

#1 FAMILY SELF DEFENCE PROGRAM

By John Hartman



FIGHT 4 FAMILY

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Disaster can strike at any time, and you need to be ready.

The flood in New Orleans threw the entire city into chaos, where only violence and strength ruled on what was left of the streets. Luckily, many Americans will never have to face such tragedy on a scale like this, but that doesn't mean you don't need to be prepared.



The reality is that danger is everywhere. From burglars gaining access to your home to children being abducted on the streets, as a responsible patriot you need to take steps so your family will remain safe, no matter what.

So ask yourself, how safe do you really feel, right now?

- What if an intruder kicks down your door and storms into the living room?
- Do you have a plan?
- Do you know how you'll escape from your property?
- How long will it take you to reach a weapon?
- What will your wife and kids be doing through all of this?
- Do you walk alone at night?
- Have you taught your children the right way to talk to strangers?

Unfortunately, most of us don't have a good answer to these questions. Be truthful with yourself, it's ok. But now you've started thinking about it, it's a little alarming. Everything you do wrong is putting your safety at risk, and all of us are guilty at one time or another of letting our guard down.

This guide will teach you the basic self defense tactics you need to combat the dangerous situations Americans face in everyday life, so you and your family don't end up another statistic on the nightly news. A little bit of knowledge and a little bit of planning is all it takes to avoid a tragedy, so read on and make a change for the better.

Someone's in my house

Bang. Crash. Two terrifying sounds to hear in the middle of the night. You lay perfectly still, straining your ears and can just make out the sneaking footfalls of someone creeping through your home.

Apart from the terror, what do you do?

Every year, 16% of Americans experience some form of property crime. But that's not the frightening part. What scares me as both a homeowner and a parent is **many of these crimes happen when the families are home.**

So what are the chances this will happen to you? Walk outside and look up and down your street. Of the 20 houses you can see, statistics tell us three of them will be robbed. Of course, some suburbs will have a higher likelihood than other neighborhoods, but it paints a scary picture.



Make a plan

A plan is absolutely necessary, and you need to get organized with it now. If a situation does come up with your family you won't have time to figure it out on the fly, as too much will be happening. Ultimately, the core of your plan needs is to get out of your home, get somewhere safe (like a neighbors house) and contact the police.

The ways to do this vary depending on your specific situation, so think about:

- Every possible exit you can take from your house
- Escape routes if you have a multi storey house
- Which neighbors you can turn to, and let them know in advance they are part of your plan
- Your family members (young kids or elderly relatives) who need assistance
- Where you can hide if you get trapped inside

When you live with a family, make sure every single person understands what they should do if an uninvited guest is in the house. You really only need to go through the plan in detail once, and if you have young kids a couple of minutes talking to them every few months will ensure even the youngest remembers what to do.



Dammit, I forgot to make a plan

Despite your best intentions and putting the evacuation plan on your 'to-do' list, your friendly neighborhood burglar was running on their own schedule, and has just broken into your house.

Without a plan, your best action is to be quiet and listen. Avoid arguing with your spouse, as any intruder will also be straining their ears and listening for any sound you are awake.

Listen closely, and quickly try to determine:

- How many intruders are in your home?
- Are they trashing your house or trying to be quiet?
- Where are they (exactly) in your house?
- Are they making their way towards your bedroom?
- Do they have any weapons?
- What vibe/emotions can you hear in their voice?

If they are professionals, one of their first goals will be to take control of you and your family. If they are amateurs, this is still a possibility, because if they know you're in the house and they can restrain you (before you call the police) the intruders will have more time to do whatever it is they broke into your house to do.

That's why escape needs to be your primary goal. Even just one person getting out and summoning help can spook the intruders, and send them fleeing back into the night to avoid a confrontation when the police arrive.



So what do you do?

Figure out a way to let all of your family know they need to take immediate action. Perhaps you can sneak into your children's rooms and quietly wake them, or if they are on the other side of the house maybe something a little more extreme is required. Making lots of noise will draw any intruders to you, giving your kids a chance to run. Obviously, getting out covertly is best because you can avoid a confrontation altogether, but if it's not an option you want your family to be rushing out of the house in as many different directions as possible. This gives a greater chance one of your family will make it out safely to a neighbors house, and alert the police.

If you can't make it out of your house, get to a safe place where you can hide until the police arrive.

A safe room doesn't need to be a massive underground bunker, or a full-on war studio like you see in the movies. All it really needs to have is sturdy walls, and a door that opens outwards. The more solid the better,



and there are plenty of reinforced doors on display at your local hardware store. While you're fitting your new door, also pick up a deadbolt so you can securely lock your family inside and wait it out until the police arrive. Be sure to grab your cell phone as you're running to the safe room, so you can stay on the line with the 911 operator until the police arrive and the situation is over.

If you didn't get around to finishing your safe room, bundle your family into a single room with you and use any heavy furniture available to barricade the door. Hide out in a bathroom, or a kids bedroom, the master bedroom is a big no-no as this is where a thief often heads first looking for you and your family, and of course all of the valuables you keep close by. Let the thieves take what they want, your insurance will allow you to replace all of the 'stuff', your focus needs to be on keeping yourself and your family alive and safe.

Alerting the authorities



A good habit to get into is charging your cell phone by your bed every night. It ensures you always have a full battery should something happen, and can reach help if the intruders cut your landline. Programming an auto-dial into your phone makes it even easier to get hold of the dispatcher, because you'll find just pressing 911 when you're in a total state of panic to be quite difficult.

Once you're on the phone to the dispatcher, explain your situation as briefly as possible, and don't forget to tell them your address. Here's what your call should sound like:

"My name is John Smith, and I live at 125 Franklin Street. Someone has broken into my house. I don't know if they have a weapon, but it sounds like only one person. I'm hiding in the bathroom on the second floor with my wife, and the intruder is still downstairs."



Once you've given the operator the information and the police are on their way, don't hang up the call. There's no need to continue talking, but just having the phone call running with it in your pocket can help the operator stay updated on the situation while the police are en route. The worst case is the intruder reaches your safe room before the police arrive. They will try the doorknob, so if you can't lock it - be prepared to act with whatever weapon you have available. Of

course, only do this as a last resort. You should have already built a giant barricade of heavy furniture between you and the door to buy you as much time as possible.

Now the intruder knows you're awake, you can do a couple of things. Calling out "I've called the police" yields mixed results. In some cases, this can scare away the intruder, who is much less likely to be able to escape once the police arrive on the scene. Other times, it can anger your attacker driving them into a frenzy to punish you for alerting the authorities (before help actually arrives). This is a dangerous situation to be in, especially if you live in a rural area where the police can take longer to get to your home. Our recommendation is to stay quiet and not give away your position, especially if there's a chance they have a weapon and start firing at you through the drywall. Sit tight, you'll be safest by remaining barricaded in the safe room until help arrives.

Being a hero

Regardless of how many Die Hard movies you've seen, real life just isn't like the movies. Never confront an intruder unless you have no other option.



The person in your house will be armed.

In a recent study, 37% of Americans said they either own a firearm themselves, or have a gun in their household. That's over a third of America with easy access to a lethal weapon.

Now consider it from the intruders perspective. They're breaking into your house, with a 1 in 3 chance you have a revolver in your bedside table. Any burglar with half a brain will not walk into a situation like this without a gun at their side. Combine this with whatever struggles they have in their life which have brought them to committing a crime, and you're facing an extremely unstable individual (or group), in your home, with a deadly weapon. Jumping out and surprising them will result in a violent reaction, so don't be stupid. Avoid a confrontation and take care of your family. If you act the hero but the intruder still gets past you, you won't be able to help your family at all.

Facing the intruder

Sometimes, things just go wrong. You're trapped, or need to make a distraction so your family has a chance to escape from your house. It's not an ideal situation, but it's possible to come face to face with an intruder and make it through alive.

It's not foolproof, and by doing this you are putting your life on the line, because you can never be 100% sure what is going through the perpetrator's mind.

In a home invasion, your best chance of avoiding a violent encounter is to follow these steps:



1. Stay calm, and announce yourself to the person in your home
2. Tell them you're coming out (of your safe room) or whatever and you're not armed
3. Try to remain calm, and cooperative with their demands
4. Approach slowly, with no sudden movements and your hands up and open

When coming face to face with a potential threat in your home, the greatest chance of violence will occur in the first 30 seconds of a confrontation. You can control the outcome, by controlling your tone, and treating the intruder like you would a wild animal. Talk in the a calm and normal voice, as they will be on edge waiting for you to attack them.

Avoid making direct eye contact, or looking at their face at all. This can be interpreted as either a challenge, or makes it obvious you're memorizing what they look like - a danger if there's a chance you may identify them later. Your open hands held up at shoulder height shows you're not hiding any weapons, and while giving you the appearance of being compliant, it means your hands are also up should you need to defend yourself.

In the calmest voice you can muster, tell the intruder you will cooperate, and they can take anything they want because you won't be any trouble. In the majority of home invasions, the perpetrators are after cash and easily re-sellable goods (like cameras and laptops) they can trade for cash. Let them take it (you've got insurance anyway, right?), and have them on their way as soon as possible.

The final outcome depends wholly on the intruders, but most will simply flee once they've got what they came for. **The faster they are gone, the faster you are safe.**



Unfortunately, there is a small chance a home invasion will be particularly long and violent. People are storing less valuables at home these days, so thugs are resorting to more intimidating methods to get the same score. Their main goal is to capture the home owners before they can notify the police, giving them hours of time to torture you for whatever information they like. Thieves normally want ATM numbers, combinations to your safe, and credit cards which can be used without reprisal so long as you are not freed to report them stolen.

Your best option is simply to tell them what they want, and as soon as they are gone alert the authorities. Don't draw out the situation, and do your best to have the invaders walk away happy. Again. **Give your captors whatever they want, to end the situation you're in as fast as possible.**

You're only truly safe once the intruders have gone, and never, ever leave with them. If they try to take you along, throw your calm confidence out the window and go mental.

Go absolutely mental.

Kick, scream, bite and yell, causing as much noise and commotion possible.

Historically very, very bad things happen to victims that are taken by the bad people who have broken into your house, and while you risk getting hurt/killed by causing a commotion, that's ultimately what's waiting for you if you leave under their control.



Preventing a break in

Most property crimes are based on opportunity, and reflect no personal agenda or motive behind an attack. This is good news, because it means you can take many steps to prevent a break in, and reduce the chances the crooks pick your house for an easy score.

It's not a coincidence most apartments that are robbed are on the ground floor. Anyone with ill intent can easily scout the property, there are plenty of directions to run as an exit, and it's much easier than scaling the side of a 10 storey building. If you're in a neighborhood with a bad reputation and you have any choice, pick an apartment at least 3-4 floors above ground to substantially reduce the chance you'll be broken into.



If that's not an option, there's still plenty you can do to deter an intruder. 50% of break ins are from the perpetrator gaining access to your home via the front and back doors. That's half of all break ins. The easiest way to prevent this happening to you is to always keep your doors locked, no matter how many of your family are at home. It's as simple as flicking a deadbolt, but it really does deter opportunistic thieves who can't walk straight in. If you like the breeze, have a security company fit a lockable security screen door. Then you can keep your solid door open, and still enjoy the breeze knowing no-one can simply walk into your house.

Your front and back doors need to be solid, to reduce an attackers ability to pry or kick them open. The best are steel covered solid wood doors, at least 1.75 inches thick. It seems overkill when you're looking at all the different doors in the hardware store, but every dollar you spend is an investment in the security of your family.



As you're refitting the door, check the doorjamb is also steel, and you have shatterproof glass on any panels in the door, or surrounding it. The strongest door in the world will not help you if all the attacker needs to do is break the glass and unlock it from the inside.

The more difficult you make it for an intruder to get into your house in the first place, the more likely they are going to leave and find an easier mark.

In the same category as doors, your windows should always be locked. Every window on the ground floor (at least) needs a security screen fitted so you can open the window and enjoy the breeze without worrying someone will use it to climb in.



With every modification you make to your windows, remember you may need to use these as an exit should there be an emergency or your home is broken into.

Whatever security screens you fit, they need to be able to open from the inside, and have the keys in a handy place so you can unlock these and escape.

If you're looking for a more budget option, a piece of dowel cut to fit in the groove of a sliding window makes it impossible to open without breaking the glass. It also lets you determine how far you want each window to open, and is a great hack for keeping airflow into your bathroom (by leaving the window open a crack), without compromising the security of your home.



Once it gets dark, draw your curtains closed. If you don't, anyone on the street has a perfectly illuminated view of what you have in your home, as well as where you are at any given moment. What's even scarier, because you're inside with the lights on, you won't even notice them standing in the shadows staring in at you. 99% of your neighbors will have their curtains covering their windows at night so their massive flat screen TV, laptops and surround sound system aren't an open invitation to anyone lurking on the streets. Don't be the one offering the invitation.

On the same note, make sure your property is well lit. You don't need to have your outside lights on all the time, but sensor lights that capture any movement and turn on when someone steps on your property are a massive deterrent for criminals who prefer to lurk in the darkness. Have these on all sides of your home, so no one can approach and catch you unaware. If you have a porch, install security lights at your front door, and remove any landscaping where a potential threat could hide. Hedges that run right up to your windows add a nice effect, but can conceal anyone intent on sneaking up to your house.

A burglar alarm is a must for every home, but is basically useless when it's not armed. Be sure to turn it on when you go out, before you sleep every night, and if you're home alone during the day.



Having a loud siren on your alarm will frighten an intruder, as well as alerting your security company who will notify the police should they not be able to get in touch with you. It wakes up your neighbors, and pretty quickly everyone in the vicinity knows something is amiss, even before you have the chance to call 911 yourself.

The course of action your security company follows once the alarm is triggered is critical, so make sure you're clear on their specific process. Typically, your security company will authenticate the alarm once it's activated by calling you. Intruders are well aware of this, and may force you to answer the phone and tell them everything is OK.

For the majority of Americans, having a burglar alarm is their failsafe means of protection, and in this situation you'll now be in serious trouble. Ask your security company what they recommend if this happens to you, because each company is a little different. Some will always send a patrol car out to a triggered alarm, while others have their own internal verifications which need to be made, something simple like repeating no three times to signal when you're in trouble. "No, no, no, everything is fine. My son just triggered the alarm when he opened his bedroom window..." The best protection is knowing how your security company operates, and follow their guidelines to warn them you're actually in trouble. If you're looking to get a security system installed, purchase one that has additional panic buttons. Then you simply need to install these in strategic places in your house, like the master bedroom, your basement, or the room you're planning to hide out in. Panic buttons work fantastic because unlike triggering the alarm, a security company will contact the police as soon as the button is pressed.



If you're heading out, shut the curtains and turn on a couple of lights. This creates an illusion you're still at home, and is much less inviting to a burglar than a perfect robbery target sitting in pitch black darkness. You don't want to come home and find your house has been robbed while you were gone, or worse - interrupt someone who is only halfway through.

Get to know your neighbors. They're an extra set of eyes and ears when you're not home, and can help keep up appearances (like collecting your mail) when you're on holiday. Plus, they are more likely to let you in if something happens at your house, because they actually know who it is banging on their door like a banshee at 2am.



When it all comes down to it, the people who have broken into your house are there to steal your things. Their main goal generally isn't to harm you. Yes, it sucks your laptop or expensive camera is getting stolen, but you can live without these. You can't live without your life, so do whatever you can to avoid startling the thief. They will be on edge already, and also want to get in and out with a minimum of fuss.

Arming yourself

Firearms

Especially if you live alone, owning a firearm will help you feel much safer when you hear a noise in the night. What most people fail to realize is having a gun is very different to using it capably. Because of this, the majority of guns sitting in the bedside tables of every Jack and Sally in America are basically useless. Wielding a gun, or pointing it at an intruder is very different to pulling the trigger, and most of us are not 100% committed to actually taking the shot. This is critical, because as soon as an armed intruder in your house sees you with a gun, they will panic and start shooting at you first. This is why attacking an intruder is always a last resort. It's much better to get out of your house altogether, or simply hide out and wait for the authorities.



Training to shoot is a must for every gun owner, helping you to prepare yourself both mentally and physically to operate the firearm in a high stress situation. If you believe this is an option for you, take an advanced course at your gun range and learn how to properly handle yourself should you ever need to confront an intruder in your home. You will learn how to hold a flashlight and a gun in sync, as well as how to clear each room in your house without presenting yourself as a target.

To give you an idea, firearms are actually fired in less than 2% of all home invasions. The intruder will usually flee once they see you have a weapon and demonstrate you know how to use it. For your gun to be effective it needs to be loaded, so remember to chamber a round before you start creeping through your house to find the intruder. The downside to having any guns in your house is of course remembering who has access to them. All weapons need to be out of reach of children, whilst being in close proximity when you need it most.

Stun guns

The most common is the taser (also spelt tazer), but there are actually a wide range of electro-shock weapons you can obtain to help protect yourself in your home. They work by using electricity to subdue the target, overloading their nervous system and causing strong muscle contractions. Basically, anyone hit with a taser will fall to the ground, unable to move. What makes them a fantastic home defense weapon is they are a non-lethal option, and are suitable for the many Americans not comfortable having firearms in their home.

A taser fires two electrodes into an attacker, able to penetrate clothing and stay attached once they're fired. Their maximum range is 35 feet, but these high powered cartridges are only available to law-enforcement personnel. Civilians can purchase cartridges that fire up to 15 feet, more than enough to subdue an attacker who is in your home.



Because tasers (and similar devices) are not considered firearms, they can be legally carried without a permit in most states. Be careful if you live in the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Rhode Island because they are forbidden for citizen use, and there are particular restrictions in certain cities and counties. As with all weapons, it's best to confirm with your local gun shop the restrictions you are subject to before you buy.

Pepper spray

Anyone that's bitten into a hot chili pepper knows the pain that comes when the burning in your mouth starts to escalate. No matter how much you drink, you can't get it to stop. That's the premise behind pepper spray, but instead of in your mouth, it's in your eyes, your nose, and burning your entire face. Made from an extract of chili peppers, it's usually contained in an aerosol can, that is very portable, and can be operated quickly and easily.



The goal is to spray into the face of your attacker, and the powerful effects take hold almost immediately. It gives you the distraction you need to escape their reach, and escape to a safe location. It's also non-lethal, and generally the effects will be completely gone in a couple of hours. Pepper spray works by making use of an active ingredient in chili called oleoresin capsicum (OC). OC contains a compound called capsaicin, which causes the burning sensation.

When looking at the different options for your pepper spray aerosol, be wary of the different spray patterns available, and know how to effectively operate the pepper spray you purchase.

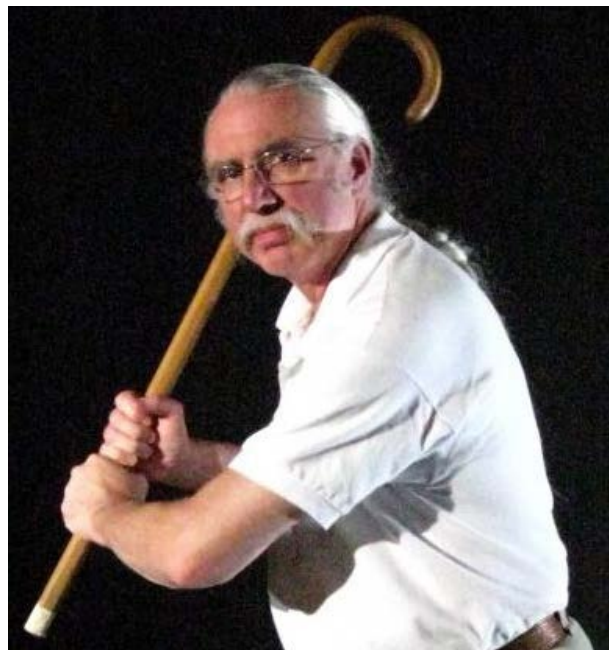


- **Stream.** It sends a thin burst of liquid, concentrating the spray but you need to be accurate for it to work.
- **Mist.** It sends out a fine mist of liquid, covering a larger area.
- **Fog.** Similar to the mist spray pattern but has a wider range of spray, and is best used in close quarters.

Depending on the dispenser, they are generally 4-5 inches tall, and 1-2 inches wide, with a trigger to release the spray and a safety lock to stop any accidental discharges. Their portability makes the dispensers easy to carry, and often you can purchase pepper spray in canisters that look like everyday objects, allowing it to be easily concealed in a handbag or on your keychain.

Use pepper spray when you have no other option, and give yourself a window in which to escape your attacker. A good shot to the face can induce 15- 45 minutes of blindness, coughing, choking and nausea, but after this time the effects start to fade. Because of this, be sure you can escape once you spray your attacker, if you get trapped they will be very unhappy with you once the effects wear off, and any residual fumes can also make staying in your safe room unbearable. Check with your local police station any regulations on buying pepper spray in your state, and where you can learn how to use it effectively.

Like all weapons, you need a plan, and be prepared to use it for it to be effective. If you decide you have no other option and need to confront an attacker, use the element of surprise. Deciding to fight back is a last resort, but you have an edge in your first move, when you can catch them completely off guard. Use one of the weapons you have armed yourself with, or simply pick up a hard, solid object and strike hard at their eyes and throat. If you get a good hit in, you can knock them out, or stun them and give you the precious seconds you need to run past them and out to your neighbors for help. Once there are witnesses, most intruders will run. No one likes to be the center of attention when they've been committing a crime, especially as the police are soon to arrive.



When you're getting followed on the street

It's late, and you thought it would be OK walking home alone. After all it was only a 5 minute walk, and it's not 'that' late.

Through the calm and still night, suddenly there's an odd sound behind you. Perhaps the rattling of keys, or a twig breaking that shouldn't have. Shrugging it off, you keep walking, a little bit faster but with an ear open. You hear it again and now you're definitely sure, the hurried footfall and hushed whispering confirm someone else is there, and you're no longer alone.

What you do right now determines how safe you remain, so be prepared to protect yourself.



Being alert in the first place

To avoid anyone catching you by surprise, the first step is to be alert. Wandering around at night with your headphones in, eyes glued to your facebook feed, paints you as a target, and anyone can sneak up on you without you even noticing. Being alert, and not oblivious to the environment you're in is the easiest way to avoid a confrontation.



If you believe someone is following you, simply change the circumstances. Walk into a convenience store, a bar, wherever there is a group of people. The best defense against being followed is actually paying attention in the first place, realizing when someone is following you, and changing your situation.

If you do hear something out of place, a quick glance over your shoulder can reveal what's going on. Perhaps it was simply the neighbors cat, another partier heading home, or there actually is someone following you. Remember that creepy feeling you had when you walked past the group on the corner and they checked you out? Perhaps it was justified, but then again, don't freak out just yet. They might just be heading in the same direction, and pepper spraying your neighbors kids isn't a good way to make friends.

When you believe someone is following you, test to see if they actually are. Cross the street and turn a corner, keeping an eye out to see if they continue on the first path or change direction with you. If heading down a side street is unsafe (less people, less lighting) try speeding up a little. They may immediately try to catch up, but if they don't you're not safe just yet. Use your instincts, because only you can best judge the situation you're in. If they're experienced muggers, they might be hanging back in order not to spook you. If you still feel unsafe it's time to act.



Take a breath to help keep yourself calm, and look around. Make sure you know where you're going, or if you're a little lost pick the safest and most well lit path. Getting out of this situation can be as easy as making it to a public place where a potential attacker can't make a move without being seen. Find a gas station, a bar, a diner, whatever is open and surround yourself with people. If you know the area and there is any type of authority figures nearby, awesome. Head there as fast as you can. Fire stations, hospitals, and best case, a police station will all have willing people ready to protect you, but stay on the main roads to get there.

Making a run for it alone is a bad idea, especially if you live in a quiet area, or it's particularly dark. If your attackers catch up with you, you're in trouble. Cutting through an alley is a definite mistake, as well as roads that aren't well lit. Get caught in one of these environments and the attackers will control the situation, putting you in big trouble. If you are being followed, walk in the center of the road, and get somewhere safe as fast as possible. Once you're with some friendly faces, call the police or a friend, and have them pick you up and escort you home.

If nothing around you is open, check out the houses. You'll be able to see who is still awake by the flashing lights of a TV behind the curtains, but be careful you don't put your safety at risk walking up to their door. You need enough time for them to answer your frantic knocks at the door before your followers catch up to you. When this also isn't an option, it's time to up your game.

Turn around and make it clear you've seen the attacker. In some cases taking their photo can spook an attacker, but it can also provoke them (they now have an incentive to get your phone as you can identify them to police). If you're lucky, simply alerting your follower to the fact you know they're following them is enough to cause them to stop. Dialing the police is another tactic, quickly tell them you're being followed, where you are and the direction you're heading and stuff the phone back in your pocket while it's still connected to the operator. You want your hands free should you need to defend yourself.

If you're still being followed, make the biggest scene you can. Screaming isn't your best tactic, (it can stimulate the chase emotion in an attacker), but yelling at the top of your lungs you're being followed, and drawing attention to yourself is a good way to put an end to the situation. Kick parked cars and set off their alarms, or blow the whistle on your key-ring your paranoid dad has made you carry since you were 14. The more people you can get to look at you, and see what's going



on the better. It doesn't matter if it's a quiet sleepy neighborhood, people will look out their windows and your potential attacker is most likely to slink back to where they came from. Once people are looking, run. Put as much distance between you and your attacker as possible, but always run towards safety. Head for lights, people, and get yourself away from your attacker.

As you're running, grab your keys and hold them tightly in your hand. This is an excellent improvised weapon should you need to defend yourself, but hopefully it doesn't come to that. If you can't seem to escape, drop your valuables. Perhaps all they're after is your wallet, or your purse, so let them have it. Losing your cash sucks, but it's much better than risking an injury (or your life) should it come to a confrontation.

If you're still being chased and nothing has worked so far, it's because they intend you real harm. In 99% of cases, the steps you've already taken will have caused your follower to give up. Keep running, but if they haven't given up yet, you're in trouble. They don't care about cash or any witnesses recognizing them, they are planning to hurt you. Try to outrun them, but if they catch up be prepared to be attacked.

Once they get close, stop running and put everything you have into defending yourself. Fight dirty, and fight hard, using your handful of keys to hit your attackers face again and again, as well as any other vulnerable spots you can find. Target the eyes and throat, and of course scratching and biting is OK, as well as a strong kick to the genitals. Do everything you can to avoid their grasp, because if a bigger and stronger opponent gets you pinned on the ground, you're in trouble. Remember, you're not fighting fair, you're fighting for your life. Your aim is to incapacitate your attacker long enough for you to get away safely.



Now you're running again, you need to think about where you're going. Heading home isn't smart, because if your attacker starts following you, you've now just led them straight to where you live. This is especially dangerous if you live alone, or your family members are out. All the attacker needs



to do is wait till you let your guard down, and resume the attack. This could be later the same night, or weeks later once this all feels like a scary dream.

Don't risk it. Run to a neighbors house, one of your friends, or even a relatives where you know there will be someone home when you start hammering on the door. The more people around to take care of you at this stage the better, and don't hesitate calling in and reporting it to the police. Try to remember everything you can about the person who followed you, to help the cops actually find them, and stop this happening again to you, or another victim.

When you're approached on the street

Damn. For whatever reason you weren't paying attention, and you've been caught out. Perhaps you thought it was a good idea to walk the 5 blocks home from the party (it'll just take a minute), while listening to tunes on your iPhone and posting about how you had such a great night. Genius.

Being mugged is traumatic, in addition to losing your phone, wallet and any other possessions of value (yes, some muggers will even take your sneakers), you're left thinking what the heck just happened.



A mugging happens suddenly, with the attacker using surprise and shock to their advantage. Their goal is to grab your valuables as fast as possible, so they can make a run for it before anyone else realizes what just happened. Unfortunately, intimidation is the best recipe for shock and awe, and you can expect anyone trying to mug you will be armed, with either a gun or a knife, or are just so massively huge you don't stand a chance. Don't freak out, in this situation there's not much you can do. Handing over whatever it is they want is the best solution, and they'll generally let you walk away. If you start being cheeky, or talking back to them, you never know what could happen. You don't know what drugs they're currently on, what they've been through today, or what they're willing to do to you to steal your wallet, so don't test them. All you really need to focus on is getting the whole situation over as fast as possible.



Starting a fight with a mugger is not a good idea, as the last time you were in a fight was probably in school, while this guy has been getting roughed up on the streets every day since he dropped out.

The best solution to stop a mugging is to avoid them in the first place. Yes, it sounds terribly simple, but there is a distinct pattern to how would-be muggers operate. If you take the right actions you can significantly reduce your appeal as a potential mark.

- After nightfall, don't walk the streets or take public transport alone
- Most muggings occur between 8pm and 2am, so pay attention when you're out

It's common sense, but being in a larger group, and sticking to well lit areas makes you less of a target, so long as you're paying attention. If a group surprises you and two friends in a dark alley because you were too busy chatting, you're still going to get mugged. The key is to be alert, and not openly demonstrate the valuables you have on you.

Knowing self defense

Being alert and avoiding putting yourself at risk is the best protection you can take, but if you believe there is a particular risk for you, take a self defense class. Perhaps your neighborhood is a little dodgy, or it would just make you feel more confident. There are plenty of courses on offer, and your local community centre will have a basic instructional course on how to defend yourself. Just knowing how to throw a punch can boost your confidence, which in many cases is enough to deter a would-be attacker looking for an easy target.



In a following section we cover different ways you can fight dirty, if it really does come down to a street fight, but remember - if you do get caught by a mugger, your safest option is to comply with their requests. Muggings can turn ugly very fast if you're being difficult or an asshole, and most street thugs won't have any remorse stabbing you with their knife or shooting you to get what they want.

Do whatever they ask, in a calm and easy manner. You can always call and cancel your credit cards or file a stolen report for your phone, two minutes after they run off, so just let them go. Being calm, neutral and non-confrontational will make the entire process fast, so you can get the hell out of there and somewhere safe as soon as possible.

Handling a mugging

Don't make it obvious, but as you're handing over your stuff, pay attention. Glance at the exact time on your phone, check out the brand of their shoes, and remember their sex, ethnicity (best guess),



any other distinguishable clothing, how tall they are, and which direction they take off running. As soon as they're gone, find a payphone, or duck into a convenience store, call the police and report what happened. Tell the operator exactly where you are, and sit tight until the police show up.

It depends on the officers, but the process now will look like this. You'll be taken somewhere to sit, and explain what happened. It might be a table in the coffee shop you're hanging out in, in the police car, or you could be home already if this took place near your apartment. It's an emotional experience, but try to keep it together while

you're running through it all. The faster you can relate all the relevant information to the officer, the faster they can get back on the road looking for your mugger.

The police need to be told what the mugger looks like, what they were wearing, and where they went. They'll head out looking for targets that match your description, so be as specific as possible, and remember everything you can. Often, the police will bring you along to help canvas, but again, this depends on both your emotional state, and the officers discretion. From here, there are three likely outcomes:

1. The police find targets that match your description but aren't the mugger
2. The police find the mugger, and make an arrest
3. The police fail to find the mugger

Unfortunately, the third option is the most likely result, so don't get angry with the police officers if they don't find your mugger. The police are here to help, and doing everything possible, but if you were robbed by a professional, you can be sure their escape route was planned out before they even decided to mug you, and they were halfway back to their own home before you even called 911.



That's just what happens.

You're going to be very mad at this point. The adrenaline of the attack is wearing off, and you're no longer scared because you're surrounded by police so it's natural your frustration will start bubbling to the surface. It doesn't matter how angry you are with the police, they did not intentionally let your mugger 'get away'. They arrived as fast as possible, have searched the neighborhood, and simply didn't find the suspect. Don't abuse the officers, and complaining to them about their level of competence won't do you any favors tonight (or in the future if you create a big enough scene the other officers remember you), so just relax. Odds are, your mugger will be caught eventually, even though they got away today.

Stay with the police, and after the search is called off, go with them to the police station. It takes about 30 minutes to officially file a report, so head down and fill it all out while it's fresh in your mind. You'll need this anyway for your insurance, phone and credit card companies, and is a great start for tomorrow as you make the rounds replacing everything that just went missing.

Prevent your kids from being abducted

At home

It's your responsibility as a parent to teach your kids the fundamentals of basic safety. Luckily for most of us 'stranger danger' is drilled into us again and again by society, our friends and our own parents. Most kids will never get in a car with a stranger, or open the door of the house to someone they don't know - but this isn't always the case.



The danger with kids, is they can be easily tricked by people acting as a symbol of authority.

Of course, your child knows they should never open the door for a stranger when they're home alone, but a kidnapper with malicious intent can be very convincing. Dressed like a policeman or a fireman, and asking for your child's help to use the phone triggers their hero response. Most children who wouldn't normally let a stranger inside will be opening the door in their eagerness to help a policeman. The same caution you teach your kids for strangers needs to apply to everyone. Never, ever let your kids open the door if they're home alone, and if they're young why are you leaving them home alone anyway? It's much safer leaving your children with a babysitter, a relative or even the neighbors should it be a situation where you really can't take them with you, leaving them home by themselves is a recipe for disaster.

Teach your kids to tell strangers asking for their help to go ask an adult. If there really is an accident or an emergency, an adult neighbor is in a much better position to help than a 4 year old.

In public



Children who wander off in public are subject to another danger. Opportunistic kidnappers. The problem with public places is they are so busy, and most people aren't paying close attention to all the people around them. Automatically, an adult with a child looks like a parent, and most other adults will simply ignore a yelling little kid, thinking they're just misbehaving.

When you're in public, never, ever let your kids out of your sight. Especially if they are young. It takes 20 seconds for someone to march them purposefully out the front of the store. In the same time it took for you to read this paragraph, they've grabbed your little one's hand and are now walking them out and into their car. It can be as simple as letting them browse the chocolates in the next aisle over and you lose concentration because work called, and you're on the phone for a

minute or two. Someone with ill intent could be speeding off with your child before you hang up the phone, so make sure you're always paying attention.

The key to staying alert is to watch the people around you. Just like when someone is following you home at night, tune your senses into your surroundings and keep an eye out. If there's a certain shopper paying particular attention to your children, or following you around a little too close just make it known you're aware. The easiest way to do this (without coming off as a paranoid parent) is to say hi. Look them in the eyes and give them a smile.

You've now shown a couple of things. First, you demonstrate confidence and friendliness to a stranger which creates an emotional connection, and they will be more inclined not to do anything negative towards you. Second it establishes you know they are there. Much like turning and facing someone who is following you, you've now made it clear they are no longer an anonymous shopper, you know exactly what they look like should anything happen. If you are in this situation, after you've said hello, the next step is to avoid them completely. Finish whatever you're doing and get your kids away from the creep.



The last real worry parents have is sleepovers. Once your kids start going, or all the others in their class are, you can't be the only parent coddling your babies at home every night. As a responsible parent, you need to make sure any family who your child is spending the night with are ok. It could be as simple as coming in to meet them and have a coffee when you drop off your kid. If something just doesn't feel right call it off, but typically, following these steps is more for your own peace of mind (as a parent). You'll sleep much better having met the parents. If meeting them isn't an option, call a couple of your friends and ask their opinion of the family. Just hearing that "oh yeah they're great" is a massive stress relief, especially if it's one of their first sleepovers.



It's a shame parents need to have their guard up at all times, but the reality is there are many bad people out there. Once you have a child, you become responsible for everything in their lives, and you must do your best to ensure you are always looking out for them.

Kidnappings

Getting kidnapped is terrifying, for both the abducted and the family they leave behind who are worried sick until you're back home safe. What's scary is it can happen in an instant, especially with professionals you will find yourself tied, unable to scream and thrown into a van that starts racing away from the scene as fast as possible. In under a minute you're blocks away, racing to an unknown destination.

While a kidnapping happens fast, faster than most people can do anything about, most victims are actually released unharmed, and fairly quickly, once the kidnapers get what they want. This is great for everyone who wants to survive, because your own survival now depends largely on the decisions you make while you're captive.



Actually escaping

The best result you can hope for is to escape the abduction attempt. It depends on a huge variety of factors, but if you can thwart your kidnapers before they force you in the trunk of a car, the entire ordeal ends here.



As soon as you know something is wrong, you need to **take immediate action**. The first few moments your kidnapers are relying on their ability to surprise you, and the quicker you can snap out of it the better.

Generally, the potential to escape at this point outweighs the danger but be careful. You need to make a judgment call here, depending on the weapons the kidnapers have, or how many of them there are. If the attacker is unarmed, or the kidnapping seems sexually motivated fight for your life. Kick, scream, bite. Do whatever it takes to cause enough commotion that the kidnapers decide to go find an easier target. The trouble comes when escape isn't an option. Multiple attackers all armed with handguns make your thoughts of escape irrelevant, because getting away (without getting shot) is not realistic.

Evaluate the situation carefully, because your best chance of escape is in these first few moments.



If there are people around, make a scene. Forget senseless screaming, and direct your anger to your kidnapper. Tell them directly to stop, confronting them face to face. If this doesn't give you a split second of hesitation to run, look at the people around you. Generally people in a crowd will be so shocked, at what's happening (it's so out of the ordinary) they won't come to your help in time. You can snap them out of it by shouting directly at them. This individualizes the problem, and gets the onlookers moving.

- **YOU, red shirt! I'm being KIDNAPPED, HELP!**
- **Guy with the hat, HELP ME!**
- **Lady with the dog, CALL THE POLICE!**

Making these direct commands brings onlookers out of their state of shock as you address them individually and gets them taking action. You need their help, not for them to gawk at you with an open mouth as they wonder "wow, what just happened?" This technique works very well in public places, and is much more effective than simply screaming for help.

If you have kids, make sure you teach them this direct method of getting attention. Screaming kids are often ignored by bystanders, as they liken what's happening to just a simple family conflict. To really get attention they need to shout things like:

- **"I'm being kidnapped"**
- **"I don't know this person"**
- **"This isn't my dad"**

Next, you want to make it as difficult as possible to bundle you up and throw you in their getaway car. Grab onto anyone or anything nearby. Actually holding onto a bystanders arm forces them to get involved, which could make a significant difference if you're a woman, child, or fighting off a much stronger attacker. Getting someone else to help in your rescue can sway your chances of escape significantly, but you can still make it more difficult for your attackers by simply grabbing hold of something nearby that is fixed to the ground. The post of a street sign, a bus stop seat, whatever is there use it to help you stay put and not be dragged into their waiting car.



The more difficult it is to kidnap you, the better chance you have of them simply giving up.



Plus, making a huge scene gets more witnesses to the crime, providing faster and more accurate information to the police if the kidnappers do manage to take you away. **The quicker the search begins the greater the chance the police have of tracking you down.**

Fighting for your life

If you decide to fight your kidnapper, put all your effort into it because you stand the greatest chance of escaping if you really are fighting for your life. You want to do everything you can to stop an attacker gaining control, and getting you in their car.

Forget about winning the fight, or playing fair. Your focus needs to be only on escaping your attacker's grip, so you can run like hell to the nearest public place. You're not out here to win a fair fight, all you need to do is escape the grip of your attacker, so you can run like hell to the nearest public place.

Use every dirty fighting trick you know, and this guide covers some very effective methods in a later chapter. You're being abducted, the rules are out the window!

Check the ground for anything you can use as a weapon, or grab the pepper spray in your purse you keep just for this occasion. Don't be afraid to use it, a blast of pepper spray in the eyes of your attacker will give you the time you need to escape their grip, and get out of the situation you're in. If they've got hold of you, attack the most sensitive parts of their body. Bite the arm around your neck, scratch for their eyes, kick their groin and keep it up until you can escape. Punching with your fist isn't recommended for someone who hasn't thrown a swing before, because if you do it wrong you can break your hand. Instead use your elbows and knees to strike, they're much more solid and can do lots more damage.



If you don't manage to escape, you need to deal with it. Once you're tied and bundled into the kidnappers' car, you'll be taken to a place where there is likely no easy chance of escape. The general recommendation is to calm down, but with one exception. If a sexual predator has you, never stop fighting. The more difficult you make it for them to violate you, the better chance you have of them simply deciding it's too difficult and give up to find an easier target.

Aftermath of being taken

After being kidnapped, regain as much composure as possible. You may have been drugged, beaten or forced into a trunk to help them escape. Don't fight if they are sedating you, it's better than the second option of your attackers simply beating you unconscious, and having to ride out the kidnapping experience with broken ribs and who knows what other permanent damage.

Once you're in their control, make every effort to get calm and controlled. It's difficult to stop your pounding heart with adrenaline pumping through your veins, but a few deep breaths will ultimately help you. Being knocked out and waking up in a strange place is disorientating, but if you're smart, you can pay attention to every detail to build a picture of where you end up.



Try to keep track of how long you're driving for, and listen to particular sounds, like the change from asphalt to a dirt road, crossing a particular bridge out of town, or certain smells from a factory. Having an idea of where you are can aid your escape plans (i.e. you know which direction to run) as well as having the information to give to police if you can contact them at a future time.



As well as trying to figure out where you're being taken, pay attention to the people who kidnapped you. Listen to determine how many people there are, particular accents which can give you an idea where they are from, what weapons they have, and who is the boss.

If you can see through the blindfold, check out their physical condition, and determine if you could actually outrun any of the kidnappers. Facts like these greatly help the escape plans you'll be dreaming of every moment you're a prisoner.

When you arrive to where they will hold you, look for as many details as possible:

- Every exit to the building, and what is immediately outside (to give you cover in an escape)
- Check for surveillance cameras, and any potential blind spots
- Take note of guards, and how many people are there to keep tabs on you



Being kidnapped puts you in a dangerous spot, but throughout it all you have to remain positive. The vast majority of kidnap victims survive, so the odds are definitely on your side.

Your only concern is to prepare yourself for how long you may be in captivity. There are cases where hostages have been held for years, but by taking it one day at a time they were eventually freed.

Figure out why

As a kidnap victim, you have plenty of time on your hands, so try to figure out why you've been abducted. There are many different motivations your kidnapers may have, so keep your ears open and listen out for any clues. It could be a simple ransom demand, a political stunt, or there might be a darker motive.

Knowing this will help you formulate a plan. If it's just a ransom, you are much more valuable to your kidnapers alive, as their ultimate objective is to get their demands met. On the other hand, if a serial killer has you locked up, or are being held captive by a politically motivated group, there is a much higher chance everything will eventually go pear shaped, and you won't get out alive.

The reason why you're being held greatly influences how much risk you should take when trying to escape, so **base your escape plans on what you believe the kidnapers plan to do with you.**



Throughout all of this, remember to stay positive, and treat your captors with respect. Put them at ease, and cooperate with their demands (within reason of course) and you will have a much easier time as a kidnap victim. Your best tool of defense against violence is to be civil, and build rapport with your captors. If they like you, they are much less likely to do anything to harm you. However if you're threatening, acting violent, or crying hysterically, you're probably going to be hurt once your captors finally snaps.

Whatever you think of your captors, don't treat them with disrespect.

You'll see this in many Hollywood movies, where the audience thinks "wow, cool - look how defiant the hero is," but in real life this only works against you. Insulting your captors is a sure way to provoke them, and is the last thing you want to do. What's best is to listen to them, being empathetic without being patronizing. It also helps you gain the information you need to escape, or to help the police apprehend the kidnappers once you are free.



On top of this, you can use the emotions and feelings within your captors to your advantage. If the two of you have children, or a partner, it becomes much easier to appeal to the bond you both share. Being able to get the kidnapper to feel how you do is key, and simple things like showing a picture of your family can plant the seed if the topic comes up.

Be careful though. Befriending your captors works wonders in 99% of all kidnappings, but it can work against you if you've been taken by someone who is psychologically unstable. If you find yourself under the control of a lunatic, be as passive as possible. Do nothing that can be construed as manipulation, like trying to be friendly. Once they determine you're one of 'them' (the people who are conspiring against your kidnapper), you may be on the receiving end of a very violent reaction.

Avoiding boredom

The hardest part about being held captive is the boredom. If you're with a group of captives, talk to them as much as you can without frustrating the guards. Looking out for each other will make your captivity easier to handle, and it may even allow you the chance to plan a more effective escape as a group than you could manage on your own. When you're part of a group, do your very best to blend in. Never, ever, be the troublemaker in a group, or the go-to leader, because if something bad happens, the hostages the kidnappers don't like (or don't trust) are the ones who are executed as an example for everyone else.



Keep your head down, and your nose clean, and stay out of trouble - if you want to make it through it.

Don't forget to look after your body, especially if you are in captivity for a long period. Staying fit while in restraints is very hard, but if you have the space do whatever you can to stay active. Exercising releases endorphins which makes you feel happy, and if you're in reasonable shape

you're much more likely to be able to escape when an opportunity does come up. In a tiny cell you can do pushups and jumping jacks, and while it's not a 5 star gym, it's far better than nothing.

One game you can play is to spot the patterns. As much as humans like to believe we are the smartest beings on earth, there are actually many things we do that make no sense. Everyone has habits, from the tells poker players watch out for to determine when you're bluffing, to the time it takes Guard #1 to finish his morning coffee and a cigarette. Once you figure out the habits of your captors, you can use this to your advantage when an opportunity arises to escape. Tracking time without a watch is hard, but you can use the sun coming in your window, or simply count to yourself. These kind of games keep you mentally sharp, and at the same time can be your salvation.



Over the long term

If you've been locked up for weeks or months, you start to settle in. Routines are set, and you've not been misbehaving, so push your captors and gradually ask for little things. Keep it simple, like a book to read or a heavier blanket, and don't bug them every day. Treasure everything they give you as a small gift, and use it to stave away the boredom.

It's also important to keep an eye on your captors. Let's face it, your kidnappers are all relatively unstable people (having abducted you in the first place) so be wary of how they are treating you. If you start to feel they are getting harsher, or simply stop feeding you altogether, now you're in serious of trouble. This is usually because the plans your captors had aren't working out, and they're becoming a little stressed. One massive change to watch out for is if your kidnappers are suddenly OK with you seeing their face. If any of these warning signs come up, you need to escape as soon as possible. No matter the risk, if you see any of these signs, there is a very big chance you're captors no longer care if you live, and may be planning to kill you themselves.

You need to escape.

When it comes to escaping, time is the biggest factor, and every hostage situation is unique. In some cases, simply waiting to be rescued is your best option, while other circumstances mean you may need to risk it. Whatever case you are in, if an opportunity presents itself and you're almost certain you can get away, be bold and take advantage. It might be your only shot, and despite how rosy everything appears now, you never know how things will change in the future, and you're never truly safe while another person has control over you.



Getting rescued

You wake to the sound of gunshots, and you hear police and a SWAT team outside and you think "thank god, finally I'm going home". Unfortunately, it's a little early to celebrate. You're now in one of the most dangerous situations possible, because it relies totally on how your captors react.

They may:

- Decide to give up without a single shot fired
- Use the hostages as a human shield to escape
- Kill all the hostages before making their escape
- Bring you with them as they escape as future leverage

If you're in this situation you need to hide from your captors, and stay as low as possible. Get underneath a table or a desk, cover your head with your hands and pray it will be over soon.

When police breach a building, it happens fast and loud, with officers armed to the teeth storming in with heavy firepower and explosives. Once reinforcements arrive, and the rescuers burst into the room, **do not move.**



They are specialists, and trained to shoot without hesitation. If you startle one, there is a good chance the level of adrenaline pumping through their veins, combined with the surprise of seeing you will reward you with a bullet to the chest. This is because they are protecting themselves, and eliminating threats as soon as they are identified.

Stay low, do not act aggressively, and by all means, don't use this confusion to decide it's finally your time to make a run for it. To stay safe in this situation, obey every command the rescue team gives. Typically, you'll be told to lie face down on the floor with your hands above your head, and will be ceremoniously zip tied and guarded until the building you've been held hostage in is clear.

Do not, repeat, do not, fight, argue, or criticize your rescuers at this stage.

They follow this process because kidnapers have escaped situations in the past, exactly like the one you are in, by posing as hostages. By restraining you, they are ensuring the safety of not only themselves, but all the other hostages. So relax, in 10 minutes the entire situation will be sorted out. Stay quiet, let them do their job, and catch the criminals who have kept you locked up. It will all be over soon.

Dirty fighting tactics

Getting into a fight should always be your last resort. It's tricky fighting an opponent you've never seen before, because you have no idea of their capabilities, level of aggression, or what hidden weapons are concealed in their jacket or stuffed down the back of their pants. Luckily though, they have the same concerns when it comes to you, and you can leverage this to gain an advantage.

Show confidence but try to diffuse the situation. Depending on the reason they want to fight in the first place, a genuine apology can sometimes get you out of it. Don't let your ego get in the way, if they called you out for looking at them funny, apologize.

Your goal here is to avoid fighting entirely, because once a fight starts it can quickly escalate out of control, with people getting seriously injured. If you do manage to calm the situation, start backing away slowly, taking a few steps without taking your eyes off the potential attacker. Be careful about turning your back to walk away, this demonstrates weakness and if they're still mad there's a good chance they'll take the opportunity to jump you from behind.

Hopefully you can just walk away, and that's the end of it.

If not, well, it's time to start thinking dirty. Before even the first punch is thrown, get your head in the game. Take a quick look around to determine:

- If there is anything within reach you can use as a makeshift weapon
- How many opponents you expect to have to fight
- A possible path to safety when you have a moment to run



If your life is in danger, and this is more than just a schoolyard scuffle, there is no such thing as fighting dirty. Using these techniques you can level the playing field, and all of these can be used by women and children whenever they need help against a larger opponent. Fighting dirty is a great way to surprise a bigger and meaner opponent, but remember - these are all just tricks. Use these tricks against someone who really knows how to fight and you're going to be in big trouble, very quickly. Dirty fighting tactics are great, but they are what they are, simply an opportunity for you to get an edge. This edge allows you to launch a quick attack on your opponent and gain a split second's break, so you can make a break for it, and live to fight another day.

Strike first

If the only option you have is to fight, use your aggression and take control. Be the one to throw the first punch, make it a hard one, and keep striking.

Imagine what happens when you back a wild animal into a corner, and suddenly they are coming at you with their survival instincts on 110%, with teeth and claws flying everywhere.



Be the wild one.

Striking like this, without warning will stun your attacker, as they haven't yet had time to set up their defense. This technique is also known as the sucker punch, because you are not giving any warning and it usually results in your target being knocked out, or knocked down. If you need to use this technique, hit hard, fast and without hesitation. It does a lot of damage, and if you're not confident using a fist, you can also slam your palm in an upwards motion on your targets chin. This strike is just as effective, and makes it much less likely you'll break the bones in your hand.

Now you've hit them once don't give up. After your first hit, you need to keep it up until your attacker is no longer a threat. If you don't, you run the risk of them getting up, and unleashing their own savage attack. It's not Hollywood, you're in a street fight so you don't need to give your attacker a fighting chance. Hit them until they fall down, and keep hitting them until the fight is over. That's when it's safe to walk away.

Gouge their eyes



Successfully targeting someone's eyes can turn the tables in a fight. Remember the scene in Kill Bill? Perhaps you don't want to take it this far, but what's great about attacking the eyes is they're one of the most sensitive parts of the body. As soon as you make a move for them, an attacker will instinctively cover, protect and/or shut their eyes. This is what makes their eyes such a great target, and what makes it so difficult to do effectively.

In a fight, despite swinging for the attackers eyes, you're far more likely to connect with their cheek or the bone above their eye. If you do manage to land a hit to the eyes, your attacker will be frightened and disoriented as their vision blurs, giving you the chance to land a finishing blow. Gouging with your thumbs is another technique, but this is slower than simply stabbing forward with your fingers, or raking your nails over their face.

Hit the groin

No matter what self defense class you take, they all cover how effective a groin strike is. That's why competitive fighting doesn't allow below the belt attacks, because it's a very delicate area and a very vulnerable target. Normally, you only consider this option if your attacker is male, but it's a technique which also works on a female. A strong strike on the groin completely incapacitates any attacker. With enough force from your knee, foot or shin, a direct hit will put your opponent out of commission and give you a chance to run for it.



Be careful doing a groin attack, because sometimes there will be a few seconds of time lag between your strike and when the pain kicks in. In a hand fight, you can simply step back, but if they've got their hands on a knife or a gun you may find yourself being shot at before they collapse to the ground in pain. If you're too close to a male opponent, you can also use your hands and nails in an attack known as door knobbing. Exactly like it sounds, you grab the appendage and twist/tear/squeeze as hard as possible, until you have a chance to escape your attacker.

Unfortunately, many opponents are aware of the vulnerability of their groin and take steps to protect themselves from this particular attack. If you kick hard enough you can still take down a guy who is wearing a box, but it is much more difficult to land a successful blow. If you find your opponent does have protection, it may be best to try an alternative dirty fighting technique.

Stamp on their feet



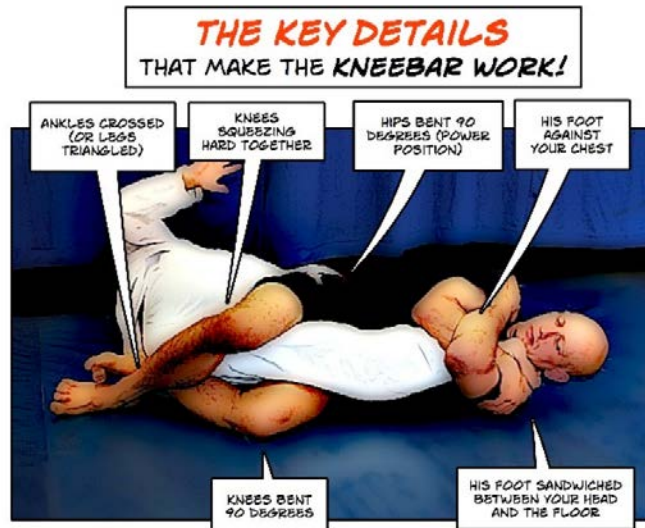
We have 26 bones in each foot and ankle, some of which are very delicate. To give you an idea, these bones make up 25% of the total bones in your body. They work together for us to be able to walk, run and even stand, and whilst very strong to attacks coming from the base (i.e. what happens when your foot collides with the ground when you run) they are very vulnerable to a strike coming from the top.

If you're grabbed and have your arms restrained, like someone is hugging you from behind, lift your foot and using your heel stomp on the top of your attackers foot as hard as you can. The best areas to hit are their toes, or the instep, but a direct hit will do damage no matter where you land it on their foot. If you're lucky, you'll crack a couple of bones, your attacker will let you go out of shock, and will not be able to chase you. The only risk here is your balance, as you have to raise your foot off the ground to do a decent stomp. If you lose balance and your attacker forces you to the ground, you're in trouble. As a dirty fighting trick it works great, just be careful to remain standing as you make your attack.

Consider the knees

Aimed right, your knee is a massive force of destruction, whether you're going for the groin, an attacker's head as they are coming down, or even a straight hit to the stomach.

In addition to an offensive weapon, your knee is one of the most complex parts of the body. The way it's designed makes it very weak to attacks from the side. A strong kick to an angle to an assailant's knee, or a stomp on the side of it can easily destroy the delicate structure inside the joint and cripple an opponent, permanently. Put your strength into it, and kick like you're kicking down a door to make sure they won't be getting back up to bother you.



As well as a strike, there are a number of grappling moves that utilize the weakness of the knees. If you have experience wrestling, you probably know plenty of leg locks you can use, and for everyone else the two most powerful are the knee bar or a heel hook. If done correctly the more pressure you put on their leg allows you to destroy the tendons holding their entire knee together. Do this, and your opponent is definitely out of the fight.

But with all grappling moves, don't forget the downside. Most of the techniques are simply a lock position, and don't actually cause any pain until you really do tear their knee in two. If your attacker has a knife, you probably don't want to be grappling with them on the floor and get a stab wound or two for your trouble as you're trying to do a knee bar.

Grab a weapon



In a fight for your life, anything goes as a weapon. If you can pick it up and throw it, swing it, or bash someone over the head with it, use it to your advantage. The more solid the better, because it will have more force when you land a hit, and has a greater chance of being a devastating attack. If you're really desperate, even a pen becomes an effective stabbing tool, or a bunch of keys held tight in your fist adds a significant amount of damage when you land a punch.

All you're really limited by is your imagination, so be creative. Grab a rock and bash them in the head, or grab that trashcan and launch it at your attacker. The only problem you have with this technique is the escalation of the conflict. Your opponent may have been unwilling to pull a knife or a gun on an unarmed opponent, but as soon as you started chucking bricks at their face all bets are off. Make sure if you do grab a weapon, you're the one who ends the fight.

Hidden weapons



Using a hidden weapon like this belt knife is a truly dirty trick, but it could be the difference to make it out of a fight alive. The general idea is to lure someone into a hand to hand combat, but when they get close enough they can no longer defend, you pull the knife and use it to attack.

This tactic is a favorite of muggers, who get close and in your face before pulling a weapon and now you have nowhere you can run. Perhaps timed with a distraction like asking you for the time, or a cigarette, and the moment you look away, they've pulled the blade into view and are making a move to stab you.

The downside of this technique again is that you're escalating the conflict. If you don't manage to take out your opponent in the initial attack, as soon as they see your weapon come into play they no longer have any reason to hold back anything of their own. If they also have a weapon, you're about to find out as your attacker comes at you with the full force of their arsenal. The trick is to strike fast and hard, before your attacker gets a chance to make their move.

Dirt in the eyes

Another nifty trick is to take advantage of the eyes sensitivity, but instead of gouging, grab a handful of whatever you can (sand, dirt, or mud), and throw it straight into the face of your attacker.



Timed right, this can cause a significant disruption to their attack, and they'll lost their momentum for a split second as they are momentarily blinded. You want to time your throw as they're coming in to attack, and there will be a brief moment of panic as they switch back to being on the defensive (as they can no longer see). It's these few seconds this dirty trick buys you, so take advantage and land your hardest punch, kick or strike with a weapon.

Hopefully your attacker goes down, and you can make your escape.

The hardest part with this technique is the timing. If they see it coming and close their eyes it will be ineffective, or if they're too close when you blind them they still may grab onto you. A handful of attackers won't actually go into defensive mode with two eyes full of dust, and instead will swing punches wildly at everything in range, as hard and savagely as they can. Because of the erratic nature of these haymaker punches, they are very hard to predict, and you may have trouble dodging their attacks.

Take a bite

Biting is a primal move that is terribly sneaky, and often unexpected by an attacker. If you're close enough while you're struggling with them to actually take a bite, they won't have a chance to get out of the way in time. For best effect, aim for one of their extremities like an ear, their nose, a finger or any part of them you can sink your teeth into.



When it comes to technique, the key is not to take a massive mouthful like you're one of the walking dead. You just want to take a small bite, because these are infinitely more painful. Your front teeth will cut and pinch their skin, and it won't be difficult to tear whatever you are biting off.

As a biter be careful of their clothing. If you get a tooth caught in their shirt, in a struggle it can easily be torn out. You also need to be aware that biting is not a takedown move. It's most likely just going to shock your attacker, giving you time to set up a more aggressive attack, but if you miss the opportunity you'll be facing a very, very angry opponent. Biting works best as a combination attack, using your teeth to get out of a grapple with your attacker, before gouging their eyes, and kicking them hard in the groin once their guard is down. This is a combination that will let you win the fight, and high tail it out of there.

Use your head



In close struggles with an opponent, most people often forget one of the most effective weapons in their arsenal is their head. To be specific, your forehead, and head butting is a wonderful dirty trick. In a fight using your head often comes as a complete surprise to an opponent, who is busy watching your hands for a weapon or the start of a punch. Because of this, you can usually get a really good shot in before they remember to defend against head butts too.

The math is simple, just smash the hard part of your forehead into any softer part of your opponents face. Their nose is an easy target, and you can usually break it with a decent head butt. You could also aim for their jaw or their temple, where landing a hard blow results in a knock out. The difficulty lies in making sure you strike with the right part of your own head, because if you happen to smash yourself in your own temple, you will knock yourself out.

Definitely not the way to save yourself in a fight!

Use an elbow

Unlike the fist, your elbow is a very strong joint that is a highly dangerous striking weapon. It requires you are closer to your opponent than throwing a punch, because you have a much shorter range, but it remains a devastating attack. The best way to use your elbows is to reach out with your leading hand (typically your left), and grab the back of your attackers head. Pull their head down towards you, as you bring your right elbow up for the strike. This makes it far easier for you to



hit the target, you shorten the distance between your elbow and their face, and you greatly increase the force (their head is coming towards you, while your right elbow is heading towards their head).

The trouble is getting comfortable throwing an elbow attack with force, because it's not something that comes naturally, and requires some practice to get the technique down. It also requires both your hands, and by doing so you expose your mid section to any attack from the attacker. An elbow strike needs to be done hard and fast, to minimize any risk to yourself.

Break a bone



To create massive pain, focus your effort on breaking one of the smallest parts of your attackers body.

Fingers are very easy to break, especially the pinky if enough force is applied. In a struggle, grab one of their fingers, and simply bend it backwards until it breaks. You'll cause a massive amount of pain, in addition to removing all ability for them to grip or make a fist with their hand. What you need to watch out for is this isn't always a fight ending technique. A determined attacker can still fight with a broken finger by simply using their other hand. Plus, they are going to be very unhappy with you. This technique, like many dirty tricks, is best used to setup a more powerful attack to finish the fight, rather than a move on its own.

With all of these dirty tricks, they should only ever be used as a last resort, when you have no other option. Getting into a fight should never be your goal, because you never know what turn the fight could take, or what dirty tricks your opponent is planning to use on you. Should you really need to fight, take down your attacker as fast as possible, and then get the hell out of there.

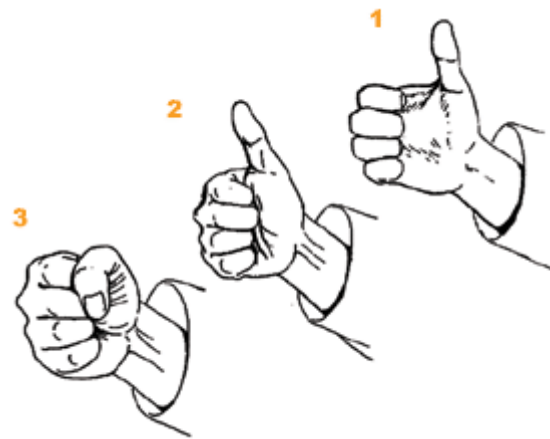
Fight Training

Understanding the right moves to use in a fight, and actually being able to perform them two very different concerns. The previous chapter covered the tricks which can give you an edge, but regular fight training will ensure you're ready no matter what. Read on to discover the effective and sometimes deadly techniques every survivalist needs to master.

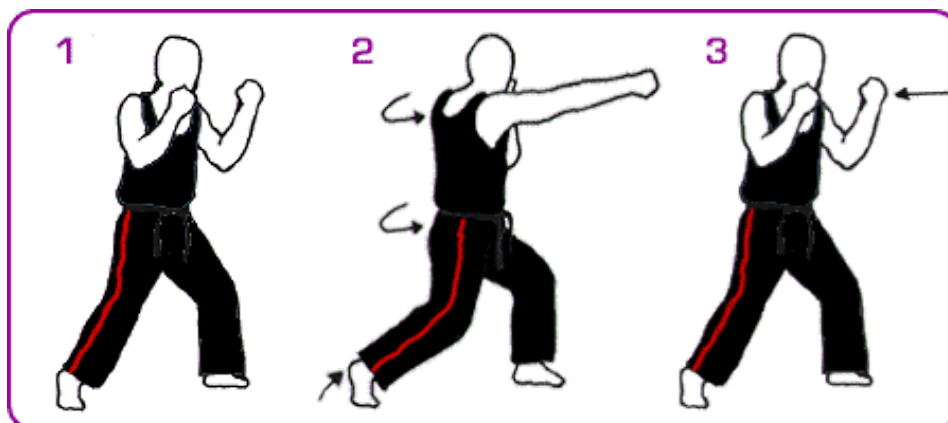
How to throw a punch

Throwing a punch effectively requires practice, and using the proper technique is much more important than your size or strength. Bruce Lee could throw a punch harder than many professional heavyweight boxers, and weighing in at only 130 pounds it was his perfect technique which helped generate his explosive punching power.

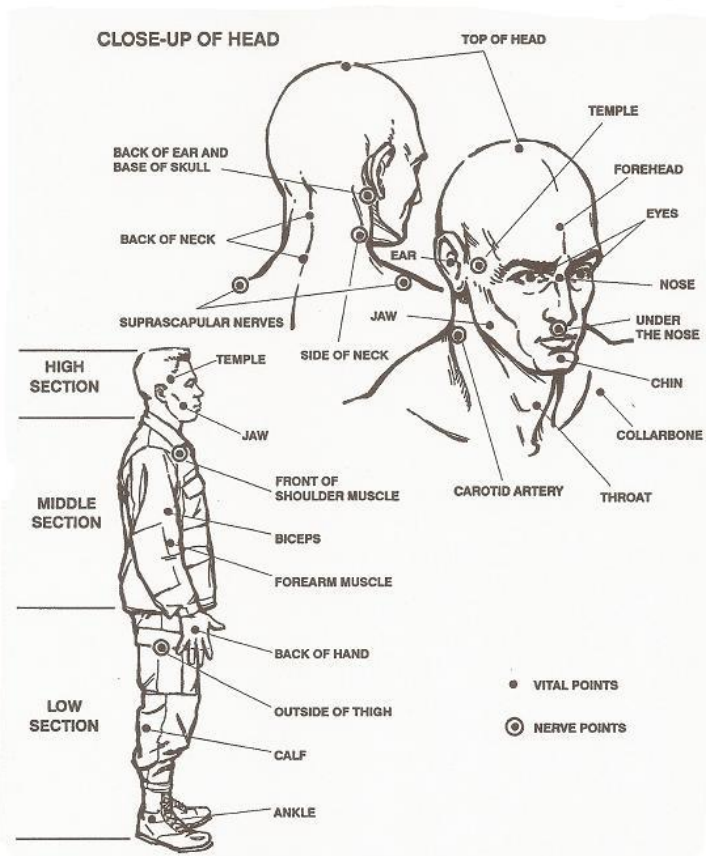
1. It's easiest if you start practicing with your dominant hand. This is typically your right arm if you are right-handed, as it will also be your strongest and most coordinated punching arm.
2. The next step is to make a fist, and remember to always keep your thumb on the outside. If you hit a target and your thumb is tucked inside your fingers; you will break your thumb. Start by curling your fingers closed and hold your thumb tight against your fingers.



3. To really understand the movement, imagine the hand you've made a fist with has grasped the handle of a jug of water. To keep the water from spilling you need to hold the jug upright, so keep your fist upright in your fighting stance - this is the starting position for your punching hand.
4. Stand with your feet a bit wider than shoulder width apart at a 45 degree angle, plant your back foot and slowly extend your punching arm forward. Turn your fist as you drive forward with your knuckles, and rotate your hips in the direction of the punch.



5. The rotation should end just as your arm becomes fully extended, and if you were holding the water jug your hand would now be in the position where it would be pouring all over the floor.
6. Bring your arm back to the starting position, and you're ready to throw a second punch. Keep repeating the movement until you get comfortable with the technique, and practice keeping your wrist straight. One of the most common causes of injury from punching a target is not maintaining a strong forearm and having your wrist bend on impact.
7. As you practice your punches, try to have your punch landing at the same spot on the target with each blow. The center of your knuckles should be the point first making contact, as it will maximize your attack power, and helps protect the bones in your hand from breaking.
8. Continue practicing on a heavy punching bag, and you'll quickly become comfortable throwing a punch, and be ready for any situation.

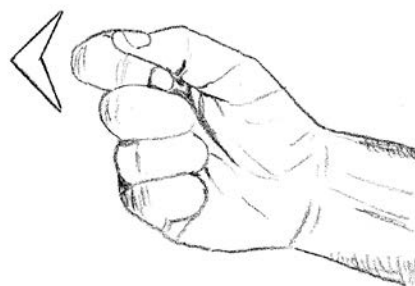


Taking advantage of pressure points

The human body has a variety of different pressure points which can help you to win a fight. If used in the proper way, targeting a pressure point can knockout or incapacitate an opponent very easily. The two main types are impact pressure points and blood flow pressure points.

To perform an impact attack, the most effective pressure points to target are in the head, aiming for the temple, jaw or the back of the neck. Simply strike with as much force as possible. To really do damage to your opponent, a phoenix eye punch to their temple is deadly. This should never be attempted with your training partner, and only ever used when you are in real danger because a direct hit can render an attacker unconscious, and in some cases cause death.

1. The first step is to make a fist in what is most commonly known as the "phoenix eye" style

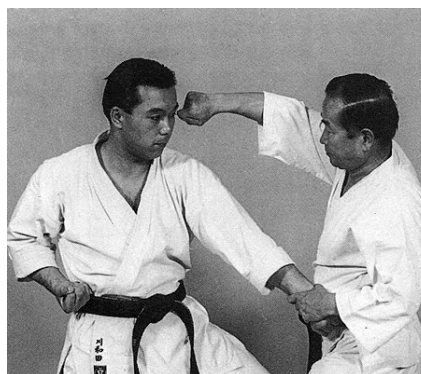


2. This amplifies the force you can focus on the vulnerable temple area with your extended knuckle, and works because the thinnest part of the cranium is at the temple.

3. All you need to do is strike their temple with as much force as possible.

4. An effective strike will render your attacker unconscious in a matter of seconds.

It's best to only use a closed fist attack when attacking the head if you're an experienced fighter and know how to correctly throw a punch. The skull is a very thick piece of bone because it protects the brain, and if you land a punch incorrectly you will cause massive damage your hand. Novice fighters can still be effective using the palm of their hand to strike, and enjoy a lower chance they will injure themselves performing an attack.



1. The best area to strike with your palm is under the nose and the base of the skull.

2. Aim to make contact with the heel of your palm, and strike hard and fast in an upward motion.

3. A successful strike will knock your opponent out, and even if you don't make a direct hit it can sufficiently stun an attacker allowing you precious moments to escape.

The second method to use pressure points in a fight is to restrict blood flow. The easiest pressure point to target with this attack is the carotid artery in an opponent's neck, but it can be complicated in its execution, especially if they have had martial arts training, and counter your attack.

1. Get behind your opponent and wrap one arm around their neck, locking it in place with your free arm.

2. Apply pressure on the side of their neck with the bone in your forearm, and tightly squeeze their neck.

3. Slowly lower your opponent to the ground as you increase the pressure on their neck.



4. To increase the pressure even further, use free arm as additional leverage, pulling the arm around their neck to your chest.

5. Take a deep breath in and push out your chest into an opponent's back to add even more pressure.

6. Within a minute or two your attacker will be rendered into unconsciousness.

7. If your attacker shows no sign of weakening after continued time in this hold, quickly let go and put all your force into striking a hard blow to the back of their head.

8. This strike will disorientate an attacker and give you a chance to escape.

Knocking someone out

The best self defense moves are focused on creating a chance to escape, and knocking an opponent out quickly provides you with the fastest way to flee a scene. There are many ways to knock out an opponent, but a head butt or a knee to the head are two of the most effective.

Performing a head butt

1. Lean out and grab your attacker by the shirt with both hands, in the center of their chest.

2. Don't grab their neck, as your attackers shoulder and neck muscles will naturally engage and reduce the effectiveness of your attack.

3. Performing the head butt with a whiplash motion does the most damage, so initially push your opponent away, using all of your bodyweight until they start to lean back.



4. This puts the attacker off balance, and can give you the element of surprise.

5. As soon as you feel their balance slip, pull them back towards you as hard as you can, bringing the attacker back into range of your head butt while they have lost their footing.

6. Strike hard with the top of your head, aiming for your attacker's nose. This is a sensitive area, and hitting it with enough force will knock your attacker out.

Knee to the head

1. Standing with your feet shoulder width apart, place your non-dominant foot slightly in front.
2. Your hands should be held up in a fighting stance, which helps you to maintain balance while performing the attack, and makes it easy to grab your attacker.
3. This attack is reliant on the position of your attacker, and is best performed when they are crouched down, and relatively close to you.
 - a. To get an opponent in this position, try initially to deliver a kick or a knee to their groin to momentarily stun them
 - b. Once they are doubled over and off-guard, you have a higher chance for success
4. Reach out and grab the shoulders or the neck of your attacker with your hands, forcing them to come down to meet your rising knee with the weight of your body.



5. You will need to focus on keeping your opponent under your control. This attack is best performed swiftly because your opponent will instinctively cover up and protect themselves as they feel their body being pulled into the attack.
6. Bring your knee up fast, striking their nose or chin with as much force as possible
7. Performing this attack correctly will almost always result in a knock out.

Breaking a knee

In a street fight, there's no room for chivalry. You need to do as much as possible to ensure you protect yourself, avoid getting hurt, and escape as soon as possible. In every situation, your only goal is to create an opening that allows you to get out of there, and an attacker's knee is a very vulnerable joint. Knees can withstand a considerable amount of downward pressure, but a successful strike from the side can easily destroy this delicate joint.

1. Stand in a fighting stance, and remember to keep your arms up.
2. Draw attention away from your intended knee strike by feinting a jab to distract your opponent.
3. Once you have an opening, perform a sweeping kick from the side.
4. Your goal is to hit your opponents leg just above their knee with the heel of your foot.
5. An effective strike will destroy the delicate tendons, cartilage and ligaments in an attackers knee, giving you will have ample time to escape the situation.

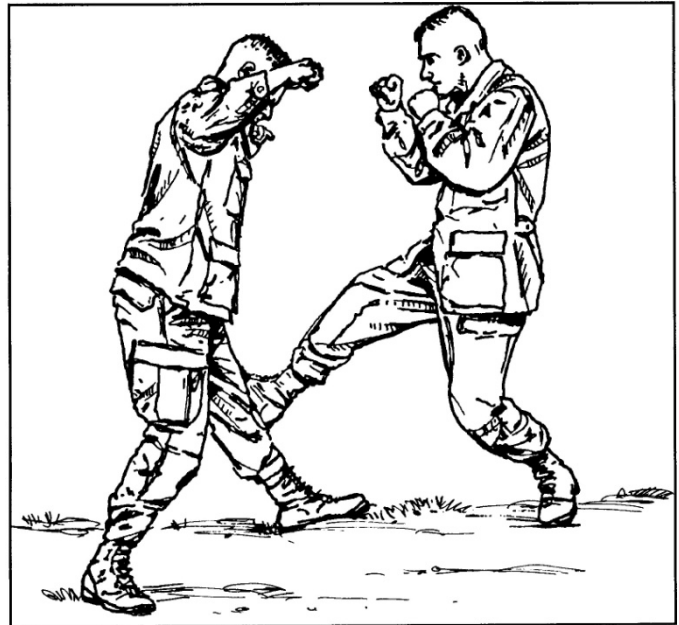


Figure 5-2. Front knee kick.

Breaking an opponent's arm

The easiest way to break an attackers arm is with an arm-bar. It's a move taught in grappling martial arts, with the goal to quickly get an opponent to quickly tap out. Arm bars are devastatingly effective. In a street fight, it can be used to cause massive damage, but your opponent first needs to be on the ground.

1. Sit with your legs over your opponents chest, holding the forearm of your attacker with both hands, as they lie on their back on the ground with their arm in the air.
2. Lock their arm in tight between your legs.
3. Slowly roll onto your back, keeping your knees slightly bent with their arm and elbow tucked between your legs, and kick your feet towards the ceiling to draw your bodies together.
4. Once your bodies are locked, hold your attackers forearm tight and bring your feet down to the floor. Your crotch should now be very close to their shoulder, with your legs lying over their chest.



5. With one leg on either side of the arm you are trying to break, position their arm to ensure their elbow remains locked, while pulling their wrist towards your chest.

6. From here you simply increase the pressure.

7. Raise your hips to apply upward pressure on their arm. Very little force is required to perform this move effectively, and from this position you can easily control the outcome of the fight.

8. Raising your hips in a quick sudden movement will snap their arm in two.



In any fight, speed and the willingness to take action are the keys to survival. Make sure every move you make is decisive, and put all of your force and energy into each attack. Regularly practicing these techniques will ensure you're prepared if you ever need to use them. Hopefully you will never need to, but understanding how to do each of these killer moves could just save your life.

Get your hands on a gun

In America getting a firearm is very simple. There are specific limitations from state to state, so if you're interested in getting your hands on a firearm your best source of information is to head to your local gun store and ask the details. They're the ones in the best position to let you know what applies locally, in your state, country or city.



Generally the federal guidelines are as follows:

Over the age of 18 you can purchase a long gun (rifle or a shotgun), and over the age of 21 you can purchase a handgun, so long as you are not:

- *Persons under indictment for, or convicted of, any crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year;*
- *Fugitives from justice;*
- *Persons who are unlawful users of, or addicted to, any controlled substance;*
- *Persons who have been declared by a court as mental defectives or have been committed to a mental institution;*
- *Illegal aliens, or aliens who were admitted to the United States under a nonimmigrant visa;*
- *Persons who have been dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces;*
- *Persons who have renounced their United States citizenship;*
- *Persons subject to certain types of restraining orders; and*
- *Persons who have been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence.*
- *Licensing is generally not required to own a gun, but is necessary to have if you plan to carry your firearm on your person (or in your handbag).*

Buying a gun is as simple as walking into a store that sells them, and making a purchase. You can find guns for sale in specialty gun shops, at gun shows, pawn shops, shooting ranges, sporting goods stores and depending on your state - even Walmart.



If you've never owned a gun before, buying from a shooting range is our recommended option. Most ranges allow you to fire off a few test rounds (if the gun is secondhand) to make sure it's in working order, and they will probably have a discounted gun ownership course to teach you how to care for your weapon and keep it functional. All of the stores that sell firearms like this are Federal Firearms Licensed dealers (FFL). To complete the purchase, they require a stack of paperwork alongside a background check to clear before

you can take the gun home.

But what happens if you want to avoid a background check, or want to get your hands on a firearm a little quicker? That's where the internet comes in, and a whole new can of worms is opened.

Gun sales on the internet

Head to Google and search for gun sales. A ton of listings will come up, and many of these will be licensed dealers, just like the gun shop down on Main Street. Buying a gun from one of these stores, even though it's online is the same as buying from a local gun shop. They will ship the firearm to your closest firearm dealer, you'll undergo the same background check, and once you are cleared you can head down and pick up your new firearm. So this type of sale doesn't change anything.

Second, you'll see many gun ads up selling bargain prices on guns in different states. Unfortunately, even if you find a great deal, it's very difficult to transfer firearms across state lines (many regulations in place) and posting them is subject to even more. This isn't going to work either.

But here's the trick.

Find an ad posted by a private seller in your city, or within your state, and meet them in person to buy the gun. Don't send it through the post, arrange to meet just like you were buying a secondhand fridge or a sofa. This is a private sale, and thanks to the situations surrounding the sale (namely that it's hard to regulate) a background check is not always required. The two current exceptions where a background check is needed are California and Rhode Island, and if you're purchasing a handgun through a private sale check your particular states regulations because there are 15 states with restrictions in place.



The law states it's a felony for a private seller to knowingly sell a gun to a person who likely would not pass a background check (because they fail one of the requirements listed above), but this is very hard to actually do, hard to enforce, and to even track. Thanks to the large amount of private sales, and the difficulty in establishing a process (the Manchin-Toomey bill tried to build a foundation for this by it failed to get adequate votes in the Senate), this remains a loophole anyone can use to purchase a gun. Private sellers will typically not perform a background check on you.

The scary thing about this is how easy it is to get your hands on a firearm. A few phone calls, no background check and a few hundred dollars in cash, and you've got a deadly weapon in your hands later that same day. In your hands it's a defensive tool, but many others use these loopholes for ill intent. So don't be the one caught out by the bad guys, and make sure you have adequate measures in place to protect your family.

Learn how to use your firearms

One of the most important aspects of being a responsible gun owner is to know how to use your firearm. If you lack the proper training and are in a situation where you need to use your gun for self defense, there is a very high likelihood you'll put yourself in harm's way, or even risk injuring a family member in the high-stress situation defending your home actually is.



Ironically, knowing how to shoot is not the first thing a new gun owner needs to learn.

Safety is key.

Every gun owner should know the inner mechanics of their gun inside out, how to reload it, clear a trapped casing, and how to secure and store it safely in your home, so you can be ready to use it whenever you really do need it.

When it comes to safety, there are four fundamental rules

1. Always treat a gun as if it's loaded
2. Never point a gun at anything you're not willing to shoot
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to fire
4. Know your target, and what's behind it (in case you miss)

There are plenty of courses offered by the NRA, or simply look up local gun ranges in your area and they will be able to give you the best advice on where you can complete a firearms safety course in the area. As a ballpark figure, a general introductory course is around \$100, and teaches you the basics in a day. At the end of the day, you'll be confident loading, shooting, and cleaning your gun, as well as knowing how to handle it safely in everyday life. Expect to learn how to hold a gun, how to aim, control your breathing and fire accurately, as well as the chance to fire off a ton of live ammunition in a safe environment.



If you're after a more extreme training, there are specialty courses you can take where an expert will train you in how to protect your home. Clearing each room in your house (when there is an intruder inside) is not recommended to be done by amateurs, but just knowing how to do it will allow you to sleep safer at night, knowing you can protect your family should the worst ever happen.



After a basic course, you need to practice to ensure you remain comfortable using your gun. Preparing for a home invasion means being able to handle the stress of any situation, while remaining calm and being effective when firing your weapon. Heading to the range every few months will help improve your accuracy, and make you very confident loading and aiming your gun. In an ideal world you will never have to fire at a person, but if you ever do, it's a blessing to be ready.

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Your first rule of thumb should always be...Safety First! These instructions as recorded have worked for others in the past and should work for you too, if you follow simple safety instructions. Use this document at your own risk.

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