

Making Your Own Strike-Dummy



If you are unable to practice with actual opponents often, using a strike-dummy can be very helpful for improving your technique.

Ryan Matthew Johnson

mrryanj@gmail.com

Step 1 – Materials & Tools

All materials can easily be purchased at any large hardware store. Smaller hardware stores often have PVC pipe as well, but 4" is usually in short supply. I recommend 4" PVC because I found it to be the best width for mounting the tire. For sawing the PVC and the tire, I exclusively used a Milwaukee Power Sawzall (using a handsaw would be very difficult).

<u>Building Materials</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Cost</u>
4" x 10' PVC Pipe	1	\$13
4" PVC 90° Standard Elbow	1	\$4
4" PVC Standard WYE	1	\$8
4" PVC Sanitary Tee	1	\$5
4" PVC 45° Street Elbow	2	\$4 total
4" PVC Standard Flange	1	\$4
3" x 1/4" Bolts	18	\$2.50 total
1/4" Nuts	18	\$1 total
Old Car Tire	1	Free

Total Cost: \$41.50

Step 2 – Measuring & Cutting

The only PVC pipe you need to cut is your 10' length, and you will need to turn it into five different parts (the below-listed lengths are for making a dummy roughly 6' tall):

1. Base (35" length) – This section is the 'legs' of the dummy; it connects the Sanitary Tee with the Standard Flange.
2. Neck (5" length) – This section is barely visible once assembled, and connects the 90° Standard Elbow with the Standard WYE.
3. Torso Target Extension (9" length) – This section extends down from the 45° Street Elbow used for the torso to create a longer area for mounting the torso-target tire.
4. Torso (9" length) – This section expands the height between the wrist and torso attack points of the dummy. It connects the Standard WYE with the Sanitary Tee.
5. Wrist Target Extension (4½" length) – This section extends out of the 45° Street Elbow used for the wrist to create a longer area for mounting the wrist-target tire.

Step 3 – Cutting/Mounting the Tire & Final Assembly

Using a tire for the actual surface that you hit has a few benefits: (1) it won't damage your sword nearly as much as a harder surface, (2) it adds slight springiness to your sword impacts, just like a real opponent, and (3) they last for an extremely long time.

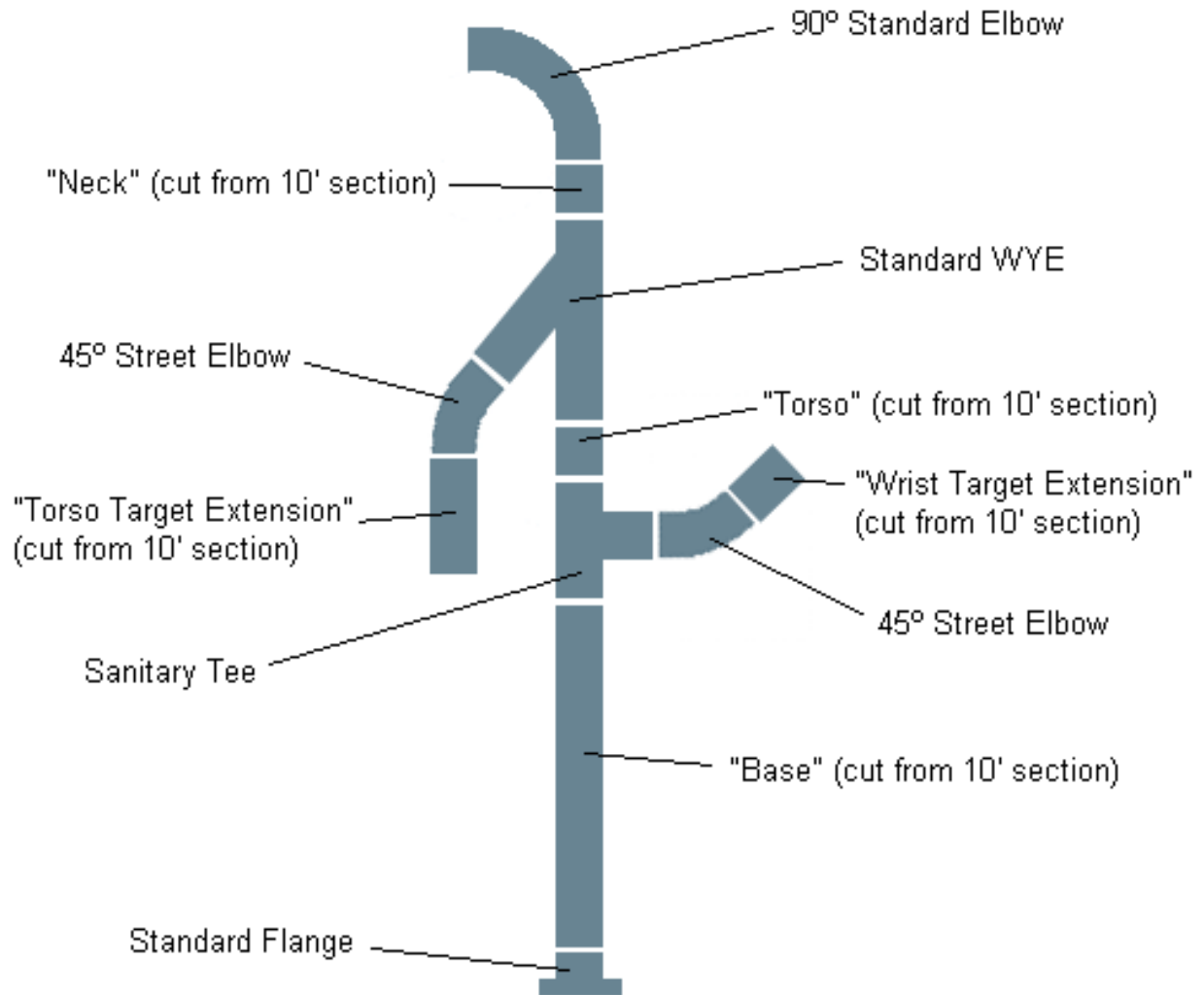
There are no exact measurements for where to cut the tire, as tires tend to vary in size, but your sections of cut-tire should cover the areas you intend to strike with your sword. On pages 6 and 7, I have included photos of the sections of cut-tire I used for my strike-dummy.

When you mount the tire parts onto the PVC pipe, be sure to leave about a 1 to ½ inch air-gap between the tire and the pipe; this will allow you to practice the proper amount of force to strike with (if you strike the tire and the tire strongly impacts the pipe, then you are probably hitting too hard).

To mount the tire parts, you will first need to drill holes in the tire and the PVC pipe, then you will thread the bolts through and tighten them down with the nuts. Each piece of tire (except the throat piece) will use 4 bolts to hold it in place; 2 on each side.

Once the tire has been cut and attached to the PVC pipe, you are all set to connect the pipe together (see page 5 for an assembly diagram) and begin practicing! I added a small piece of plywood to the Standard Flange to serve as a sturdier base, but other weights or methods could be used too. Enjoy!

PVC Pipe Assembly Diagram



Photos



Sanitary Tee, 45° Street Elbow, Wrist Target Extension (cut from the 10'), and Tire attached with bolts.



Standard WYE, 45° Street Elbow, Neck (cut from the 10'), Torso Target Extension (cut from the 10'), and Tire parts attached with bolts.

Photos



Base (cut from 10'), Standard Flange, and a 2' x 2' piece of Plywood attached with bolts.



Tire attached to a 90° Standard Elbow with bolts.