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Martial Arts  
& Fitness Training

# Self-Defense Guide

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# Self-Defense Guide

Sage Arts  
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## Introduction

This Guide is designed to give the student a reference of the training methods and techniques used in our Self-Defense Course. The Self-Defense Curriculum covers essential concepts, techniques and experiences necessary to become functional in all areas of self-preservation in short order.

This is by no means meant to be a complete Martial Arts program, rather an experience that will prepare someone for the realities of a physical confrontation in a very short amount of time.

This course has secondary benefits as well, which include heightened awareness, balance and dexterity, improved cardiovascular fitness levels, and increased flexibility. Students will also become capable of assertive behavior, which often has a positive effect on the rest of their lives. Many students also use this course as a starting point for continued training in Martial Arts and Fitness.

The following material is designed to help the student begin to think in terms of environment, circumstance, and conflict. This type of role-playing or “What if” scenarios will create drastic improvements on the student’s ability to handle a situation and foster a pro-active mindset. It cannot be stressed enough to the student, the importance of determination.

## Awareness

### What to Expect

The next time you are assaulted, will it be cold out or hot out?  
 Will your attacker be bigger than you or smaller than you?  
 Will there be more than one? Will they have a weapon?  
 Will you be in your car or will you be in your home, or on your way somewhere?  
 Will you be on wet grass or on pavement?  
 Will it be someone you know?  
 Will it be in the morning when it's light out, or at night, after work when you're tired?

The fact is that no matter how much training you do, there is very little that you can predict about a physical confrontation. Some things you can expect:

- It will be fast and unexpected - you will have very little time to think.
- It will be violent.
- It will be unlike anything that you've prepared for and you will have to adapt without thought or suffer the consequences.

### Environmental Concerns

Consider the effects of the Weather on your choice of clothing. Consider your everyday clothing and its effect on your movement capability. When you travel to and from work, do you carry a brief case, lunchbox, a purse, a backpack? How about an armful of groceries? How do each of these affect your movement? Can any of these items make you more of a target? What about the type of shoes you are wearing? Can you run equally as well in high heels or sandals as you can in tennis shoes? Perhaps you're barefoot. How will this limit your movement?

### What to Project

Throughout all of your training, it is important to realize that you are capable of projecting your intention to your opponent, even before the attack begins, willingly or inadvertently. This means that you are capable of communicating things to people in very subtle and non-verbal ways. What you choose to project or what you choose to allow yourself to project (whether it is an accurate portrayal of your present mindset or not) is within your control. Strategies using misdirection are wise, but require practice

## Awareness

### Escalation

Just as you have the ability to communicate things to others nonverbally, you also have the potential to escalate matters within a physical confrontation, to a point where they are out of your control. Be aware that any situation has varying degrees of aggression, and that you will have to justify your actions to the law at a later time. If words can defuse the situation, then that possibility should be exhausted. A relative misunderstanding can go to fisticuffs with the right amount of encouragement. Likewise, a violent situation can become suddenly lethal, given the right opportunity.

### Warning Signs

Just before things become physical, there may be signs given from the aggressor, indicating a resolve to act. These are valuable cues to warn you of imminent danger, and may stand up as such in a court of law. What is important later is demonstrating how you came to believe that you were in physical danger. Things to look for include:

- Amount of Tension in the shoulders
- Narrowing of the eyes, furrowing of the brow
- Clenching of the fists
- Setting the Jaw/clenching the teeth

In addition to this, a reddening complexion would indicate that the opponent is getting very emotionally upset or angry. A whitening or pale complexion would suggest that the opponent is about to act, that the flight or fight physiological response has kicked in, and the blood is being drained from his face to supply his limbs and prepare them for action.

### Priorities

One needs to be aware of their priorities. This too will be dictated by the situation, as each situation is different. Will it involve just you or your home? Will it concern your property or loved ones? Is this a simple mugging, an attempted rape, or an aggressive response to something? Each of these variables will contribute to how you will act. It is important to have these dialogues with yourself before you face them. During and after this course of study, you should give serious thought to your priorities, and justifications for those.

## Preparedness

### Ready Position (Non-Escalating)

This is your “Head’s up” position. Most important is that you don’t want to be caught with your hands down, in your pockets, or anywhere other than where you need them. If you think that there is going to be trouble, don’t let yourself be an easy target. Get your hands out, about chest height, ready for action, in a non-threatening posture. If you are not sure of the situation you find yourself in, you want to be prepared without escalating matters unnecessarily. In other words, you don’t just jump into a karate fighting stance with a yell every time you think there might be trouble.

#### Rule of the 7 “P’s”

Proper  
Previous  
Preparation  
Prevents  
Piss-Poor  
Performance

In class we will refer to this rule often, it is one of the surest ways to prevent the disaster that comes from the Murphy Factor (Murphy's Law - If anything can go wrong it probably will go wrong at the worst possible time).

### Balance

Place your feet about shoulder width, one foot in front of the other, and angle your body slightly so that the target that you present your opponent is slightly narrower than if you were standing square to them. Feel how this allows for quick movement and action. This also helps to protect the groin and solar plexus from a direct hit. You want to prepare yourself for having to move quickly, but also be prepared to keep your balance if it comes to a shoving match.

#### 3 Aspects of Balance

**Sensory Perception** - Using Visual and kinesthetic sensory cues to create a spatial understanding. Effectively, knowing which way is up. This is also responsible for motion sickness and vertigo.

**Inner Ear Mechanism** - Responsible for the body’s equilibrium, this mechanism can be impaired due to ear infections, viruses, and physiological impairments.

**Physical Stabilizers** - The body’s ability to correct its balance using the skeletal structure to support the weight and the muscle control to maintain a balanced position with regards to the stresses that are present.

## Preparedness

### Breathing and Mindset

Control yourself! Your breathing and your behavior are intimately related. On one hand, how you are breathing (the rate of your respiration, your blink rate, the color of your skin in your face, the colors of your eyes, etc.) will tell the opponent exactly what you are about to do (if they are perceptive enough) as well as what state of mind you have. If you do not show that you are successfully intimidated, they may no longer feel that they can easily threaten you without consequence. The image that you portray to your opponent and to outside parties is HALF of the situation.

On the other hand, the way you choose to breathe can affect your present state of mind (this is the underlying foundation of many methods of meditation). If you find yourself huffing and puffing, and you have not yet begun to exert yourself physically, this condition is a result of emotional/psychological stress. By slowing your breathing, you are also slowing other physiological responses that are directly related to the "Flight or Fight" response (which, coincidentally, is designed to prevent processes unnecessary to survival such as rational thinking). Proper deep and/or aggressive breathing can give you more control over the adrenaline rush that is sure to follow extreme situations, and prevent hyperventilation.

Realize that the mind is capable of incredible things. When you visualize a response to an action, you are actually practicing 1/3rd of the actual movement, in the form of the neurological trigger. Concurrently, this means is that if your mind is not 100% behind your action, you are cutting away up to 1/3rd of your potential. One way to insure that you are accessing closer to 100% of your potential is through the use of mindset training.

### Psychological Preparation

It has been said that 90% of a fight takes place within the minds of the fighters. Yet, few people, when preparing for the realities of a physical encounter spend a proportional amount of time preparing their minds for the event. The fact is that in order to be fully prepared for any encounter, you MUST diligently and frequently train your psychological potential - with discipline - to be capable of anything that your body may require.



# Preparedness

## Verbalization

One of the greatest cues as to the state of mind of someone who is caught within a stressful circumstance is the human voice. The ability to vocalize in a powerful, confident way is one of the first elements that the body will shut down when under duress. By practicing Vocalization under stressful training situations, while hitting pads and dealing with attacks, the body learns to vocalize and harness its own potential without clamming up.

Vocalization also has a psychological effect on the attacker. When combined with a strike, a verbal stun can cause a degree of control over the attacker, taking advantage of the momentary window of responsiveness that is caused by the shock and pain of being struck.

Besides this effect, Vocalization is useful in reinforcing your rights in the eyes of other onlookers, whose testament will effect any legal judgement over how justified your actions were. There are three perspectives in any physical confrontation; yours, your opponent's, and that of an innocent bystander. How and when each of these perspectives are communicated to law enforcement and the judge can have drastic effect on your credibility in the eyes of the law.

## Confidence Building

During class, you will be exposed to a gradual progression of drills and exercises that are designed to prepare you for the realities of a physical confrontation. Pad hitting is used to develop a sense of one's potential, not only in striking, but also in receiving blows, as the exposure to contact gradually builds student's resolve and determination. We are attempting to override existing response patterns, educate them and improve them to be functional and practical to the likely circumstances. This requires you to train in varying degrees of duress.

## Preparedness

### The Threat

The threat, from a legal standpoint, is any perceived reason that will make you feel that your life or well being is in imminent danger, or that of someone near to you. You must consider and be able to articulate the justification for your actions when questioned later by law enforcement officers, including answers to the following questions:

- Could I have Escaped?
- Was I really in danger?
- Is the attacker still a threat?
- Would a reasonable person have done what I did if they knew what I suspected?
- What was it about the attacker that made me feel threatened?

Remember proper justification means establishing in the eyes of the court that your actions were both necessary and appropriate.

### Identify the Threat Potential

Are there cues that will tell you what the potential or intention of your opponent is? Do some signs relay information that would indicate that one type of assailant is more dangerous than another? Consider the following:

Posture - Are they blocking the door? Are they trying to surround you, or limit your escape? Are they relaxed or tense, waiting? Can you identify based on posture which of the people in the immediate area are aware of them, or may be working with them?

Hand Position - What is in their hands? Where are their hands? Could they have a weapon within easy reach?

Behavior - Is their behavior consistent with the environment, or are they behaving in a way that makes them stand out? Are they making other people uncomfortable as well? Are they shunning eye contact, or looking directly at you?

Realize also that you can apply this same level of scrutiny to yourself, to evaluate whether or not you are inadvertently affecting the situation. This will be crucial if the conflict involves law enforcement officers, or mentally/emotionally disturbed people.



# Self-Defense Guide

## Be Assertive!

It is absolutely necessary that you convey to the potential attacker the fact that you are not going to be an easy victim or target. In order to be convincing, there are several Rights that you need to convince yourself of before the encounter:

1. No one has the right to Threaten you or harm you for any reason.
2. No one has the right to take what is yours.
3. No one has the right to make you feel unsafe.
4. No one has the right to threaten your family or household.
5. You have the right to defend yourself in an appropriate manner.

## General Self-Defense Priorities:

1. Protect your computer (Brain). Head shots will usually slow you down in a way that if you take one shot, you will likely take many shots.
2. Hands Up, free your tools, but do not escalate. Raise your hands in a non-threatening manner.
3. Convey Body Language through your posture (eyes forward, shoulders back, feet apart, hands up). Eye contact is very intimidating to an attacker.
4. Don't fight if you don't have to. Make it apparent to onlookers that you don't want to fight, and that you are not the instigator of the conflict. Self-defense also means legal defense in the aftermath of an altercation.
5. When possible, use Language to avoid physical conflict, and make the apparent effort of warning:  
    "Calm down sir, I'm sorry."  
    "Stay away! Get back!"  
    "Leave me alone or I'll hurt you!"  
    "You're going Down!"
6. During the confrontation, Verbalize With your actions:  
    "Get Down! Stop! Get Back!"  
    "Stop Doing this to yourself!"  
    "Stop Hurting Me!"  
    "Stay Down!"
7. When the threat starts, YOU ACT. When the threat ends, YOU MUST STOP your aggression.

## Tools and Methods

Training in any Martial Art can be broken down into 3 categories:

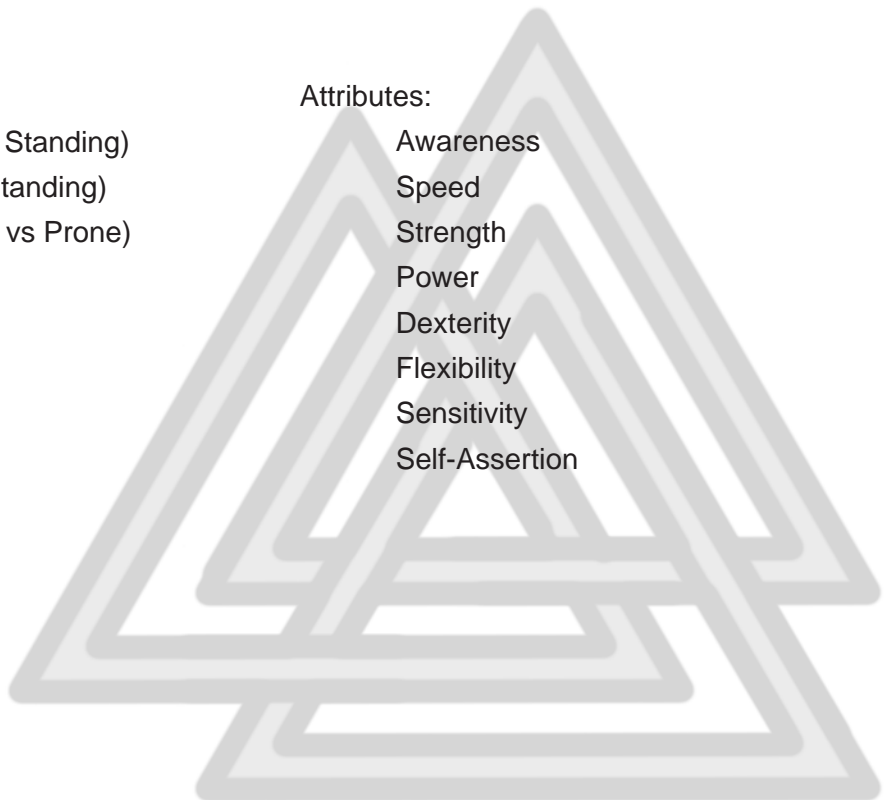
1. Techniques      Technique has to do with learning the form, positions and technical variables involved in responding to a physical confrontation. Literally the “How-to” information.
2. Exercises      Exercises are those activities which develop a student’s attributes for more effective and efficient performance of skills.
3. Drills      Drills are what combines attributes such as timing and rhythm, awareness, and sensitivity with techniques in a format that emphasizes the development of the psychology necessary to defend oneself successfully, and the timing involved through gradual means.

### Basic Tools:

- Standing Guard (Standing vs Standing)
- Grounded Guard (Prone vs Standing)
- Groundfighting Guard (Prone vs Prone)
- Proper Standing Methods
- Proper Falling
- Verbalization - Verbal Stun
- Strikes
- Evasion - Control Drills
- Grab Defense
- Grounded Defense

### Attributes:

- Awareness
- Speed
- Strength
- Power
- Dexterity
- Flexibility
- Sensitivity
- Self-Assertion



## Tools and Methods

### Strikes:

#### Finger Strikes

- Finger Jab
- Thumb Gouge
- Claw
- Pinch

#### Punch

#### Hammer Fist

#### Palm Heel

#### Elbow

#### Knees

#### Straight

#### Side

#### Kicks

#### Front

#### Side

#### Round

#### Twist

#### Stomp

### Grounded Strikes

#### Kicks

#### Front Thrust Kicks

#### Side Kicks

#### Round Kicks

#### Stomping Run

#### Heel Kicks

#### Strikes

#### Punches

#### Hammerfist

#### Palm Heel Strikes

#### Elbows

#### Dropping

#### Inward

#### Backhand

#### Knees

#### Side

#### Dropping

#### Knee Guard

### Targets:

#### Eyes

#### Ears (Eardrums)

#### Nose

#### Throat/Neck

#### Solar Plexus

#### Floating Ribs

#### Groin

#### Thigh

#### Knees

#### Shins

#### Insteps/Toes

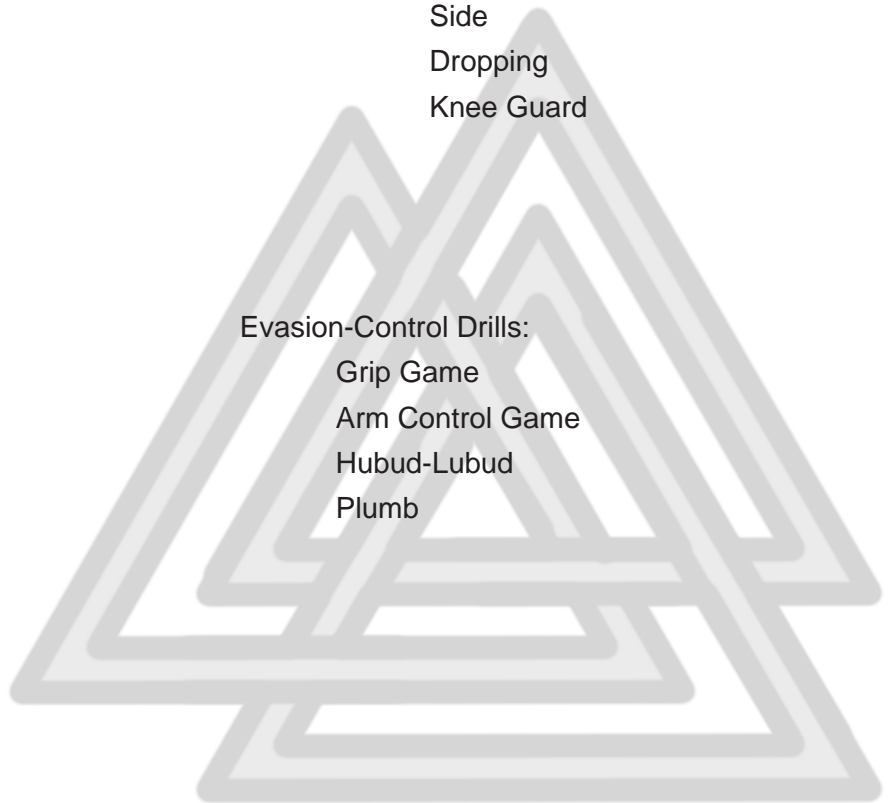
### Evasion-Control Drills:

#### Grip Game

#### Arm Control Game

#### Hubud-Lubud

#### Plumb



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## Grab Defense

- 3 Levels of Threat

- Defensive Response Pattern:

  - Strike

  - Release

  - Counter

  - Evade and Guard

- 6 Categories:

  - Wrist/Arm Grab

  - Long Choke/Strangle

  - Short Choke/Headlock

  - Bear Hug

  - Full Nelson

  - Parts Grab/Lapel

- Grounded Grab Defense

## Grounded Positions

- Mount

- Guard

- Cross Body

- Headlock

- Rear Mount

## Weapons Aspects

- Evasion & Obstacles

- Knife Tapping

- Disarming Principles

- Weapon vs. Weapon Principles

- Improvised Weapons



## Aftermath

### Injury Assessment

Once the confrontation is over, and you are safe (or when you regain consciousness), take a moment to do an injury assessment. First: **DO NOT MOVE**. Before you continue moving around, take run through your mental checklist. Begin with your fingers and toes. By wiggling them, you will likely discover if there are any broken bones or pulled muscles in your limbs. Note any sharp pain, blood, numbness, coldness, burning, or soreness. Run your tongue over your teeth and lips, to check for tooth damage or loss, cuts, etc. Take this observation part by part, to the rest of your body. Try to identify the extent of your injuries. Second: **RELAX**. If you keep your head, you will be ok.

Next, test your perception. Is your heart still racing? Are you unusually dizzy? Is your vision cloudy or blurred? Can you bring things close to you into focus? How about things far away? Can you shift back and forth between these focal points? Is the light hurting your eyes or making them water? This is an important series of questions for determining whether you have suffered a concussion due to head trauma.

If you are injured, try to get help. If you are alone and are using a phone to call for help, try to be as specific as possible about where you are, in case you lose consciousness before help arrives. Above all, when waiting for help to arrive, stay calm and assure yourself that you are going to make it. Sheer will power will go a long way towards your survival.

If you have a cut, attempt to slow the bleeding. There are compression points at each of the limbs which can help to slow the flow of blood to an injured limb. Packing the wound with bandages can also help allow the body to seal the wound, provided that they are not frequently moved and replaced. (Keep adding layers, rather than replacing them, as this will aid in blood clotting, which is what will stop the bleeding).

If you find that you are stabbed, and the weapon is still lodged, **DO NOT REMOVE IT**. The weapon itself may be helping to keep the wound from bleeding profusely. If you find that you are severely cut, avoid as much as possible, any movement that will aggravate that area of your body. The same goes for severely broken bones, as fractured or shattered bones can cause internal lacerations, causing internal bleeding, which can be equally fatal. Puncture wounds are especially dangerous, as bleeding is difficult to staunch even with direct compression. One option is to use a Driver's License or Plastic ID card to create an area of suction at the point of injury to begin to slow the bleeding. Cigarette boxes with cellophane wrappers can also be used for this purpose.

If your injuries are not as severe, note the condition of your clothing. Remember that if you were assaulted, the condition you are in, and your present appearance can be valuable evidence, and should be documented. This is especially true in the case of a rape, in which a Rape-Kit should be performed at the Emergency Room before any showering or changing of clothing. If you have open wounds, and have also come into contact with the opponent's bodily fluids, it is also important to get checked for bloodborne pathogens. This is especially true if there was any biting in the altercation.

## Aftermath

### Plan of Action

One of the most important things you can do to prepare for an altercation is to give a great deal of thought to what you would do if and when it happens. This pertains to your actions both during the assault and immediately after. After an actual encounter, especially a life-threatening encounter, it will be difficult to think clearly, as you may go into shock, and have a great deal of adrenaline coursing through your body.

Some of the effects of shock are chemical in nature and in response to injuries, the loss of life, or even the stress placed on you during questioning by law enforcement. Having the shakes is not be uncommon, likewise with recurrent dreams of the events in the days to come. Reassure yourself that these are natural and healthy reactions to the event. Also remember that if you do not feel well enough to answer the questions that the Police may have for you, that you may request more time to calm down after the event.

### Responsibilities

If you injure someone, and you are no longer at risk in that environment, it is your responsibility to contact the Police and report the incident. This will require answering specific questions as to your involvement in the whole course of events. The answers you give to these questions, and the manner in which you speak with the Police may determine whether or not your will be going to jail, and eventually, prison. If you are involved in a physical altercation, it behooves you to be the first to contact the Police, as it will add credibility to your version of the events, and may go a long way towards your legal defense, should the circumstance end up in court.

### Evidence

Realize that should an assailant escape, you may have on your person, valuable evidence that can be used to secure a conviction at a later time. With the rise of the use of genetic testing in legal cases, this has never been more true. If you have been raped or attacked, do not shower or wash your hands or face or hair until after you have been examined. Scratches from fingernails, and hair that may have been grabbed and pulled out can be exceptionally damning evidence.

The last thing you will do, every time, is get out a piece of paper and pen, and begin to make a written record of the sequence of events, WHILE EVENTS ARE FRESH in your mind. Begin by listing the major events, then get as specific as possible. This will help you later, both in terms of legal preparedness, as well as in psychological healing.