

SELF-DEFENSE MASTERY

**HAND TO HAND
COMBAT SKILLS
ESSENTIAL TO SURVIVE
SOCIAL UNREST**

Dear Friend,

I want to share with you some "inside tricks" that Cache Valley Prepper--one of Survivopedia's best writers--practiced in his outstanding experience in hand to hand combat. These are some of the most important tools in your survival arsenal.

Sometimes in the near future you might be in a situation where the only weapons available will be your body and your mind. You need the ability to manage your fear and still be able to project violent force against the attackers.

I advise you to read this report carefully and discover some of the most important things:

- A simple system to gauge your situational awareness and what to do in each case
- How to use range, timing and fear management to turn you into an effective fighter
- What you should aim for in a fight and what are your built-in "body weapons" you can use
- How to use Airsoft as a tool for self-defense training

P.S.: Remember that sharing is caring, so share this info with your friends that might benefit from this experience!

Alec Deacon

Survivopedia.com

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SELF-DEFENSE MASTERY

Hand to Hand Combat Skills Essential To Survive Social Unrest

Take a moment and think about what the last few months have brought us in terms of social unrest. Remember Ferguson, Baltimore, Texas. Do you feel safe? Do you know what's coming? Are you prepared to face this type of social unrest?

We haven't heard the end of it, because it's only the beginning.

Do you have any doubt that it's the right time to train your self-defense skills?

Hand to Hand Combat: Striking For Survival

A Few Words from the Writer about His Teaching Method

I may reference specific fighting systems, instructors, self-defense systems, training programs, martial arts, sports, tactics, techniques, doctrine or principles in order to communicate what I believe will help you survive. Some of my examples will indicate what I believe to be more or less effective, but I will try to avoid labelling examples as good or bad.

I choose to teach this way because *all communication has two tracks or channels to it. One is content or the message. The other is emotion or how they feel.*

I do not want the “emotion” track of my message to provoke an emotional response in reader because that often ends in the learner becoming defensive because they feel hurt, misjudged, marginalized or misunderstood. The result is usually that they stop listening and start working on their rebuttal or their message. They switch from learning mode to ignoring the instruction and their learning grinds to a halt.

Many folks devote a lot of time, sweat and resources to martial arts, fighting systems and self-defense studies. Contributing regular to something they determine to be a just or worthy cause they feel passionate about, many people develop deep attachments to specific arts, systems and cherished beliefs.

I get that, I understand why they do it, and I am not here to bag on any anybody’s system or be a cheer leader for any one system in particular.

I see other instructors and students as brothers and sisters in the same movement as opposed to competition. I am not a salesman for any particular product, instructor or discipline, and have no vested interest in any of them beyond my writing.

Every time you hear someone tell you about the “one true fighting system that defeats all others” you should be alerted to the fact that they are likely trying to sell you something.

They may be benefiting financially or they may do it out of something akin to religious zeal, but see it for what it is ... a sales pitch ... nothing more, nothing less. Just because I object to their sales technique, doesn’t mean I won’t steal a couple of techniques from them if they suit me. I say “steal” to make a point.

The first thing you need to understand about fighting in general, and striking specifically is that there aren’t any rules. There are correct principles, and if you transgress them, you will likely take a trip to the hospital, but no rules. If the other guys are trying to take your life, it is perfectly acceptable to lie, cheat or steal to win.

Fighting techniques and other ideas cannot be patented like inventions, so they cannot really be stolen.

Nobody actually owns them, so do not worry about mixing them up and adulterating someone's "pure" system.



If you find yourself in a fair fight, your tactics suck."

Colonel Jeff Cooper

survivopedia.com

Only the printed materials or recordings an instructor creates have any real creative rights attached to them. Not surprisingly, many individuals with assertive, Type-A personalities gravitate to this subject matter.

To my way of thinking, being confident and proactive are assets in self-defense, especially the parts of it that involve striking people. But overconfidence and excess ego do not help students learn.

Principles of Striking

Regardless of the instructor's talent for instructing, students must listen, understand and follow instructions, not necessarily in that order.

People who think they already know it all, do very little learning. Their only hope is to embrace their own uncertainty and to admit they do not know it all. This leads to curiosity and they soon begin asking the right questions.

Some guys with over-developed ego, tend to think that they are the best fighter, the best shooter, the best driver, the best lover and so on, regardless of the vastness of the realm of

knowledge and the fact that any one of us can only hope to sample a minute portion of it in this lifetime.

If there is nothing to improve, why study? For this reason, I regularly observe more humble students surpassing them and fighting and shooting circles around them in no time. This is simply because they listen and follow directions because they do not start out thinking they already walk on water.

But let's see the principles you should learn from your instructor when training your self-defense skills.

Tactical Toolbox

While striking is certainly an important tool which receives loads of attention, striking is just one of many tools to include in your tactical toolbox. Tools give you mechanical advantage, provide options and some can multiply combat effectiveness.

By choosing multiple "tools" and training with ALL of your tools, you can avoid the syndrome of: "He who is good with a hammer, sees everything as a nail."

By itself, the effectiveness of striking is limited. Combined with immobilizations, projections, breaks and chokes, you have a lot more options, making you a more flexible and effective combatant.

Situational Awareness

Cooper's Color Codes. Jeff Cooper taught a simple system to gauge your own situational awareness using colors.

- It starts with White, which is a state of being oblivious, like when we sleep. Most of the time, most of us are completely consciously unaware of our environment.

- Next comes Yellow, which is a state of relaxed awareness. You can stay at condition Yellow every waking moment of your life and suffer no ill effects. When you are armed, you should always be at least at Yellow.
- After Yellow comes Orange. At Orange, you have identified a possible threat and are preparing a fight or flight response to it. You cannot stay at Orange all day every day or you will suffer fatigue and start making soft compromises which will lead to hard ones which lead to death.
- The final stage, in the original version, was condition Red which is where you execute the fight or flight response you have prepared.

The color codes are very important because you cannot simply skip steps. You cannot instantly jump from White to Red, from sleeping to fighting or running. You will hesitate in between.

So it is very important that you start out at Yellow and ratchet up Orange at points in your day that you assess possible threats in preparation to go to Red. Otherwise, you will try to skip steps and hesitate.

Situational awareness often results in the opportunity to avoid the need for striking and fighting altogether.

If your situational awareness and camouflage or deception are good enough, you will avoid many high risk situations, which usually gives you much improved odds of survival over fighting.

Awareness is essential when out in the public especially at potentially targeted locations.

The best preventative measure is to avoid danger by focused awareness.

Range



Violent conflict is dynamic and mobile. Some fighters constantly transition ranges, trying to keep at a distance. Others like to get in close and stay there.

The longest range in striking, we will call kicking range which we will call up to two arm's length away from the trunk of the body. Closer is striking range at an arm's length away. Closer in is trapping range, essentially at elbow's length. Closest is ground fighting.

Different types of striking using different body weapons are effective each ranges. When I strike, I prefer to enter and close to trapping range and stay there where I know I can do the most damage at too close of a distance from my enemy for him to be able to respond before he is hit.

This largely negates all blocking and counters so if you strike effectively and know how your opponent's body will react to your strikes, you can take control of the situation because you not only know where he is, but where he will be after your strike.

Out at kicking and punching range a bigger, stronger opponent can pick you apart, they can see your strikes coming and risk getting ensnared in immobilizations which can result in broken bones, quickly diminishing your effectiveness.

Timing

Timing is very important in conjunction with range. Understanding how the body reacts to strikes and approximate reaction times at various ranges tilts the odds in your favor. Close enough in, there is just not time to respond to strikes so make sure you enter to your desired range and start striking.

Striking above the solar plexus, the torso of your enemy will bend back, at it or below it he will bend forward. Striking to his sides will cause him to wince toward the pain. Master this and get in close enough and you will mold him like clay.

Manage Fear

If you are a mentally healthy person, you experience fear. Physiologically, fear causes:

- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Loss of balance, feeling as though your center of gravity is getting higher up in your body
- Hesitation or "freezing"
- Tunnel vision and tunnel hearing causing you to fixate on the greatest perceived threat and blinding you to threats that you would normally pickup in your peripheral vision or hear
- Startle response, your default response when startled

You possess fear for a reason. It is a tool to keep you alive. Ignoring fear will not make you a more effective combatant. I do not know of a "life hack" or "short cut" that works like a magic wand to banish it. I do know some correct principles that help mitigate fear and keep it in balance. Knowledge and stressful training diminishes fear.

People are typically most afraid of the unknown, such as how most people are much more afraid in the dark than they are in the light, even if they should already be familiar with all of the sounds they are hearing.

Biofeedback tools such as breathing and meditation involving visualization and actualization act to physically calm body and mind just as forcing a smile stimulates the physical release of endorphins and dopamine and the production of electrolytes, causing you to feel happy from the tail end.

Just as the smile is usually the response, replacing rapid shallow breathing with a few slow, deep breaths oxygenates the bloodstream, boosting clarity of thought. Train your startle response so you will respond in the way you determine is most effective instead of freezing up or hesitating.

Slow & Low

Slow is smooth and smooth is fast. If you have not heard this before, now you have. If you have, it bears repeating. Burn it into your mind. You can develop a lot more power attacking low than high.

Strikes should originate from your center line. Just like it is easier to open a jar close to your body as opposed to at arm's length, we generate more strength the closer we are to our centerline and center of gravity.

Targets

Your objective is to mechanically disable your enemy. Pain compliance is less effective against enemies who are drunk, drugged or determined or DDD, and if they are one, they may be all three.

But your enemy is going to have a whole lot harder time killing you with broken bones, dislocated joints, a compromised respiratory or cardiovascular system, with ruptured organs or missing an eye or two.

When striking, you should be “target shooting.” Just like in armed combat, shot placement trumps speed. It is not the first shot or firepower superiority that matters most in individual and small unit combat. It is the shots that actually hit the target that matter most.

You can pound on the human body all day if you never hit anything fragile enough for you to break or important enough to disable your enemy. But when you can mechanically disable the human body by breaking something it needs to continue fighting, you have mechanically disabled it.

Strike Hard to Soft or Soft to Hard

“Body weapons” come in two flavors: hard and soft. If you strike a bone-hard target with one of your own hard bones, no one will have to tell you that you just made a mistake.

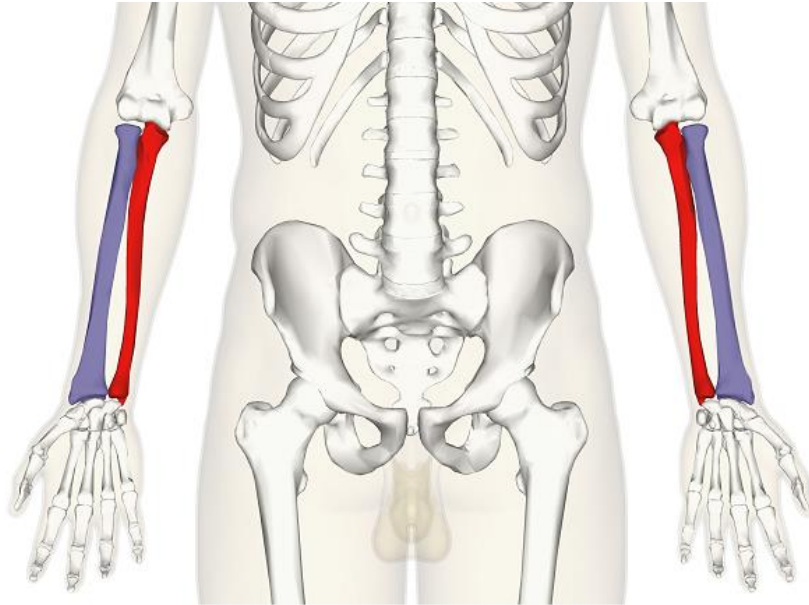
You will feel it ... first in the bone you break ... and then in the pocketbook when surgeons attempt to put Humpty Dumpty back together again and bill you ridiculously high rates because of everyone they had to patch up who did not pay.

Weapons

Whether armed or unarmed, weapon selection impacts combat effectiveness. Your body is endowed with built in weapons that you do not need a license or permission to carry.

1. **Ulna:** I was trained that these two bones in the arm are my “Personal Piece of Pipe.”
The ulna is a hard weapon and is the bone in your forearm that does not move when you turn your wrist as if opening a door knob.
The other bone, that moves is the radius. The radial nerve runs along the top of it and it is quite breakable when an ulna slams down on it, so it is a better target than weapon.

Striking with the ulna as a weapon is effective because it does not have any major nerves or blood vessels between the bone and the skin so it is better to take a cut or get hit



Ulna (in red) and Radius (in blue)

there than on top of the radius or in the inside of joints. The ulna is a good weapon in trapping range.

2. **Elbow:** Elbows are hard weapons that can be devastating from trapping range. Face the palm of your hand toward your opponent and rake with your elbows.
3. **Fist:** There are multiple fists you form with your hand, each having different properties. I categorize them as the Karate or classic fist, the SCARS fist and the Kuta fist. These are all hard weapons. There is plenty written on how to make a fist if any of these terms are new to you.
4. **Palm:** Soft weapon to use against hard targets. When cupped, it can drive air into the ear drums essentially creating an overpressure like a stun munition. More than 10PSI can stun an attack, especially if both ears get boxed at once.

5. **Webbing of Hand:** This is kind of a compromise between hard and soft to use against the neck and trachea in training so you do not send your sparring partner to the hospital.



Use of Force Continuum

To me, using an appropriate amount of force is more than just a legal consideration. It is also both a moral imperative and tool to speed my decision making process under stress.

If you do not integrate scaled use of force into your training, you will certainly not use it when your life is on the line. Even worse, you may hesitate because you are unsure how much force you should apply in a given situation.

In recorded footage of use of force, it is very common to see moments of hesitation. Hesitation is clearly less-effective, yet well trained personnel do it all the time.

I hear all the time, "At my age, I don't do fist fights, if you know what I mean" (often patting their concealed carry hardware for emphasis.) Things are not always as black and white in real life as they are in people's minds. Chances are very good that you may end up fighting someone you know.

What if you have to control a loved one having some sort of breakdown, mental issue or problem with medication?

Violence of Action

Once you are hitting the right targets, then making more, bigger holes faster matters.

Airsoft as a Tool for Self Defense Training

As a training tool, Airsoft equipment has strengths and weaknesses. All training tools do. The important thing is to understand what those are so you can leverage the benefits without creating unrealistic expectations.

As with many training tools, what you get out of the training is largely dependent on what you put into it. As a game, Airsoft lacks many key aspects of sound training, but with proper adaptation, Airsoft equipment can be an effective tool to develop many critical self-defense tactics and techniques.

Pro's

- 360 degree Shooting Range
- Role Play
- Lack of Noise
- Enables In-home and On-property Training

- Drills
- Couples Tactics
- Small Unit Tactics
- Relatively Low Cost
- Availability
- Encourages Equipment Familiarity
- Safe
- Low Profile "Cover" for Preppers

Airsoft equipment fills a niche between the "finger Glock" and SIRT (Shot Indicating Resetting Trigger) laser training pistols. Beyond SIRT, exist many higher-end training technologies such as marking cartridges, blanks, lasers and firearms simulators, to name a few.

Airsoft is an attractive alternative for people wanting to train on a budget and already have access to Airsoft equipment, especially when training in groups and some of the group members already have Airsoft gear.

Real Training for Your Skills

Armed conflict is dynamic and mobile, so one-way shooting ranges where shooters line up and all shoot in the same direction are of limited use.

It is crucial to a trainee's development to train regularly on a 360 degree range with moving targets that shoot back from all directions including elevated and depressed positions.

Otherwise, students do not develop mechanisms to deal with threats while suffering from tunnel vision, tunnel hearing, unsteadiness, altered perception of time, rapid shallow breathing and other physiological effects that occur when they must fight for their lives. These types of ranges also do not lend themselves to learning what it is like to fall prey to an ambush or ruse.



Airsoft and similar equipment can make it possible to train using role play, drills and training exercises in realistic environments such as your home, vehicles, business, camp and other places you may actually be when the need to defend yourself arises.

Since Airsoft gear tends to closely approximate the dimensions of real firearms

and magazines, you can train in the clothing you wear every day. Just like location, this is absolutely fundamental to developing an effective defense.

Training where you live, with the people you live or spend time with, in your everyday clothing, in low light and in extreme weather leads to a lot of adjustments to tactics, clothing, carry platforms, weapons systems and how you configure them.

What might seem like minor adjustments and details, such as deciding you should be carrying your car keys on your weak side instead of your strong side, end up smoothing out tactics and shaving time off your response.

Effective Training

The average deadly force conflict involving firearms is over pretty quickly with 80% occurring within 12 feet or less, at night and within 3.5 seconds. It takes most shooters about a second and half to bring accurate, aimed fire to bear on the range and extreme stress adds a full second to that figure for most shooters, not leaving much time to feel around while you remember where you put what.

Effective role play exercises where you spend your time, with whom you spend it and with your EDC (Every Day Carry) gear lead to dramatic improvements effectiveness.

Whether or not you train effectively is far more relevant to your survival than whether you are the fastest or slowest draw in competition because among trained shooters, the difference between the fastest and the slowest is very small, often coming down to tenths or even hundredths of a second. But the difference between trained and untrained can often be measured in multiple seconds.

A meaningful number of your role play exercises should begin well before the attack, focusing on situational awareness and readiness and not end until first aid has been rendered, you have escaped, called 911 or some similar termination. At least some of them should not end until you are dragged off in handcuffs because the fight on street is often followed by fights in the courts.

You want to be prepared for it, believe me. If you are planning to SSS (Shoot, Shovel and Shut Up), I would consider rethinking your strategy. Even in a chaotic, grid-down scenarios, history tells us that life eventually resumes some degree of degree of normalcy, and once it does, people are often prosecuted for serious crimes. It catches up with them eventually.

In my opinion, it simpler to live life as if you will be held to account for your actions, even if you do not believe that you will for some reason or another.

Firearms are loud, especially inside vehicles and indoors. The lack of noise and muzzle flash and blast is good for your hearing, but not as good for your training. Keep in mind that that most armed conflicts are at night and muzzle flash, night sight and tactical illumination make a huge difference in low light. If you carry tools, you need to train with them, so any Airsoft gear you use in training should accommodate what you use in real life as closely as possible.

Airsoft Training Is a Team Work

If Airsoft enables you and yours to train as a couple, family or small unit, then it makes sense. Moving and fighting as a team takes practice. A lot more variables come into play. Teams need to have clear leadership, communications, objectives, rules of engagement and SOP. Many groups have difficulty with communications and communications plans any given day.

Communications do not get any easier during catastrophes and violence. To the contrary, they become orders of magnitude more complicated. Just as you hopefully would not do this with a firearm, you cannot just pull a radio out of storage and expect it to work. Communications plans change. Radios and batteries need periodic maintenance and so do you radio skills.

Especially these days, it is a whole lot easier to explain these exercises as “Airsoft games” than practice for something else. A group of people with gear and weapons, practicing small unit tactics tends to attract attention.

When people observe or are told that they are Airsoft guns or paintball markers, they are far more likely to relax and not interfere by calling authorities in a panic and attracting unwanted attention. Airsoft also creates a plausible explanation for why you have a lot of the gear you have. Having an Airsoft magazine on hand lends credibility to the explanation.

Effective Training on a Budget

If you have purchase or shop ammunition regularly, you know that prices have been sky high for many, many years with no end in sight.

Shooters need to do a certain amount of live fire. But SIRT pistols, reloading and Airsoft are ways for regular people to be able to afford training. Because of their low cost relative to firearms, they are pretty common and readily available.

Ideally, I would rather that we all be able to afford plenty of live ammunition like the good old days, but the reality is that a lot of people just can't afford to burn through thousands of rounds in training anymore. This is not acceptable, but even at ranges, a lot of good training happens in the dry fire bays.

Airsoft guns can also add degrees of feedback and safety to weapon retention exercises. Weapon retention is very physical, accidents such as lacerations, bumps, breaks and bruises happen with regularity and students are regularly hospitalized as a result of them.

Any measure of safety is welcome as long as it does not sacrifice something else.

Why Should You Use an Air Gun?

Here are some advantages associated with using an air rifle:

- *Air rifles are very quiet – there are no loud bangs to scare off other game in the area.*
- *Easy to shoot – this weapon points nicely, and is not too heavy or large for the beginner or inexperienced shooter.*
- *It is an excellent, low cost training rifle with a simple design and cheap pellets.*
- *Air rifles come with iron sights and are very accurate. When used with a scope, the shooter gets very tight groups (where multiple pellets hit). When hunting with a scoped air rifle, small game may be taken safely up to 50 yards away.*
- *They are legal to own and shoot in most states. Because an air rifle uses only compressed air to fire the pellet (and not powder and a primer) most states do not classify them as firearms.*
- *Air rifles make an ideal stash gun. It can be buried in an air and water tight container with a couple of tins of pellets and then easily retrieved at a later time.*
- *Ammunition will not go bad. The only ammunition an air rifle needs is a pellet, nothing else. There are no cases, powder, or primers to worry about.*

Con's

- Not a Substitute
- Lack of Realism
- Game Mentality
- Damages Property
- Better to Use Your Actual Equipment as Opposed to Facsimiles
- Lack of Stimulus/Consequences

- Protective Equipment

On the downside, depending on where you practice and how, Airsoft can make a big mess, the BB's can damage property and can be a real pain to clean up. Indoors, a few strategically placed beach towels can go a long way toward not ending up with pockmarks in your walls and furnishings or broken decorations.

In order for Airsoft to be an effective training aid, it needs to be adapted from a game to your model and plans. You will fight the way you train. It is better to sweat in training than to bleed in battle. If you treat your training as a game, you will treat the real thing like a game, and may get you killed in a hurry.

Airsoft already has a couple of strikes against it in the form of protective equipment that you do not likely wear around town, and since getting shot with an Airsoft gun is not usually traumatic compared to getting shot with marker ammunition or the real thing. This sometimes leads to students blowing off the fact that they got shot in training, which is not acceptable.

They would be very concerned if they were shot with a firearm, so it they should take getting shot in a training exercise very seriously. Otherwise it could end up doing far more harm than good.

Is the use of Airsoft gear a perfect solution to defensive firearms training? Absolutely not. If you have the money, there are some much better solutions for many training scenarios. But for the average "Joe Prepper" or survivalist, I would not dismiss it out of hand either. Some of the very best use it as a tool.

Regular training sessions in the environment, with the people and dressed as you actually live your life leads to some of the hallmarks of squared away armed citizenry: turn out bags to get dressed and packing as fast as possible, even in the middle of the night, solid individual and group communications plans, individual and group training and individual and group inspections.

Other Survivopedia Articles on Self-Defense

[The 5 Fatal Self Defense Weapons That You Carry](#)

[4 Deadly And Easy-To-Make Weapons](#)

[Improvised Survival Weapons in a Lady's Purse](#)

[The 12 Rules Of Choosing Your Concealed Pistol](#)

[Is Your Defense At Risk In Case Of An EMP?](#)

Survivopedia Articles on Surviving Riots

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[Surviving Riots: 6 Crucial Steps for Your Safety](#)

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[Martial Arts For Street Fights? 5 Myths Debunked](#)

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[Bugging in Place and Making Your Stand](#)