

Defensive Tactics

**Street-proven
arrest and control
techniques**
for today's security professionals

Go beyond academy and in-service training



Loren W. Christensen



Defensive Tactics: Street-Proven Arrest and Control Techniques

Whether you are a law enforcement officer seeking to improve your edge or a martial artist wanting to expand your knowledge of real-world techniques, you will find *Defensive Tactics: Street-Proven Arrest and Control Techniques* is filled with invaluable information to prepare you for even the most difficult scenarios.

Highlights include

- Joint manipulation that works
- Leverage control vs. pain control
- Striking with the hands, feet, forearms, and elbows
- Safely and quickly crossing the gap
- Blocking an assailant's strikes
- Using vulnerable points to gain compliance
- Head disorientation
- Safe application of carotid constriction or "sleeper" holds
- Controlling a suspect on the ground
- Arresting big guys
- Fighting concepts to take on patrol
- Weapon retention in close quarters and on the ground

Defensive Tactics goes beyond what is taught in the academy, during an officer's in-service training, and what is allowed by the administration.

This book also includes a chapter on proven ways to control a suspect on the ground, written by LAPD officer Mark Mireles, an MMA coach, police academy trainer, and champion wrestler.



Loren W. Christensen is a retired cop and high-ranking martial artist who survived everything the mean streets threw at him, working patrol, gang enforcement, and dignitary protection. Loren Christensen resides in Portland, Oregon.

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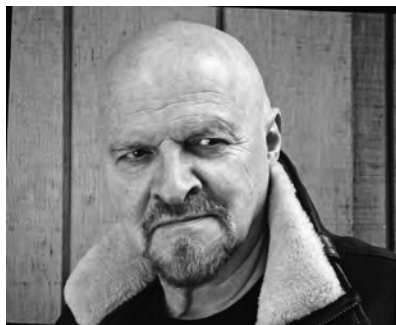
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As a martial arts student and teacher since 1965, he has earned an 8th dan in American Free Style Karate, a 2nd dan in aiki jujitsu, and a 1st dan in Modern Arnis. He has starred in seven instructional martial arts DVDs. In 2011, Loren was inducted into the Masters Hall of Fame, garnering the Golden Lifetime Achievement Award.

As a writer, Loren has worked with five publishers, penning over 50 books, nonfiction and fiction on a variety of subjects. His thriller fiction series *Dukkha* is popular among martial artists. He has written dozens of magazine articles on a variety of topics to include, martial arts, nutrition, bodybuilding, police tactics, survival skills, meditation, and mental imagery.

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It's always amazed me how few police officers train in the martial arts. Most love to shoot, rarely turning down an opportunity to plink holes in paper targets, but how often have you seen an officer pantomiming an armbar in the roll call room or two partners taking turns applying wristlocks in the fleet garage? Sometimes you see recruits in the academy practicing defensive tactics during their breaks, but mostly it's in preparation for an upcoming test. You hear them say enthusiastically that they want to perfect their tactics but that fades once they are assigned to a precinct.

I had about seven years of martial arts training under my belt when I joined the Portland Police Bureau, which included a year of practical fighting experience as an MP in Vietnam. The only other officer with martial arts experience was a judo black belt, the lone defensive tactics instructor. Over 1,100 officers and only two of us had martial arts training!

The fighting arts have been my life since 1965 so I often wonder why everyone doesn't practice this incredible lifestyle. Then I remember that I'm a bit of a fanatic. Even so, the police job puts officers into the toxic realm of the human condition, a place that is often as bad as it can get. So why wouldn't every officer want the additional edge that martial arts training gives? Beats me. Today, the fighting arts are more popular than ever and there are more officers training than there were a few years ago - but still not that many.

Another problem is that the number of defensive tactics instructors with a martial arts background is small. Usually what happens is that selected officers attend a two-week training seminar for certification to teach. I've only been to a couple of these as a trainer, so I can only guess that some are good and some aren't. Even when they are outstanding, the graduates have a limited knowledge of defensive tactics as a martial art. Can they teach a wristlock and an armbar? Sure. But the odds are high they might:

- leave something out.
- not know how to help an officer who can't apply a move properly when he is too short, too tall or too uncoordinated.
- not know when to change a pain technique to a leverage one.
- not understand the subtleties of balance.

- not understand the psychological/physiological link of different forms of distraction.
- not know how to block and shield.
- not know how to make a technique more effective.
- not know how to use various parts of the body as weapons.
- not understand the psychological/physiological link of blows to vulnerable targets.
- not know how to answer a host of “what if” questions.

I say this with complete respect for those officers who believe in defensive tactics enough to take the extra training (in some jurisdictions they do this on their own time and at their own expense) and then stand before the toughest audience in the world and impart what they know. Still, they don't know the answers to the above because as non martial artists, the knowledge isn't in their backgrounds. Nothing beats years of experience training, teaching and accumulating information.

The easy solution is for every police agency to use only veteran martial artists as their defensive tactics instructors. But that isn't going to happen because as mentioned, there aren't that many experts in police work. So it's up to those defensive tactics instructors who don't have a martial arts background to take it upon themselves to keep learning. If that's you, take every class you can, join a martial arts school that includes grappling in its offerings, research techniques on-line, buy books and DVDs. To use an apropos cliché: Knowledge is power.

In *Defensive Tactics*, I've drawn on my experience of 29 years in law enforcement, most of them as a defensive tactics instructor, and my training and teaching several martial arts styles to civilians since 1965. I've also received information, insight and help from many veteran martial arts friends, many of whom are in law enforcement now.

My objective here is to draw upon the martial arts to ensure that basic police defensive tactics techniques are done correctly and to show variations to enhance them so that you have a Plan B to transition to should the first variation not work well. I've also included principles and techniques that most police agencies don't incorporate into their program because of time limitations, budget issues, or because they don't know about them.

Police defensive tactics is a unique entity. It's not like full-contact taekwondo competition and mixed martial arts events where competitors do battle under rules that apply to both fighters. The law enforcement officer must follow rules established by city, state and federal laws, citizen demands, attorney demands, all with an objective of gaining control with minimum injury, while the violent suspect gets to follow that classic axiom: The only rule is that there aren't any.

Tough to do? You bet. It's just one more of a long list of hard tasks we ask you to do day in and day out.

I hope this book gives you an edge.

Author's Note

For ease of writing and reading, I have used the male gender "he" instead of the cumbersome "he/she." This is in no way intended to exclude the thousands of hard-working females patrolling our crime ridden streets everyday. Also, I have mostly used the word "police" for ease of writing and reading, with no disrespect intended to the many other types of law enforcement agencies.

The Foundation: Nuts and Bolts

Section

1

While everyone wants to jump immediately into the punching, kicking, joint locks, and sleeper holds, it's critical to take the time to think about and understand the underpinning of defensive tactics. Consider this section as the cement foundation of the house. Without it, there isn't a lot of support for the walls, the beams and the ceiling. So that you don't end up under a pile of lumber, read this section first.



Thinking Ahead

Chapter 1

*It pays to plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.”
- Anon*

Beside throwing each other down on the mats and wrenching arms beyond their intended range, it's valuable to prethink about engaging in a physical force situation. Here are a few subjects to ponder in your car as you cruise the hood on a slow, rainy Wednesday night.

Adrenaline Response

As we discuss accelerated heart rate and surging adrenaline, keep in mind that not everyone experiences these in a street scuffle or even in a shootout. You might experience them today but if you were to get into the same hairy situation tomorrow, you might not. Whenever this is discussed there is a risk of a self-fulfilling prophecy. You engage in a violent situation and, because you think you should be experiencing these things, you do. The idea is to understand that they can happen so they don't surprise you and affect your performance, while at the same time being cautious that knowing about the possibility doesn't make it happen.

Much of the following information is taken from *On Combat*, by Lt. Col. Dave Grossman and me, and from Bruce Siddle's *Sharpening the Warrior's Edge*.

Your ability to function deteriorates when your heart rate accelerates to around 175 bpm, though you're going to fare much better if you have trained to perform in this realm. Keep in mind that this type of rapid heart rate is caused by excitement, fear and a desperate need to survive. It's not the same as one accelerated from jogging or pumping on the Stairmaster. Here is the difference:

- An accelerated heart rate caused by exercise flushes your face (turns it red, if you're light skinned) as blood vessels dilate to allow blood to surge to your muscles.
- An accelerated heart rate caused by fear pales your face (turns it white, if you're light skinned) because of vasoconstriction, the narrowing of blood vessels that constricts or slows blood flow.

Should you run in desperation, adding physical exertion to your panic, your body will require additional fresh, oxygenated blood, just as your fear-induced vasoconstriction shuts down or constricts the vessels that deliver this much-needed supply. The result: an even higher heart rate.

FACT

Your heart rate can go from 70 bpm to 220 bpm in less than half a second.

Let's take a quick look at the stages of an accelerated heart rate, data based on an article by researchers Bruce Siddle and Dr. Hal Breedlove entitled "Survival Stress Reaction" and from Siddle's excellent book *Sharpening the Warrior's Edge: The Psychology and Science of Training*. When we talk about fear-induced accelerated heart rate, we're talking about Survival Stress Reaction (SSR).

- Around 115 bpm, most people lose fine motor skills, such as finger dexterity and eye-hand coordination, making it virtually impossible to, say, type in a code to unlock a door or find the right key in a cluster of keys. Multitasking also becomes difficult.
- Around 145 bpm, most people lose their complex motor skills, movements that involve a series of muscle groups, such as eye-hand coordination, precise tracking of movement, and exact timing. Executing complicated self-defense techniques becomes difficult if not impossible.
- Around 175 bpm, most people experience numerous negative effects: tunnel vision (meaning a loss of depth perception) and loss of memory of what happened (though there is usually a 30 percent recall after the first 24 hours, 50 percent after two days, and 75 to 95 percent after three to four days).
- At 185–220 bpm, most people go into a state of "hypervigilance," sometimes referred to as the "deer in the headlights" mode. This is often characterized by performing actions that are useless, such as continuing to desperately twist a

The Importance Of Visualizing

I've written about visualization, AKA: mental imagery, for years in magazine articles and books because I'm convinced it's one of the most powerful training devices we have available to us. One writer said this about it: "Visualization is important because it makes the future become clear. Seeing yourself already achieving your goal makes your brain believe that attaining that goal is possible." In addition, consistently imagining a goal, or a skill set, helps you attain it much faster. Now, here is the real good news: You can do it in your pajamas, in your swim trunks, and in your police uniform. You can do it your easy chair, lying in a hammock, or sitting in your squad watching traffic. The only "equipment" you need is your imagination.

This is how easy it is. Pick up a mug shot and look at the bozo's face. Now put it down and try to remember what he looked like. If you see a face that looks anything like the person, you're visualizing. If you don't, try this. Look at the picture for a few seconds and then close your eyes. Open them again and look at it, then close them again. Open, close, open, close. Do this for a few minutes. When you can see the picture but you don't know whether your eyes are open or closed – you're on your way to visualization skill. The more you practice this the better you get at it.

Now, park your car across the street from the convenience store at Broadway and Main. Look at those two guys standing on the corner, smoking and laughing. Close your eyes, open your eyes and look at them, close your eyes, open your eyes and look at them, and so on. Do this about ten times. Once you can see them – standing near the store's big window with that butcher paper sign advertising beer, with the dumpster alongside the building, the fire hydrant at the corner, the parking lot on the east side, and the door at the front – and you don't know if your eyes are open or closed, you're ready to do some serious visualizing that will help your performance in a high-risk situation.

You're going to see yourself confronting these two. Here are three easy tips before you start:

- See the action out of your eyes, as opposed to watching it as if looking at a movie.
- Fill the whole "screen" in your mind's eye, all in vivid color and surround sound.
- Visualize in real-time, that is, at the same speed the real action would occur.

Visualize the confrontation

- As you imagine walking up to the men, see them look at you.
- See yourself stop outside of their arm's reach.
- Feel your body stand at an angle, see and feel your hands lift up in front of you to gesture, and hear your voice ask them for identification.
- See one of them reach into his pocket for his wallet.
- See and hear the other person become agitated and demand why you are harassing them.
- Feel the fight or flight juices surge through your body, as you become hypervigilant.
- Feel your heart rate surge as you see the agitated man throw a punch at you.
- See and feel your arm snap up to protect your head.
- Feel and hear his hand hit your arm and jar your head.
- See your arms snap out and feel your body launch into him...
- ...and so on.

This is an incredibly powerful tool used more and more by Olympic athletes, the military, martial artists and law enforcement. There is nothing terribly mysterious about it, or supernatural, it's simply a powerful mental tool that allows you to rehearse a physical response. In the end, your mind and body acts as if you physically practiced your block and follow-up.

FAST REPS

A real situation can deteriorate and turn physical in 10 seconds. Therefore, when you imagine a suspect attacking you and you imagine your response – your favorite move or any technique in this book – for one minute, that is enough time for you to practice four or five visualized “reps.” Do it for five minutes and you can easily get in 20 reps or more. Pretty good deal and you don't wrinkle or sweat-stink your clothes. Practice five minutes or longer three or four times a week.

The Value of Reps: More Training in Less Time

As long as I can remember, students have asked me what the “The Secret” is that will make them faster, stronger, more flexible, and a better fighter. So is there a secret to acquiring skill in the combat arts? Yes. The secret is ...train hard.

I know, I know. That’s not a secret and it’s not even mystical. Sorry, but training hard is the only way to get good. There are no short cuts, no easy paths, and no special meditations.

Still, too many people waste precious time looking for a quick and easy path to combat effectiveness. I call them the McDonald’s Generation, people used to driving up to a window to get an instant meal. But not everything can be gotten as easily as that. Some things you have to work for - like physical skill.

It’s All About Reps

Within the first so-called secret is the concept of repetition. It takes many reps to polish a technique and to ingrain it into the brain so that it’s there for you when things get ugly. There is an old saying in the martial arts: “It’s better to do 10 correct repetitions than 100 poor ones.” I disagree. I tell my students that it’s better to do 500 correct ones than 10 good ones.

Repetition practice works well on the firing range. Every time you fire a box of ammo, you get in 50 reps of gripping, sight alignment, trigger pull, and so on. When you spend an afternoon shooting, you might do hundreds of reps; spend a week at the range and you knock out thousands. In time, the movements become second nature, which is exactly what you want them to be when the you-know-what hits the fan and you have to shoot fast and accurately.

When you do it correctly and do it in volume, repetition practice in defensive tactics provides the same benefits. Unfortunately, it’s the critical element missing from many programs, mostly because of

time constraints. What you need is a way to squeeze in lots of reps in an ever-shrinking time allotment for DT training, and do so in a way to keep the students, many of whom would rather be doing something else, interested and progressing.

Let's look at two training methods that allow you to experience a variety of approaches and a variety of training partners. One method uses that old standard commonly called the "Line Drill" and the other uses what martial artists call, "Monkey Line Drill."

Line Drill: Attack And Response

The instructor divides the class in half and has the students form two lines, Line A officers facing Line B officers. Line A is the attacker and Line B the observer and defender. You're in Line B. For discussion purposes, let's keep the attackers' move easy; they simply extend their arms – it can be a punch or a push - toward your line. The drill is to break the attack into phases then practice each repetitiously

Your line faces the attackers as if interviewing them on the street: standing at an angle, feet staggered, and hands up. As the suspects reach forward with their right hands to shove or punch, your line will:

- Phase 1: observe the attack.
- Phase 2: swat it aside in the direction of the suspect's other arm.
- Phase 3: step toward the attacker's right side and then grab their right upper arm and wrist. Then they turn the rest of the way so that each officer in your line faces the same direction as their respective attacker faces.

While the attackers' action might justify a greater response than what I'm describing here, let's keep it simple for the sake of this discussion. The final position in the last bullet is commonly called "The Minimum Custody Hold" (shown in many of the techniques throughout this book), which is used to walk a nonviolent suspect a short distance and a position from which you can execute several pain compliance holds and takedowns.

The Elements of Balance

Chapter

3

When you control the suspect's balance, you control the suspect, and yourself. Conversely, when you don't control his balance, you're probably not controlling yours and you're both likely to kiss the sidewalk. Balance is critical when dealing with a resistor, so critical that if you don't have it, all the defensive tactics techniques in the world aren't going to help you. It's true in shooting and it's true when it's hands-on time with someone.

Let's look at a simple concept that when understood will help keep your balance stable and the arrested suspect at your mercy.

The Tripod Concept

A camera needs a three-legged stand, a tripod. If it has only two legs, the stand and the camera will fall over. You have only two legs but you don't fall over because you have equilibrium. Knock back five too many beers, however, and you obliterate your balance to the extent that you become that two-legged tripod in search of support.

Your equilibrium is on the job 24/7 sending your body little and big adjustments to keep you upright. Nonetheless, know that your balance is weakest in the direction of that invisible third leg.

The invisible third leg

The circles indicate where the 3rd leg would be, and where you're weak.



Your balance is weak to the front and rear.



When your feet are in alignment, your balance is weak to each side.



No matter how you configure your legs, your balance is weak where that third tripod leg would be if you didn't have equilibrium.

Be cognizant of how you stand when talking to one or more suspects. They likely won't know the tripod concept, but a lucky push can send you down anyway.

Crossing the Gap

Chapter

4

Moving into Range

A potentially dangerous moment

Martial artists train hard so that they can cross that empty space - that hot zone – between themselves and the adversary. A fighter can have the best punches and kicks this side of Bruce Lee but if he can't cross that space without getting clobbered, his super techniques are for naught.

I did an informal survey at my agency one year and found that most of the minor and major assaults on officers happened when they moved in to apply hands on. It just makes sense when you think about what it means to the bad guy. He knows that your advance means that his freedom to walk wherever he wants, to buy a burger, and to steal, rape and burn is about to be taken away from him. Up until you moved toward him, he thought he was doing a good job lying to you. But when he sees your body incline in his direction and your foot move in his direction, he knows the jig is up. Sometimes he simply exhales his resignation and offers no resistance, while other times his sudden realization makes him reflexively or purposely stiffen, turn to run, flail his arms, or smash you in the nose.

His body language

Sometimes a suspect clearly verbalizes his message that he is going to resist: "Touch me and I'll kill you," "You better get more cops," "I'm not going to let you arrest me." Other suspects won't comment verbally, though they display certain signals with their body that indicate their intention. For example:

Face:

- A sudden change from his wide-eyed and lifted-eyebrows look of fake innocence to bunched eyebrows, narrowed eyes and overall facial tension, as if his skin is suddenly too small for his skull.

- Sudden tightening of the lips.
- A facial tick.
- Eyes appearing to go out of focus or they narrow, as he looks off to the side and appears to be in a trance. I call this the “German shepherd stare” because it’s a trait dogs do just before they rip into your inner, upper tender thigh.

Body

- Twitching (ants in the pants), feet shuffling, head turning this way and that way.
- Hands hanging at his sides, repeatedly closing into fists and opening again.
- He initially faces you straight on during your contact, but he turns himself into a quarter turn (the same position you should be using). Although not every resistor is going to shift into this position, those who do are often trained fighters, either “trained” through street experience or trained via formal classes.

Your stance



As always, you should be in your interview stance, hands up and open. Now, don’t hold your arms stiff and motionless because it looks weird and it’s easy for the suspect to see when you move. Even if you don’t talk with your hands much, start. You might feel like a bad actor at first but that will pass. When it does, you’re left with a subtle device that camouflages your intention. Then when you do move to grab him, it takes a moment longer for it to register in his brain that you’re not just gesturing again. Here are a couple of bumper stickers:

Action from non-action is easy to see

Action from action is harder to see

Blocking

Chapter 5

In whatever setting I've taught over the years, whether law enforcement or private citizens, students are always anxious to practice the fun stuff – punches, kicks, throws, joint locks – missing the glaring fact that if an attacker hits them first they might not get a chance to do the fun stuff.

When you're on the receiving end of an incoming foot, fist, or a 2 x4 board, it's critical that your defense is a simple one based on natural reaction. Toss a Nerf ball at a child when he doesn't expect it and his hand snaps up to swat it aside, or he lifts his arm to cover his head. That natural response is what we want to use and polish.

Blocking and Shielding

Technically this is a deflection rather than a block. The punch or push enters your space and you swat it aside as if it's an annoying mosquito. Don't glom onto the suspect's arm and don't push it farther away than is necessary. Simply swat it off its course and snap your arm back, or launch a counter grab or hit.

Let's look at a few simple blocks that are based on natural reflexes.

Swat to the inside



From your hands-up stance...



...swat your lead hand from in front of its shoulder...

...across your body and to the front of your other shoulder. There is no need to go farther since you don't exist beyond that point and doing so would leave you too exposed. Keep your other hand up so it's available for blocking or countering.



Weight Training and Aerobics

Chapter 6

Here is something I've observed since the mid 1960s when I began teaching cops and civilians how to defend themselves: cops and martial artists who lift weights and do aerobic activities are better at defensive tactics and martial arts than those who don't. I'm guessing that it's their body awareness that helps them catch on to the teaching faster and executing the techniques more easily.

That said, sometimes a weight lifter, especially a hardcore bodybuilder, thinks too much about his exterior to the extent he over-muscles techniques. After all, that is how he lifts, that is what makes the barbell go up and come back down with control. But once he learns not to flex when doing defensive tactics, not to care about how his muscles look, and not try to overpower his training partner, his movements take on a greater fluidity. He will begin to understand and enjoy how the mechanics of the move, along with his energy, makes the suspect grimace. Once he has achieved that, he can then bring that hard-earned exterior muscle along for the ride, a ride the suspect will hate.

I don't want to spend time and space in this book illustrating weight lifting and cardio exercise. The interested reader wanting to know in detail about training and nutrition will find tons of information in *The Fighter's Body: An Owner's Manual: Your Guide to Diet, Nutrition, Exercise and Excellence in the Martial Arts* by Wim Demeere and me, also available through YMA Publication Center Press. However, I do want to comment briefly on why you should lift and why you should train for cardio fitness.

Weight Training

Here is a revelation that will sit you back on your heels: weight training makes you stronger. As obvious as this would seem, why doesn't every law enforcement officer lift? Being stronger makes hauling that injured person down the stairs easier and that drunk up the stairs. It helps you push that car out of the intersection easier and, for you county deputies, it helps you get that tipped cow back up on its hooves.

You can do all those things now, you say. True, but when you're strong, you do them easier and with less chance of injury. Strength gives you confidence and looking strong makes some people think twice about resisting.

Fast-twitch muscle fibers

When you push the heavy weights, a poundage that makes your neck cords stick out on the final 8th rep, you not only gain strength but you stimulate your fast-twitch muscle fibers. While you can't increase the number of these fibers, you can make them stronger, which in turn makes you faster. Don't wait until some vermin is pointing a gun at you within your reach, to think, "Gee, I wish I were faster."

Greater speed provides you with a better chance to:

- grab or deflect that threatening weapon.
- block that incoming punch, push or kick.
- apply a control hold before the suspect can resist.
- leap out of the way of that car sliding toward you.
- grab that bridge jumper.
- duck the sergeant when he's looking for someone for a crappy detail.

If the idea of lifting weights makes you want to lie in a hammock under a tree, know that you only have to do three or four sets of five exercises, which takes about 20 minutes. Wearing those tiny posing trunks is optional.

Finger Techniques

Chapter 7

Definition: Yubi tori are the Japanese words for finger techniques, sometimes shortened to yubies (you-bees) by jujitsu people. Yubies occur anytime you twist, stretch, crumple or bend a finger or fingers in a way they weren't designed to move.

Finger techniques are subtle, excruciatingly painful and most importantly, they work more times than not. As a skid row beat cop who wrestled with the extremely inebriated on a daily basis, finger techniques were my bread-and-butter moves, the pain from which nearly always penetrated brains pickled from years of alcohol abuse. In addition, as a member of one of the many arrest teams sent into action whenever there was a violent protest, I used finger techniques to get people off the ground, move them through hordes of TV cameras, and out of the midst of their compatriots. This was all done while appearing as if I weren't remotely responsible for the person yelping and carrying on.

War story

Curtis Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels, came to town once to join in with dozens of other protestors who were upset about something involving the homeless. Several of them chained themselves to the doors of a building (if I'd been chief for a day, I'd have ordered all the officers to resume normal patrol and let them sit on the cold asphalt with their arms chained to door handles).

When Sliwa showed up, there weren't any door handles left so he just sat on the sidewalk. Television cameras zoomed in as I bent down to tell him that he was under arrest. He said he understood but that he wasn't moving. Again, I told him to get up and he said he wouldn't because he was protesting. I bent farther and said into his ear that I would use force and he whispered back for me to do what I had to do.

Sliwa looked to be a solid 200 pounds and I wasn't about to strain my gizzard lifting him in view of the salivating cameras. So, I slapped on

the handcuffs and grasped his upper arm. When I felt his body tense to make himself heavy, I grabbed his little finger and ring finger with my other hand and flexed them back a couple inches beyond where they normally go.

Mr. Sliwa got up so quickly that I had to step back so that he didn't knock me over. The 5 o'clock news showed him standing up in a hurry but the cameras didn't detect the technique that made him do so.

LOW VISIBILITY

Bending or twisting a digit is a low profile move that draws little attention to what you're doing and can save you extra problems when moving a biker out of a crowded biker bar, a violent protestor away from his peers, or a drunken movie patron up the aisle of a packed theater. Onlookers haven't a clue what you're doing, though they wonder why the person you're arresting isn't balking. Of course, there are the occasional recipients of finger techniques who scream bloody murder, "Yooowww! You're breaking my finger!" That blows your cover and ruins everything.

Elements of Applying Finger Techniques

Finger techniques are simple. You know the mobility range of your fingers and at what point pushing them beyond that hurts. That range is similar – give or take a couple inches - to that of every other humanoid. If it hurts you, it's likely to hurt the drunken husband you need to move out of the house.

Here are the classic moves:



Across

Push his little finger across his other fingers

The Versatile Wristlock

Chapter 8

Most police agencies under-use the wristlock, limiting it to a come-a-long hold or a setup position to handcuffing. This is unfortunate because there are so many other situations in which to use it and variations as to how it's done.

War story

One time I arrested an outlaw biker, flexcuffed him and was pressing him against a wall yelling at him to stop resisting as I applied ever-increasing pressure on a wristlock. Just as I was thinking that he might be impervious to the pain, I heard a loud pop, not as loud as a .22 round, but close, and I felt the tension in his wrist give way. For the first time since I'd been cranking on the hold, I saw his face change expression, not much, just a little grimace. Realizing that his muscular wrist had just broken like a thick tree branch, I let it go, scooted around to his other side and applied a wristlock on that hand.

He was cooperative after that.

I learned later that this particular bike club followed a code of not showing pain, especially to the police. I wish now that I would have asked him, "So, how's that code workin' for yuh?" as they encased his hand in a cast.



Elements of the Wristlock

By wrapping one or two hands around the back of the suspect's hand and pressing it toward his braced elbow, his wrist tendons stretch painfully farther than they do normally.

Here are a few important elements about this classic hold:

- Without the elbow brace, the technique won't work to affect pain.
- As mentioned, this simple configuration works in a variety of positions, which we examine in this chapter.
- Stretching the innards of the wrist doesn't hurt everyone, though it hurts most.
- You can increase the pain without significantly changing the position.
- It's rare, but there are people who possess such extreme flexibility that their palm can lie flat on the underside of their forearm. This technique won't work on them.
- Some people possess wrists so stiff that even the slightest pressure on their hand causes them great pain. Don't think they are faking or resisting.
- Some eat the pain and continue to resist no matter how intense. We don't like these people.
- Use the wristlock to hold a suspect in place, to force him to the floor, to force him to stand up, and to force him to move left, right, forward and back.

Standing Suspect

Let's look at a few ways to use the wristlock to make a suspect stand fast.

Basic entry: From minimum custody



You're holding the suspect by his wrist and elbow.



Use the edge of your inside hand to press into the front of his elbow. Don't insert your wrist because it's easy for the suspect to tighten his arm and trap you.



As you bend the inside of his elbow, push his wrist toward his shoulder.



As his forearm nears vertical, slide your hand down to the back of his hand and begin to move your inside hand...



...up to join it.

Don't let your hands extend onto his fingers. They bend so flexing them won't hurt.

Don't grip his wrist as it doesn't bend; only the joint does. Stay on the back of his hand.



Don't fail to wrap your thumbs underneath because he can easily escape by snapping his wrist downward.



Do wrap one or both thumbs underneath.

Wrist Crank

Chapter 9

This technique is called sankajo (sahn-kah-joe) in Japanese. It's a powerful move for a variety of situations but unlike most of the other techniques shown in this book it's not as forgiving if you apply it incorrectly. Where his arm is held at a 90 degrees angle, it won't work if it's 80 degrees or 100 degrees. Where his hand is 18 inches from his body, the technique will fail if it's 25 inches or 10 inches from his body. The good news is that it's not difficult to do it right. The secret is – ready? – practice.

Elements of the Wrist Crank



The suspect's arm should be bent 90-degrees.



Your hand closest to his body grips the beefy part of his palm and your outside hand twists his fingers. His hand should be open, vertical and held about 18 inches from his side. Stand at his side with your elbow touching his ribs so you can feel him should he try to twist away. If he does, crank the twist harder, maintain the 90-degree bend in his arm, and follow him at his side as you bark commands for him to freeze.

Applications

From minimum custody



Your inside hand presses inside his elbow to bend his arm 90 degrees.



Drop your inside hand to grip the heel portion of his hand as your outside hand holds his elbow in place.



Your outside hand then drops to grip his fingers. To crank on the pain, twist his entire hand toward him. Command him to spread his feet and put his other hand on top of his head.

Note: Think of the process this way: Your right hand grips his wrist, your left hand grips the beefy part of his hand, and then your right hand grips his fingers.

Elbow Techniques

Chapter 10

Armbar

Most police agencies refer to this technique as an “armbar,” though the term can be a little confusing, as some officers believe that the suspect’s arm has to be straight. Not so. In fact, the technique works just as well on a bent arm, sometimes better.

The armbar is used more often on *Cops* and other reality-based police shows (ever notice how the bad guys are always shirtless on those programs), because it’s a natural move that’s easy to remember. But it can be improved upon with attention to detail. For example, one common error is to make the technique a muscle contest. This is fine except when the suspect is stronger. Since you can’t always tell by looking how powerful a person is, it’s better to use solid technique from the beginning.

Elements of the Armbar

Straight arm

This is the variation most people think of when considering the armbar.



Lift the suspect's arm to and against your midsection, lock his elbow by rotating his arm so that his palm faces upward, and place your wrist against his ulnar nerve, located an inch or two above his elbow. Pressing this hurts a little but the effectiveness of the technique is more about pressing the leverage point.

Pull his hand to your far hip.





Don't **press** on the upper arm because you won't get the same leverage benefit as you do pressing on the ulnar point. This makes it easy for the suspect to resist.



Don't **press** his ulnar point with your hand because it can easily slip off.



Don't **get ahead** of the suspect. It weakens the hold and allows him to resist.

We'll look at taking him down in a moment.

Bent arm

Apply this when the suspect resists by jerking his arm upward. Hand placement is the same as with the straight version.



Keep hold of his wrist and press your wrist or forearm an inch or two above his elbow.



Push his ulnar so his entire arm rolls forward. Sometimes his arm straightens sometimes it doesn't. No Matter.



Take him down in a forward direction as pictured here, or in a circle.

Shoulder Locks

Chapter 11

This is one of my favorite techniques, although for years my approach had a few flaws. Still, it worked well and allowed me to introduce hard concrete to many feisty folks. Doing it correctly, though, works even better. What a concept! As we proceed, I'll point what I did wrong so you can avoid doing the same.

Elements of the Shoulder Lock

Why it's a lock



Hold your upper arm motionless and rotate your lower arm up...



...to this position. It can't go much past vertical because the joint locks. That's a good thing for us, and a bad thing for the crook.

The steps



Grab the suspect's right wrist with your right hand.



Slam your left wrist into the crook of his arm, not so hard it knocks his wrist out of your right hand, but enough to remove any rigidity out of his arm.



Simultaneously, push his wrist toward his face as you press into the crook of his arm. The two opposing forces accomplish two things: it makes it difficult for him to resist and it “takes the air out” (free play), making the technique nice and tight.

Bent-Arm Shoulder Torque

Chapter 12

This versatile technique works well as a way to hold a suspect in place for a few moments, as a position from which you can handcuff, and as a powerful takedown.

Elements of the Bent-arm Shoulder Torque



His arm is bent behind him and yours is inserted within it.



Press the edge of your hand into the leverage point, half way between his shoulder and elbow. Pressing here makes it much easier to bend him and take him down than does pressing near his shoulder or near his elbow.



To affect pain, lift your left arm to push his hand toward his opposite shoulder, while also pulling his arm away from his back a few inches.

Important:

Don't just push the suspect's hand upward. Do pull his arm away from his back, too.



Don't use a weak cupping hand to press into his arm.

Citizens don't like to see you hitting people, the chief's office doesn't like hearing about it, and neither do your immediate supervisors. What about the media? You bet your spit-shined shoes they love it. A citizen hits you and no one cares. But should you hit him back, it's almost a requirement in the cosmos that someone nearby captures the moment on a cell phone camera. That person then scampers to a television station and within an hour a spray-haired and Botoxed news person breathlessly announces, "Captured on tape. The film the police don't want you to see. See it tonight at five." Of course, they don't just show it 5 o'clock; they show it ad nauseam for days after.

Although hitting never looks good, when you're confronting a suspect who wants to send you to the hospital or the morgue, you gotta do what you gotta do to get home.

So here's the plan. Do everything possible not to hit. But if you gotta, here's how.

Hands

Chapter 13

It's common knowledge these days in martial arts circles that hitting the head with the fist can injure said fist. So here is the rule on that: Don't do it.

While punching people in the face doesn't look good PR-wise and it gets complaints, you can sweat those things out. But a broken hand can have a profound effect on the rest of your contact with the suspect. Should your punch not stop his aggression and he reaches for a weapon, but you just shattered your weapon hand on his jaw, things could get ugly.

During my 25-year career, I punched a hold-up man who was throwing a series of jabs at me and an arrestee who managed to pull my partner's gun partially out of his holster. I was fortunate that these blows didn't injure my hand and I subsequently got these people under control using joint manipulation.

The third time I used my fist was when the suspect, as if he were in a Hercules movie, picked up my 200-pound partner and tossed him through the air. I punched the guy and, for the next three weeks, the guys at the precinct all wanted to write crude things on my cast.

Here's the thing: My fist was about two inches from the guy's skull when, I swear it's true, I heard that buzzer sound that TV game shows use when the contestant makes an error: *rrrrrrrrrr!* It even sounds a little like the word "error." But before my brain registered the last "r," my knuckle had disintegrated to dust.

Here are a few ways to avoid hearing that buzzer.

Elements of Hand Striking

When to hit

The usual motivations:

- To get a suspect to release a weapon.
- To distract.
- To “soften” him so you can better apply a control hold.
- To knock him away from you, from someone else, or from a weapon.

The improper way



Punching the jawbone, a structure similar in hardness to a horseshoe, can break your fingers and knuckles.



Hitting at an off angle risks spraining or breaking your wrist.

Forearm Slams

Chapter 14

This is one of my bread-n-butter techniques. Think battering ram but with the side of the ram rather than its end. Here is what makes it effective:

- You can hit with any side of your arm.
- You can hit with a single arm or augment your arm with your other hand.
- The stronger your core – abs, lower back and legs – the harder you hit.
- If you train with bench presses, you hit harder.
- It's a good technique for hitting a specific target, for pushing the suspect, and a good tool to smash through his on-guard stance.

TIPS FOR GREATER IMPACT

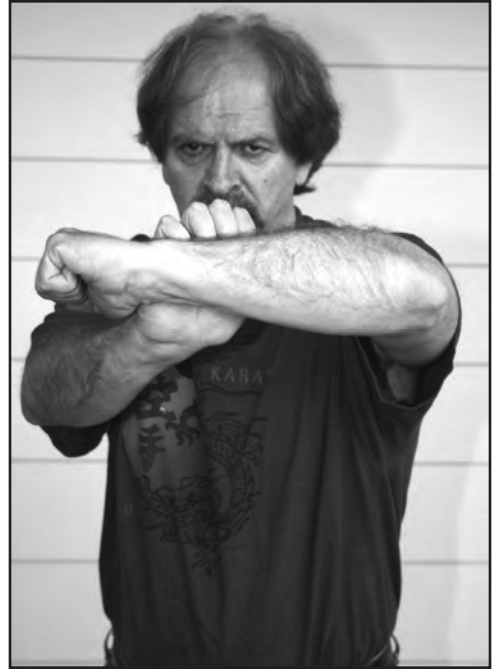
- **Tense your six-pack.** When your forearm is about six inches from the target, tense your abdominal muscles hard.
- **Grunt.** Bring it up from deep within your midsection on impact, as opposed to making a sound just in your throat.
- **Drop step.** Take enough weight off your lead foot to advance without lifting it off the floor. When your step concludes, drop your weight hard onto your lead foot while simultaneously landing your forearm strike. The drop step and the strike must be simultaneous for maximum impact.

Elements of the Outside Forearm

Let's begin with the augmented outside forearm slam. You can certainly do it with just the single forearm, and there are times when that is all you can manage, but the augmented version is superior because it incorporates more upper body muscle and allows for some hip rotation into the blow.



From the hands up position...



...position your lead forearm in front of your chest. Place the palm of your other hand just above your wrist, your fingers curled so that they don't extend over the impact area.



Step toward the target and thrust your forearm forward.

Applications

Here are a few applications. Experiment to find more.

Suspect squares off with you



The suspect lifts his arms in a fighter's stance.



Lunge forward to strike his arms...



...and smash them against his chest.



Hit like a locomotive to overwhelm him.

Attempted headlock



The suspect lunges high to grab you around the head. Drop low and “load” your forearm...



...and slam it into his ribs.

Training tip: In all of the hitting techniques discussed here and those you devise, practice the blows first. Once you feel comfortable with a hitting technique, proceed with the best follow-up control hold or takedown for the situation.

Elbow Strikes

Chapter 15

The beauty of hitting with the elbow is that your impact weapon is a hard bone. That means you can hit just about anywhere and the recipient feels it. Now, should you hit his hard skull or his jaw, you're going to feel it, too. So it's better to hit soft with hard, i.e., your hard elbow into the suspect's chest, stomach, forearm, neck, and so on.

One other aspect of elbow striking is that you must be close to deliver it. Kicks are long-range techniques, punches are middle range, elbows and knees are close range, and grappling techniques are super close. I saw a Hong Kong chop-socky flick recently in which the hero dived 15 feet through the air and elbow smashed his opponent in the chops. Don't do that. You might lose your keys.

Elbow strikes happen up close and personal.

- You're in a tight clinch with a suspect and it's not going well.
- The suspect slides up behind you in a crowd and grabs your holstered gun.
- You're thrashing around on the ground with a suspect.
- You're in a close-range situation in which you need to distract or hurt the suspect.

Elements of Elbow Striking

Keep your hand open when executing elbow strikes to keep your arm muscles relaxed, which increases your speed of delivery.

How many elbow strikes are there?

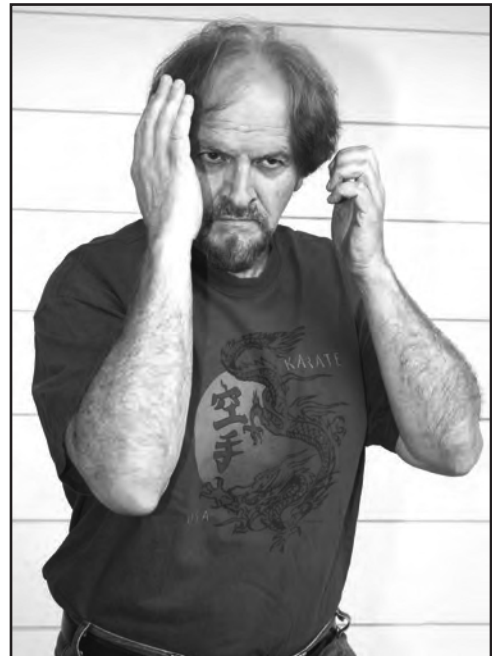
Picture a big circular clock in front of you hanging in the air. Look at the 6 and then sweep your eyes up the right side to 12, a full 180 degrees, half the circle. Erase the numbers in your mind and mark each degree on the clock from the bottom to the top. Now, think of each mark - 180 of them - as a pathway upon which you execute your elbow strike toward the center of the clock. Actually, when you consider that you can also elbow strike back down the clock, there are really 360 pathways on just one side.

Corn-fused? Check out the pics.

1st-degree path (6 o'clock), striking upward.



From your standard on-guard stance...



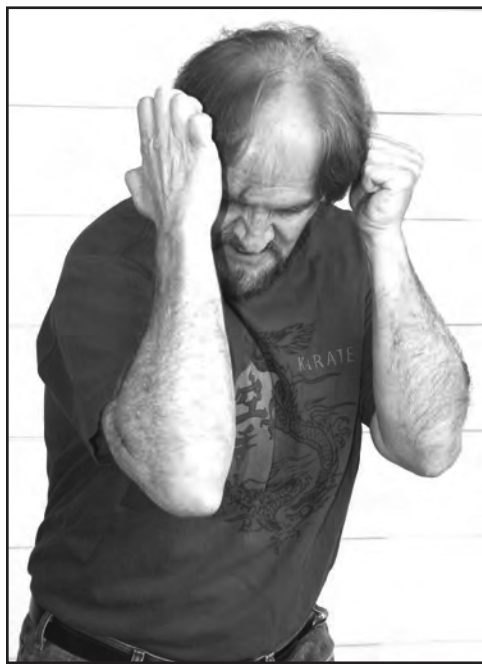
...execute a vertical elbow strike from the bottom of the clock, let's call it the 1st degree...



...up and into the target.

Note: You can deliver all of these strikes with your lead elbow, too.

1st-degree path (back to 6 o'clock), striking downward



This time, beginning where the last elbow strike ended, strike downward, say to a suspect's hand grabbing your weapon... (Elbows Pic 5)

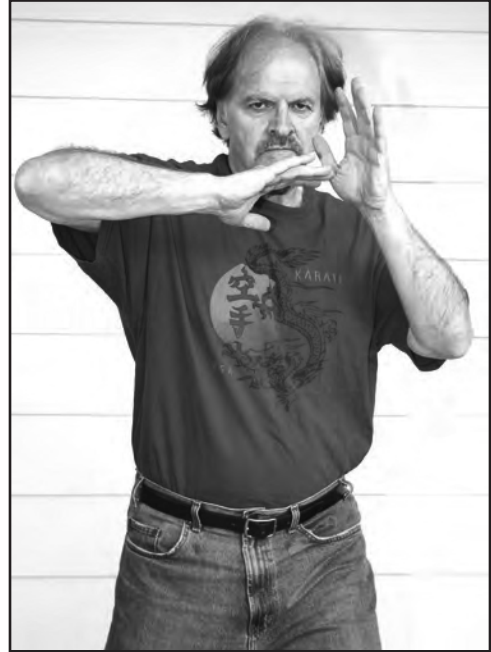
...and crunch his bones.

Let's jump up to the 90-degree mark, half way up the side of the clock.

90-degree path (3 o'clock), striking inward

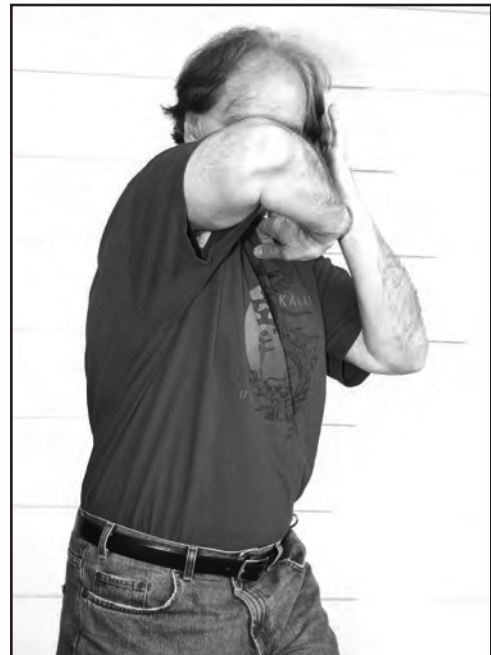


Beginning in your on-guard stance...



...swing your elbow around...

...and into the target
directly in front of you.



Vulnerable Points

Section

4

Let's define a vulnerable point, to include pressure points, as a susceptible place on the body in which there is a nerve close to a bone. Sometimes these places are called nerve centers, where a nerve branch connects to a major nerve pathway, or where several major nerves join together to form a nerve plexus. I also like to include those places that really, really hurt when poked and gouged just because they are...tender? Okay, that's not scientific but it's nonetheless true. Of course, there are nerves endings involved but not to the same extent as the other more commonly used points. These tender places are simply vulnerable, which makes them applicable to police work.

Get the Point

Chapter 17

Pressure point techniques receive mixed reviews from officers for several reasons:

- Not every point works on every person.
- The suspect's state of mind – mental illness, rage, intoxication - affects the technique's success.
- The officer's lack of expertise.
 - o He doesn't know the best technique for the situation.
 - o He doesn't understanding its goal: give direction, distract, control.
- He expects too much. Perhaps movies and TV programs - like Star Trek and that Vulcan dude, Spock, who could knock folks out with a mere touch - has ingrained delusions of mystical power associated with pressure points.

I've had vulnerable point techniques do exactly what I wanted them to do, and I've had them fail. One night I spent half my shift teaching pressure point techniques to a dozen officers, and then went out to finish the night working patrol. An hour later, dispatch sent me to cover two officers having problems with a resisting suspect. Coincidentally, the two had been in my class.

As we tussled with the guy, I saw an opportunity to apply a pressure point technique. After pressing it for several seconds, the suspect grinned, and said, "Ain't workin' is it?" I lost face and I lost credibility with those smirking officers.

Don't think of these techniques as finishing moves, though there are times they do exactly that. Think of them as supplemental tools that assist and provide that additional nudge you sometimes need to get a suspect to do what you want.

Elements of Pressing Vulnerable Points

Base

Like other techniques in defensive tactics, you need to find or create a base when applying pressure to a vulnerable point. If you don't, the technique won't be as effective as it could be; it might not work at all.

Let's say you're grinding your thumb into a suspect's sinus cavity. If he is standing in the center of the room, he simply leans or steps away from the pressure, leaving you standing there with your thumb hanging out like a hitchhiker; it's a no brainer defense on his part. Therefore, you must create a base so that all the pressure goes into the vulnerable point. You can do that by wrapping your other arm around his head.

When the suspect is lying down, the floor becomes the brace. But if you're wrestling someone on a soft sofa or bed, you need to provide a base, usually with your other arm.

Use more than digital pressure

While some defensive tactics systems use what they call digital pressure to press points, you can use whatever works. Press with your fingers, thumbs, knuckles, elbows, forehead, feet and shins. Your entire body is a weapon. Your police baton, portable radio, pen and your handcuffs work well, too.

While many people think of pressure point control as simply pressing a spot, there are other things you can do. You can:

- press
- rub
- gouge
- hit
- or any combination of the above

A WORD ABOUT PAIN

The philosophy of delivering pain by pressing vulnerable points is no different when applying joint locks or any other type of compliance hold. Your objective is to elicit cooperation, control and/or direct the suspect into a position to be handcuffed. Should you inflict more pain than what is necessary and what the suspect can tolerate, there is a possibility that he will go over the edge. His desperate mind will scream for him to resist harder. He might even experience an adrenaline dump that increases his strength and resistance many times over.

When he does what you want, reduce or stop the pain depending on the situation.

A word about words

The pain from some vulnerable points can confuse the suspect as to what you want him to do. Sometimes this confusion leads to greater resistance. Apply the pain and tell him, “Get down, now!” “Move your arm, now!” or “Stop resisting, now!” When he obeys you, reduce the pressure but maintain the technique in place should he resist again.

Applications

Head

There are several vulnerable locations on the head, primarily because the thin skin there just barely protects the nerves under the skin.

Forehead

This hurts like the dickens.



You're applying a control hold on a supine suspect but he is beginning to eat the pain and push himself up. Press your knee down on his forehead to pin him and then rub it in to activate the Pain-o-meter.

Cheekbone



Pressure on the cheek hurts but doesn't give clear direction. Use your verbal commands in conjunction with the technique. "Keep your head down!"

Grind the middle knuckles of your fingers into his cheek.

In all my martial arts books and DVDs, I emphasize easy techniques and simple concepts and principles. If you ask a question in class and your teacher gives you a complex answer, he is trying to be impressive or he is missing the point of hand-to-hand combat. Fighting is too fast and furious to be complicated. Never is this more important than when thrashing about with a combative suspect.

In this section, we look at ways to control the suspect's head. The concept is this: Control his head and his body follows.

We are also going to look at ways to make him sleep when other options are not feasible. The concept is this: Put him to sleep and his body snoozes too.

Head Disorientation

Chapter 18

We see our world through our eyes (you can quote me if you want). The ground is down there, the ceiling or sky is up there, and everything to the right is, well, to the right. When we look up or in any direction, we most often do it on our own accord. Since we control the action, there are no perceptual issues. However, when someone else forcefully turns or lifts our head, we experience a brief sense of disorientation, dizziness, and sometimes confusion that gives us pause. That is what you want to force upon a dangerous suspect so that it provides you with a window of opportunity to dump him, apply a control hold, and handcuff him. Since you don't know how long that window is going to be open, you must act fast.

Here are a few situations in which you force the window open.

Defense/Offense

Palm forehead

This move always works like a charm for me. To get a sense of what it feels like, look at this page for a moment and then quickly snap your head up so that your face is flush with the ceiling. Did you experience a mild sense of dizziness? Well, it's worse when someone forces your head up and continues to force it back until you splatter onto your back.



Swat aside the suspect's reach.

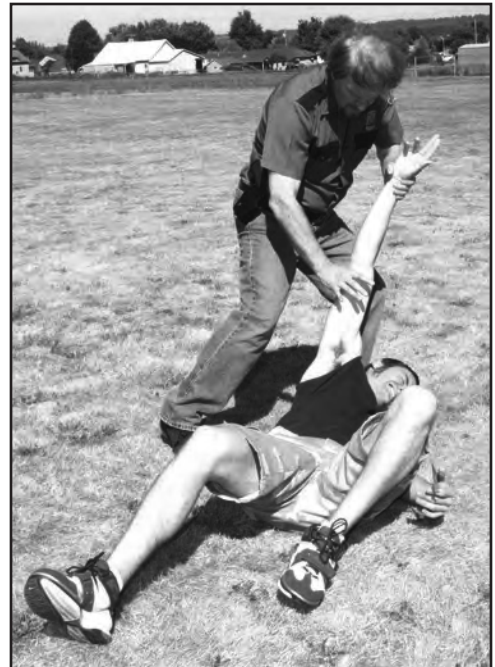


Lunge forward with your other hand and palm his forehead back.



Continue to push so that his face looks straight up as you move even with him. Keep pushing as he goes down.

Grab his arm and proceed with a turnover technique.



What type of baton an officer favors is often determined by the amount of training time he's been given with it. The more time, the greater his skill, the more he likes it.

I carried a straight, light-weight metal baton for years, which I liked because I trained with it often and taught it to recruit academies. Then one day – after a controversial incident in which a suspect had died from an officer-applied sleeper hold - hundreds of side-handled batons arrived at our training unit. It was supposed to appease the officers after the front office banned the sleeper hold.

I hated the thing from the beginning because I found striking and thrusting with it to be an unnatural action under stress. My theory was that when you give a child a straight stick he swings it into your shin without any training. The side-handled baton, however, requires you to spin a little protrusion!

But since I had to teach it, I began to train with it – a lot. I practiced on my breaks, I took it home and practiced, and I made up an 18-count striking and thrusting set.

To my chagrin, I became quite proficient with it. Now, I still didn't like it but I could spin and thrust that thing like a real whiz bang.

Most other officers didn't like it either and with good reason: They received only two hours of training with it. So they complained long and hard until, a few years later, the front office bought everyone collapsible batons. Today, most don't like that one either.

In the end, you carry what you carry and, more times than not, you don't get a choice. Therefore, as long as you have to hang it from your belt, it's in your best interest to practice with it, and often.

Here are a few tips on ensuring that you're using the right body mechanics no matter what version you carry. The concept is simple:

Use improper body mechanics and your blow lands like a marshmallow.

Use the right body mechanics and you blow hits like a shotgun slug.

Body Mechanics

Chapter 22

One day while training cops in an in-service class, I put on the Redman suit and faced a class of twenty officers who grinned as if just handed a free Starbucks. Why not? They were about to thump another cop who was dumb enough to let them do it.

If you haven't worn a padded suit, such as a Redman, imagine stumbling through Desert Valley, sun blazing at 130 degrees, while wearing clothing designed for Antarctica. It does a good job of absorbing most blows, though those that land in the thin places where the padded sections connect produce some serious stinging.

I shuffled about to give the trainees a moving target as one by one they advanced and whipped their collapsible batons into my legs, arms and ribs. Except for one or two who found the thin areas, the blows went mostly unfelt: then the instructor called for the line to hit me with two-handed thrusts.

With one hand near the front of the baton and the other near the end, the trainees, one after another, rammed their batons into my stomach and chest. Those I felt more than the strikes since the energy of a thrust is concentrated into the somewhat pointy end of the baton.

The next to the last trainee in line was a big SWAT man, a guy so huge they could have used him for their equipment van. With a gap-toothed, evil smile, he drove his baton into my solar plexus, knocking me back a step and sending a small, dull ache through the ol' breadbasket. Everyone laughed and patted the guy's tattooed muscles as he lumbered to the back of the line.

Last was a new officer, a man who weighed about 130 pounds, undoubtedly happy that the bureau no longer had a minimum height and weight requirement for hiring. I was still throwing good-natured insults at the SWAT monster when the little guy's thrust hit me like an artillery round, knocking me back several steps so that I had to desperately flail my arms not to fall over in the big suit. A wave of nausea swept through me that nearly brought up my lunchtime burger. I even looked down at my stomach to see if there might be a hole in the padding.

Later, after I'd removed the padded suit and rubbed my tender, soon-to-bruised stomach, I asked the small officer how he was able to hit me harder than all the others. I asked if he trained in the martial arts. He looked around to ensure no one was listening, and nodded.

When I asked him to demonstrate his form, it was immediately apparent how he was able to generate so much power. His body mechanics – hip snap, lead-leg lunge, speed, and obvious mental intent – were flawless. That was the difference that made him hit harder than even the oversized SWAT man who had hit me using only his muscles.

Martial arts legend, Bruce Lee, weighed about 135 pounds, but could hit with the same power as a 225-pound man. He once designed a heavy, hanging bag that not one of his training partners could move more than a few feet with their best punches and kicks. Lee could kick it so hard that it slammed into the ceiling.

Let's look at how you can incorporate proper body mechanics, as well as the suspect's momentum, to generate greater force with your collapsible baton, straight baton or side-handled baton.

STRENGTH

Strength matters. While this chapter is about ways to create force using precise body mechanics, strong muscles compound your power. You don't have to train like a bodybuilder; all you need are two, twenty-minute workouts a week to dramatically increase the strength in your legs, arms, chest and back. You will look better, feel better and, when you combine your new strength with proper body mechanics, your baton blows will land with awesome lethality.

“The bigger they are, the longer you’re unconscious.” - George Carlin

The biggest guy I’ve tangled with weighed 400 pounds and had been a weightlifting competitor in the Olympics. I’m guessing the heavyweight division. He was fat, he had giant muscles and he had the strength of the gods. The story was he had dropped a barbell on the back of his neck in competition, severely damaging a nerve there. From that day on, he experienced intense pain, made tolerable only by daily medications. One day he ran out of his meds and that’s when a half dozen officers, including me, got a call on a “really big guy gone berserk and tearing up his house.”

His hands were the size of Dodge Ram hoods and, for the first five minutes of our officer/citizen contact, he used them to toss us around his trashed living room while his mother hid behind a sofa on all fours calling out for us not to hurt her baby. Someone shouted “together, charge!” and we did, toppling him to the floor. Four of us draped our bodies over his four limbs and two more cops lay across his mountainous upper body. One smallish officer, who was clinging to a massive thigh, was tossed airborne. But to his credit, he courageously crawled back to straddle the limb again.

Handcuffs were out of the question and a pair of ankle restraints from an ambulance was too small. The two ambulance drivers got the idea to twist a couple of bed sheets into a “rope,” which we used to bind the huge fellow’s arms and legs.

Getting him onto a stretcher and stumbling with him on wobbly legs to the ambulance was not unlike the task the Egyptians had maneuvering those giant blocks of stone up the sides of the pyramids.

Training and Fighting Concepts

Section

9

Let's look at a few concepts that pertain to dealing with dangerous people, to training, and to all-out fighting. As I've said a few times throughout this book, there are no absolutes in a fight; understanding this critical truth goes a long ways toward keeping your mug free of scars. Think about the concepts that follow and keep them in the forefront of your mind throughout your workday, and during the other 18 hours, too.



Concepts

Chapter 24

Fighting concepts are just as important as techniques; some argue that they are more important given officers' limited training time. Think about the concepts here and ponder how they apply to what you do. Think about them in advance, so that they will serve you when your heart rate is going Mach 10 and your adrenaline is crashing against the rocks.

Survival Concepts

When justified to use force, don't hesitate

The late martial arts master Ed Parker said often, "Those who hesitate, meditate in the horizontal position... forever." He's right. In fact, hesitation to use force is one of the characteristics found in FBI research that gets cops killed. Keep in the forefront of your mind that force is justifiable in situations you reasonably perceive as threatening; you can even employ pre-emptive force to stop a threat. In other words, you don't have to wait until you're assaulted or injured. Besides, it might be too late to act then.

Don't quit

Don't give up because you're tired or injured. Author Kit Cessna – Delta Force veteran and SWAT officer – writes this in his excellent book *Equal or Greater Force*, published by Paladin Press:

“It's never over until it's over.' When I was younger, I used to think that was just a quaint saying, but now I know that it is true. ...it's meaning is simple. The fight isn't over until it is *really* over. Don't count yourself out; that's somebody else's job. If you find yourself in a situation where you are fighting for your very survival, then you

don't stop for anything while you are still alive and moving. Plenty of people have received grievous injuries and gone on living. Plenty of people have gone into a fight where the odds appeared to be completely against them, yet they prevailed in the end. Many people have been in situations when they thought they were going to die, only to live and tell about it... Whatever you do, don't quit."

Don't take shortcuts

Sometimes it's the hard working, arrest driven officers who take shortcuts, shortcuts that get them hurt. I heard of one officer who did a quick pat down of a suspect, placed him in the backseat of the police car without handcuffing him, and then drove off to jail. Half way there, the officer realized he should have searched the man a little more thoroughly when he heard the distinctive sound of a round being chambered into to a shotgun. *His quick-search missed a great big shotgun!* The officer survived to tell the story.

Trusting your "cop's instinct" too much

You're a veteran cop and you can read people better than those with advanced psychology degrees. For sure, a cop's sixth sense about things is a powerful tool that even some courts of law respect. But, BUT, you just might be wrong next time.

When I walked a beat in skid row I saw a cop get his jaw broken by an old wino he had arrested a dozen times before without incident. In fact, the officer had bought the man a meal on more than one occasion and had saved his bacon several times when other street folks wanted to kill him. This time after the officer picked him up out of the gutter and was walking him to the police car, the man shattered his face.

I once came this close to eating a big nail when I tried to scoot a street drunk out of the way so that tourists could make their way to a trendy shop. I had known this wino for 15 years and had never had a bit of trouble from him. This time he snatched a board with a protruding nail from his grocery cart and swung it at my head. My alert partner grabbed the man's arm and saved my skull from looking like a colander.

Your gut feelings are powerful tools, but don't count on them 100 percent. Don't count on anything 100 percent.

Philosopher Bertrand Russell said: "...fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts." He also said: "I would never die for my beliefs because I might be wrong."

Drive him backwards

You can move forward faster than he can back up. When he retreats defensively from you, charge him hard and fast to confuse his thinking and overpower him physically.

High/low

When striking with your baton, hit his elbow and follow with a blow to his shin. Then hit his elbow again. Hitting high then low, or low then high, disrupts the brain. I have found that the recipient's clear thinking shuts down around the fourth or fifth blow.

Concepts to take on patrol

1. **Action is faster than reaction.** I have had countless officers tell me over the years that remembering this concept saved them on the street.
2. **You can't judge how dangerous a suspect is by his appearance.** Even dweebs can pack a weapon or know kung fu.
3. **Always watch the suspect's hands.** If you can't see one of his hands, be very concerned.
4. **You can see every action a suspect makes by watching the triangle formed by his chin and shoulders.** Continuously move your eyes from his eyes to his shoulders.
5. **Execute your attack** – body-weapon hit, joint lock or baton strike – with authority so that the suspect isn't given an opportunity to strike back.
6. **Be cognizant of the suspect's friends.** When making a physical arrest, position yourself so you can watch his buddies.
7. **Stay alert.** See everything.

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