

How to Defend Yourself in an Extreme Street Fight

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At some point in your life, you may find yourself in a situation where you have to defend yourself from one or more opponents. A street fight won't follow rules or niceties; if you find yourself in this situation, you need to do as much as possible to defend yourself and avoid getting seriously hurt. Bear in mind that use of excessive force is illegal but that defending yourself is not, so remember that the aim is to protect yourself and get out of there as quickly as you can.

Method
1

Fighting off a Single Attacker

- 1 Walk or run away and hide, if possible.** Not having to engage the assailant is your best defense.
- 2 Know how to defend yourself.** In the event that you can't get away and you do have to respond to protect yourself, knowing self-defense is crucial. Be aware that the rules of martial arts techniques might not help you, as sometimes even Black Belt Martial Artists can get severely injured on a tough street fight with *no rules*.
- 3 Try to talk the assailant out of fighting.**
- 4 Try to stay calm.** The calmer you are, the better you will be able to find the gaps to escape through and to know to seize the moment to get away.
- 5 Remember that the idea that size has absolutely no connection with strength is a myth.** Size does actually matter. Don't fool yourself into thinking that you can beat someone twice your size just because you have some martial arts skills.

Method
2

Fighting off Multiple Attackers

For greater detail, read: [How to defend yourself in a fight at school](#) and [How to fight off multiple opponents](#).

- 1 As with the advice for a single attacker, try to walk or run away, and stay calm.**
- 2 Try your best not to anger the group of assailants even more; yelling fighting words might egg them on to attack you.**
- 3 If possible, try to find out why they are trying to abuse you.** But beware: talking too much or asking questions may anger them to attack you harder.
- 4 If you're not a good fighter, put your back to a wall as it will keep you from being surrounded, and you will be able to go left or right to fight your way out through one attacker rather than a surrounding group of attackers.**

Method
3

Responding to an attacker

For greater detail, read: [How to avoid getting beaten up by a bully.](#)

- 1 Be aware of some of the basic techniques that can be of help.** The following techniques can be used in self-defense:
 - Try your best to hit the attacker on the ribs. Contrary to popular belief, it really *can* hurt.
 - The best place to strike is the solar plexus. Or, strike the area under the nose. Never aim for the eye-sockets, it is a very strong part of the face, and could possibly break your fingers. Hitting the solar plexus can give you a lot of time to get away (as well as winding the attacker, giving you a chance to hit back), while hitting the nose can knock the attacker out. Either will work.
 - When the attacker punches you, turn to the side to dodge it, then grab their arm, and strike their elbow joint.
- 2 If your attacker(s) attempts to choke you and take you to the wall, (still choking you), do the following.** First, take your left hand, and hold one of their arms with it. Then, use your right hand to strike their elbow joint hard. After this, strike their neck hard (but not too hard), then push them to the wall, and run like the wind. If you want, you can put one of their arms behind their back too.

Method
4

Using Advanced Tactics

- 1 Use the following techniques to help to give you better odds, but recognize that sometimes you may still need more.** Use these advanced tactics as a **last resort**.
- 2 Twist the attacker's arm backwards (not enough to dislocate it), and hold it there.** It will hurt the attacker a lot and disable them long enough for you to get away.
 - If you're training in **martial arts**, then use the techniques you've been taught, as this is a commonplace martial arts move (Judo, Jiu Jitsu, wrestling, etc).^[1]
- 3 Perform a headlock.** Try to move around the attacker initially. Try to go behind the attacker. When you get a chance, wrap your left or right arm around the mid-point (about near the nose) of the head.
 - Hold on for a while, and then release them. Be mindful that they could still attack you once you break the headlock.
- 4 Some people that take karate classes have learned that to break out of a headlock, you need to step on their foot, giving them pain.** If someone tries to do this to you, jump slightly backwards while still having them in a headlock. Knowing how to do this successfully though takes some practice.

Method
5

Defending When Mounted

Being in the mounted position is **extremely** dangerous. This position is when you're on the ground, and the attacker is on their knees above you, gaining greater control to strike while you're extremely restricted.^[2] It's a very common position in a street fight.

- 1 Know what to do.** The key to stop this event from taking place is to block incoming strikes. If you still end up in the mounted position, an attack approach would be to kick the mounting attacker as hard as you can with both legs to the front of the hips. Then, run for your life.
 - Don't just try to launch an attack immediately. That will just make you more vulnerable, as if being on the ground wasn't bad enough!

2 Find an escape method. Attacking might not work, so escape strategies are your best option once pinned down. Here are some suggestions:

- Use the "back door escape".^[3] Move or wriggle from under your attacker.
- Use bridging.^[4] Thrust your hips upwards and to the side.
- Use the elbow escape.^[5] Use your hands or your elbows to create space between you and the attacker, so that you can pull out one or both legs from under the attacker.
- Rotate your body so that your face points downward.^[6] In doing this, your attacker is now performing a "back mount", which is a lot less favorable to the attacker, and in turning, you may find you adequately loosen the attacker's grip over you and you can get away, by standing up and shaking off the attacker or using the "back door " escape.

Method
6

Breaking a Headlock

1 Learn ways to break out of a headlock, as this is a common street fighting tactic.^[7] Some suggested methods are listed here but your very best defense is to stay alert and **not** get into a headlock in the first place. Being aware that someone is approaching you can enable you to turn around and prevent it from happening.

2 In the very initial moment where the headlock is being applied, try ducking and blocking the attacker's arms.^[8] This may be enough to get you out of the attempted headlock. Note that the longer you wait, the harder it will be to remove yourself from the headlock.

3 Protect yourself. A headlock can result in cutting off your air or blood supply. So the very first thing to do is to protect yourself:^[9]

- Tuck your chin in.
- Turn your face toward their chest to protect your face from fists.
- Grab their hands (held together as they perform the lock) and pull their hands downward. This will lessen the pressure immediately.

4 Stay low. Keep your legs bent and relatively wide.^[10] The aim is to maintain *your* stability, so that the moment you get a chance to counter-attack or free yourself, you're in a good position to do so.

5 Use your free arms to protect your face from punches.

6 Try some of the other following methods when seeking to get out of a headlock:

- Step on the attacker's foot. Do it quickly and get it right first time. If executed correctly, you will cause them pain, which could be enough to make them loosen their grip, allowing you to get away.
- Punch the upper inner thigh or groin.^[11] Then pull their head up (by hair, eye sockets, whatever), and push them away from you... and run.^[12]
- Pinch your attacker. This method can make *the attacker's* face hurt, and give you enough precious moments to break out of the headlock.
- Move your head up and down, fast. The aim in doing this is to confuse them; once you've done so, make a sudden forward movement. This will also cause the attacker holding you in a headlock to fall.
- Grab the attacker's arms, and push your head under them, and break out. This requires finding a key moment when their hold is less or their focus has been distracted temporarily. An effective strike to the ribs or genitals may cause enough distraction.
- Use two hands against one of theirs (2v1). Focus both of your hands on one of their wrists and pull it away. It is VERY difficult to apply a good headlock or choke with just one arm so once you've removed one of their arms from the clench you should feel instant relief from the pressure.
- Or rather than choosing one hand, pick a finger. With one hand take hold of a finger and bend as hard as possible. This technique will break an aggressor's finger with relative ease.

Method
7

Breaking an Armlock

Breaking out of the arm-lock is a very painful experience. Here are some suggested moves.

- 1 If they are going for a straight arm lock, bend your arm.** If they are going for an arm lock that involves a bent arm, straighten your arm.
- 2 Prevent the armlock from occurring by holding onto your belt, pants, skirt top, etc.** before the lock is executed. Doing this will prevent the attacker from leveraging your arm and wrist backward.^[13] Of course, this requires both that you are alert to what's about to happen, and that you recognize the intended armlock.
- 3 Once in the armlock, try some of the following strategies:**
 - Feign a punch toward them to cause the attacker to loosen their grip. Use that moment to remove yourself from the armlock.
 - Really punch or kick the attacker and use the moment when their grip loosens to get out.
- 4 Try to pull your hand back as fast as you can.** This may make them let go sometimes as a reaction, and give you a chance to escape.
- 5 Be extra careful when trying to release yourself from an armlock, as the attempt could also lead to breakage of your arm.**

Method
8

Blocking Punches

For more details, read [How to block a punch](#).

- 1 Learn to identify a punch coming.** As with many attack moves, recognizing the move that's about to happen is a big part of defensive strategy. Signs to look for include:^[14]
 - Formation of a fist
 - Gritting teeth, angry jaw movements
 - Shallow, forced breathing
 - Once foot suddenly shifted in front
 - Chin drops (to protect the throat)
 - Shoulder drops (this is where the power of the punch starts)
 - Body turns to side, away from you.
- 2 Move.** By the time a person has made a decision to punch, they've already decided where that punch is going to land and have done with their strategizing. You, on the other hand, have a split second to change where that punch lands. So if it's coming for your head, move your head just a fraction and the punch may well miss or at least have much less force than originally intended.^[15]
- 3 Move your hands in the same direction of the punch.** Here it helps to make an educated guess as to your opponent's next moves. This is **not** about making a wild guess, but requires that you make a plausible and educated guess.
- 4 Try blocking with your arms instead of with your palms, as it can cause your attacker's punching range to decrease and not impact the originally intended target.**

Method
9

Blocking Kicks

- 1 Remember that blocking a kick is the hardest technique in fighting.** Yet, if you successfully grab someone's leg while they attempt to kick you, you can make them fall to the ground.
- 2 When blocking a kick, use your palms, instead of the area in your arms which have muscle.** You could get severely injured if the attacker's kick lands on your muscles.
- 3 Evade the kicks.** "Using evasion" is simply a fancy way of saying that you should rely on using an array of the following techniques to evade the kicks:
 - Dodge out of the way
 - Duck quickly
 - Jump backwards
 - Move to the side.
- 4 Keep in mind that dodging kicks will be more effective when you're jumping, moving side to side, dodging, etc.,** than just relying on ducking all the time.
- 5 Be unpredictable in how and when you duck and dodge.** Don't set a pattern.

Can you answer these readers' questions?

 Refresh

On **How to Change an Address of a Drivers License in Texas**, a reader asks:

So where does one go to change the address on a CDL from out of state? My CDL is up to date and I've gotten my medical cards up dated in Houston, TX. Also, what is the fee?

Your answer...

Reply

On **How to Write a Proposal**, a reader asks:

How to write a proposal for air conditioning in my residence?

Your answer...

Reply

On **How to Play Gin Rummy**, a reader asks:

Do I have to discard a card with my last play?

Your answer...

Reply

Tips

- Do something unexpected and weird. If you think of something creative in the moment, try it. Surprise always helps.
- If the attacker shows you a weapon in their pocket/hand, give them what they want to rob from you. Your life is more important than any valuables in the world! Realize that they're likely to use it if you annoy or upset them, so comply as best you can.
- Speaking of weapons, it's always better to have one than go into a street fight against a stranger with just your fists. Even a stick, a rock, or an umbrella can make a huge difference.

- Try to avoid looking like a victim. Stand tall and show good posture; that already makes you appear more intimidating. Walk with one hand in your pocket. Street gangs like to bully people who look like they will be easy to bother, and who display outward signs of vulnerability.
- Try to avoid street gang areas if you can.
- **Be nice** to people. Don't give others a chance to hold a grudge if you can mend fences instead. Don't act like you're scared of other people, as weakness attracts street gang members seeking to attack others.
- Stick with a friend or two when walking through unsafe places. This could be enough to help you to stay out of trouble.
- Only fight **as a last resort**. Talking your way out and getting away are infinitely better options.
- Play to your strengths. Use the tactics that work best for your body and physique. A thin, light person may run better and dodge easier. A big heavy person may be able to block easier than dodge and throw hard.
- Keep trying to talk them out of it calmly, confidently. Stay serene. The less fear or anger you show or feel, the less easily the opponent can control you or read you. The more angry they are, the less controlled they are. Psych them out!

Warnings

- Do not use excessive force on opponents. Doing so could get you into trouble if you don't use self-defense in accordance with the law in the United States and other jurisdictions. If you wish to remain within the realm of self-defense as opposed to provoking a fight, it's important that you don't use excessive force, attack while your attacker is already down, or use repeated blows and such once the attacker has been subdued, etc. See [warnings](#) for more information.
- Do not start a **big** fight. The more people involved, the worse the fight will be.
- If the attackers have weapons, [run away](#) as fast as you can, and call the police.
- Do **not** anger them with flaming comebacks or disses. This will *make* them attack you even further.
- Despite the fact that law prohibits use of excessive force, if they did something that severely threatened your life, you may need to use as much force as needed in self-defense, and worry about the fine details with your lawyer later. What is and is not "excessive force" in the case of self-defense is subject to the context and to interpretation.
- It is better to look like a wimp than to be injured. So don't even think about trying to fight against an experienced fighter or a group just to save "your reputation". Having your health and life intact means more than having your reputation temporarily boosted.
- Watch out for people who may try to [abduct you](#).
- Real men or women (to be respected) do not start a fight for the fun of it. Make sure that you have a reason to fight. Do not be a bully that picks on people or "sucker-punches" someone for little or no reason. It is wise to have a reason when trying to do something, even if it isn't the most reasonable purpose.

Sources and Citations

- Videos provided by [fightTIPS](#)
- 1. <http://www.fightingarts.com/reading/article.php?id=487>
- 2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_%28grappling%29

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