

# Unarmed Defense

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# Unarmed Defense

The best defense is to never have to defend yourself in the first place: avoid dark alleys, pay attention to your surroundings, and know your escape routes. Learn the behaviors of a victim and avoid exhibiting those to the people around you; this will keep you from becoming a target.

If you do ever have to defend yourself, there is a single rule you should remember: ESCAPE. If you've ever had to defend yourself, you know this. There is nothing more important than getting to safety. As soon as you can, run away. See the Parkour chapter for unarmed and unequipped escape and evasion skills.

Even more important: if someone wants something from you, your wallet, car keys, watch, etc, and is willing to stab or shoot you for it, GIVE IT TO THEM! These things are material goods that are not worth your life.

With that said, there are definitely times when defensive techniques are needed, and that is what this guide is here for.

While this guide is better than nothing, it's still best to obtain regular instruction from a live and experienced coach. It's damn difficult to learn martial arts and self defense properly by reading text. Moreover, a proper teacher will push you; both in martial technique and in physical fitness. Just avoid the McDojo. These gyms usually cater to children and bored suburbanites and teach you something that's more like dancing than fighting. As Bruce Lee said, the only way to learn how to fight is by doing it, so if the gym does not have regular, full contact sparring, it's not worth the time or money.

Being physically fit is important, but not crucial. More important is being able to move quickly and being flexible. If you are going to defend yourself from an attack, you need to be able to move faster than your attacker.

## Basics

There are two types of encounters: fighting, and survival. Fighting is what you do with your friends in your backyard or in a bar with a drunk. Survival is what you do when you're being attacked by a 6'3" mugger with a knife.

Next up, there are two types of encounters: the ones you see coming, and the ones you don't. The ones you see coming are the guy at the bar who keeps giving you the evil eye, or that mugger refusing to leave you alone after you've given him your wallet.

The attacks you don't see coming are the scariest. All of a sudden you're being thrown, dragged around, or put into a headlock with a knife at your throat.

This guide will primarily cover the first type of attack. While there are specific defenses against particular attacks in the second category, you'll need a proper teacher to learn these effectively.

## Defense

The prime directive in defense is to GET OUT OF THE WAY. A martial arts sifu once said, "If someone wants to put a knife right where I'm standing, who am I to deny them this?"

When you're in a defense position, you *will* be jacked up on adrenaline; this is not a question. When your system is compromised like this, you'll lose all fine muscle control. This means that your defense will have to rely only on large muscle groups. These are your "curl" muscles: crunching your stomach, raising your arms, and ducking your head. Because these are your strongest muscles, you need to use these as your main defenses.

As many martial artists can tell you, simply visualizing attacks and defenses can be just as effective as physically practicing them. It's not a replacement for practice, but it's a tool that you should use.

### **Incoming Attacks**

When you're dealing with incoming attacks above the stomach, there are only two blocks you need to know. One uses the opposite hand to block and one uses the same side to block (meaning each side can block itself or the opposite; four blocks total).

# High Attacks - Block One - Slap

1. If the attack is coming from your left side, use a bicep curl motion to bring your right hand up to your ear. Ideally you will meet the attack midway (any sort of punch, swing, etc) and redirect it past your head.

2. Next, bring your left hand up and replace your right. This should be one complete motion; the second hand should be a half-second behind the first.

3. Meanwhile, step in towards your attacker. This puts you inside their strike range and out of danger (remember, AVOIDANCE is the KEY).

4. After blocking the attack, return fire (with your primary blocking side) with an elbow to the head, a chop or punch to the neck, or any other strike. USE yOuR JUDGMENT AS TO HOW MUCH FORCE TO USE. The drunk guy doesn't warrant a crushed throat, but anyone who wants to kill you deserves the same in kind.

# High Attacks - Block Two - Crazy Monkey

1. The Crazy Monkey starts the same as the Slap, with a bicep curl motion. But this time, you're bringing your hand to your ear. On the way up, your elbow should come as far inside as possible, to catch any attack on your arm, rather than your head.
2. Next, step in. Again, this puts you on the inside and therefore the outside of the danger zone.
3. Finally, return fire with the non-blocking side. Again, gauge your response based on the situation.

## Fighting stance

A proper fighting stance is essential to maintaining balance and power. Various fighting systems recommend different basic stances. The one presented here has the advantage of being simple, intuitive and adaptable. I've broken it down into six parts because the little things are important. This is an orthodox stance, which is the standard most fighters will be taught. However, if you get real coaching, you may find a more effective stance for you. Many great fighters have used the peek-a-boo, Philly shell, mummy, karate and hands down stances to great success, however you can't know if you can do any of these well unless you regularly spar.

**Step 1:** With your opponent directly in front of you, turn 45 degrees to the right or the left, toward your stronger arm. Spread your feet slightly more than shoulder-width. Your feet and body should both be facing 45 degrees from your starting position, with your toes parallel and your weight evenly distributed. This angle is important because it gives you forward-to-backward and side-to-side stability, making you harder to take down or knock over. It also presents a narrower profile to your opponent, limiting the target area.

**Step 2:** Relax your arms and shoulders, and sink down into your position, bending your knees slightly to lower your center of gravity. Your weight should be distributed equally on your right and left legs.

**Step 3:** Turn your head toward your opponent, keeping your chin low and slightly tucked behind your shoulder. Your torso and hips should still be facing 45 degrees. Bend your body very slightly toward your opponent.

**Step 4:** Make a fist with your strong (rear) hand, curling your fingers tightly into the palm and then tucking your thumb over your second knuckles. Draw up your rear hand so it's almost touching your cheek. Keep your elbow tucked against your ribs, protecting them.

**Step 5:** Make a fist with your other hand and hold it out in front of your face, just below the level of your nose, and at least two fist-lengths from it in distance. Your elbow should be bent slightly more than 90 degrees, leaving a good distance between your fist and your face. This elbow should also be turned in toward the center of your body, affording better protection.

**Step 6:** Raise your back heel very slightly. This will put a little spring in your step, and help you to absorb blows.

Practice this stance until it feels natural and you don't have to think about it. Then practice moving forward and backward, side to side, using small steps and without losing the distance between your feet (they should always be shoulder-width apart, 45 degrees from your opponent.) Move in L shaped motions and NEVER let your feet cross, as this will make you trip and fall. When you feel comfortable, practice the stance with the other foot forward.

## Punching

Always punch with a tightly closed fist, and make sure your thumb is tucked over your middle knuckles. If you wrap your fist over it or allow it to protrude, you risk breaking it should you actually hit something. The back of your hand should be roughly aligned with your forearm, rather than bent; the striking surface is the knuckles of your pinky, ring finger and middle finger. Generally, your fist should be horizontal for jabs and crosses, but turned with the thumb slightly down for hooks. Some martial art styles advocate a vertically aligned fist, however, it takes practice to learn to do this effectively. Strike anywhere below the forehead and always aim several inches behind your actual target. Any boxing coach will tell you to throw punches in bunches, and you would be wise to heed this advice. Multiple, quick shots are much harder to see, with one shot hiding the next, and the chances of scoring a one hit knockout are fairly slim. It's also much harder to block if you throw multi-hit combos, alternating between body and head. This is where conditioning comes into play. A less skilled, but better conditioned fighter can simply smother a more skilled, yet less conditioned fighter with a huge punch output.

**The Jab:** From fighting stance, the jab is executed with the forward arm. Punch straight out without drawing it back in preparation or allowing your elbow to pull away from your body horizontally. Twist your shoulders and hips slightly to give power to the punch; it is OK to pivot or step forward slightly on your front foot. Draw the fist back to its original position. The jab is a quick punch that is often used by itself, or in combination with the more powerful cross. The jab can also be used to determine the distance between you and your opponent, as it can be flicked out quickly without exposing yourself.

**The Straight:** The straight is executed with the rear hand; punch straight out without allowing your elbow to pull away from your body horizontally, pivoting the shoulders and hips to give maximum power. As the arm extends, twist the heel of your back leg outward by rotating on the ball of your foot to give the punch more power, but be careful to not throw yourself off-balance. The straight is a very powerful punch, and should be a bread and butter shot. It has range, power and reasonable speed. The 1-2 (Jab-Straight combo) is a basic, but very effective boxing technique and should be practiced until it is second nature.

**The Cross:** The cross is similar to the straight, however the punch is arced slightly to come at the opponent from above. It is almost always thrown as a counter punch, with your arm almost appearing to slide down the opponent's, then arcing down, which makes your arms cross and gives this punch its name.. This is an incredibly powerful punch, but if it fails you are left wide open for a fierce retaliation.

**The Hook:** The hook can be executed with either the front or the rear hand. Strike out in a subtle arc to connect with the side of the head. Rotate the hand so that the thumb is angled slightly downward on the strike. Aim for the side of the head or the neck. With practice, this can be an effective punch. Practice executing a controlled hook; avoid wild "haymaker" swings from the side, which can be easily seen and avoided by a skilled fighter. Hooks to the body can also be devastating, with a good shot to the liver or kidneys able to drop an opponent in a single blow. Body hooks are a good followup after a high jab, as your opponent's guard will be high and cannot protect against the body shot. Remember, every shot landed to the body gives you an advantage, especially against poorly conditioned opponents. Take their lungs away and the fight is yours.

**The Uppercut:** This punch comes from below and strikes up against the opponent's body. It is generally effective only from very close range. Dip your shoulder and draw your fist upward, using your hip to provide torque. Don't drop your fist before throwing, the whole motion should come from the knees and hips, and the punch should end up at about your eye level. It helps if you throw this off a slipped or ducked punch, as you are already in the correct position at this point. This is a difficult strike to perfect for an inexperienced fighter, and is best learned by watching serious boxers execute it. However, if it can be landed, it is arguably the most powerful punch you can throw.

## Kicking

Forget every kung fu movie you've ever seen. Unless you've been doing tae kwon do since you were 5, you're very unlikely to land that spinning back kick without getting yourself killed in the process. Every time you kick, at least one leg leaves the ground, compromising your balance and leaving you vulnerable. However, short, low kicks (below waist level) can be very effective because they are quick and difficult to see. Always return quickly to fighting stance after executing a kick or your opponent will grab you and take you down.

**Groin Kick:** Raise your knee and swing your foot upward toward the groin, with the toes extended, so that you're striking with the bridge of your foot. Practice this kick with both the front and back leg, so you can do it without losing your balance. It is the simplest kick to execute, and it can end a fight if timed properly. Be warned, however, that males instinctively protect this region of their body. Despite the common misconception, this kick is effective against female pigs. What's more, there's a chance the pig in question will believe herself immune to a groin attack, and fail to guard against it. Use this to your advantage.

**Straight Kick:** This is similar to the groin kick except you raise your knee up higher and then strike straight forward (almost a "pushing" motion) at the opponent's groin or thighs, delivering the blow with the balls of your foot. This is more difficult to block (or catch); however it takes practice to execute it properly.

**Shin Stomp:** This simple and potentially debilitating kick is usually delivered with the rear foot and is particularly useful in a clinch. Raise your knee and then stomp forward and down with the flat of your foot against your opponent's shin. This can be extremely painful. A similar strike to the side of the knee can fell your opponent or tear ligaments (and potentially expose you to costly lawsuits).

## Fighting

First rule: Relax. Second rule: See above. Third rule: Refer to #1. Keep your mouth closed, your tongue pressed against your palate. Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth. Never look your opponent in the eyes. Watch the elbows – fists move too fast for your eye to track, but elbows betray intentions. (Find a friend and practice until you can see a punch coming.) Keep moving, but never in sustained retreat. When your opponent closes in, don't get cornered; work your way around. Always take the offense.

Regular sparring can help reduce the anxiety of getting in a fight or being hit. Its also a great way to build confidence in your skills. Don't bother with backyard brawls, as they breed bad habits and can result in serious injury. You can get quality instruction at any local boxing gym, and it will be nice and safe. You can get a great workout, too, which is important as stamina is possibly the most important (and overlooked) quality of a successful fighter. Even the best technique won't help you if you're dead tired in 30 seconds.

## Grappling

With the amount of armor worn by the pigs today, strikes can be under-effective. Also, the pigs will try to take you to the ground to arrest you, so you had better have grappling skills, However **Try to stay on your feet** if there is more than one pig around(most of the time)the moment you touch the ground-even if you're the wold's best grappler-it wonn't take long for another pig to put a baton on your face

Here's some basic judo:



## Break Falls

When falling backwards, you want to land on your shoulder blades (upper back). You can favour either side or fall on both. The most important thing to remember when falling is to tuck your head into your chest (as they say in judo: "look at your belt"). This will help prevent dangerous head and neck injuries.

## Center of Balance

Balance occurs on both the y- and x-axis (vertical and horizontal, respectively). To find your center of balance, start by standing normally (back straight, arms at your side, feet shoulder width apart). Draw a line through your feet, so that the line passes through the middle of each foot. The center point of this line represents your vertical balance. (the point directly below your crotch). On the x-axis, it is one thumbs-width below your belly button, where your waist is.

As you move your weight from one foot to the other, you will become less balanced. Exploiting this weakness is important for grounding your opponent.

## Throws and Takedowns

There are hundreds of throws and take downs, everything from a simple tackle to a bold flying omoplata. They are divided into four basic kinds of throws: leg throws (foot sweeps), hip throws, hand throws, and sacrifice throws.

### Leg Throws

The basic idea here is to use your leg or foot to unbalance your opponent. First, you need to pin your opponent's weight over one of his legs. This can be done by pulling your opponent's arms and shoulders in the direction you want them to fall. Then take your leg and, swinging it at the hip, aiming for the ankle, sweep (not kick) their foot out from under them. Keep pulling their arms as you sweep. The whole motion must be done at once.

A basic throw of this style is called Major Outer Reaping:

Here, you square off with your opponent. you have their inside right arm (near the bend in the elbow) in your left hand, and their left shoulder (or neck/face if you're evil) in your right hand. Take a side-step to your left, swing your right leg up through the hole between you, twist their upper body by pulling on their arm and pushing on their shoulder/neck, and bring your right leg back down, connecting with your opponent at the ankle, and brushing his leg away. The result is that his center of balance will be over a point where there is no support, and thus he will fall.

Another common throw in this category is the Minor Inner Reaping: Start the same as with the Major Outer Reaping, keeping the hands in the same position. Do not side-step, instead, step in with your left foot, so that your left shoulder is close to his right shoulder (still facing each other, though)(Almost as if you were going to head-butt him). Then, when he can't see it, slip your right leg between his legs, hook his right leg at the ankle with your heel, and sweep his leg with turning his upper body as before. This is a sneaky move that is hard to see coming. Even if the move fails, you can still head-but, or use a knee strike to the groin. As with all throws, but ESPECIALLY with this one, it is very likely that your opponent will pull you down with them (you should land on top of them though); watch out for this.

Yet another common leg throw is the Minor Outer Reaping: This is the classic foot sweep. Start with the same grip as before, with your right hand on their left shoulder and your left hand on their inside right arm, facing them. Take your right leg back in a quarter circle, so you are now standing at a right angle to him (keep the holds). Pull down with your left hand and pull towards you with your

right, thus pinning his weight under his right leg. take your left foot and sweep his leg at the ankle, using the bottom of your foot.

### **Hip Throws**

Here, you use your hip to unbalance your opponent. The trick is to get your center of balance below his, by bending your knees. You then lift him by straightening your knee. You then throw him by turning.

Let's try a basic hip throw, one similar to the Floating Loin: Start by facing your opponent, holding his inside right arm in your left hand, and put your right arm around his waste, leaving his left arm free (don't worry, if done properly, he'll be on the ground before he can even think to strike with his free left). Turn into your opponent (your ass should be just about in front of their crotch), bending your knees as you come in, so as your belt or waste is below their belt or waste. Pull them close to you with your right. Straighten your legs, and turn to your left. This completes the throw.

### **Hand Throws**

Hand throws are a far more diverse category. They can also be the most destructive, visually impressive, and most difficult to use. Here are a few.

## **Fireman's carry/ Shoulder Wheel**

To start out, face your opponent, and take his inside right arm in your left hand (again). Step in and put your head under his armpit/lat, keep your knees bent, your right foot between his two legs, and grab the back of his knee with your right hand. Then lift by pulling with your left hand, straightening your knees, and pulling up on his leg. You can then drop him somewhere (off a highway overpass, down a flight of stairs, onto a large rock, onto another opponent, and so on). To drop him, step forward and bend over, keeping your head down and letting go with your hands. (careful when practicing, this eliminates almost all control over how he will land)

# Shoulder Throw

A Judo classic.

## Groundwork

The ability to fight on the ground is very important and yet often overlooked. While groundwork does include strikes (ground 'n pound), it also includes devastating chokes and joint locks.

## Armbars

The arm is weakest at its joints. Submission/ victory is achieved by exploiting weaknesses in anatomy to cause pain, breakage, and dislocation. In an armbar, the joint being targeted is the elbow. The elbow can be broken if it is hyper-extended past it's normal range of motion. While on the ground, an armbar can be accomplished any number of ways, the most common case is: your opponent is lying on their back. You are lying at a 90 degree angle to them. You have their right arm in your hand, and your left leg across their throat (your right leg can hold the left leg down), so that their arm is extended between your legs. You then hold their hand to your chest and lift your hips off of the ground. This will cause the elbow to break.

## Armlocks

Another lock that targets the elbow – instead of hyper-extending it, it hyper-flexes it. To do this lock:

1. Take their right arm again. Hold their wrist in your left hand.
2. Put your arm in the bend of their elbow, and hold your own left wrist in your right hand.
3. Push down with your left hand. The resulting force will cause the elbow to pull apart, separating the forearm from the upper arm.

## Cheating

Rules are for the ring. If you're in a fight with someone who is seeking to seriously hurt you, you should exercise any means necessary to survive in one piece.

## Dirt

Sometimes better than a strong punch or kick but with longer range, dirt, sand, or gravel in the eyes is a distraction that if all goes right might give you five to ten life saving seconds to escape.

## **The groin**

A swift kick, slap, or grab in the funzone can quickly disable nearly all male opponents, giving valuable time to escape. Remember: A hard kick works on women too. Go nuts.

## **Eyes**

Pretty much self explanatory here. A good thumb in the eye can end a fight by itself, and a serious eye gouge can leave your opponent walking with a white cane.

## **Ears**

A slap to one or both ears with a cupped hand can injure or blow out the eardrum, this can ruin your opponents balance sense which is located inside the ears and is damn painful.

# Weapons

When you're in a pinch, nearly anything can become a weapon. Bottles, glasses, trash can lids, chairs, stout sticks, belts, rocks or bricks, tools, or anything hard, sharp or heavy can be used to put your adversary down. I have even seen someone take out 2 knife wielding foes with a propane tank. When the chips are down, never be afraid to double up.

# Original UNARMED DEFENSE

Let's face it, when it comes to trashing in the streets, our success is going to depend on our cunning and speed rather than our strength and power. Our side is all quarterbacks, and the pigs have nothing but linemen. They are clumsy, slobbish brutes that would be lost without their guns, clubs and toy whistles. When one grabs you for an arrest, you can with a little effort, make him let go. In the confusion of all the street action, you will then be able to manage your getaway.

There are a variety of defensive twists and pulls that are easy to master by reading a good, easily understandable book on the subject, such as George Hunter's *How To Defend Yourself* (see appendix). If a pig grabs you by the wrist you can break the grip by twisting against his thumb. Try this on yourself by grabbing one wrist with your hand. See how difficult it is to hold someone who works against the thumb. If he grabs you around the waist or neck, you can grab his thumbs or another finger and sharply bend it backwards. By concentrating all your energy on one little finger, you can inflict pain and cause the grip to be broken.

There are a variety of points on the body where a firm amount of pressure skillfully directed will induce severe pain. A grip, for example, can be broken by jabbing your finger firmly between the pig's knuckles. (Nothing like chopped pigknuckles.) Feel directly under your chin in back of the jawbone until your finger rests in the V area, press firmly upward and backward towards the center of the head. There is also a very vulnerable spot right behind the ear lobe. Stick your fingers there and see. Get the point!

In addition to pressure points, there are places in the body where a sharp, well-directed whack with the side of a rigidly held palm can easily disable a person. Performed by an expert, such a blow can even be lethal. Try making such a rigid palm and practice these judo chops. The fist is a ridiculous weapon to use. It's fleshy, the blow is distributed over too wide an area to have any real effect and the knuckles break easily. You will have to train yourself to use judo chops instinctively, but it will prove quite worthwhile if you are ever in trouble. A good place to aim for is directly in the center of the chest cavity at its lowest point. Draw a straight line up about six inches starting from your belly button, and you can feel the point. The Adam's Apple in the center of the neck and the back of the neck at the top of the spinal column are also extremely vulnerable spots. With the side of your palm, press firmly the spot directly below your nose and above your upper lip. You can easily get an idea of what a short, forceful chop in this area would do. The side of the head in front of the ear is also a good place to aim your blow.

In addition to jabs, chops, twists, squeezes and bites, you ought to gain some mastery of kneeling and kicking. If you are being held in close and facing the porker, the old familiar knee-in-the-nuts will produce remarkable results. A feinting motion with the head before the knee is delivered will produce a reflexive reaction from your opponent that will leave his groin totally unprotected. Ouch!

Whether he has you from the front or the back, he is little prepared to defend against a skillfully aimed kick. The best way is to forcefully scrape the side of your shoe downward along the shinbone, beginning just below the knee and ending with a hard stomp on the instep of the foot. Just try this with the side of your hand and you will get an idea of the damage you can inflict with this scrape and stomp method. Another good place to kick and often the only spot accessible is the side of the knee. Even a half successful blow here will topple the biggest of honkers. Any of these easy to learn techniques of unarmed self defense will fulfill the old nursery rhyme that goes:

Catch a piggy by the toe  
When he hollers

Let him go  
Out pops Y-0-U





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