



Personal Safety

***Tips for when you are
at home
or out and about***

Content of this Brochure provided courtesy of El Segundo Police Department, Crime Prevention Unit,
348 Main Street, El Segundo, CA 90245

Self-protection is more than just using physical defense skills; it is also knowing how to avoid trouble. Listed below are some suggestions on how to avoid possible dangerous situations.

WALKING ALONE

- Don't engage in conversation with a stranger.
- If they persist, tell them in a loud, angry voice to leave you alone. If this doesn't work, walk toward other people or to a business or home. Stay away from places where you might get cornered.
- If you are followed by someone in a car, turn and walk the opposite way.
- It is always best to walk facing traffic.
- Copy the license plate number of the person following you, and report it.

WALKING AT NIGHT

- Don't unless it's absolutely necessary.
- If you must, walk in busy, well-lit areas.
- Avoid shrubbery, dark passages and walking between parked cars.
- If someone follows you, run to the nearest busy, well-lit location.
- If you need help, don't be afraid to knock on someone's door.

AVOIDING A PURSE SNATCHING

- Hold the purse firmly against your body.
- Keep shoulder straps across your body. Don't dangle your purse by the strap.
- Keep your purse with you at all times, even while trying on shoes or clothes.
- Don't keep your purse in the shopping cart seat. Carry it.

IS A DOG GOOD PROTECTION?

- If you have a dog, take him with you when you're walking or jogging.
- A dog may deter a mugger, or be a good burglar alarm. However, only a properly-trained guard dog can be relied upon for protection.

DRIVING

- Keep all windows up and doors locked.
- If possible, while driving at night, stay on well-traveled, well-lit roads.
- Keep your car in good working order, and your gas tank at least half full.
- If you're followed by another car, drive to an open business. Either stay in your car and sound the horn to attract attention, or run inside and ask an employee to call the police.
- Get to know the 24-hour businesses wherever you frequently travel.

PARKING

- Park only in busy, well-lit locations.
- If you are approached, stay in the car with the doors locked and windows rolled up. Try to drive away.
- If you are trapped, honk your horn to attract attention.

LEAVING YOUR CAR

- Make sure all car doors are locked, and windows rolled up tight.
- Secure all property in the trunk before you reach your destination.
- When you return, have your keys ready so you can get in quickly. Before you enter, check the backseat and under the car for uninvited passengers.

CAR TROUBLE WHILE ON THE ROAD

- If your car has mechanical problems, activate your emergency flashers and pull over to the emergency lane.
- Use a call box, then return to your car. Remain locked in your car, with the windows rolled up and your seatbelt on until the police or tow truck arrive.
- If a stranger stops to offer help, **NEVER GET OUT OF YOUR CAR**. Roll the window down slightly, tell them your passenger went to call for help (even if you're alone it will appear you are not), ask them to also call for help.
- Don't accept a ride from a stranger or start out on foot in deserted areas.

HOME SECURITY

- List only your last name and initials on the mailbox and in the phone directory.
- Install deadbolt locks on all doors and secondary locking devices on windows and sliding glass patio doors.
- Install a door viewer (180-190 degrees) so you can see who is at your door. **USE IT!**
- When someone knocks, don't open the door. Even if you are expecting someone, check to see who it is first.
- Keep the door locked and talk through the door or a window.
- At night always keep your house well lit around every side of it.
- Never give information about yourself to a stranger over the phone. Never reveal you're home alone.
- If you receive an obscene phone call, hang up at once. If the caller persists, notify the police.

PROWLERS

- If you hear or see a prowler on your property, call the police at once.
- Don't let the prowler see you, unless they are breaking in.
- If they do try to break in, scream loud and make enough noise so that your neighbors will hear you.

IS A GUN GOOD FOR PROTECTION?

- If you decide to buy a gun, find a qualified instructor to teach you the proper care and handling of a firearm.
- Buy only a high-quality firearm. (There are many cheap handguns on the market, however they are extremely dangerous.)
- Know local and state laws regarding use of firearms.

HANDLING UNAVOIDABLE TROUBLE:-

TIPS TO TRY IF YOU ARE CONFRONTED BY AN ASSAILANT

ROBBERY

Stay calm and cooperate. Whether you see a weapon or not, assume they have one and will use it. Give them what they want. Never argue, delay or try to trick them. **No property is worth losing your life over.**

Try to get a good description of the person (sex, race, age, height, weight, eye and hair color, moles, scars, tattoos, jewelry, look past disguises for a good clothing description), vehicle description, license plate number and direction of travel.

WHEN TO DEFEND YOURSELF

Physical self-defense techniques should be used only to protect yourself from bodily injury, and as a last resort.

ESCAPE OR DEFENDING YOURSELF

The main object of self-defense is to incapacitate or throw the attacker off guard long enough for you to escape.

You are not trying to win the fight, only to get away. It may be hard to out run the attacker unless you have a good head start.

Anything you can do to give yourself a head start is a form of defense. It might be as simple as screaming or throwing something in their face.

Surprise is essential. Their intent is to catch you off guard and helpless. If you defend yourself quickly and fight with all your strength, you'll be the one to take them by surprise.

Some defense skills may seem vicious, but remember, you may be fighting for your life.

PERSONAL WEAPONS

PURSE - Grab the outer edges firmly with both hands, and jab quickly at the attacker's face. Don't swing your purse by the strap, as it can be easily blocked.

BRUSH, COMB OR ANY RIGID OBJECT - Hold it with both hands and use it in an upward jabbing thrust. Aim for the face, neck or midsection.

KEYS - Hold a key between each of your fingers and make a fist. With a side to side racking motion, scrape the face, or any exposed skin.

BOOK - Hold the book tightly with both hands and jab upward at the nose, or any part of the attacker's face.

ROLLED MAGAZINE - Hold it firmly with both hands and jab it into the attacker's midsection just below the ribs.

UMBRELLA - Tightly hold the umbrella with both hands and move quickly, jabbing at the attacker's midsection with the pointed end. If your umbrella is open, push it at the attacker and run.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS (Pepper spray, personal alarms, hair spray, oven cleaner) - The possession and use of these weapons may be against the law in your state. Unless these items are already available and ready to use, they may be turned against you.

USING PARTS OF YOUR BODY AS A POWERFUL WEAPON TO DEFEND YOURSELF

SIDE KICK - To use this kick with your right leg, make a half-turn so that your attacker is on your right side (instead of facing you). Shift your weight to your left foot. Keep your arms out for balance. Lift your right knee as high as possible and kick down sharply on the attacker's knee or shin. These are highly vulnerable targets.

HEEL GRIND - Grind your heel on the attacker's instep if you are wearing hard-heeled shoes.

HEEL OF THE HAND - Shove it up hard underneath the chin, or, better yet, the nose, which is very sensitive to pain.

FIST - Place your thumb on the outside of your fingers to make a tight fist. Hit hard with the bottom edge, not the knuckles. Swing hard and aim for the side of the jaw, the temple or come down hard on the nose.

WINDMILL TECHNIQUE (For breaking strangle holds) - If the attacker is facing you with his hands around your throat, raise both arms and twist your body. As you twist, your elbow must pass over his arms. His hands will be pried off your throat if you twist quickly and forcefully. The Windmill Technique only frees you from the strangle hold. It does not injure the attacker. You may have to use another defense skill with it to give yourself time to escape.

CONDITIONED RESPONSE

For a defense to be effective, you must use it quickly and with confidence. If you are paralyzed with fear and confusion, you have already lost the battle. Imagine yourself in various attack situations and then work out defense strategies. Practice the tactics over and over until you know you will react automatically if the situation arises. Plan your defense now; there won't be time once the attack begins.

REDONDO BEACH
POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY SERVICES UNIT



401 Diamond Street, Redondo Beach, CA 90277
(310) 379-2477