Self-Defense

The right of a person to use force upon another person in order to protect him or herself, a third person, or sometimes his or her property from the imminent use of unlawful force by the other person. The degree of force that may be used in self-defense varies in different jurisdictions. In general, a person may use a reasonable degree of nondeadly force upon another person when he or she reasonably believes the other person is about to use unlawful nondeadly force and when he or she reasonably believes it necessary to prevent bodily injury. A person may use deadly force upon another person when he or she reasonably believes it necessary to prevent death or serious bodily injury, and when he or she reasonably believes that the other person is about to use unlawful deadly force. In some jurisdictions, a person must retreat, if he or she can safely do so, before using deadly force, except that a person is not required to retreat from his or her home or place of business. A person may never use more force than is reasonably necessary to repel the attack. The force used must be reasonably related to the harm it seeks to avoid.

In general, the same rules apply to a person’s use of force to defend a third person from the unlawful use of force as apply to the defense of self. A person may use reasonable nondeadly force to protect his or her real or personal property if the person reasonably believes that the property is in immediate danger of unlawful trespass, entry, or carrying away and if the person reasonably believes that the use of force is necessary to avoid this danger. In general, deadly force is not justifiable to protect property.

Definitions

**Force:** Physical violence; physical strength or power exerted upon an object or person; physical coercion or restraint.

**Unlawful Force:** Force, including confinement, that is employed without the consent of the person against whom it is directed and the employment of which constitutes an offense or actionable tort or would constitute such offense or tort except for a defense not amounting to a privilege to use the force.

**Deadly Force:** Force that is used with the purpose of causing or that one knows to create a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily injury.

**Nondeadly Force:** Any physical force that is not deadly force.
HOME SECURITY

- Have secure locks on all doors and windows, and use them even when you are at home.
- Outer doors should be solid core wood (1 3/4 inches thick) or metal.
- Place a metal or wooden rod in the track of sliding glass doors.
- Have good lighting at all entrances.
- Prune back shrubbery so it doesn’t hide doors or windows.
- Clearly display your house number so police and other emergency vehicles can find your home quickly.
- Replace the locks when you move to a new dwelling. Previous tenants may have old keys.
- Draw the shades after dark.
- Identify callers before opening the door. Where practical, install a peephole or an intercom device. Teach children to use them and to always check with an adult before opening the door.
- Do not admit strangers. If someone requests the use of your phone, place the call yourself.
- Ask to see the identification of service people, police, or other strangers claiming legitimate entry before admitting them.
- Know your neighbors, and work out a mutual watch and warning system to prevent burglaries and other break-ins.
- Hang up immediately on obscene or anonymous phone calls. Report them to the telephone company or police if they persist.
- Advise family, friends and co-workers they are not to give your telephone number to anyone without your permission.
- Keep important telephone numbers posted at or near every telephone in your home.
- Tape emergency numbers on ALL telephones.
- Never leave a message on your answering machine that indicates you may be away from home. Say “I’m not available right now.”
- To prevent house keys from being copied, do not leave them with your car keys when leaving the car for parking or servicing.
- If you have good reason to believe that an intruder is in your home, do not wait to make sure. Leave your home by the nearest safe exit, and phone the police from a neighbor’s. Memorize the number to call for help.
- List only first initial and last name on mailbox, door or phone directory.
- If you loose a key, change the locks right away.
- Don’t put your address on the key ring.
- Don’t put house keys on the same key ring as your car keys.
- Don’t hide keys near the door, especially under the door mat.
- Use timers to turn lights on and off in different rooms, play the radio or television, and stop mail and newspapers when away.
- Never pin notes on your front door.
- Keep valuables out of reach of an open window.
- Inscribe ID numbers on valuables.
- Don’t keep large sums of money in your home. Use the bank for your valuables.
- If living in an apartment or condominium, be attentive and careful if you are alone in the laundry room or garage.
- Do not give information about yourself to strangers over the telephone or admit that you are alone.
• Keep all emergency numbers near the telephone.
• A family dog is the least expensive, but the most effective alarm system.
• Keep fuse boxes locked. Have battery lanterns in residence.
• Maintain all-purpose fire extinguishers in the residence and in the garage. Install a smoke detector system.
• Prepare an evacuation plan. Brief household members on plan procedures. Provide ladders or rope for two-story residences.

**PERSONAL SECURITY**

• Remove home address on personal checks and business cards.
• Place real property in a trust, and list utilities under the name of the trust.
• Utilize a private mail box service to receive all personal mail.
• File for confidential voter status or register to vote utilizing mail box address.
• Destroy discarded mail.
• Phone lines can be installed in a location other than the person’s residence and call-forwarded to the residence.
• Place residence rental agreements in another person’s name.
• Never put your name and address on your key ring.
• Have your keys out and ready when approaching the door to your auto or home. This eliminates fumbling in your purse or pockets trying to find them and they also can be used effectively as a weapon if you are attacked. Approximately 50% of assaults take place inside the home. The automobile is the second most common place of occurrence.

**VEHICLE SECURITY**

• Always lock your car doors even when you will be gone for only a few minutes.
• Lock your car doors when driving.
• Park in well lighted areas, and observe your surroundings when you leave your car at night.
• Park in a secured garage if available.
• Always have your car keys in hand so you will not have to fumble for them.
• Keep your car in good repair, with plenty of gas.
• Check the back seat and under the car before you get in.
• If your car breaks down, use distress signals such as putting the hood up, putting a white flag on the aerial, setting your emergency flashers, or display a “Call Police” sign in window.
• Remain in your car with the doors locked and windows up.
• Wait for the police and ask anyone who stops to send a tow truck or Police.
• Do not hitchhike or accept a ride with anyone.
• Always carry money for emergency calls.
• Do not pick up hitchhikers or stop to help disabled motorists - report to the Police.
• Wait to see that a friend is safely inside their home before driving away.
• Vary your routine and routes a little each day.
- Friends should always know your route of travel and expected arrival and departure times.
- If you think you are being followed, drive to a public place or a police station.
- Park your car in a garage, if possible. Lock your car and the garage.
- Park in secure lots, when possible or lots that are well-lighted and near heavily traveled areas.
- Use anti-theft devices that are highly visible, hard to defeat, and renders the car undrivable.
- When parking, turn your car's wheels toward the curb and apply the emergency brake to help protect it from illegal towing.
- Engrave ID numbers on valuable components.
- Remove valuables from your car or place them in your trunk out of view.
- Try to avoid driving through high-crime or questionable areas.
- Avoid driving late at night or in the early hours of the morning.
- Do not patronize parking lots where car doors must be left unlocked and keys surrendered; otherwise surrender only the ignition key. Allow items to be placed in or removed from the trunk only in your presence.
- When parked in the residence garage, turn the garage light on and lock the vehicle and garage door.
- Equip the gas tank with a locking gas cap. The hood locking device must be controlled from inside the vehicle.
- When traveling by vehicle, plan ahead. Know the locations of police stations, fire departments, and busy shopping centers.
- Don't approach your vehicle is someone is standing by it. When shopping take advantage of security personnel offering to assist you to your car. Be leery if a van is parked next to your car on the driver's side. Enter your car via the passenger side if you find it is occupied.
- Keep a flashlight in your car and check it periodically.
- Don't get distracted while driving by eating, shaving or combing your hair. Losing the focus on the road and your surroundings could make you and easy target.
- Be alert after a minor rear-end accident. If you are bumped from behind and you don't feel comfortable exiting your vehicle, motion for the other driver to follow you to the nearest police station, hospital, fire station or 24-hour store.
- If you are approached by a person with a weapon who demands that you turn over your wallet, your purse, or vehicle, comply. The loss of these items is not worth your life.
- Don't make yourself more attractive as a victim by leaving your purse or other valuables in view while you are driving.

**STREET SURVIVAL**

- Stay in well-lighted areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently, directly, at a steady pace.
- Avoid walking alone, especially if you are tired, depressed, drunk or using illegal substances.
- Make eye contact with people when walking.
- Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street - continue walking.
- Walk close to the curb. Avoid doorways, bushes and alleys where someone could hide and walk facing traffic.
- If you carry a purse, carry it securely between your arm and your body.
- Keep your keys in your hand.
- Cross the street to avoid loitering groups.
• Avoid the use of automatic teller machines and night depositories at banks when alone or when the area is dark or hidden by shrubbery.
• If you think you are being followed, walk quickly to areas where there are lights and people.
• If a car appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction, or walk on the other side of the street.
• Consider carrying a whistle or personal alarm and use it if you are in trouble. Attract help any way you can.
• Do not wear jewelry or clothing that will attract undue attention.
• Do not accept rides from strangers.
• On returning home, have your keys ready for immediate entrance.
• Wear clothes and shoes that give you freedom of movement.
• Try to avoid isolated bus stops.
• Stand away from the curb until the bus arrives.
• Don’t open your purse or wallet while boarding the bus - have your pass or money already in your hand.
• During off hours, ride as near to the bus operator as possible.
• Stay alert - and be aware of the people around you.
• If someone bothers you, change seats and/or tell the driver.
• Carry your wallet inside your coat, or in a front pocket.
• Check your purse or wallet if someone is jostling, crowding or pushing you.
• If you see suspicious activity, tell the driver.
• Stand near the control panel on elevators. If accosted, press all the buttons, including the alarm.
• Senior citizens should have their social security or retirement checks sent directly to their checking or savings account.
• Beware of get-rich-quick scams or persons who ask you to give them large sums of money. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
• Be wary of good deals on expensive home repair or home improvements.
• Be alert for any unusual packages, boxes, DO NOT disturbe the objects.
• Don’t drive an attacker to a deserted location. Drive your car into another car or building. There is no guarantee he won’t kill you if you do cooperate. If you create a diversion there will at least be people there to assist you and medical attention if necessary.

TRAVELING

• Check alcoves in corridors before entering your room when staying in hotels.
• Identify hotel workers and/or confirm with front desk before allowing admittance to your room.
• Keep valuables in hotel safes.
• Check elevators before entering
• Make a record of your passport, credit card and traveler’s check numbers, plane, train or bus ticket numbers.
• Leave your itinerary with a family member, neighbor or friend in the event of an emergency.
• Take only enough cash for your immediate needs.
• Locate fire exits, elevators and public phones. Plan the best way to get out in an emergency.
• If a front desk clerk mentions your room number out loud, request a new room.
• Don’t enter the room if the door is ajar.
• Ask for an escort to the room.
• Don’t sit in the room with the door propped open. Don’t leave the door open for any length of time, even if you are just going to the ice machine.
• If someone is loitering in the hall near your room, do not enter your room. Instead go directly to the front desk and report it.
• Use CB radios for long trips or purchase a portable telephone.
• Stay near the front of public transportation and away from alleys.
• Don’t use public restrooms unless absolutely necessary. If you should, have a friend stand guard while using the facility.
• Concerts or ball games don’t necessarily guarantee your safety. As crowds disperse, one can often find themselves alone and isolated. Leave with the crowd.
• Carry enough money for a cab or other transportation should your ride not arrive so you are not stranded.
• If you are driving in a potentially risky area, use the middle lane. Don’t allow yourself to be pinned against the curb at a stop sign or light. Leave enough space between cars to pull away if necessary. Be able to see the rear tires of the vehicle in front of you.

**OFFICE SECURITY**

• Central reception should handle visitors and packages.
• Office staff should be alert for suspicious people, parcels, and packages that do not belong in the area.
• Establish key and lock control. If keys possessed by terminated employees are not retrieved, change the locks.
• Park in secured areas if at all possible.
• Have your name removed from any reserved parking areas.
• Be alert to anyone possibly following you from work.

**DATING PREVENTION**

• Alcohol and drugs increase crime. 20% of rape victims were found to be under the influence at the time of attack. A survey of college males showed that 60% would rape if given the opportunity.
• Insure that your body is saying the same thing you are. Be sure to communicate intentions to your date early enough so that there will be no misunderstandings.
• People misinterpret, misread comments and dialogue under the influence. Take precautions by not going alone on the first date with a subject. If you are going alone, let someone know who you will be with, when you expect to be home, and where the two of you plan to go.
• Remember the two prerequisites for rape are isolation and uninterrupted time.
• Check out your new date with friends or associates who might know the individual. Double date the first time with your friends and make sure it is understood that you want to stay together as a group the first date.
• Bar hopping is like playing Russian roulette. Alcohol and drugs lower resistance and alertness.
• Be leery of a companion who constantly tries to control all the dating activities and must get his way. Most often this is transferred to an intimate situation and he does not take “no” for an answer.
CHILD SAFETY

- Teach them basic safety rules.
- Know the three "W's": Where your kids are, What they're doing, and Who they're with.
- If left home alone, make sure your children are old enough and mature enough to care for themselves.
- Never leave a young child or children alone at home or in a car.
- Establish well-understood, consistent procedures for picking up your child.
- Teach them to run to the nearest public place, neighbor, or safe house if they are being followed.
- Teach them to tell you if anyone asks them to keep a secret, offers them gifts or money, or asks to take their picture.
- Teach them to tell you if something happened while they were away from you that made them feel uncomfortable in any way.
- Teach them that the private parts of their bodies are not to be fondled by anyone and to report such activity immediately.
- Teach them that police officers can be trusted for help and are their friends.
- Teach them the importance of yelling, and protesting if a stranger tries to pick them up or take them somewhere.
- Teach them to stay on sidewalks and not use shortcuts through fields or lots.
- Teach them to notice and remember how someone looks and vehicle description.
- Teach them never to play around or go near parked automobiles.
- Establish a block parent component in your neighborhood to provide a safe house where children can take refuge if frightened or in trouble.
- Avoid dressing children in clothes that have their names printed on them.
- Keep children who are riding in cars fastened in car seats or seat belts and keep car doors locked.
- Encourage mutual trust between you and your children, and investigate any report from your child of molestation.
- Keep hair samples, up-to-date pictures, and copies of fingerprints and dental records.
- Have them memorize their full name and address, including city and state.
- Memorize their telephone number and area code.
- Teach children to use both push button and dial telephones to make emergency, local and long distance calls and how to reach the operator.
- Teach them to check in with you or a neighbor immediately after arriving home.
- Teach them to never go into your home if a door is open or a window is broken.
- Teach them how to work door and window locks and to lock them.
- Teach them how to get out of the home quickly in case of fire.
- Teach them how to answer the doorbell and telephone when they are home alone.
- Teach them not to go into anyone else's home without your permission.
- Teach them never to go with another adult unless you have made arrangements ahead of time.
- Adopt a family code word to use if you have to ask a third party to pick up your children.
Teach them to avoid walking or playing alone.
Teach them that a stranger is someone neither your nor they know well.
Children should be accompanied to school or bus stops.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

- Check that the costumes are flame-retardant.
- Keep costumes short to prevent trips and falls.
- Try make-up instead of a mask. Masks can be hot and uncomfortable and, more importantly, they can obstruct a child's vision.
- Make sure kids wear light colors or reflective tape.
- Young trick-or-treaters should be in groups or accompanied by a parent.
- Challenge kids to create costumes that don’t need “weapons” to be scary.
- Older kids should trick-or-treat with friends. Map out a route so you know where they’ll be.
- Get kids to go out while it’s still light out. If it’s dark have them carry a flash light.
- Remind kids not to enter stranger's houses or cars.
- Inspect all candy, fruit or homemade goodies before eating. Don’t eat unwrapped candy.