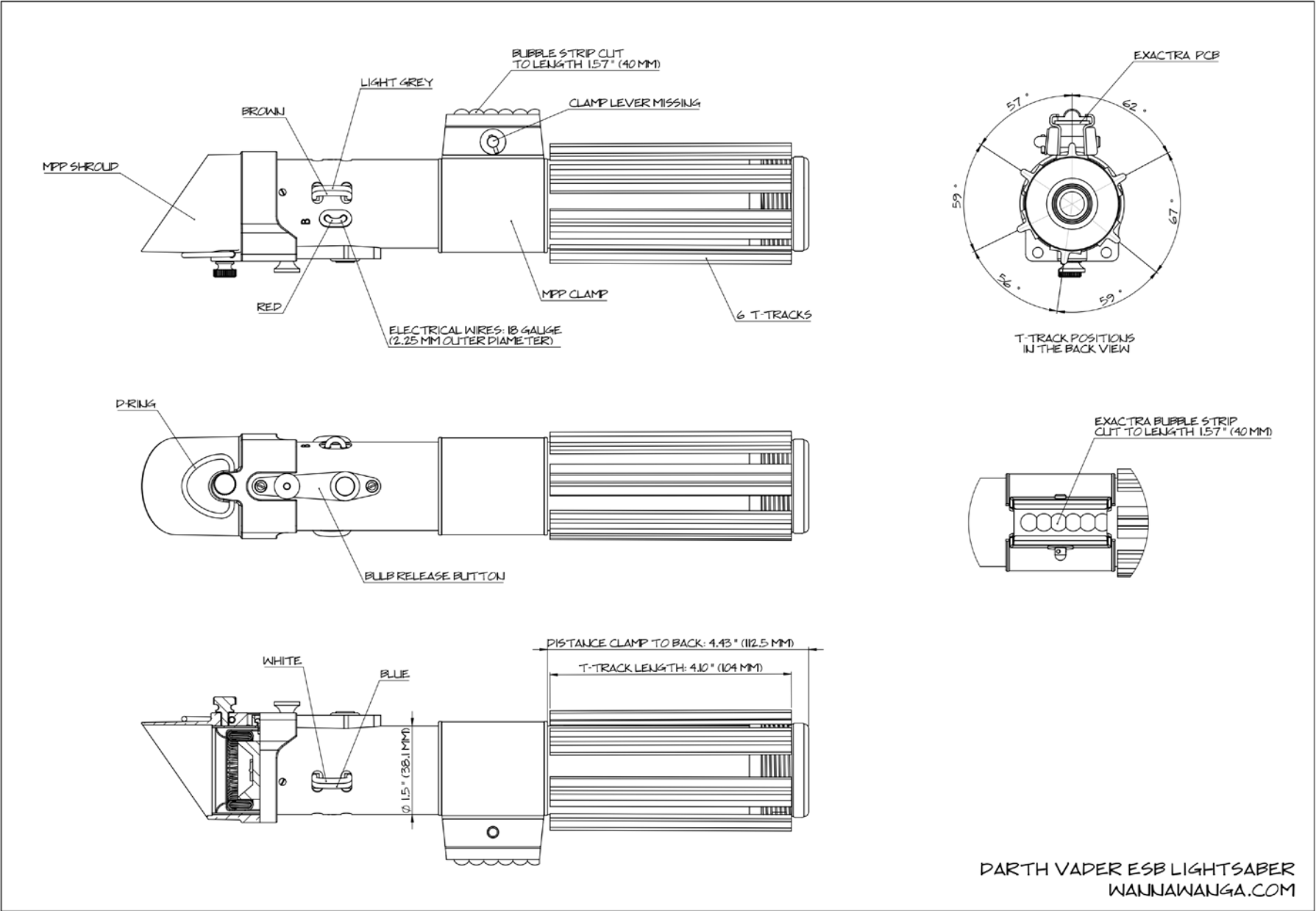
As it exists today, the grips have the same 2mm screws as seen on the Dagobah/Ranch Graflex. Here, they are at the top and bottom, on opposing corners. These were not present during filming.



Image Courtesy of The Prop Store



AKA: VADER ESB
FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK / RETURN OF THE JEDI
TYPE: BELT-HANGER



AKA: VADER ESB STUNT
 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
 TYPE: SOFT GRIP BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

Like the Graflex stunt, knowing that the internal motor rig was no longer needed, the stunt sabers for Vader were built by mounting the dueling rod directly into an MPP using a series of Allen head screws.

Like the Graflex dueling stunt, this version also makes use softer, wider, grips. The clamp however is not covered, and even has a bubble strip.

NOTES

For at least one sequence aboard Vader's Star Destroyer, the stunt pulled double duty as a belt-hanger. There are also images of the saber missing some of its wide grips.



AKA: VADER ROTJ MPP STUNT
FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
TYPE: BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

For ROTJ, multiple stunts were used between photography, rehearsal, stunts, and gags. For most of the duel it is very hard to make out which stunt is being used.

In the early portions of the fight, the thicker, angled end and lock knob of an MPP shroud is unmistakable.

This version appears to use t-track as a grip, not the softer dueling grips used on the ESB stunts. While it is hard to make out, the wire details and bubble strip may also be present on this version.

It is unknown if this was made fresh for ROTJ or a rehabbed ESB stunt.



AKA: VADER ROTJ HERO / MoM / DV6
 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
 TYPE: BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

The Vader lightsaber most commonly associated with ROTJ is the "MoM" saber, which stands for "Magic of Myth," the name of a museum tour and subsequent book comprised of Star Wars props and costumes.

The same saber was also seen in the Lucasfilm Archive book that was put out in the 90s. The MoM and the Barbican (see apocryphal lightsabers section) were the only Vader sabers in the archives at this time.

As such, the MoM became incorrectly referred to as the hero Vader saber and became the basis for toys and other recreations moving forward, (including as recently as Star Wars Battlefront using it as their model.)

That said, this saber is actually only seen during the final shots that lead up to the end of the duel.

This prop is possibly a recycled Luke stunt from ESB that has been refreshed with new parts to more resemble an MPP. Details that can be matched to the ESB stunt:

- The ESB Graflex Kobold D-ring assembly is still on the bottom
- Several 1/2" Allen head cap screws are drilled into the body in exactly the same places seen in photos of Luke's stunt sabers

The obvious changes:

- The body is buffed and/or chromed to resemble the finish of the MPP
- the tip has been painted black
- In place of the bulb release assembly there is a 50mm double ball catch, likely from an MPP cam-

- era case; also possible used with cupboards
- Seven angled 3 5/8" T-Tracks serve as a grip

These new parts that were added and remain scrap-box greeblie mysteries:

- A drum style D-Ring mounted in the bunny ear slot
- What is possibly a tire valve in the lamp socket
- The "clamp" box resembles an electrical wire connector or switch box, but no exact match has been found
- The shroud could be a variant Heiland or MPP shroud, but is more likely a found piece, or something machined for the saber

NOTES

When Vader throws his lightsaber at Luke, the prop is a rubber copy of this variant, and the wrong end is rotoscoped.

As a touring saber, the dueling rod assembly is still inside, though the rod has been cut to a stub.



AKA: ROTJ VADER SEVERED HAND SABER
FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
TYPE: GAG/STUNT

DETAILS

The most clearly seen Vader saber in ROTJ was a one-off stunt used for a single shot (seen at the right) of Vader losing his hand.

According to the Profiles in History: Hollywood 40 auction information, Stuart Freeborn made at least four of these one-off sabers from random parts to roughly resemble Vader's saber.

The lore suggests that Vader's hand being severed was considered a practical make-up effect since it involved recreating a living thing, making the gag the responsibility of Freeborn, who did all the prosthetics for the film.

That said, the one that actually makes the cut to being onscreen is a dressed-up resin cast of the Vader ANH stunt / "Barbican" lightsaber, (see apocryphal lightsabers section).

As an existing piece, this copy would have been made by the prop team, not Freeborn.



AKA: RI VADER
FILM: ROGUE ONE
TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

Rogue One offered up the interesting premise of presenting Darth Vader as he appeared in ANH, but with modern costume advancements and FX work.

The end result was a mixed bag. While his appearance and actions in the film are a hit with most fans, the actual costume was a misfire with several continuity and material errors.

Sadly, the lightsaber hung on Vader's belt was also a misfire. Instead of being one of the ANH versions, which would have been correct, the prop team looked to the current day images of the ESB hero and chose to emulate that model.

The end result is a "clean" and un-weathered version of the ESB/ROTJ hero. It has all the same features, save for a brass shroud knob, and none of the damage or aging.

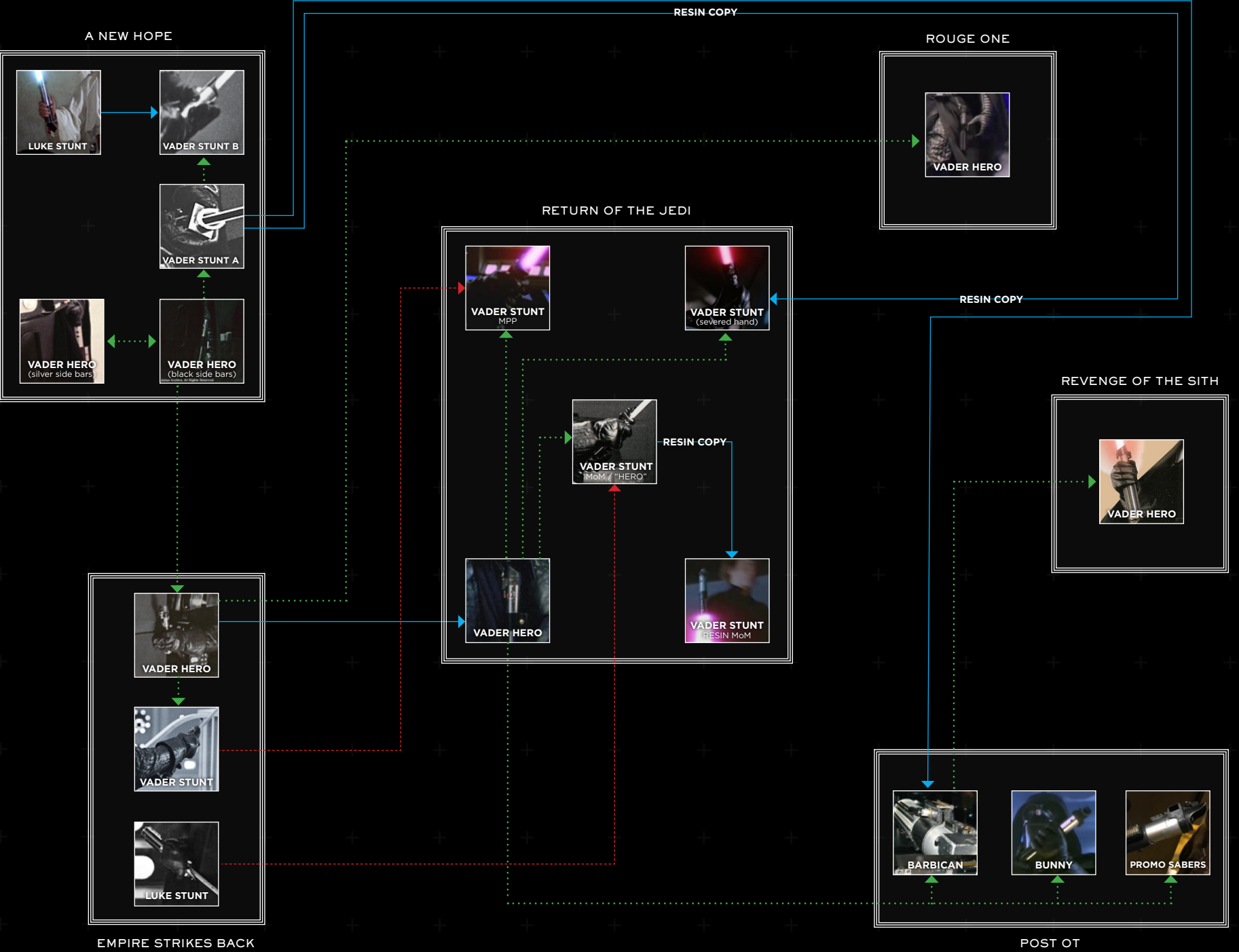
NOTES

On the positive, the saber is not scratch-made, or a replica, but is an actual MPP acquired by Lucasfilm during the same quest to acquire Graflexes for TFA.

The stunt version of this lightsaber is unseen due to the darkness of the scene where it is used, so there is no clear evidence of what was used-- though one can assume the technique was similar to TFA which was developed shortly before Rogue One.



ACTUAL PROP (CONFIRMED) —————→
ACTUAL PROP (THEORETICAL) - - - - -→
BASIS FOR→





Original parts Obi-Wan hero build and photo by RPF member Serenity

OBI-WAN KENOBI'S LIGHTSABER

OBI-WAN KENOBI'S LIGHTSABER

Where Luke and Vader's sabers turned to vintage photo gear, Obi-wan Kenobi's weapon was the result of having just the right junk at hand. It has been noted that much of the production design of ANH, on Tatooine especially, came from the acquisition of airline and military scrap. At the time, it was very cheap and they bought it in bulk.

Jet engines were taken apart to build blasters, droids, snub fighters, and through some sheer luck, it would seem that a handful of parts with similar diameter came together perfectly to form what was for a long time, the most mysterious saber of the saga.

With only a handful of images and diagrams to work from, the exact construction of Obi-Wan's saber was a mystery until 2005. Created from an assortment of scrap, and disassembled and recycled after ANH was done shooting, it was near impossible to get any new or closer looks at the prop.

A few parts were obvious— such as the Graflex clamp, or faucet knob pommel (though the exact make and model took time to pin down). Popular theories from the early speculation days included machine gun and motorcycle parts. Slowly the image became clear.

Other Star Wars props that used parts from the same source lead to discoveries. For example, IG-88's head was known to be part of an old jet engine— when said engine was found and disassembled by a fan, somebody recognized Obi-Wan's emitter amongst the pieces.

Today, all parts have finally been identified. Some of them are common, others are incredibly rare. Thankfully for fans, reproduction parts crafted from originals have lead to recreations that are at least 90% accurate.



AKA: OBI-WAN HERO
 FILM: A NEW HOPE
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

There are three known “states” of the Obi-Wan hero. It is possible these are three different props, but it is equally likely that it was a singular prop with alterations made along the way. Whether it is one or three, the same assembly of parts are used.

From top to bottom:

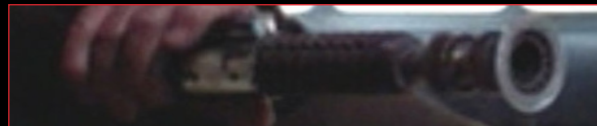
- The “Emitter” is a balance pipe from a Rolls Royce Derwent 8/9 jet engine, essentially part of a fuel pressure regulation system. The emitter is more specifically the large (or female) segment of the assembly
- The “Grenade” section is the titular name for the central grip, a 1916 No. 3 WWI Mk1 British Rifle Rod grenade
- A Graflex clamp and Exactra bubblestrip, virtually identical to the set-up used on the ANH Luke hero
- Two transistors (exact type unknown) backed with washers are mounted into the side of the clamp, at the nine o’clock position to the clamp box’s twelve
- The booster section part of a Browning ANM2 (.303 Mk II) fighter plane machine gun. Specifically, the section between the barrel and the flash suppressor
- The “pommel” is a chromed British sink knob (aka a “handwheel” in UK vernacular), a “Starlight” model made by Armitage Shanks
- A d-ring in a drilled hole in the pommel cube that lay on the opposite side as the transistors
- Though not seen clearly onscreen, chrome tape may have been used to cover the clamp band

Given the similar diameter of the parts, and the fact most of them are open through the center, it is assumed that a simple rod with nuts was used to hold it together. Most reproductions make use of an inner core inside the clamp, the original likely did something similar.

NOTES

The three different states are:

- On Tatooine, the pommel is flipped and the endcap appears to be missing.
- On the Death Star, the inside details of the emitter differ from that on Tatooine.
- The “Chronicles” saber, named for the book it appeared in, (see image right). There were very minimal differences not seen on film. Namely, a missing washer from the top most transistor, a few extra set screws, and small cotter pins between the clamp and booster. Chrome tape was applied, then worn down, over the clamp band. There is debate over whether the Chronicle saber is the one used onscreen, or if it was rebuilt for the book.



AKA: SHARED STUNT(S) / V2 AND V3

FILM: A NEW HOPE

TYPE: BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

Like the Luke/Vader shared stunt, Obi-Wan's dueling saber for ANH was scratch built to better facilitate the motorized practical effect.

The end result was a metal stunt saber that had the shape of the hero, but none of the surface details. The booster was smooth, for example. The neck was painted to match the color of the hero "wind vane" section, while the grenade was matte black to better block off the light used for the early saber effect. The booster was painted black, or possibly covered with gaffer's tape. A graflex clamp completes the look.

There are at least two known stunt versions. Version A was machined from scratch and designed to house the internal motor used in other ANH stunts. It can also be identified by its unique Graflex clamp with a missing side bar, and elongated lever.

Version B was cast from a wooden buck that was designed to resemble the hero. It is unclear whether or not it was ever used on screen. While it was rigged to hold a rod, it was not outfitted with a motor.

NOTES

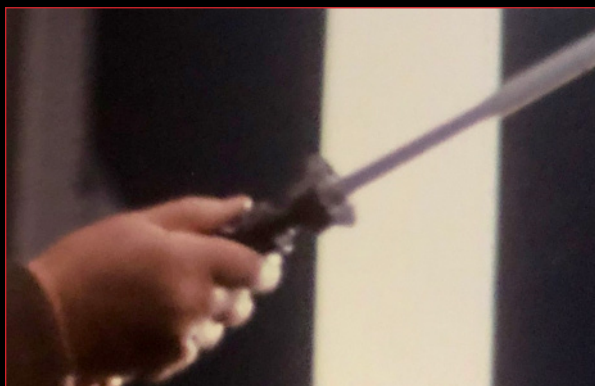
Obi-Wan's death scene uses a suspended saber, it is unclear if this is one of these two stunts, or a third.

Several blank casts, and even the wooden buck itself, have surfaced over the years, meaning that it is very likely that Version B was one of many.

These stunt sabers have a lineage that takes them through the entire saga, which is actually how we know some of the details. ESB BTS images clearly show version A being used in rehearsal by David Prowse, Bob Anderson, Mark Hamill, and even Irving Kershner. One even makes an appearance as a Rebel's "tool" in the background of Echo Base. (see appendix for images of these instances).

Both A and B would be pressed into service for ROTJ for Luke, hence the "shared stunt" nickname. More recently, while doing prop detective work, these two stunts have become more commonly known as the V2 and V3. The V2 is the completed bladed stunt with the longer lever. It was pressed into hero duty for Luke, gaining its name as the "Version 2" hero.

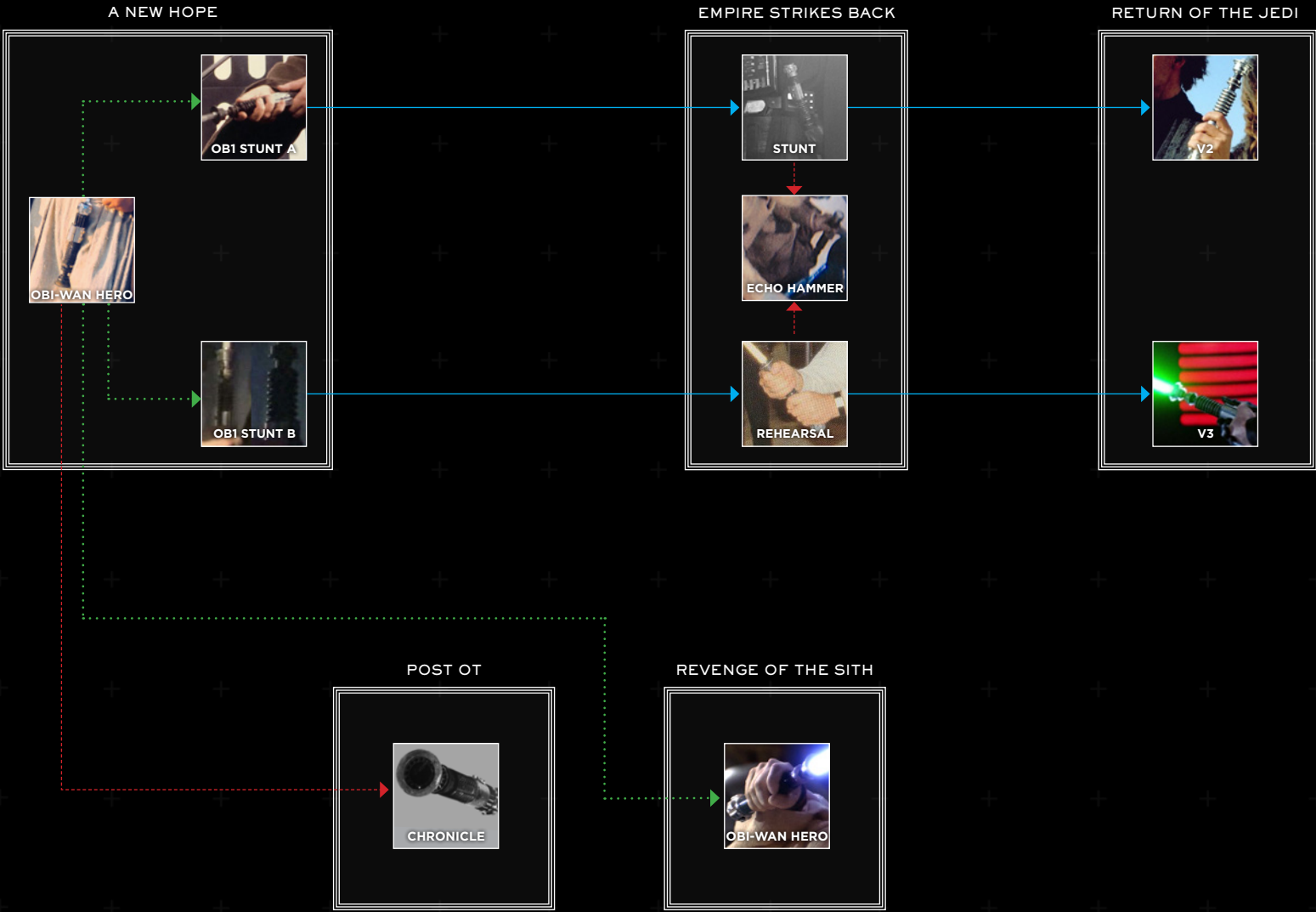
This made the B shared stunt "Version 3" by default, which became the primary bladed stunt used for Luke in ROTJ. (see the Luke section for more info.)



ACTUAL PROP (CONFIRMED) →

ACTUAL PROP (THEORETICAL) →

BASIS FOR →





An "Anakin Starkiller" designed fan reproduction with weathering templates by Trooper Trent, edge card by Slothfurnace, assembled and finished by The Propicator

LUKE SKYWALKER'S LIGHTSABER

LUKE SKYWALKER'S LIGHTSABER

The lineage of Luke's second saber is the most rich and storied behind the scenes, with ties to the production of each of the OT films.

Onscreen, it was different from what we'd seen before— in color, sound, and action. While the prop itself had been around since ANH, at the time it drew attention to itself for being very different.

Much like Darth Vader's lightsaber in Return of the Jedi, this saber has a wide variety of variants and what is considered the "hero" is barely seen in the final cut of the film.

ROTJ // For a singular narrative saber, this model has the most numerous real-world stand ins.

On the first day of shooting in the UK, production focused on the ultimately deleted sandstorm scene. While some sources say there was a plan for Luke to have a unique saber, what went down on the first day of shooting implies otherwise.

There is an image of Mark Hamill with the Graflex (see appendix)-- and obviously, that wouldn't work for continuity. There are also images taken at nearly the same time wherein Luke has the saber we know. One can assume the continuity error was acknowledged, and a quick fix was made: one of the ANH Obi-Wan stunt sabers was tagged in.

At some point the holes were plugged, the emitter was taped in place, and a clamp card was added. Maybe right then and there, maybe back when they were used as rehearsal duelers for ESB, maybe some combination of that. As Luke's belt-hanger, this saber ultimately became known as the V2 (as it's existence wasn't recognized until much after the official hero).

Knowing they needed stunt versions, the prop team went to the second Obi-Wan stunt be the bladed stunt. It would eventual be known as the V3. For the California portion of production both resin and metal copies were made.

The resin models were used as "soft" stunts (for physical gags, like Luke jumping aboard the sail barge.) Multiple metal copies were made (and later found by fans), and at least one was worked into being a short-bladed stunt-- the Yuma.

The Yuma was later cleaned up for insert shots, and in this state becomes known as the official hero.

TFA // During the preproduction of TFA, it was unknown how much Luke would be in the film, and what his appearance would look like in terms of costumes or props. Early drafts had his role integral, while the finished movie reduced him drastically.

To that end, the prop team scratch-built a lightsaber for Luke to have on hand. Ultimately it was not used, and the only glimpse of it comes from a BTS video that was bonus content solely for people buying the Target release of the film.

TLJ // Appearin in flashback form, again, the official ROTJ cave-build/ISYHCANL version is used as the inspiration, but the details seem to be based off of replicas of this saber.

TROS // Appearing in a single scene, another flashback, the saber is ignited and held in a very wide shot, so no actual details can made out.



AKA: LUKE ROTJ HERO / ISYHCANL / CAVE-BUILD

FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI

TYPE: CLOSE-UP HERO

DETAILS

After principle photography had wrapped a series of pick-up and inserts were shot. Amongst them, an insert shot of Luke's new lightsaber, and a new scene of him building said lightsaber.

Perhaps the idea was floated that if Luke was indeed using NEW lightsaber, then the usual worn Star Wars look wouldn't do. Or maybe the goal was to present something that looked different from Obi-Wan's... whatever the reason, the Yuma (see page 55) was cleaned up, repainted, and given a detailed control box.

This singular prop has TWO distinct states: the "ISYHCANL" (short for "I See You Have Constructed A New Lightsaber"), and the "cave-build." The only difference between the two states is the details of the control box. The box is scratch-made and contains a blue and metallic PCB card. Two buttons and light-up arrow indicators stand in for a clamp lever.

The ISYHCANL:

This state appears in just a single shot of the final film: when the titular line is spoken, and we see the saber in Vader's hands. Not the full scene, but simply that one insert shot of Vader turning the saber in his hands.

The ISYHCANL either has flush rails, or is detailed to look as if rails are present. Some say it is simply tape holding the card onto the box.

The "cave-build":

In a scene cut from the film, and only revealed with the BluRay release of the OT, Luke is seen finishing construction of his lightsaber. As part of the action, the clamp card slides on rails to reveal inner workings. The modified rails, sliding card, and blinking lights were built for this sequence.

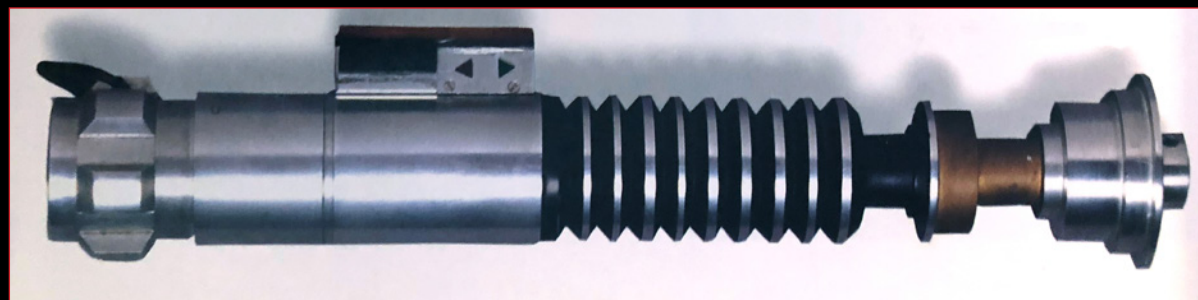
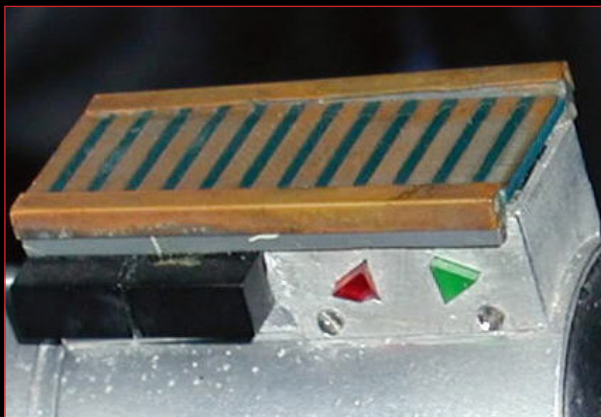
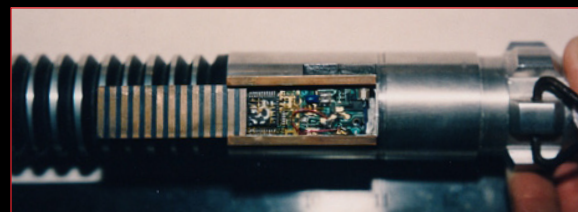
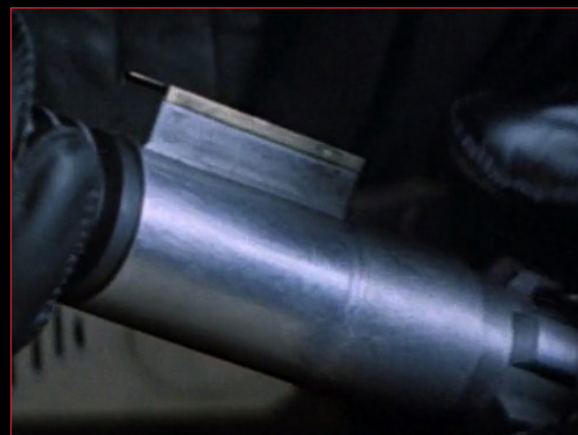
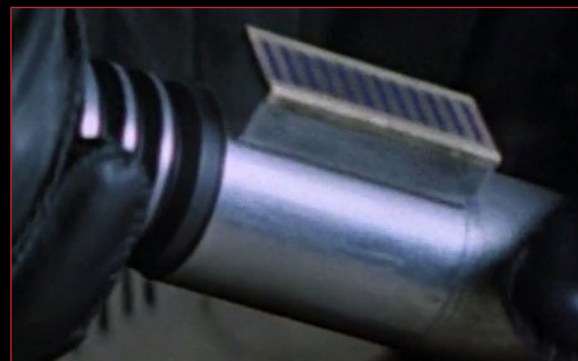
NOTES

The cave-build sequence was shot second, so this state is how the prop has since remained. It was first seen closely in the 90s era Archives book and was subsequently used as the basis for resin copies given to exhibitions, toys, and official replicas.

It is the saber most commonly referred to as the Luke ROTJ HERO.

Much like the Darth Vader MoM stunt, this version was the one chosen to "officially" represent Luke's lightsaber, despite barely being seen in the film.

The confirmation that this prop and the Yuma are the same can be discerned by the matching uneven ring sizes on the "grenade"/grip section.



AKA: V2 / SHARED STUNT
 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
 TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

While not officially recognized as the hero lightsaber for Luke, this saber was used as the belt-hanger for the entire film, as well as several dedicated close up shots.

The V2 is actually the same physical prop as the primary Obi-Wan stunt saber, (see page 47). It can be identified by its Graflex clamp with the long lever and missing sidebar.

Additional details that were added:

- A PCB clamp card of unknown origin
- A “mystery chunk” of metal screwed into the port that was initially meant for the practical motor wires in ANH
- A cone-shaped knurled retainer nut from a Michell Transcriptor turntable
- A D-ring on a pommel cube, which may or may not have been part of the prop in ANH

The chunk and knob may have been added after its first use in the sandstorm scene of ROTJ.

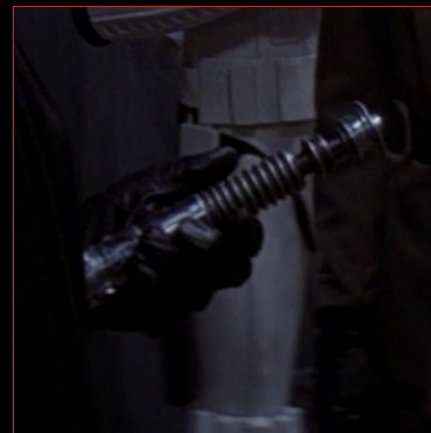
NOTES

Initially, as a stunt prop, the entire emitter spun with the dueling rod. That feature was eliminated here with a piece of black gaffer tape around the neck.

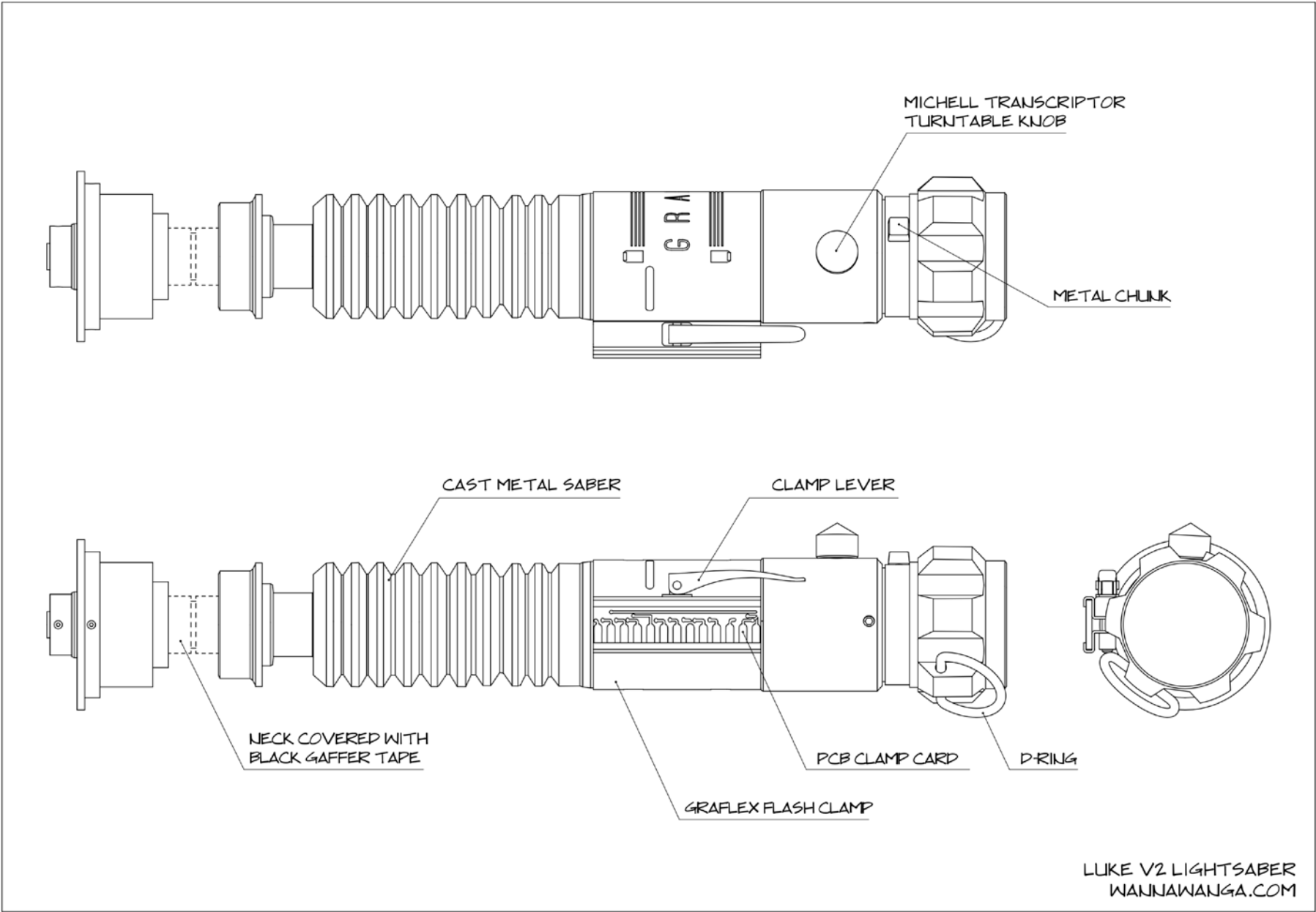
Despite not being the official hero, this saber can be clearly seen multiple times: when Luke catches his saber on the skiff, when The Emperor takes it, then again when it sits next to him on the throne, when Luke lifts it into frame for ignition as he is about to cut down the speeder bike, and pretty much any decent medium shot where it hangs on Luke's belt.



Original V2 Hero I Photo courtesy of Brandon Alinger



AKA: V2 / SHARED STUNT
FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
TYPE: BELT-HANGER



AKA: V3 / SHARED STUNT
 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
 TYPE: BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

This saber started life as Obi-Wan's back up stunt saber, (see page 47). Pre-ROTJ, as a shared stunt, it could be discerned from the V2 by a lack of a Graflex clamp, a visible seam line from being cast, and an overall rougher appearance.

After the V2 became the belt-hanger for ROTJ, it made sense to rehab the V3 to be it's stunt.

During filming the following features were added:

- A Graflex clamp with stock lever. There are three circular holes on either side of the clamp, which implies this clamp could have been pulled off a ESB stunt Graflex. The clamp is flipped compared to all other sabers that use this part

- An ESB Graflex style clamp card

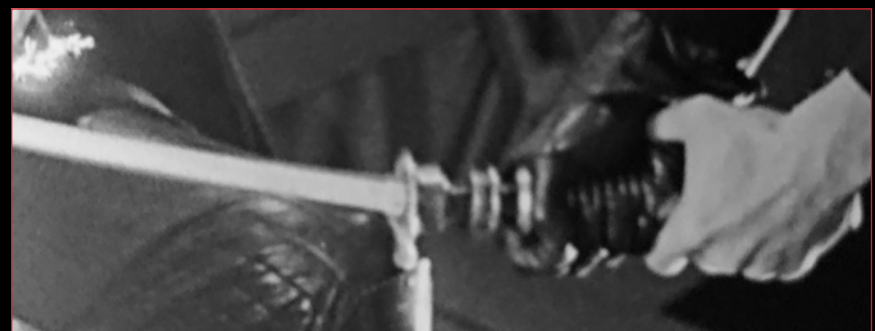
After the OT, the V3 was used in many promotional events/tours. It was further altered to better resemble the close-up hero with these details:

- A paint scheme matching the hero
- A clamp card with even metallic and matte sections

NOTES

Chrome/foil tape covers both the clamp, as well as the emitter. It is unknown if this was present during filming, or added later.

The V3 is the prop that went on a trip to space aboard the Space Shuttle.



AKA: YUMA
 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
 TYPE: SHORT-BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

For Luke facing off against Jabba's henchmen, a short bladed stunt was required.

New sabers were made from scratch based on the general appearance of the V2 and V3, possibly based on the measurements of a resin V3 (see next page). It is unknown how many were fully fixed with short blades. It would seem onscreen only one is used, as evidenced by the chipped paint.

Two different blade sizes can be seen in various BTS images, both much shorter than a dueling blade.

The paint, while worn, was an exaggerated version of what existed on the V3 at the time.

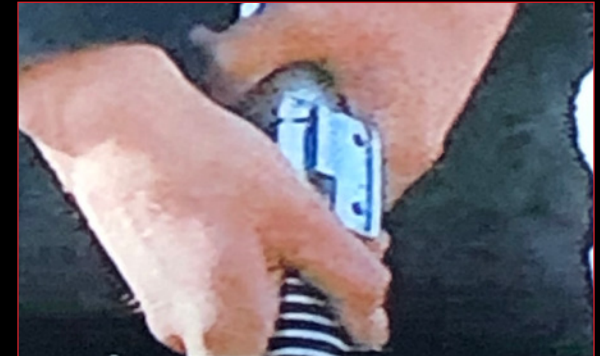
The metal Yuma has the following unique details:

- A triangular shaped pommel ring
- A simple control box emulating the Graflex clamp, attached with two screws; no clamp card is present, a dummy lever is on the right side of the box

NOTES

The Yuma is held by Mark Hamil in the iconic ROTJ promo image of Luke on the sail barge.

In post-production, the Yuma was cleaned up, repainted, and used for the two hero insert shots (see page 51).



AKA: RESIN V3 / RESIN YUMA
 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI
 TYPE: SOFT STUNTS

DETAILS

For the sail barge sequence, a set of resin stunt sabers were used for various bits. Two specifically stand out.

One, given all the heavy physical work and acrobatics, (like Luke throwing himself into the side of the sail barge), it made sense to give either Mark Hamil or his stunt double "soft" props.

Two, a saber was "sleeved" around a tube for firing from an air cannon placed inside an R2 prop. (Though the saber that Luke catches is the V2).

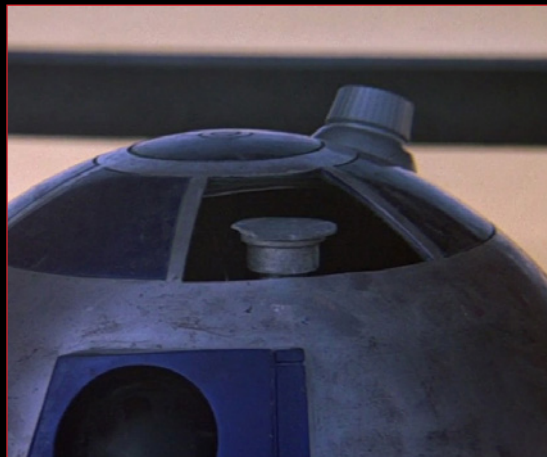
The R2 saber was a resin copy of the V3, and actually gives an idea of what the V3 look like in early production.

It is unclear if the saber tucked in Luke's belt is a copy of the metal Yuma or the V3. It has a uniquely painted black upper neck, which only the V3 has.

Some sources claim that one, or both, of these stunts are actually rubber not resin.

NOTES

In the image on the lower left, a resin "sleeve" saber for the R2 gag can be seen amongst various other stunt and cast lightsaber props.



AKA: LUKE TLJ / THE CREEPY UNCLE
FILM: THE LAST JEDI
TYPE: BELT HANGER /

DETAILS

While based on the ROTJ hero, the details of the TLJ version are not taken from the original prop, but a recreation. Given the thickness of the edges of the rings on the grenade section, many believe the body was inspired from the Prodigal Son replica, a Master Replicas LE, or an eFX Reveal saber.

Onscreen, the details that differ from the ROTJ hero include:

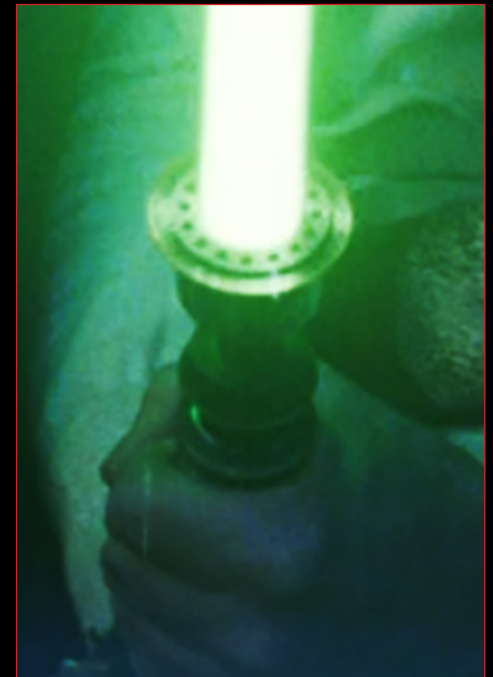
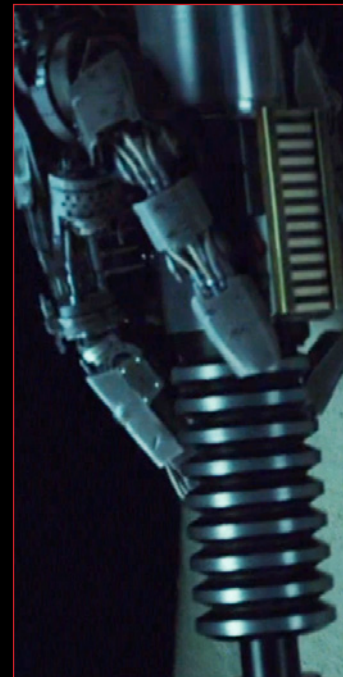
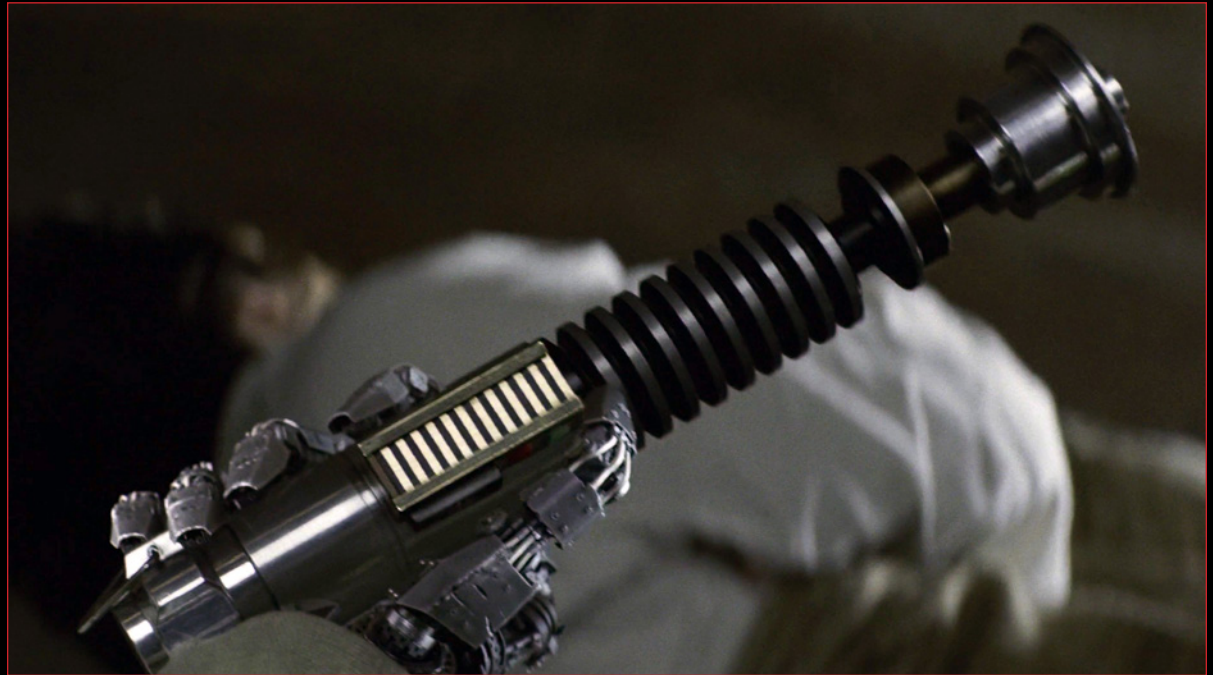
- The tri-ring lies on a pommel cube at 9 o'clock to the box's 12 when looking at the base (roughly speaking as the cubes are not aligned exactly with the box)
- An emitter that matches the TFA BTS version, which itself was inspired by the Obi-Wan ANH hero
- The PCB card appears more gold and reflective, with the bottom bar dulled (note the thinner dark bar at the end)
- Thinner box rails that sit flush with the box body, (SYHCANL style)

NOTES

Given that Luke's artificial hand is holding the saber in the single scene it appears, it is likely that every shot we see of it is an FX/composite. There is evidence that the saber itself was digitally retouched. Namely:

- The buttons change shot to shot; in one angle they are a single lower profile button; in another, they appear as classically seen in ROTJ, in a third there is a reflection/artifact that makes them look different-sized

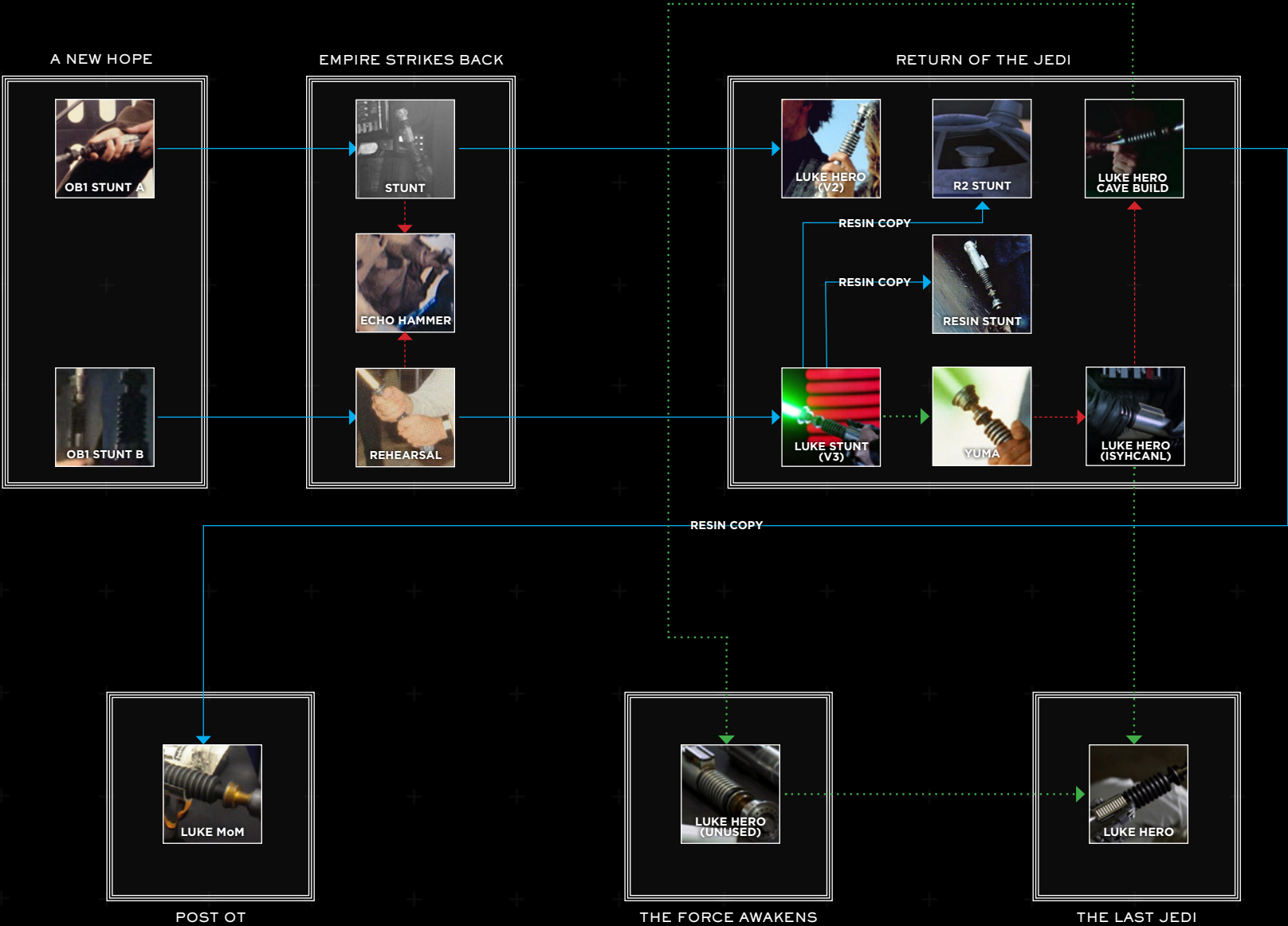
It is possible that Luke's hand being a CG element required roto-ing out his real hand which resulted in the saber needed to be filled in digitally. It could also be a fully CG element. It could even be a retouched resin stand in, as the physical prop presented at promotional events as this saber is a resin copy.



ACTUAL PROP (CONFIRMED) —————→

ACTUAL PROP (THEORETICAL) - - - - -→

INSPIRED BY / BASED UPON→



THE PREQUEL TRILOGY LIGHTSABERS



OVERVIEW

Unlike the Original Trilogy, where most props were made by assembling real world and found objects together, mostly props in the Prequel Trilogy were custom designed and scratch-made to better reflect the vision of this being a more regal, artisan focused era. While the exact methods of construction changed and improved for each film, they still followed the same basic process from start to finish.

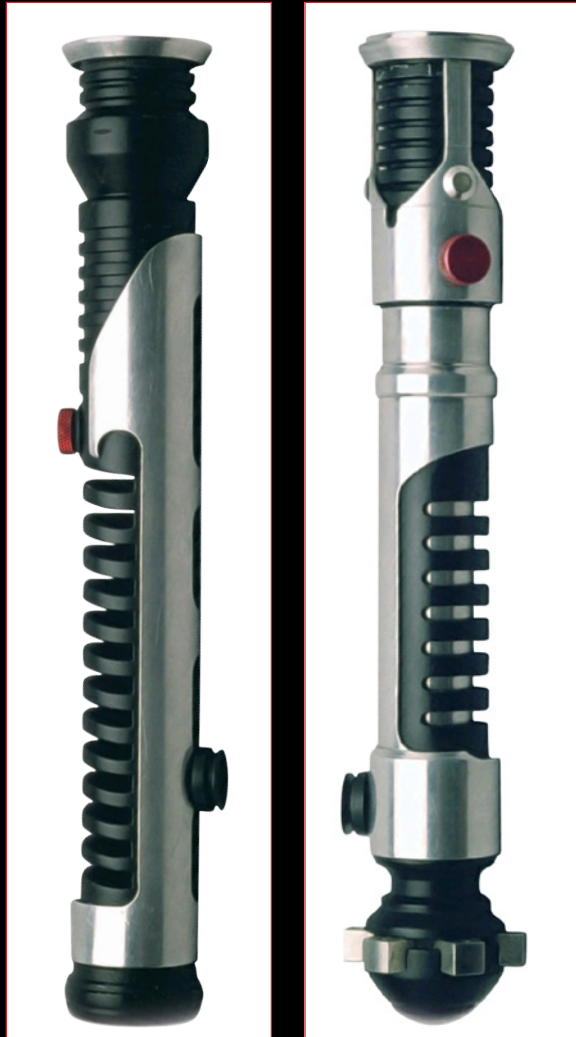
Each of them was designed by the art department, hero versions were created via various machining methods, molded copies of the heroes were then made to serve as stunt sabers, both soft, and bladed. Given that very few real-world parts were used, this section functions more as an overview of the props as a whole instead of focusing on individual saber designs.

QUI-GON / OBI-WAN DARTH MAUL LIGHTSABERS

FILM: THE PHANTOM MENACE
TYPE: HEROES

Two real-world items were used on virtually all of the TPM lightsaber designs: red knurled thumb-screws, and Covertec wheels to function as a belt hanger system. Beyond that, all other parts are fabricated.

Here are the trio of lead-character sabers seen in the film: Qui-Gon's, Obi-Wan's, and Darth Maul's.



JEDI COUNCIL LIGHTSABERS

FILM: TPM
TYPE: HERO

Virtually every other lightsaber in The Phantom Menace is based on the same basic components, slightly mixed and matched with unique minor surface details. They are barely glimpsed on film, if at all. Most appear in promotional materials-- specifically, the Visual Dictionary.

Many of them were re-used for the same Jedi they were assigned to when seen fighting in AOTC and ROTS. Every "clan saber" (as dubbed by the EU to explain their similarity), is one of these four sabers, with slight cosmetic differences in color or part arrangement.



NOTE

STUNT SABERS in TPM were made by making resin copies around a central threaded rod. The dueling blades were simply screwed onto the hilts.

ANAKIN SKYWALKER'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: ATTACK OF THE CLONES
TYPE: HERO

For Anakin Skywalker's first lightsaber, inspiration was taken from the design of Darth Vader's weapon-- most likely to foreshadow the future.

This lightsaber visually looks like a "light" version of Vader's, replacing the prominent black shroud with a chrome one. It took its proportions and measurements from an early Vader replica by Icons, and therefor indirectly from the MPP. As with all Prequel sabers, it was scratch made.



COUNT DOOKU'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: ATTACK OF THE CLONES
TYPE: HERO

Perhaps the most unique lightsaber design set to film, Count Dooku's saber took its inspiration from a scimitar or Katana, presenting a curved body.



MACE WINDU'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: ATTACK OF THE CLONES
TYPE: HERO

To match his growing role in the trilogy, Mace Windu was given a more unique saber, rather than the generic clan saber he was shown with in TPM promotional material.



YOUNGLING / PADAWAN LIGHTSABERS

FILM: AOTC / ROTS
TYPE: HERO / STUNT / CG

While the individual sabers used by the Younglings varied a bit, most were very similar. While the CG Younglings had CG sabers, the physical ones each had one of two sabers.

Both were actually a repainted Star Wars toy, specifically one from the Qui-Gon Jedi Gear set from 1999, and the other from a deluxe Darth Maul action figure accessory.



JEDI ARMY LIGHTSABERS

FILM: ATTACK OF THE CLONES
TYPE: HERO

The remainder of the lightsabers in AOTC are seen during the arena action sequence.

Many of the Jedi appearing here are the same characters from the council in TPM, and as such, use the same mix and match clan sabers.

Some Jedi are pure CG, and have lightsabers with no physical counterpart.

The lightsabers are not consistent scene to scene. For example, Anakin and Obi-Wan are tossed generic clan sabers, and when Anakin wields them both we can see he has a clan saber in one hand (different than the one he just received), and Obi-Wan's in the other (which was already lost) with a green blade.



NOTE

STUNT SABERS in AOTC were made using the same process as TPM, making resin copies around a central threaded rod. The dueling blades were screwed onto the hilts.

There is a brief sequence in AOTC of Anakin and Dooku fighting with practical lit blades-- but these predate the technology developed by fans for dueling with electronic sabers.

These shots are only inserts used for lighting, no contact is actually made with the blades.

ANAKIN SKYWALKER'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: REVENGE OF THE SITH
TYPE: HERO

The third movie of the prequel saga was tasked with bridging the two trilogies in as many ways as possible. One such connection was to show the lightsabers in possession of Anakin/Vader and Obi-Wan in ANH as they were 20 years previous.

While narratively the same as the sabers seen in Episode 4, the props were significantly different from their previous appearances.

As per the PT work flow, real world parts were NOT used in their construction, though the original sabers at least served as inspiration for their looks... sort of...

Anakin's lightsaber (aka the skinnyflex) was oddly based upon the Ranch Saber (see apocryphal lightsabers section) as opposed to the ANH or ESB versions.

In addition to the skinnier body, the clamp card was an original design, a d-ring was absent with a covertec wheel being used as the belt attachment device (located on the hilt), the button color was more metallic and gold, and the glass eye was replaced with a similarly colored recessed button.

A few alternate designs with a flipped clamp have



OBI-WAN KENOBI'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: REVENGE OF THE SITH
TYPE: HERO

While based on the ANH hero, Obi-Wan's saber follows the same design cues as Anakin's: an originally designed clamp section, idealized greeblies, and a much shinier, skinnier design.

The overall finish of all the ROTS hero sabers are very chrome and shiny.



DARTH VADER'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: REVENGE OF THE SITH
TYPE: HERO

Like the Ranch Saber, this variant was not based on any hero from the OT, but inexplicably on the "Barbican" saber (see apocryphal lightsabers section).

While only seen in ROTS promotional materials, like the "skinny flex" it was a narrow and idealized, the Barbican's greeblies became original parts with no real world origin. It had a covertec knob, and an original patterned clamp card.



DARTH SIDOUS / PALPATINE'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: REVENGE OF THE SITH
TYPE: HERO

The first “short” handle design lightsaber seen, (violating the rule Lucas himself established for the OT that lightsabers be two-handed), this saber was given to Palpatine after his fight scene was shot, added mainly as insert shots.

In wide shots you can see him using Anakin's stunt saber. There are two versions with slightly different tints to the metals.



GENERAL GREVIOUS' LIGHTSABERS

FILM: REVENGE OF THE SITH
TYPE: CG

There was significant use of CG body-stunt doubles in ROTS. Therefore CG models of many props, including lightsabers, were created.

This is most apparent when the all-CG General Greivous was given four lightsabers he had supposedly taken from Jedi he killed.

But to save time, resources were recycled, and among the sabers he carried were CG versions of the skinnyflex, and Obi-Wan's saber... which Obi-Wan is also actually holding while fighting Greivous.



NOTE

STUNT SABERS for ROTS switched from resin to rubber as it is more forgiving to a performer's hand, and because the ability to faux-chrome rubber was a new process at the time.

This allowed the props to be softer, but yet look more metallic-- in both cases, a step up from what painted resin would offer up. The chromed rubber hilts were cast around the carbon fiber dueling rods, making for the most sturdy dueling sabers up to that point.



THE SEQUEL TRILOGY LIGHTSABERS

KYLO REN'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

As with the PT, the original lightsaber designs for The Force Awakens were scratch built. Using a combination of machining techniques and 3D printing this allowed for the hero and the stunt to be virtually identical, built out of the same material. The stunt can be discerned by the fact the base is not hallowed out as the hero and the wire clips are staples.



RANDO PADAWAN LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: CONCEPT

Included here because, frankly, I needed to fill out the page and offer up something than just the Kylo Ren show.

This lightsaber was apparently physically made, and on-set for the Knights of Ren scene in TFA, supposedly belonging to the young Jedi that Kylo Ren kills in front of Rey. It can almost be seen in Kylo's hand in the Knights of Ren group shot, (though some believe that is Luke's saber in his hand).

It appears to have a central body that is turned on a lathe, with 3D printed detail work that slide over the body.



KYLO REN'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE LAST JEDI
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

Much like the Graflex, the proximity of the production between TFA and TLJ has granted us the magical phenomena of prop continuity between films. For the most part, Kylo Ren's saber in the same design, but there are very minor differences in the dimensions of individual pieces.

Noted changes include a slightly different design for the bases of the side emitters, the shape of the cut-out section, and the fact that the finish is a matte black paint job. The stunt is nearly identical, save for a retention bolt.



BEN SOLO'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE LAST JEDI
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

When faced with Luke and his wrath, young Ben Solo has no choice but to defend himself.

Seen ever so briefly, Ben Solo's lightsaber is actually the same one he uses as Kylo Ren-- just without the modifications.

The side vents that make the cross guard are absent, as is the red wire, and black paint. For this prop one of the Kylo stunts was repainted, as evidenced by the blade retention screw/bolt seen in the body above the grip.



REY'S JEDI LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

Rise of Skywalker ends with Rey having constructed her own lightsaber. The intent is clear for us to assume she repurposed the end of her staff. While the prop dimensions vary slightly, it is clearly adapted from those parts, and given a wrapped grip.



REY'S SITH LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

In TROS, Rey faces the darkside within herself in her own version of the famous cave-scene from ESB. Rey faces a dark version of herself, who is armed with a folding staff saber.

While obviously inspired by Darth Maul's TPM saber, it has elements similar to Vader's MPP-based lightsabers, namely the lower section of a shroud, and a bulb release assembly on either end.



KYLO REN'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

Simply put-- the same design files are used to 3D print the parts needed for Kylo's saber in each film. The assembly of the parts varies each time. For TROS, the paint job is essentially the same as TFA, and the greeblie "core" in the bottom section is flipped upsidie down compared to TFA and TLJ.



LEIA ORGANA'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

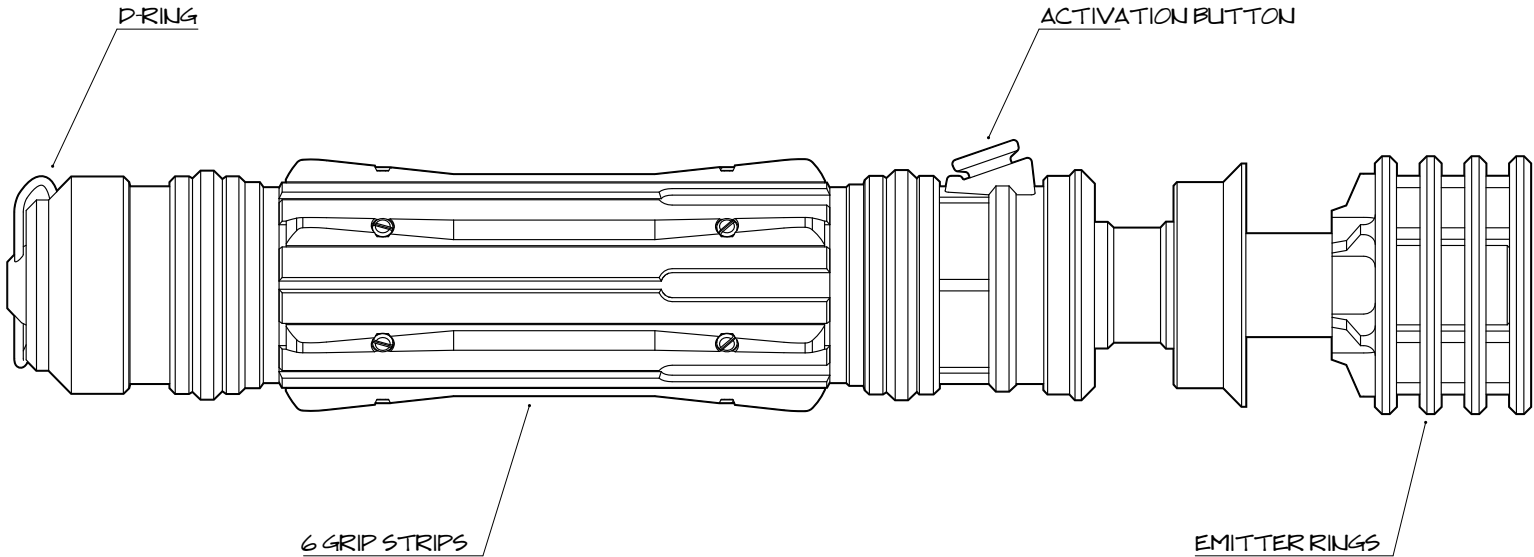
TYPE: HERO / STUNT

Inspired by both Obi-Wan's lightsaber and the grip section of the Graflex, Leia's scratch-built lightsaber prop is not unlike a PT approach to an OT saber. Like every other ST lightsaber, it is scratch-made, not using any found parts, as is it's stunt counterpart.



LEIA ORGANA'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
TYPE: HERO / STUNT



THE RISE OF SKYWALKER
PRINCESS LEIA'S LIGHTSABER
WANNAWANGA.COM

CANON FAN-MADE LIGHTSABERS



OVERVIEW This guide is made for the community of lightsaber prop enthusiasts. On a few special occasions, custom creations by people in this community have gone on to be used by Lucasfilm, canonizing them as official lightsabers.

YODA'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: AOTC / ROTS

TYPE: CG

In the early 90s, prop/model/toy collector Ed Maggiani tracked down a box of camera flashes in hopes of recreating lightsabers. In that box there happened to be a Praco model flash. As a joke to Steve Dymso, (who would go on to found Master Replicas), Ed noted that it must be Yoda's lightsaber. After some thought, he and Steve thought it might be fun to do exactly that.

Steve took a crack at the Praco first. He added:

- The "clamp box," "an oil sump pan from a 1/12 scale Monogram 1967 Corvette"
- The emitter, an 1/16 Lamborghini Countache front wheel from a Japanese model kit
- A 4-40 PEM nut near the emitter shroud

He also added white foam tape grips, which Ed didn't care for and later replaced with black foam grips. Later, Ed had made friends with David Reynolds, who had been given the task of creating one of, possibly the first, Visual Dictionary. Reynolds requested the use of the Yoda saber for inclusion. With Lucasfilm getting the rights to the design, they recreated it digitally, giving it to Yoda to use in AOTC and ROTS canonizing the design.



EVEN PIELL'S LIGHTSABER

FILM: THE PHANTOM MENACE
TYPE: HERO

As the Star Wars EU grew in the 90s, many new Jedi and Sith characters were added. For fun, RPF member LUUKE created a website with custom designs for all these new characters.

Several of the designs were later used with permission by Darkhorse in comics, canonizing many of the designs. One of them had a particularly OT feel-- Even Piell's lightsaber. It uses a Minicam Jr flash and ESB style edge card.

LUUKE's other designs can be seen [AT HIS SITE](#).



MARA JADE'S LIGHTSABER

MEDIA: SWCCG / PROMOTIONAL
TYPE: HERO

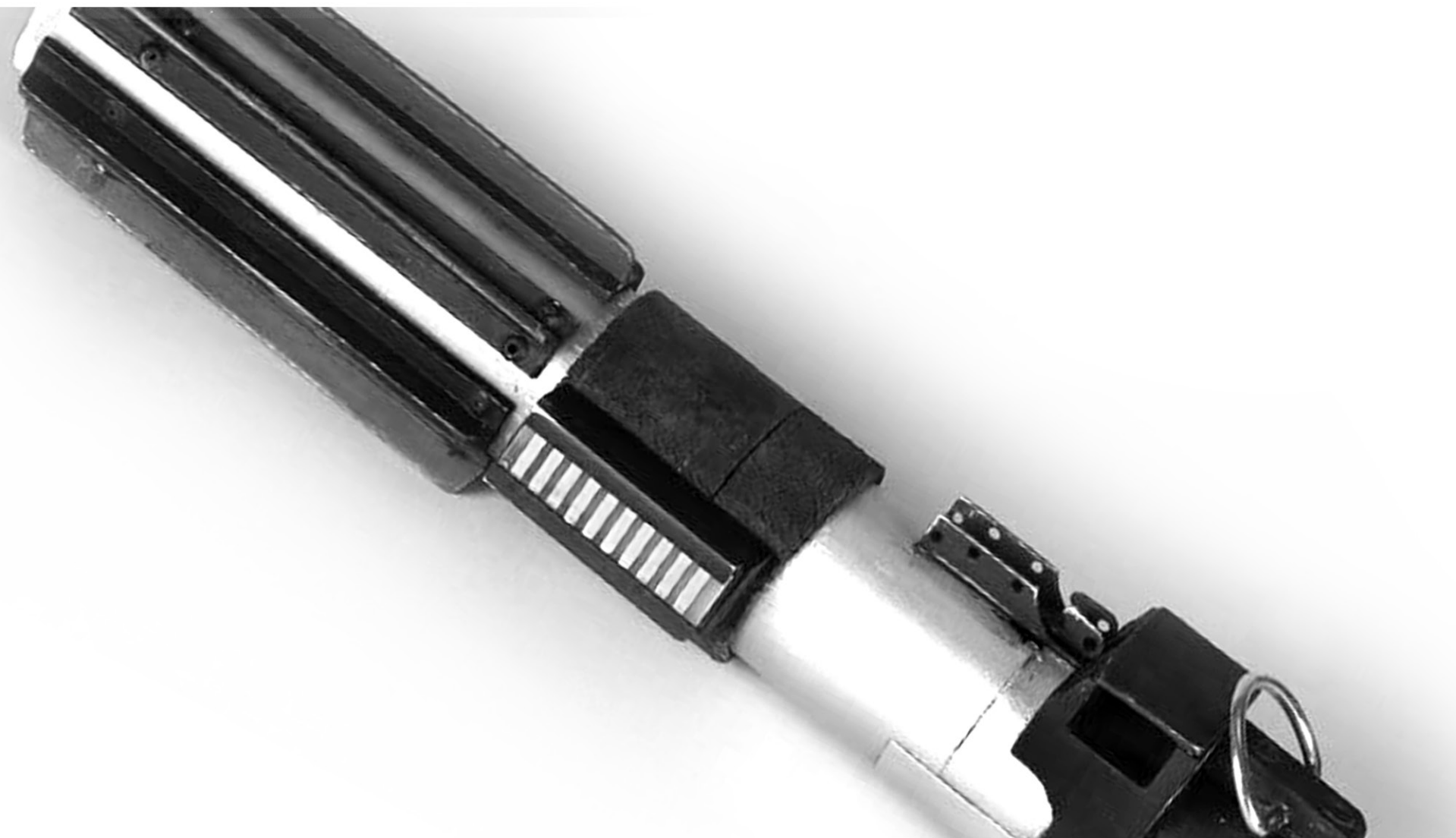
Jeff Parks was one of the earliest sabersmiths to design and sell replicas to the prop community. To this day, his work is the backbone to modern-day replicas.

Parks is credited with designing the lightsaber most associated with Mara Jade, the single most popular Star Wars character outside of the films.

It is not clear if the first appearance was in the Star Wars card game from the 90s, or if it was when the Star Wars Insider Magazine featured a live action model as Jade on its cover holding the lightsaber. In both cases, Park's design was used, making it official and canon. The design looks to be inspired by some of the early lightsaber designs that went unused in ANH (see appendix).



APOCRYPHAL LIGHTSABERS



OVERVIEW ANH was in a lot of ways a one-off. The studio expected it to fail, and the budget was actually fairly small for a picture of its scope. Much of the props used for the movie came from prop houses and had to be returned. The weapons were restored to their original state. The scrap was broken down and sold off.

The Lucasfilm archives, and the idea of them retaining their own materials, did not happen until the production of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Empire Strikes Back*. This is why no other ANH lightsabers have ever come to light. They likely no longer exist. It has been noted by several sources that following ROTJ, very few of the lightsaber props made it back to the archives.

When there was a resurgence in *Star Wars* in the early 90s, there were not a lot of “official” representations to go to. So between ANH and ESB, and following ROTJ, **NEW** versions of the sabers were made. There are also well-known stand-ins, fakes, and stunts that have their own stories outside of the movies themselves.

AKA: ELSTREE GRAFLEX
FILM: ANH
TYPE: UNUSED STUNT PROTOTYPE

DETAILS

This beat to hell Graflex was first spotted in a documentary film about Elstree studios, where much of the OT was shot. The son of a studio manager found this in the trash, having been left behind by the ANH prop team. It has since made its way to The Prop Store.

An early patent Folmer model, there is some very unique damage to this Graflex that lead most to assume that this was likely an early attempt at making a bladed stunt saber. As we know, the lightsaber effect was something that was attempted practically in ANH. The large washer, welding damage, and dents seem to indicate that there may have been an attempt to connect a blade.

The early strip-knurled button is the same styler used on the scratch made ANH shared stunt saber. The bubble strip is a great Exactra example.

Glue residue where the grips were attached can be seen. The most interesting feature is the D-Ring.

Given that there are no clear images of how the ANH hero d-ring is attached. A pair of rivets was not considered before, but when now compared to existing images of the ANH belt-hanger, details match up, telling us it has a similar dual rivet d-clip.

Given the various tells, the community is relatively certain that even though this Graflex was part of the production, it likely is never seen onscreen.

Images courtesy of Ruben Jimenez Brinquis, Andrew Mitchell, and The Prop Store.



AKA: KOBOLD PROMO

FILM: ANH

TYPE: PROMOTIONAL IMAGE

DETAILS

This odd looking saber for a Japanese promotional image is actually an airbrushed addition, painted over a smaller Kobold flash.

The Kobolds were used as droid callers in the saga, and had their mounting brackets removed to be used in D-ring assemblies for the Graflex.

This image, taken after ANH was shot, adds evidence to the fact that the ANH props were no longer accessible/in existence.

It's my personal theory that being tweaked for this shoot, the Kobold likely would have been given seven grips, as the ANH sabers were. To me, that makes it a likely candidate as the lower half of hand-gag Graflex stunt on page 18.

No proof of course... total guess, don't hold me to it.



AKA: LUKE HS
FILM: THE STAR WARS HOLIDAY SPECIAL
TYPE: BELT-HANGER

DETAILS

While not technically in canon, or even good taste, the Holiday Special is a thing that we can all agree exists. Included here because it's part of the bigger prop story, this lightsaber is based on a Graflite, the predominant model of flash made by Graflex to replace the model normally used for lightsaber props.

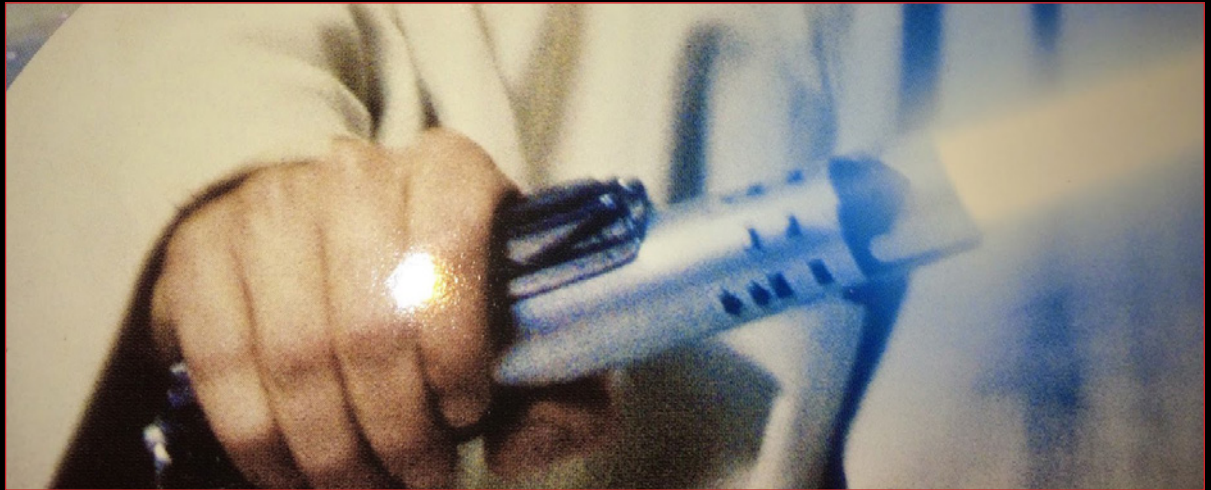
It employs T-Track for a grip, but the remainder of the parts are unknown.

The important part of the story here, is that this illustrates the lack of props from ANH.

NOTES

Only recently has it come to light that the HS saber was actually used in ESB. It was used as a belt hanger for Luke's stunt double for an insert shot.

One can also see that the shroud of this prop changes. It appears to be one piece lodged into a second, and the first is missing during the ESB shoot.



AKA: SRS / RANCH SABER

FILM: ESB / POST OT

TYPE: DISPLAY

DETAILS

On display at Skywalker Ranch and billed as one of the heroes from ESB, this Graflex was built from left-over ESB parts, possibly to serve as Luke's lightsaber in ROTJ before the obvious continuity error was addressed.

It's unclear what details were added for that purpose and what was added for later display, but it now appears as a unique variant that has been closely studied as the only Graflex-based saber from the OT still in Lucasfilm's possession.

Its features include:

- A red button has been seen in both holes at different times, leaving the other socket empty
- A brass screw that pins down the clamp lever
- The clamp is surrounded by a 1" strip of reflective textured fishing lure tape
- The Kobold D-ring assembly is upside down, and mounted with brass screws instead of rivets

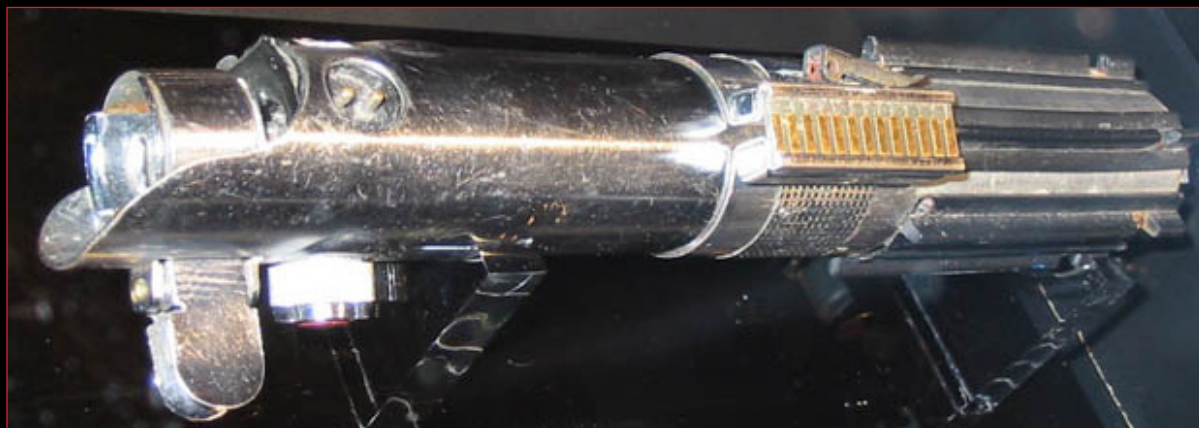
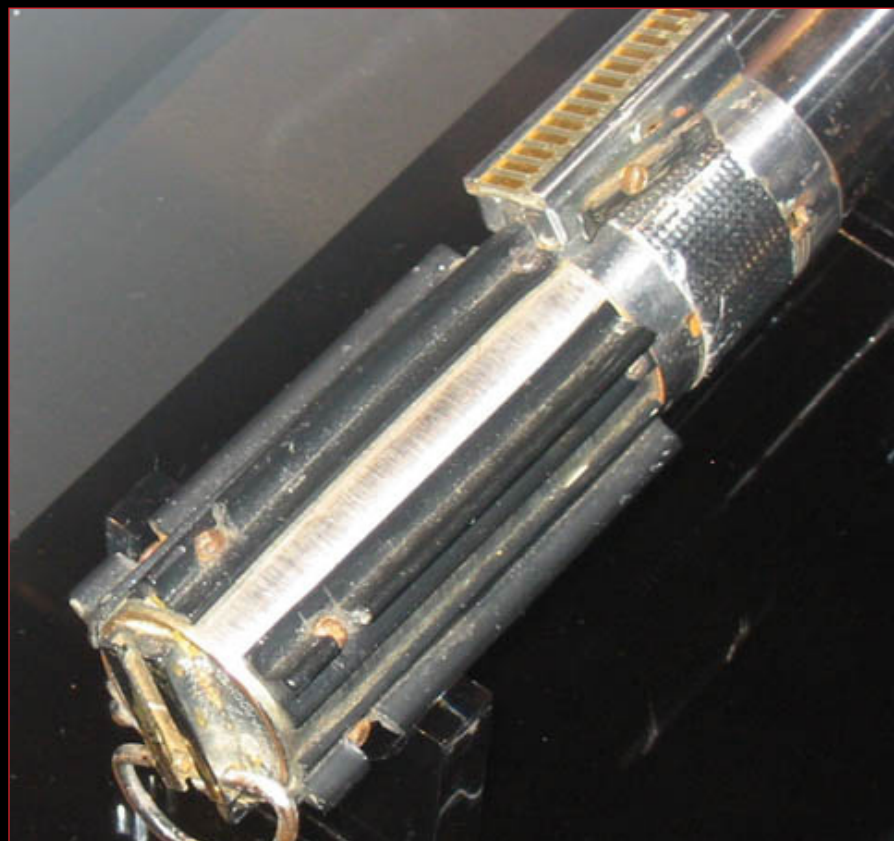
The very specific warping and shape of the grips on this saber can be matched to the grips of the Dagobah belt-hanger hero. The upper half does not match up with the Dagobah saber when examining the weathering and damage. The stamping looks to be that of a Folmer Patent model Graflex.

NOTES

This saber has more recently been part of various museum/show tours appearing both in a display with other sabers, as well as on a costume mock-up of Luke's Bespin outfit.

In the Archives there are resin copies of this saber, made for the R2 launching gag in ROTJ.

This saber served as the inspiration for the "skinny flex," the lightsaber used by Anakin in Revenge of the Sith. (see page 63)



AKA: PIPE STUNT / BLANK STUNT / CUSTOM STUNT

FILM: ANH / ESB / ROTJ

TYPE: BLADED STUNT

DETAILS

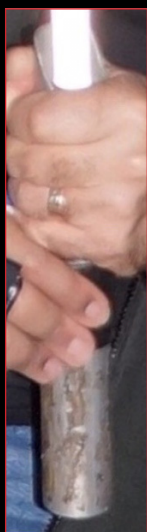
In addition to bladed stunt sabers built into camera flashes, or closely made replicas, there are also several “pipe” stunt sabers. Their name comes from the fact they appear to be lengths of pipe cut at angle and given a taped up Graflex clamp.

While today in the archives, the one model we know of has nothing but tape residue on the base, other images exist in the archives that show the wide/soft grips used in ESB were at one time on this stunt.

The exact origin is unknown, but rumor has it these things were ubiquitous throughout the OT. The one in the archives looks as if it may have served as a Vader saber, but we also see both Mark Hamill, his stunt double, Bob Anderson, and a stunt choreographer all using it in ROTJ BTS images.

NOTES

There are many rumors of other stand-in sabers, both stunts and belt-hangers, used in various shots throughout the OT. These include resin and rubber copies, simple PVC, even cardboard according to some sources.



AKA: THE BARBICAN

FILM: ANH / ESB / ROTJ

TYPE: PROMOTIONAL TOUR / MUSEUM DISPLAY

DETAILS

For decades, the icon of the franchise was Darth Vader. From a promotional aspect, this is genius-- he can be anywhere one can rent a tall dude's time and put him in a suit.

Vader's popularity, and the fact he could appear without needing to hire an original actor, made him the most useful fixture for events, collections, and museum tours.

As mentioned at the top of this section, faced with a shortage of lightsabers, Lucasfilm often resorted to offering up less-than-hero sabers or copies in a pinch.

"The Barbican" is named for the Vader lightsaber given to the London museum of the same name. This prop began life as Darth Vader's dedicated stunt in ANH. At some point it was converted into an ESB style bladed stunt.

It is not seen clearly in ESB or ROTJ, either onscreen or in BTS images, but it is possible it was used in either of those film's duels or rehearsal.

- the body is a cut piece of pipe
- the clamp is from an MPP
- the PCB card is from the same source as other ESB era sabers, though it has one "fat" trace at the top
- t-track is used for the grips

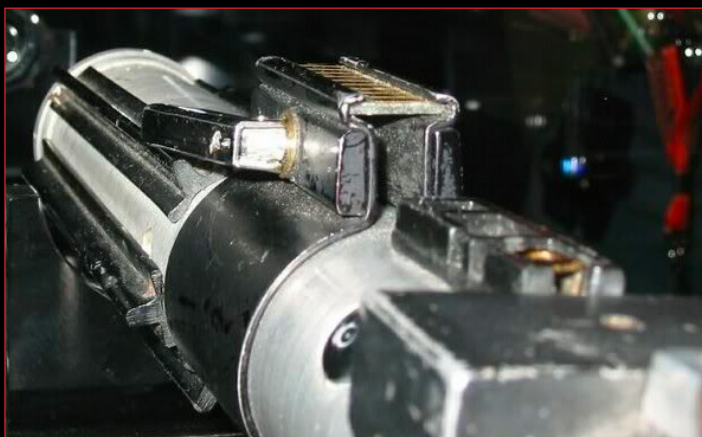
The rest of the parts are unknown greeblies.

NOTES

A resin copy of the Barbican was used for the severed hand gag in ROTJ.

Following the OT, this was the only Vader saber present in the archives.

The Barbican was chosen as the basis for Vader's saber in Revenge of the Sith. (see page 63)



AKA: THE BUNNY / PROMO COSTUME SABER
FILM: ENERGIZER SUPERBOWL COMMERCIAL (1994)
TYPE: HERO / PROMOTIONAL TOUR

DETAILS

For Superbowl XXVIII the Energizer Bunny faced off against Darth Vader, only for the Sith Lord's saber to die out as its generic batteries failed.

Crafted by Star Wars archivist and propmaster Don-Bies, it was built on the body of a Maglite to provide Vader with an endcap he could unscrew to inspect the batteries.

According to Don, the look was based on the only Vader lightsaber in the archives at the time. Given the details and era, I am making the educated guess that he is referring to the Barbican.

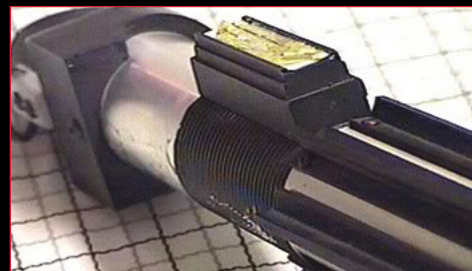
At the end of the commercial, Vader drops and kicks the saber. For this, Bies improvised a stunt stand in with a length of PVC, some cardboard, some foil, and gaffers tape.

In 1995, Lucasfilm provided Fox with 18 Darth Vader costumes for various promotional tours and events. The lightsabers that accompanied these costumes were all resin casts of the original Bunny saber.

NOTES

Several resin bunnies have popped up in promo images or at auctions. There are minor variations in paint and greeblies.

One was even put up for auction with Profiles in History billed as the original bunny saber (it wasn't, Don Bies still has it), and another fetched a high price billed as a Vader stunt saber.



AKA: THE STROBONAR HYBRID / KURTZ VADER

FILM: -

TYPE: MUSEUM DISPLAY

DETAILS

The STROBONAR is a camera flash made by Heiland (who also made the SYNCHRONAR, which the MPP is a UK knock off of.)

The Strobonar looks nothing like any known lightsaber, but one was broken down and recognizable elements were used to recreate this Vader promotional variant.

Outside of the Strobonar being a source of the parts, familiar looking t-track grips, and a PCB style edge card, everything else about this saber is a mystery save for the emitter, which is from a telegraph Graflex (see page 92) as evidenced by tiny set screws.

NOTES

When this saber was built, or by who, is unknown, but it is rumored to have come from the collection of Gary Kurtz, who has been known to sell sabers under the pretense of them being screen-used, when they were not, (see next page).

This saber is part of the permanent collection at the EMP in Seattle.

The grips and d-ring appear to be the same as those made for the Bunny saber, (see previous page.)



FILM: ?
TYPE: AUCTION

DETAILS

In addition to the questionable Strobonar, ANH and ESB producer Gary Kurtz auctioned off more than one Graflex saber from his private collection.

While billed as being used in the film, evidence points to the fact that they were never seen on screen.

It is also hard to know just how many sabers Kurtz has auctioned off-- the auctions seem to come up every handful of years, and it is unclear if it is the same items, or similar ones. There are a few discerning details to be gleaned that will allow you to laugh at whomever spends a few hundred grand on something they think is legit, but is not. (Looking at you, Paul Allen.)

Billed as ESB sabers, the arrangement of parts tend to be mishmash of the ESB and ANH versions. (An ANH style upper, but an ESB style lower half.) It has also been revealed that the grips were added for the purpose of the auction.

At best, one could surmise that while these sabers may have been with the prop department for production, they were likely only used for spare parts (one of them was missing its buttons) and not actually converted to full sabers or used in filming.

One of these is at the EMP in Seattle, another with Ripley's Believe it Or Not Museum. Enough fans chose NOT to believe it, and the prop community made enough noise that the display placard at Ripley's admits to its provenance being dubious.



FILM: NONE
TYPE: PRIVATE ARCHIVE

DETAILS

Over the years, many auctions have cropped up claiming to be the ROTJ Luke hero saber.

Elstree Props (not to be confused by the studio of the same name), The Kurtz Joiner Archive, and Auction Specialists are the most high profile-- with the Elstree one showing up in a recent episode of Pawn Stars.

The Yuma stunt and resin replicas of the V3 were made in California by third party machinists, working off the V3 for reference. These makers, and Lucasfilm themselves, have made copies over the years.

These, or perhaps even early third-party replicas, have frequently become mistaken for the real thing and had a moment in the spotlight.

Details do not line up to what we know the screen-used props are, so while these sabers are often touted, even officially, as the real thing, they are not.

As of now, the primary sabers used in ROTJ are accounted for. The V2 is in the hands of the Prop Store, while the Lucasfilm archives has the V3 and Hero/Yuma, though they occasionally make out for museum tours.



FILM: ?
TYPE: AUCTION

DETAILS

In 2017-2018, Roger Christian, creator of the original ANH Graflex lightsaber, began to do promotional tours. While his recollection of details of the original prop seems to vary, with his story changing from time to time, often on his talks he had a lightsaber along with him.

It was unclear if it was an original, or newly made, (he said both). Eagle-eyed fans spotted that the t-tracks were fan-made repros.

On his lightsaber he used a Robertson screw to attach the d-ring leading many fan-builders to adopt this feature.

In late 2018, Roger claimed to have found one of the original ANH Graflex props in his storage unit. It immediately went up for auction.

Again, prop-fans found details questionable enough that they raised alarm, and the auction was subsequently pulled.



AKA: LUKE TFA
FILM: THE FORCE AWAKENS
TYPE: BELT HANGER

DETAILS

Based on an early script and concepts, Luke's lightsaber was recreated for TFA. As it never appeared onscreen, its consider apocryphal and unofficial, though it does present itself as an idealized Luke ROTJ Hero with these details:

- A body style based on the ISYHCANL hero, with even rings.
- A control box based on the better-known cave-build version-- with larger triangle indicators.
- The emitter is all-new, a combination of Obi-Wan's ANH lightsaber and Luke's V2.
- The tri-ring is in the pommel cube at 3 o'clock to the box's 12 when looking at the base
- The clamp card is obscured



AKA: THE WHITE-GLOVE
FILM: THE LAST JEDI
TYPE: MUSEUM DISPLAY

DETAILS

Presented in a featurette on The Star Wars show, this saber was presented alongside other props from TLJ. There is much debate and confusion on what this particular saber's relationship is to what we see onscreen.

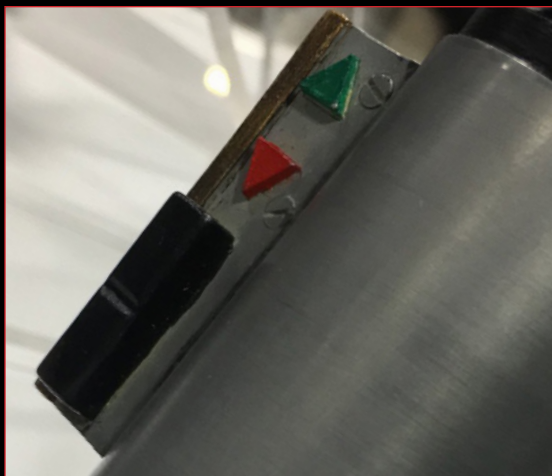
While it has key features unique to the TLJ, (the thicker rings and pommel cube shape), others, namely the control box, are different. There is no blade plug/retention system.

Also, this saber is clearly a painted resin cast.

There are two possibilities--

One, this is a stunt version cast from the hero for use in a rumored cut scene where Luke fights the Knights of Ren, or simply for museum display.

Two, this is the saber used onscreen, but it was re-touched to appear metallic and had its box altered.



VISUAL DICTIONARY LIGHTSABERS

Some of the most apocryphal lightsabers known to prop-dom come from official sources.

With every new movie, and sometimes just for the hell of it, Lucasfilm will release another edition of "The Visual Dictionary." Generally they are in-universe encyclopedias of costumes, props, ships, weapons, etc.

These guides often have access to the archives, and images are provided of props, and actors in costumes. So you'd think these could be one of the best resources for prop enthusiasts... right?

Not so much.

Here's what actually happens-- these books need to be ready for release when the movie premieres. That means they have to be created while the movies are in production. That means that they must rely on the production to supply them with images.

Sometimes that goes smoothly, sometimes it does not. Sometimes certain props are not available, or the images themselves might be of an early version of the prop. Lucasfilm is notorious for having little quality control over correct prop representation in promotional images.

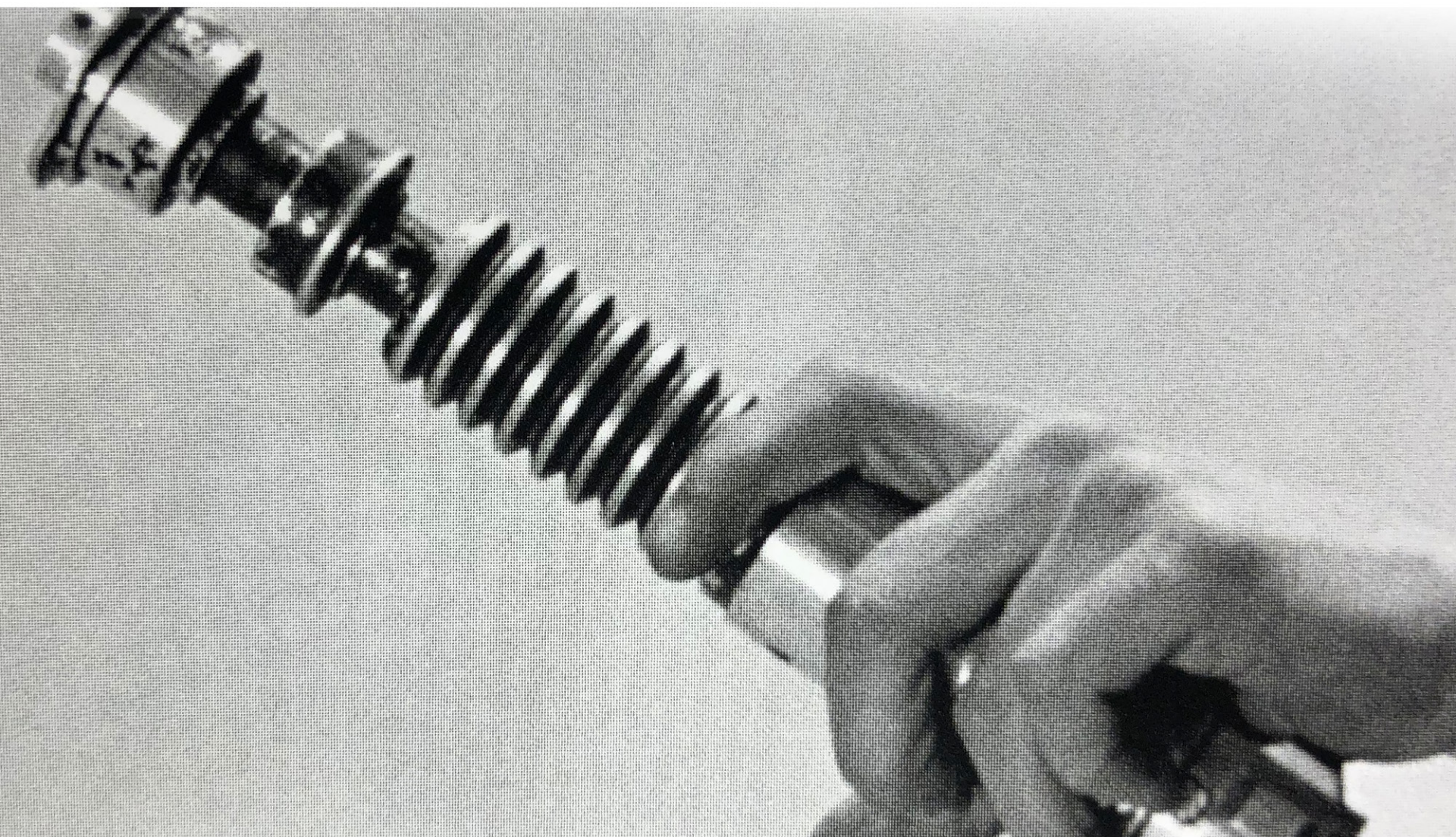
In the case of the OT, the guides were made in the 90s, and while access to the archives was there, a lot of the original props were simply gone. It fell to people like Don Bies to re-create them.

Yoda's lightsaber was made by the MR founders as a one-off while creating things for the VD-- but Lucas ended up liking it and became canonized in the book.

Sometimes official copies from Icons or Master Replicas are used in place of the actual props. Much like the touring display sabers, you can look to these sabers for reference and basic design-- but never trust them for detail work.

This page has a few examples of incorrectly represented lightsabers from the pages of Visual Dictionaries (in that they do not match what is on screen).





APPENDIX

RIVETS VS SCREWS -- FIGHT!

The method of how the T-Track grips on the ESB and TFA Graflex-based sabers are attached has been an ongoing debate for many, many years.

Here's a bit of history over the debate.

The first attempts to truly offer up a decent look of the Graflex came from Shane Johnson's SW Tech Journal (1993). Using archive images and a fan-made replica made with 90s era knowledge, Johnson drew his blueprint and used rivets in the grip design. This seemed logical given that one of the few things clear onscreen in ESB is that the Kobold d-ring assembly uses rivets. You could see something was holding the grips down, and it certainly looked like little silver rivets.

The first round of official replicas made use of this detail-- all of them using rivets. This cemented the idea into the minds of many to the point that when watching the film, all we could see were rivets. When the Ranch Saber became pubic, the idea of screws entered the field, but it wasn't until the more recent digital HD home video releases gave us the ability to pause and pull HD screengrabs. While there are hold outs for ESB rivets, the majority of the community has shifted into the screws camp.

As noted in the ESB section, we only see silver grip fasteners during exterior scenes shot in Norway. Everywhere else, they are black. The popular theory is that in the cold of the Hoth scenes, the adhesive for the T-Track gave way and the grips would not stay on. To quickly solve this problem, they were more permanently screwed down, because again, they didn't think anyone would ever see such a detail. Early promo images from Norway support this theory as some shots show grips broken or even missing.

Basic prop team logic says you make your fix as quick as possible. Self-tapping machine screws go in a lot faster than drilling out holes then popping

in rivets.

Verdict: ESB uses screws.

They are usually black, though in exterior Hoth scenes, they are silver. The silver vs black question could be painted silver screws, oxidized silver screws, or different color screws on different props.

The predominant notion that rivets were used was so cemented into prop culture for so long, that the TFA prop team felt that rivets were the most obvious choice. The confusion returned when Disney's Launchbay and Visual Dictionary both appeared to be using some sort of Hex or Torx screws on the grips. (This isn't contested, they actually do).

This programmed the notion into many minds that this was also what was used onscreen. The details are so tiny onscreen that it is hard to be definitive at times. But at the end of the day, there are a few shots, namely the one used on page 19, that make it clear to most that traditional pop rivets are used for the onscreen versions.

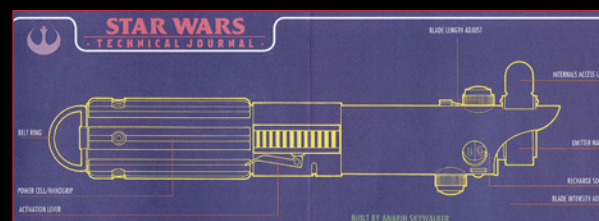
Verdict: TFA uses pop rivets.

Images to the right show the variety of grips of the Norway shoot. Top image-- no grips whatsoever, likely after the glue failed.

Middle image, no screws, just glue.

Bottom image, silver screws now visible.

Below, Shane John's Tech Journal blueprint.



CLAMP CARD GUIDE

- All ANH lightsabers use the magnification bubble strip from an Exactra 19, Exactra 20, or TI-2000 calculator. The Graflex and Obi-Wan's use the full 7 bubble strip, Vader's is trimmed to 5 and 3/4 bubbles.

- The ESB Graflex-based sabers make use of the edge connector of a circuit board in their clamps, the part of a PCB that slots onto the motherboard.

Many say it's either an HP-44 Bus Type circuit board. Most people claim it's an Otis Elevator PCB, but there may be similar cards from the era.

The most common elements of the PCB are: THICK gold bands, sometimes rounded, sometimes rectangular in shape; THIN traces that extend from the bands, sometimes from the center, sometimes at the edge. The bands are generally gold/copper, and the traces are tin. Depending on wear and tear, the tin may look either gold or silver

The Vader Barbican variant has thin traces, save for one at the end, which is thick.

- Vader's ANH/"Black bars" saber uses an alternate Exactra calculator PCB with larger red LEDs.

- Vader's ESB/ROTJ hero (and possibly the silver bars ANH) uses the more standard Exactra PCB in conjunction with the bubbles.

- Luke's V2's PCB remains a mystery

- Luke's V3 uses an ESB era card onscreen, but was replaced for museum tours to match the hero.

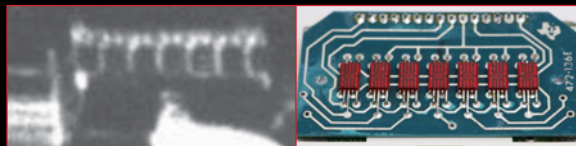
- The production team for TFA made theirs from scratch based on what you see when you Google "HP-44 PCB"

- The TROS board is scratch-made, based on the TFA design, but shortened for the new clamp box

Note: Exactra boards vary in color and design even within the same model run; the bubbles themselves tend to vary in translucence and "window"



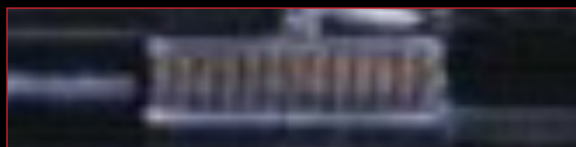
STANDARD ANH EXACTRA BUBBLES



VADER ANH/BLACK BARS



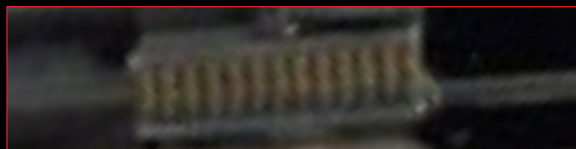
VADER ESB/ROTJ HERO



LUKE ESB HOTH



LUKE ESB DAGOBAH



LUKE ESB BESPIN



VADER "BARBICAN"



RANCH SABER



LUKE HERO - CAVE-BUILD



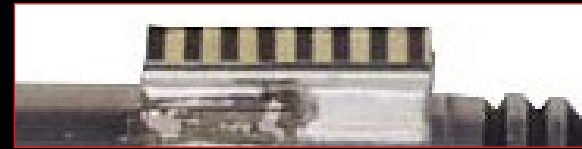
LUKE HERO - ISYHAN



LUKE V2



LUKE V3 / ON SCREEN



LUKE V3 / POST ROTJ



LUKE TLJ



REY TFA/TLJ



REY TROS

THE GRAFLEX 3 CELL FLASHGUN

While not the rarest, or the most expensive of the real-world parts used in lightsaber builds, The Graflex is easily the most sought after.

It is unknown exactly where and when the source of identifying the part originated-- I myself read it from Shane Johnson on an AOL message board not long after the Tech Journal came out. As a photo-major in college I frequented photo-swap meets and within a month, had one in hand for mere dollars. Today I would be so lucky. The word is out.

There have been official replicas of the various versions of the Skywalker Lightsaber-- Icons, Master Replicas, Hasbro, Mattel, and The Prop Shop have all had their shot. There's also been nearly a dozen different unofficial fan recreations from sources such as Larbel, Parks, Korbanth, Roman's Empire, The Graflex Shop, 89 Sabers, Graflex Reborn and Biskit to name a few-- with more on the way.

Identifying a legit vintage Graflex and matching it to what was used onscreen has become a near full time job for admins of Graflex FB groups.

The RPF's Scottjua wrote a comprehensive guide to what to look for, it can be found [HERE](#). If you want to determine if you're looking at a vintage or a replica, use this source.

If you can confirm you have a vintage, there are still a few details that vary to keep in mind if you want to spend the cash to make it into a lightsaber. First, all Graflex based sabers used a 3-Cell unit. The Graflex can come in 2, 3, 4, and even 5 cell versions. There's even a slave unit (sometimes called a sync or side-light) that is nothing more than the bulb holder.

The evolution over the decades of the Graflex was not a simple new model year with everything being upgraded. Parts were improved along the way, making for many variations of individual units.

Here are the basic components, how they changed over time, and what was seen onscreen:

THE BODY - the upper and lower halves and the clamp were mostly unchanged. The earliest version, while having the shape we are familiar with, also has a set of grooved lines around the top, and the button was mounted on a length of thin metal, making it resemble a telegraph-- which is what this version is nicknamed. This model was not used to create any lightsaber props, but was used to create a concept blaster for Boba Fett.

The next version of the body was virtually unchanged for the rest of the multi-decade run. The primary difference was the thickness of the lip around the base, and the stamp on the base, which indicates the era it was made. While the lip thickness and surface finish seem to vary over the years, the stamps come in three versions:

- The Early Folmer Graflex, (stamped with "Made by the Folmer Graflex Corp. Rochester New York USA.")
- The Folmer Graflex with Patent, (stamped with "Made by the Folmer Graflex Corp. Rochester NY USA. Pat No. 2310165")
- The Graflex Inc. Patent, (stamped with "Manufactured by Graflex, Inc. Rochester NY USA. Pat No. 2310165")

THE BUTTON - the earliest version has a knurled strip. The button itself grows in size as the years pass. The strip position also changes slightly through time. Somewhere in the Folmer Graflex with Patent era, the buttons got a major change-- the knurling shifted from being a strip, to covering the entire diameter of the knob, top to bottom. This style continued to the Graflex Inc. Patent model. The exact height of the button, the bezel, the step shape and the flatness of its top has variations over both styles of button.

THE GLASS EYE in its earliest form wasn't an eye at all-- but a cable port. As a lamp there are three basic versions: a deep bezel with a flat top lip, found mostly on Early Folmers and Patent Folm-

ers; a thicker lipped shallow bezel found on later Patent Folmers; and one with a rounded top and polished surface found on the Graflex Inc. Patents.

SYNC PINS come in two variations, smooth, and tipped. Older Graflexes have smooth pins, while the newer models have the tipped.

For what is used onscreen-- here are the most basic details:

In ANH, the glass eye looks to be the deep bezel version, while the button is the full knurled style. A strip-knurled knob is used on the shared stunt.

In ESB all buttons used on every hero saber are the full-knurled style; early Folmer strip-knurled buttons can be spotted on stunt sabers. The bottom of the Wampa cave saber is an early Folmer.

In TFA, the endcap obscures the copyright info. The primary saber was either a late Folmer or Graflex Inc. The official display versions made by the TFA prop use Graflex Inc. models.

In TLJ, officially, the belt-hangers are the same used in TFA. The Graflex displayed at Awesomecon 2018 had smooth pins, implying it is not a Graflex Inc. But there are no clear enough shots in TLJ to match it onscreen. The use of digital retouching makes it hard to track details.

...all that said, all the tiny button shape variations and glass eye alternates are constantly being found, inspected, and compared to what is onscreen, and are easily swappable.

Refer to the link above to see detailed images that get down to some very specific versions of which parts appear in which scenes if you are a stickler for the tiniest of details.

THE MPP 3 CELL FLASHGUN

One of the most rare, and most expensive, real-world found parts used in the creation of the OT props, the MPP is sought after by many collectors.

Much like the Graflex, the MPP is a side-mounting external camera flash for older press-style cameras. Its exact name is the MPP Microflash.

Created by Micro Precision Products of England, the MPP is actually a knock-off an American flash--the Heiland Synchronar.

For many years it was assumed that Vader's lightsabers were actually built off the Heiland Synchronar, given how common and ubiquitous they are.

Like the Graflex, the MPP had a long run, and as such, there were changes made to the design during its production. It's also possible that there was more than one vendor manufacturing the flashes for Micro Precision Products given that some of the variations are very small and hard to spot.

The RPF's Parfaitelumiere wrote a comprehensive guide to what to look for, it can be found [HERE](#).

All of the following information is based off of his research.

Here are the basic components and their variations in the MPPs production life:

THE BODY: The dimensions, finish, and size of the body remained consistent through all known variations of the MPP. All of them were badged with a small MPP logo plate.

Near the top of the body, there are a series of ports for sync and power cables. The dual horizontal ports are labeled with engraved letters. The center set are indicated with an "S" and the ports on either side are engraved with the letter "E."

On some MPP models, the S is painted red.

A fourth port, identified with an engraved "B," sits to the side of the left-hand E ports. This set of ports is smaller, and the hole is vertical.

The size of this hole has two noted versions, one bigger than the other.

On the opposite side of the S ports there is a bulb release and trigger assembly.

On the top, the bulb socket has two styles, one rounded, and one flat, though the difference is minimal.

THE SHROUD: Designed to connect the flash unit to a reflector pan, this piece is probably the most iconic part of the saber.

There are two sections of the shroud, the angled body, and the squared "shoulder" at the base.

There are two versions of the shroud, one has the body as a single shape, while the other has an extra "step" between the base and the tip.

The stepped shroud has a slightly smaller inner diameter, and a slightly larger exterior size, making it thicker than the no-step shroud.

The shrouds are wrinkle-painted zinc with a locking thumbscrew with coin-edge style knurling.

THE CLAMP: Intended to be the part that mounts the flash to the side of a camera, the MPP clamp has a plethora of variations and changes in style.

The main clamp body has been found in two different heights (in relation to the vertical body of the flash itself). While always black, the finish varies between glossy and matte. Some have been spotted with a subtle reddish/blue tint to them. These shifts are likely due to varied anodization bath times.

The clamp walls, (where the sidebars and lever are affixed) come in two distinct styles. One that has wide, parallel walls when the clamp is fully tightened, and one in which the walls are closer together, and taper in toward each other.

The side bars come in two styles. Type one is more or less just rectangular bars with rounded edges.

They have straight-cut ends, which expose the shape of the clamp walls. Their profile is thin, and symmetrical.

The second type have bars are much thicker in profile and taper, getting thinner as they go up. The ends of these bars are cut to match the angle of the clamp walls, giving them a trapezoidal shape.

Both types of bars come in the silver or anodized black styles.

The clamp lever also varies in finish (glossy vs. glazed), and in its pivoting axis (short, short/flat, and long/rounded).

The clamp has a thin sleeve between it and the flash. It tends to vary in thickness and tint.

THE END CAP: The end piece of the MPP contains a black 1/4" tripod mount. Some version have three concentric lines engraved into the mount.

Here are the few KNOWN details of MPP sabers appearing in the OT:

- All known versions of Vader's saber have the MPP logo plate removed and a shroud sans step
- The ANH "silver bars" has straight cut side bars of the chrome variety
- The ANH "black bars" obviously has black sidebars, but the shape is too hard to make out
- The ESB/ROTJ hero has the 3 rings on the end-cap, a clamp with narrow/tapered walls and black trapezoidal sidebars, and the large-sized "B" port.
- The shroud on this saber is a bit of a mystery. In its current state, it is rusty, and zinc does not rust. The paint is also semi-gloss and the thumbscrew is nickel-plated brass with diamond knurling. No other MPP shrouds found in the wild have these details leading some to assume that this one is perhaps custom-made.

REAL WORLD PART SOURCES



The Graflex in its first life...



...and the MPP in its.



Was Obi-Wan HOT or COLD?



The Kobold flash.



Obi-Wan's emitter and IG-88's head hiding inside an old jet engine, which demonstrates how random, and lucky the design of this lightsaber was to come together so perfectly for the film.



The Exactra 19 and 20. Bubbles and PCBs!



Rifle Rod Grenade. Not a sketchy weapon at all. Yeesh!



Vintage T-Track found by Kal Kamel in Malaysia.



Obi-Wan's "booster/gear" at home on an aircraft machine gun.

IMAGE GALLERY



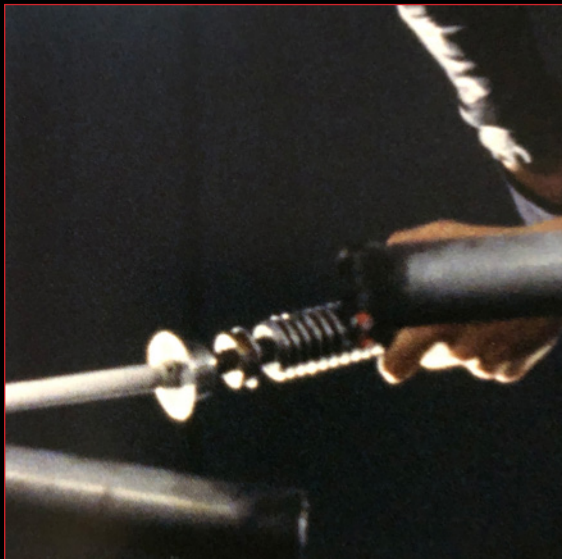
A wooden buck and the cast it may have birthed, likely early steps in the creation of the Shared Stunt sabers.



The Vader MOM Stunt and the V3 in action.



Disney's Launchbay Graflex-- a lie! Never trust display sabers.



Luke could have been a lumberjack!



The ANH Shared Stunt in ESB rehearsals



RPF founder Brandon Alinger reunites Mark Hamill with the V2 after 34 years apart.



The V3, on the way to space aboard the shuttle.



Mark Hamill uses a shared stunt during ESB rehearsals.



A CGI stand-in Graflex, right before it explodes.

IMAGE GALLERY



Shooting the ISYHCANL insert shot.



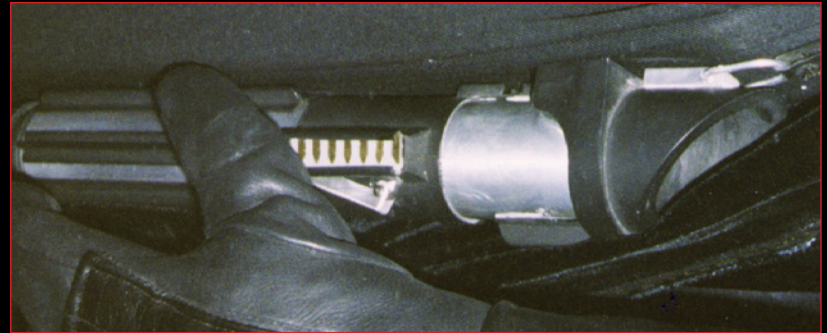
Vader inspires Al Williamson to screw up. (This is a funny joke. I swear.)



A rebel extra uses a Shared Stunt as some sort of tool.



Kirschner using a Shared Stunt.



A Vader promotional "costume" saber.



When we say short-bladed, we mean short-bladed!



The V2 shared stunt on Dagobah...

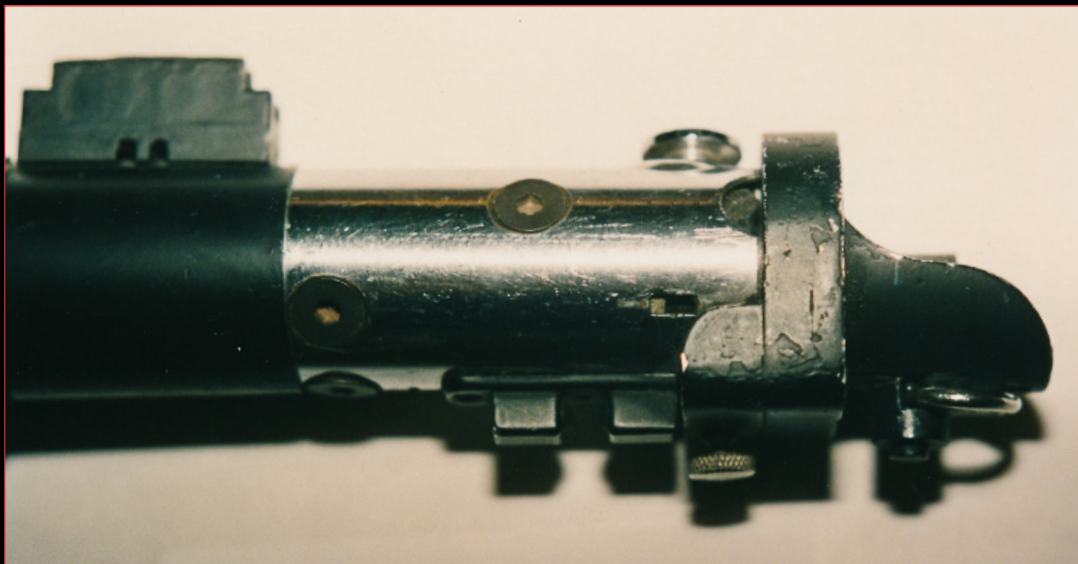


...and on the Death Star.

IMAGE GALLERY



Time to play SPOT THE GRAFLEX!



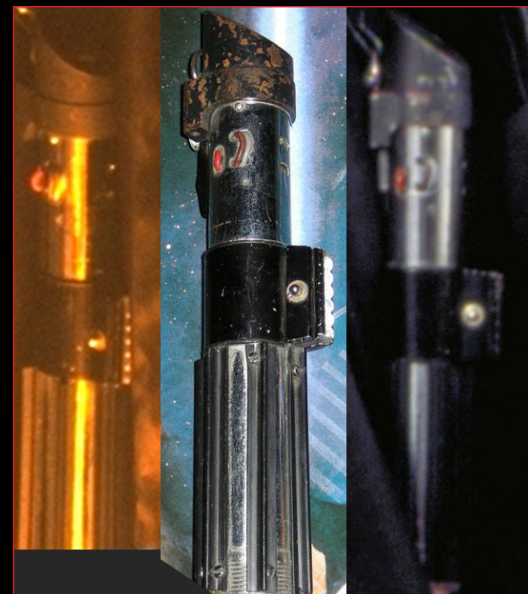
The MoM... possibly began its life as Luke's ESB bladed stunt, only to become a Vader stunt in ROTJ, then after being seen in the Archives book it was dubbed as the "hero" ROTJ saber.



The Last Graflex.



Bob Anderson rehearsing with the V2 during ESB.



Screenshot confirmation of the Vader ESB Hero.



ESB rehearsal. Hamil with an ANH Graflex stunt, Prose with the V3.



More gaffers tape than you even know...

IMAGE GALLERY



Mid-80s promotional Vader saber(s) made from a Kobold and tube that looks to have used a graflex as a paint template. Similar in design to the hand-gag ESB stunt.



Shared stunt in an ESB BTS video.



A particularly messy detailed TLJ Graflex stunt with extra notched grips and a peeling PCB. Some apparatus lays atop the grips, possibly part of a rig to float the saber into Kylo's hand.



V3, looking bent.



Likely a simple or CG stunt Hero for TROS.



Check out that nipple...



TLJ resin Graflex stunt.

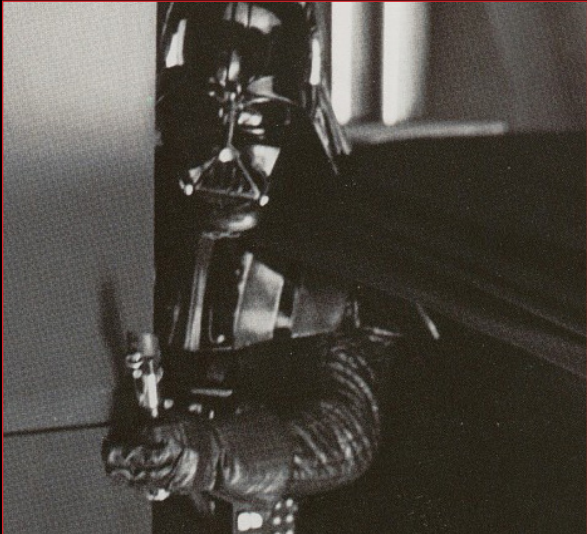


No, you can't make out the stamp... we've tried...

IMAGE GALLERY



Minutes later, a Shared Stunt got a HUGE promotion.



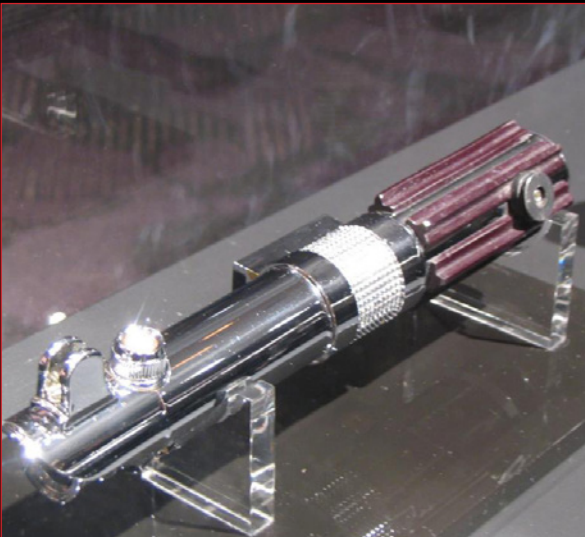
The Darth Vader ESB hero.



V3 on Endor, possibly with V2 style gaffer's tape on the neck



Profile of the V2 lever.



Chromed rubber skinnyflex.



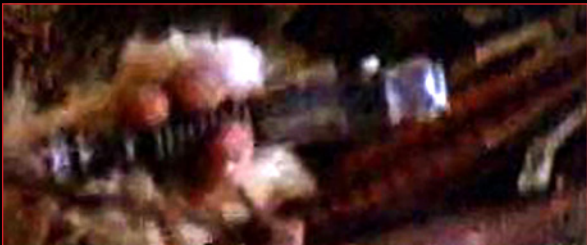
From the TFA trailer, our first reveal of the fact that the Graflex was returning... and that it was different... again...



A resin (or rubber) cast of the MoM incorrectly rotoscoped.



Cleanest Graflex ever.



Ewok hand on a suspiciously clean V2.

IMAGE GALLERY



ROTJ rehearsal, glowing blades, fat grips, and mystery sabers!



Several of Vader's scenes on The Executor us a wide-grip stunt as a belt-hanger.



Darth Maul's animated lightsaber makes its live-action debut in Solo. Likely 100% scratch-made.

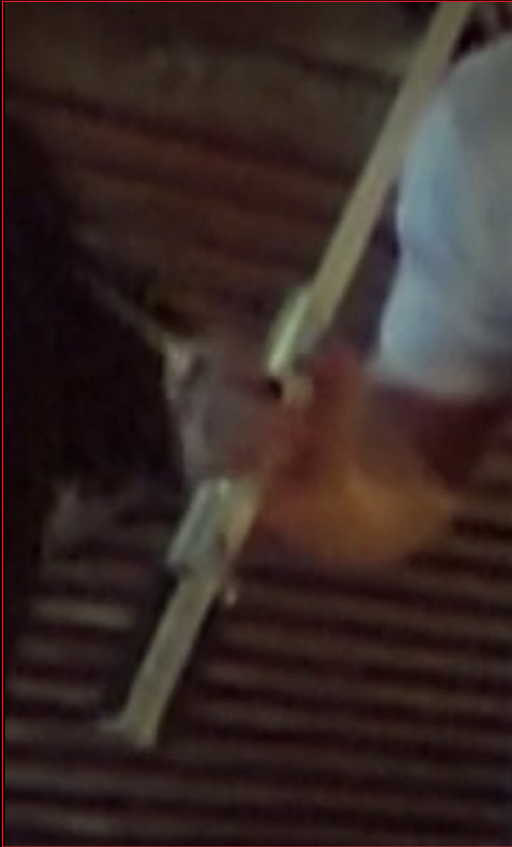


Proof that the clamp lever was sometimes pushed down in place.

IMAGE GALLERY



Prowse and Guinness rehearsing with prototype stunt sabers.



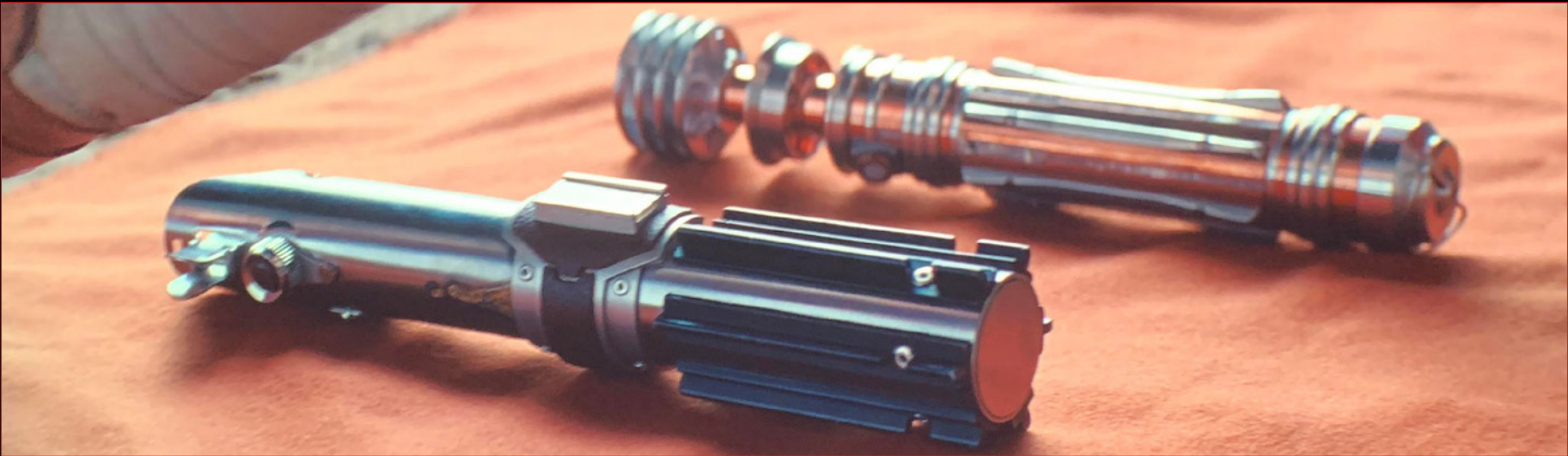
ESB stunt Graflex-- with a long V2 style clamp lever and fat grips.



RAF Inventory stamp.



Rey was building a saber of some sort... too bad we never saw what it might be.

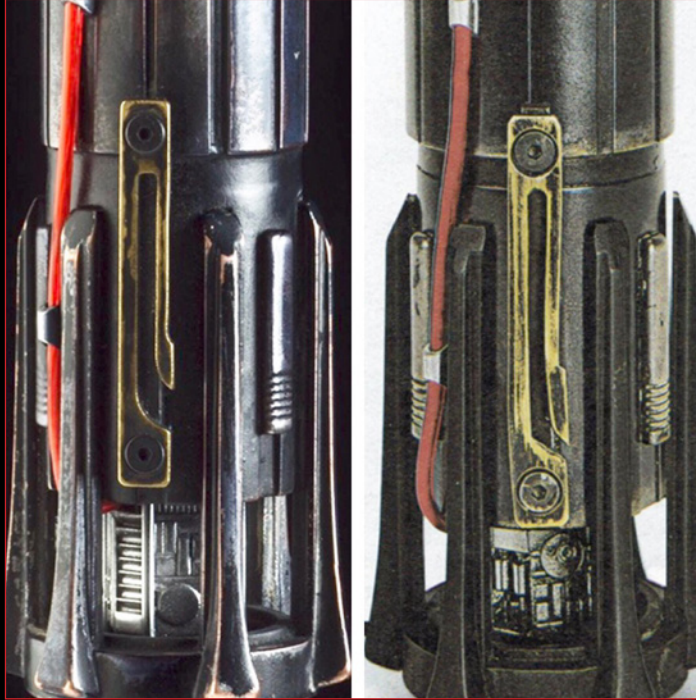


Brother and sister.

IMAGE GALLERY



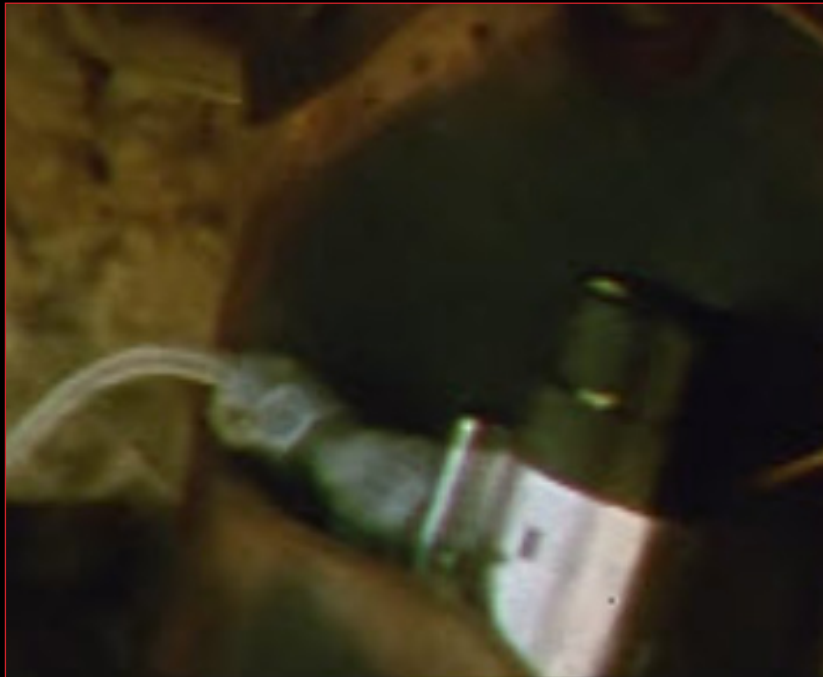
Billie Lorde stanbding in for her pre-cgi mother in TROS.



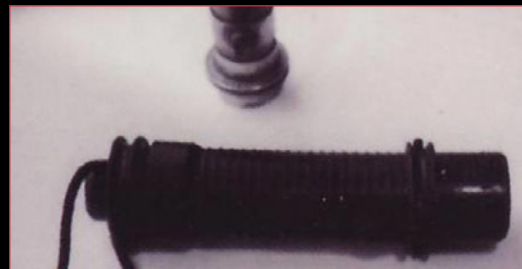
Note the flipped greeblie box, TLJ vs TROS.



Double rivets, spotted in 4k.



Jawa tool/blaster made from a Graflite and the V2 clamp.



Proto-sabers, from early ANH preproduction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

While I am credited with “writing” this document, it must be said that I am the originator of VERY LITTLE of the information in this bible. I have only done minuscule amounts of research like tracking down the ranch saber texture tape.

With this guide, I am merely recapitulating all known lightsaber info into one place for easy reference. All of the details, measurements, parts identification, and more, is due to the diligent and never-ending work of the members of the RPF.

I’ve culled from countless threads where pieces have been discovered, measured, investigated, and replicated by a wide variety of members. Their hard work is what is being presented here. While I am reticent to give names, because I’ll no doubt forget somebody important, there are a few people who do stand out for having done hours upon hours of real investigation and research and were willing to talk with me to fill in gaps or supply images: [Drew Baker](#), [James Kenobi 1138](#), [thd9791](#), [Veek-tohr](#), [PoopaPapaPalps](#), [Kurtyboy](#), [Halliwax](#), [Anubis Guard](#), [Kal Kamel](#), [ms80444](#), [Serenity](#), [Adam Wells](#), [D48thRonin](#), [Ridire Firean](#), [Luuke](#), [Fusion](#), [JoeK3rr](#), [Henry Jonathan Bartsch](#), and [Parfaitelumiere](#).

Most of all-- a special thanks to [Teecrooz](#), [ScottJua](#), [Gino](#), and [Chaim / Sym-Cha](#). True lightsaber archivists with great collections of images that provide immeasurable insight, and in some cases, first-hand accounts of the actual props. Any image in this bible that is not a screencap very likely came from one of them.

And I should thank Lucasfilm, and George Lucas himself for playing a small part in all of this... :)

Much of the information here is thanks to the work being done by [Roy Gilsing](#) ([wannawanga.com](#)), [Anakin \(Dan\) Starkiller](#), and [Roman Gomez](#) ([romanprops.com](#)) to faithfully recreate hard to locate parts and saber components.

Their work is intrinsically tied to investigating the origin of the sabers, as well as determining how to recreate them.

Though it hasn’t been updated since the web ran on nothing other than HTML and duct tape, [partsofsw.com](#) was, and remains, the starting point for so many saber collectors/builders out there. Much of the core information and terminology we know comes from there; even if much of it is now out of date. That site essentially did what this guide does— cull all the available information into one place... but [Chris Trevas](#) and [Chris Reiff](#) had to do it by slogging through AOL threads, Geocities pages, sorta-legal archivers access, and incredibly low res images.

[Don Bies](#), former archivist of the Lucasfilm Archives was kind enough to look this book over and offer up several corrections and answers to a few mysteries.

[Ed Maggiani](#) for sharing with me his account of the inception of Yoda’s lightsaber.

Also, saving me a lot of time, the [graflexbank.com](#) by [Brage Borgsø](#) has gathered as much info on the Graflex sabers as possible, and much of his work is shared here.

Finally, none of this would be possible without [Brandon Alinger](#) who both founded theRPF.com and provided first-hand information about particular lightsaber props.

In an attempt to be thorough while eliminating speculation, unless noted otherwise, all images seen are from screen grabs, promotional material, or verified photos of the actual props. All photos are credited to their owners. It’s the internet, photos get passed around, if your image is used here and you get no credit, please let me know.

Finally, while I strive for this to be accurate, some things are still a mystery. Much of this information relies on evidence-based educated guess-work. From time to time, discoveries are made and what is considered confirmed often turns out not to be.



FINAL WORDS

CONCLUSION

Information fluctuates. Facts change when new evidence arrives. Just as the first draft of this book was finished, new images of the V2 showed up in a video. In this current draft there are details covered for the ANH hero Graflex that have been staring back at us for years yet went unnoticed.

Currently, this book is the most up to date assembly of data on the lightsabers props of the saga.

But parts still remain a mystery— what kind of transistors were those on the Obi-Wan hero? What is the control box on the Vader MOM?

Is it possible that in some cases, propmasters actually managed to make indistinguishable copies and will we learn that there were a dozen hero sabers in ESB and we just didn't know it?

Who knows! As new info reaches the community, I'll do my best to keep this guide updated

Thanks for reading!
Seth M. Sherwood

ABOUT ME

Star Wars fan since age 4. Graphic Designer for 15 years. Professional screenwriter for 6 years.

I wrote the 2017 Texas Chainsaw Massacre Prequel LEATHERFACE, 2018's HELL FEST, and am a writer and co-EP on the current Hulu show LIGHT AS A FEATHER.

Despite these fancy writing credits, please note that I also never learned to properly type, and am generally operating on either 15 or 4 hours of sleep-- nothing in between.

I live in Los Angeles and my Zen hobby is making custom lightsabers with an OT aesthetic.

I am NOT the travel writer for the NYT and he REALLY hates getting my fanmail and death threats about Star Wars and Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

CHANGE LOG

All future revisions and archived versions of this bible will be noted here.

Version .5: January 2017
- Beta copy

Version 1: January 2017
- typos and grammatical errors revised
- additional V2 images added
- shared stunt / V3 information revised
- Luke ROTJ "hero" Archives image added

Version 2: February 2017
- typos and grammatical errors revised
- V2 and V3 info updated and revised
- PCB card details updated and revised
- Obi-Wan hero page updated and revised
- DV ESB Hero page updated and revised
- Luke ESB stunt page updated and revised
- new gallery images added
- dedicated Revenge of the Sith page added

Version 3: December 2017
- typos and grammatical errors revised
- overview sections added
- all ESB Graflex sabers revised
- Vader Rogue One page added
- TLJ Graflex information added
- Luke Hero TFA/TLJ sections added
- Prequel sabers section added (under protest)
- Sequel sabers section added
- Apocryphal sabers section added
- glossary added
- Yuma section revised
- gallery expanded
- T-Track information revised
- reveal saber page added

Version 3.5: January 2018
- typos and grammatical errors revised
- revisions made after notes from Brandon Alinger

Version 3.75: May 2018
- typos and grammatical errors revised
- revisions made on all TLJ material
- additional gallery images added
- reveal saber entry removed

Version 4 (beta): January 2019
- typos and grammatical errors revised
- multiple entries updated with new info
- several new images added
- apocryphal sabers section revised
- MPP fact page added
- brokeflex entry added
- prop lineage charts added
- revisions made off notes from Don Bies
- complete redesign to allow for bigger images, and to make it more difficult for unauthorized printing

Version 4.5: May 2019
- Elstree saber added
- Rise of Skywalker Graflex info added
- Fan-canon saber section added
- new photos added
- Vader ROTJ stunt page updated
- Yoda saber information revised

Version 5: Spring 2020
- ANH hero updated
- updates and new entries to cover TROS
- new photos added
- "false ROTJ hero" section added