



Is It the Most Advanced Fighting Method in Existence?

by Arne Soldwedel

If you've heard of the Sabaki Challenge—the Denver-based full-contact karate tournament that is considered by many to be one of the martial arts' toughest challenges—you may know the meaning of *sabaki*. Simply put, it teaches a

fighter to use circular movements to slip into his opponent's blind spot. The *sabaki* technique is useful not only for tournament competition, but also as a method by which a smaller person can defend himself against a larger and stronger attacker on the street.

This article will explain everything you need to know about the *sabaki* technique, including ways to correct some common mistakes that crop up whenever newcomers try to use it and methods for defending against it.

Using Position, Balance and Angle

The proper application of the *sabaki* technique usually involves parrying a kick or punch, then controlling your opponent's upper body at the elbow and neck. The idea is to put yourself approximately 135 degrees around him in his blind spot.

Moving to your opponent's blind spot is done in a relative sense. That means it is not always necessary to move your own body the entire distance to the spot. Part of the job can be accomplished by moving or spinning your opponent. The main point, however, is to achieve this position.

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