

You will need the following supplies to create each hand guard for any given weapon:

1 completed (or near-completed) weapon with approximately 8"-10" of handle exposed.  
10" x 14" of 1/4" 'Blue' Camp Foam  
Scissors  
Duct Tape

Substitutions can be made at your discretion, but for purposes of this 'how-to', we will assume you have the above materials and are putting a single basket hilt on a medium 'sword'. This design can easily be adapted to accommodate flails, axes, hammers or almost any other Amtgard weapon you wish to add a hand guard to. Feel free to elaborate, but always remember: SAFETY FIRST! If you must use an alternate material, stiffer foams offer the best hand protection, are more durable and are easier to work with.

This how-to covers only one easy and basic hand guard. There are many other ways to attach hand guards to a weapon and some of these will be covered in future how-tos. This version is quick, easy and exceptionally durable; more so than the weapons to which they are attached. Should the weapon to which this hand guard is attached fail in battle, it is a simple matter to remove your trusty hand guard and reattach it to a new weapon.

If you are looking for pointers on how to build a weapon to put this hand guard on, please consult the how-to for the particular weapon you had in mind.

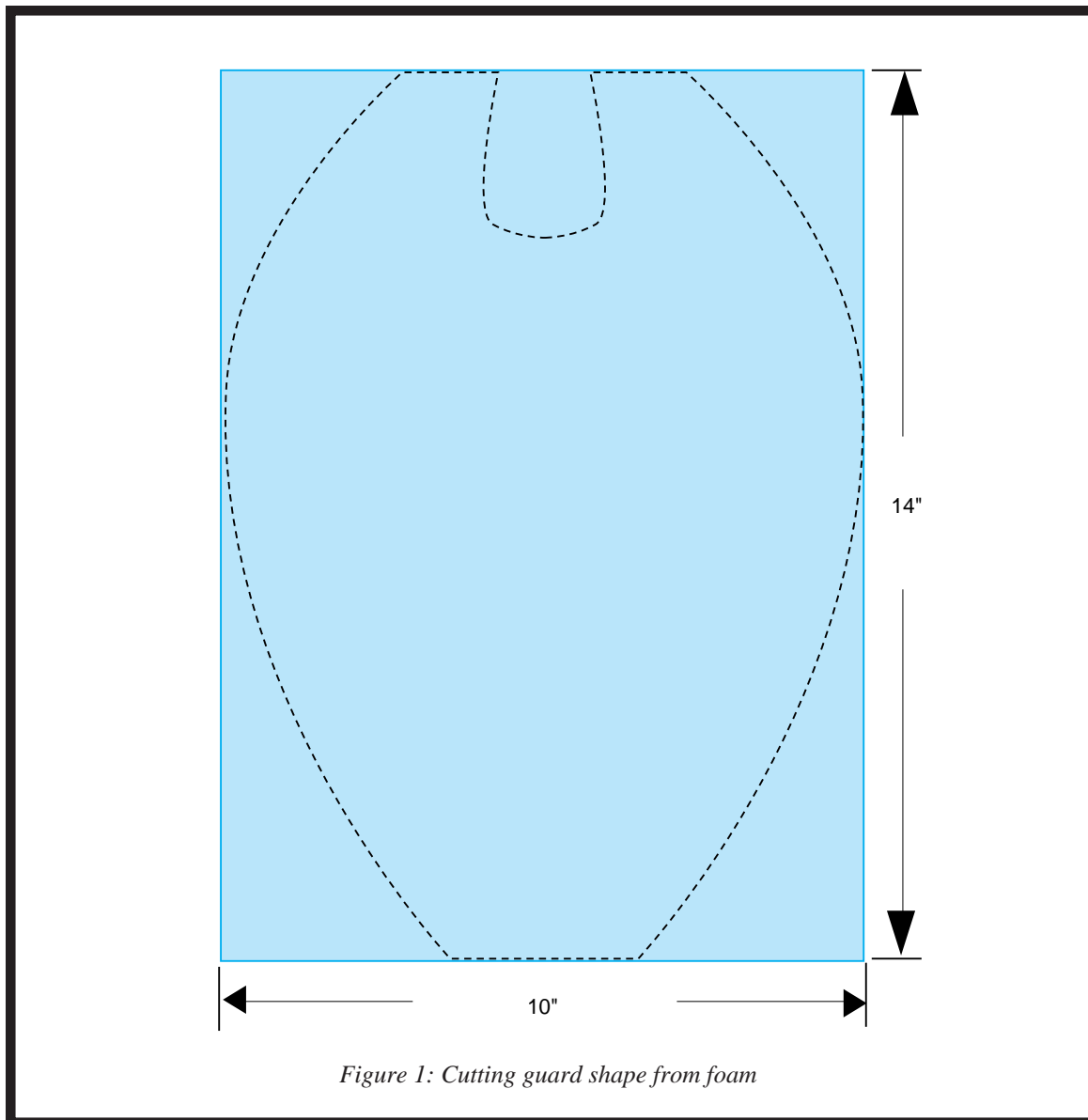
- 1) Cut a piece of camp foam approximately 10" x 14".
- 2) Cut the foam to the shape defined by the dotted line in Figure 1. (Fig. 1)
- 3) This will be the hand guard. Cover the entire surface with the colored duct tape of your choice. (Covering the guard is not *strictly* necessary, but if you do not cover the guard in tape, it will not be remotely as durable as a taped guard would be and will probably tear after a few hours use).
- 4) Fold the guard in half.
- 5) Push the sword handle, above the grip, into the notch at the top of the guard. The Guard should be folded towards the tip of the sword. (Fig. 2)
- 6) Tape the top of the guard tightly so that it pinches tight on the handle.



- 7) Push the guard against the 'blade' of the sword. The two halves of the guard should be against the sides of the 'blade'. (Fig. 2)
- 8) Bend the guard against itself towards the back of the handle. When the Fold is inverted, it will cause the sides of the guard to flare away from the handle.



*This fallen fighter's handguard may very well save him from a stinging rep on the knuckles*



*Figure 1: Cutting guard shape from foam*

- 9) Use a small piece of tape to temporarily hold the guard in place. Test the fit of your hand inside the grip. If it is too loose for your tastes, trim off a bit of the bottom until it suits your personal preferences. If it is too tight, either shorten the length of the exposed core, or cut a new guard larger than the one that was too tight. When you are satisfied with the fit and appearance of the hand guard, move on to step 10.
- 10) If you already have a pommel (ball at the bottom) on your sword, you can tape the guard directly to it. (Fig. 2). If you do not have a pommel attached, you may fold the end of the guard over the butt of the sword and then tape into place securely for a safe alternative to round pommels. (Fig. 3)
- 11) If, like me, you prefer your guard not to 'float' around the handle, you can insure that the guard does not rotate around the core of the handle by applications of more tape where the guard meets the 'blade' and pommel.
- 12) Decorate guard to taste. You can often greatly enhance the appearance of any Amtgard weapon by using a few well-placed pieces of tape of a contrasting color on the guard, grip, or pommel. Some even add tassels or hanger loops. The decision to modify or not to modify is entirely subject to your personal preference.
- 13) One of the most common 'oversights' when making a hand guard is using too little tape in step 3, so be sure to have tape on hand when you use your sword for quick repairs. Take your new weapon out to the park and find some unsuspecting Amtgarder to try your new weapon out on!

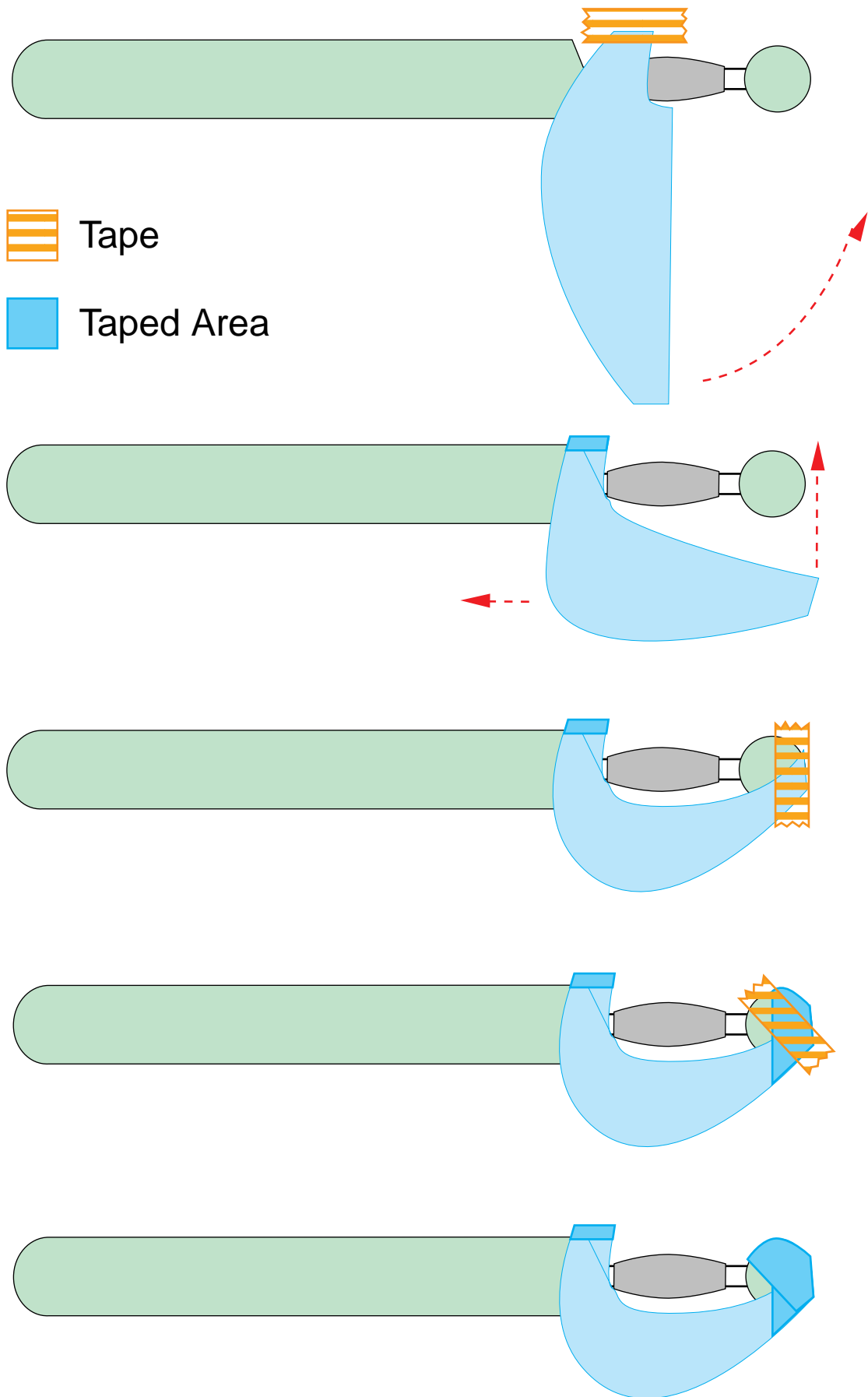


Figure 2: Attaching guard to weapon with pommel

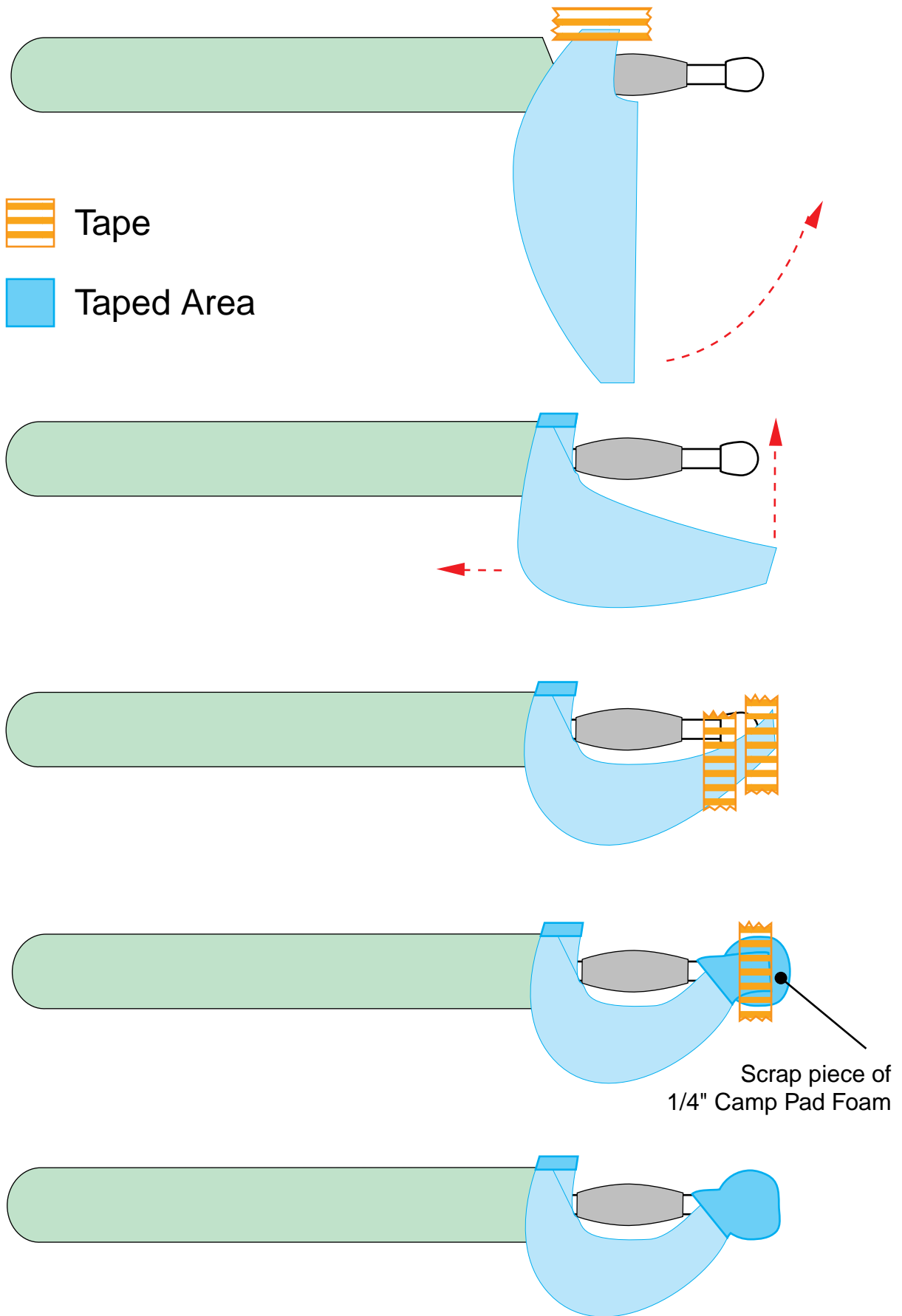


Figure 3: Attaching guard to weapon without pommel