



# American Gun

## ASSOCIATION REPORT

February 2015

Volume I, Issue 2

### In This Issue

#### PAGE 1

WHY CIVILIANS  
SHOULD CARRY GUNS

#### PAGE 3

SIGHTED FIRE OR  
POINT SHOOTING

#### PAGE 7

LOW COST & FREE  
FIREARMS TRAINING:  
PUTTING IT ALL  
TOGETHER

#### PAGE 13

SPOTTING CONCEALED  
WEAPONS &  
PROFILING



## Why Civilians Should Carry Guns

BY DAVID MORRIS

*In his book, "More Guns, Less Crime," John R. Lott Jr. argues that guns in the hands of civilians do far more good than harm. Lott is an economist at the University of Chicago who has been researching this very question for several years.*

**H**is research shows that: Mass public shootings are more common in states that prohibit citizens from carrying concealed weapons. Men, and especially women, who use guns to resist assailants, are significantly less likely to be seriously injured in violent crimes.

Contrary to arguments favored by gun control advocates, legal possession of concealed handguns does not raise the number of accidental firearms deaths or suicides. Knowing that a homeowner may be armed discourages burglars from breaking into occupied dwellings.

No concealed weapons permit holder has ever shot a police

officer, and there have been cases where permit holders have used their weapons to save officers' lives.

Lott was the chief economist at the U.S. Sentencing Commission, the federal group that sets penalties for federal crimes. Lott says, "When I saw the huge life-saving effects of owning a gun, I decided to get a gun.

Lott studied 14 states that adopted right-to-carry laws between 1987 and 1995. Before the states passed these laws, their number of mass public shootings per 100,000 population was 0.0136.

After they passed right-to-carry legislation, that figure dropped to .002 per 100,000 people, a decline of 84%. Lott concludes that gun control laws have noticeably reduced gun ownership in some states, but with unfavorable results.

For each decline of 1% in gun ownership in these locales, there has been a 3% increase in violent crime. Women who offer no resistance to a violent attacker are 2.5 times more likely to suffer serious injury than women who resist with a gun.

Women who resist without a gun are four times more likely to be seriously injured than those who offer armed resistance. More children die in bicycle accidents each year than die from all types of firearms accidents. Finally, Lott concluded that concealed



handguns are the most cost-effective method of reducing crime. They provide a higher return than increased law enforcement, incarceration, or private security devices.

If you've been reading for long, you know that I am a big proponent of concealed carry. Personally, I didn't need any statistics to make my decision. I simply accept the fact that when seconds count, professional help is only minutes away—and I'm on my own in the meantime.

When I'm with my wife and sons...or even carrying one of my boys, I want to have every advantage possible in the event that I have to defend them from a violent encounter. Try and do what you want to me alone, but when it affects my family, I'll take every advantage that I can possibly get to make sure that they are not victims.

# Sighted Fire or Point Shooting

BY DR. LEONARD M. BREURE, PhD



*For those of you who don't know me, I've been in the military or law enforcement for 28 years. I've been a weapons instructor for 23 years, eight years of which was spent as the Chief Instructor of the Passaic County, NJ Police Academy. I've taught thousands of cops, soldiers and civilians to shoot. I've trained under most of the top guys in the country and have a PhD in Criminal Justice Education. Most importantly, I've been involved in several shootings personally.*

I mention all this for one reason only, even after all of this, I still don't have the answer!

What I can do is share my experiences and give you some facts from my research. (I would be glad to provide details to anyone who asks.) You can never get enough training, knowledge or experience!

First, about my two shootings. I am a Modified Weaver shooter - I use my front sight if at all possible, carry a 1911 and dry fire almost every day. In short, I live and breathe this stuff 24/7. The first shooting I was involved in was against a burglary suspect that was trying to kill me. The distance was about twenty yards. My partner said I stood in a perfect Weaver stance, with the gun at eye level. I remember clearly seeing the orange insert on my front

sight. I fired two quick, sighted shots from my 1911 (NOT a double tap). Both rounds impacted about 2" apart, center of mass — end of story! With all the training and practice I've had, at that distance SIGHTED fire saved my life.

The problem with all the statistics and percentages are we don't have all the facts. Numbers of shootings at XXX yards, etc. doesn't tell us if the shots hit or missed. Most stats come from the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reports and their Officers Killed Summaries. "Officers KILLED" most of the time means that whatever they did DIDN'T WORK. In the 60's and 70's when point shooting was the rage, 80 to 90% of the shots fired by NYPD cops MISSED! No matter what the distance. One officer I know of shot six rounds at a suspect, point shooting, at five feet and missed

every time. The suspect ran to about 15 yards, turned and fired at the cops again. The cop remembered what he had been taught at the academy about looking at the front sight, aimed, fired once and killed his attacker. This was a rookie with minimal training and only a few months on the job.

In my second shooting, I was confronted with a 12-gauge pump shotgun, pointed at me from about 12 feet by a deranged subject. With no time to spare, I raised my pistol to eye level, used a flash sight picture (basically just buried the front sight center of mass) and double tapped. The two 230 grain Hydra-Shoks from my .45 entered about 1 inch part. This time the distance was close, the time frame was hyper-quick, but seeing my front sight, even if only briefly, assured two solid hits, ending the engagement instantly.

To answer the question about how much training does it take to be able to use your sights under stress - the answer is a lot, but how much do you want to live??? It's worth the time and effort. For years in the basic program at the Police Academy, recruits got 40 hours of firearms training. I would say that is the MINIMUM to learn and develop acceptable skills with a handgun for a professional. That means training under a good instructor, not just practice on you own. A civilian can probably get by with a 2 or 3 day course to start with, but I would highly

recommend additional training when practical. Today, most progressive agencies conduct quarterly training.

Again, I think that is the minimum. When I worked the street full time, I dry fired every day and shot once a week. Top notch Special Response Teams spend 25% of their time training. That works out to about 40 hours per month! My recommendation to my students is to dry fire at least twice a week and if at all possible to get to the range a minimum of once a month.

Point shooting in real gunfights, (whatever the distance) just doesn't have a good track record. Yes, it seems to be what people with little or no training do under stress. That doesn't mean it will work. When you take a close look at a lot of actual shootings and their details, one thing becomes VERY CLEAR...

## YOU STAND A BETTER CHANGE OF HITTING YOUR TARGET IF YOU LOOK AT YOUR FRONT SIGHT!

Does this mean always using your sights? NO. It means that you are more likely to survive if you can, but often the circumstances, including time and distance, don't permit using your sights. Therefore, you MUST have some other options.

Here is one possible solution that many others and I have used for a number of years. Most of the tops schools - police, military and civilian, teach something similar. It has been PROVEN,

time and again in actual shootings. It is based on a couple of fundamental principals:

1. **USUALLY time and distance are proportional in a gunfight.** That means that the more distance involved, creates more time that you have and the more time that you'll need to hit your target. (Also, the greater the distance, the more you need your sights.) Obviously there are exceptions.
2. **Regardless of the circumstances,** you are more likely to hit your target if you use your sights. It doesn't matter if you are a cop or civilian, highly or poorly trained, shoot yearly or daily; the fact is sights help you hit what you're aiming at. (Also, the LESS you train, the MORE you need your sights.)
3. **Holding a handgun at arms length,** (even if it's not at eye level), when you are at contact distances with your opponent, is asking to have your gun deflexed or taken away. In extremely close quarters, you must protect your sidearm.
4. **Distance is your friend!** By increasing the distance between you and your adversary, you up the odds of survival in your favor. Movement in general and moving away from your opponent in particular, makes you a harder target for him to hit.
5. **Cover (not just concealment) is your Best Friend!** Movement is good, distance is better, and cover is best. Cover means something that will stop incoming rounds. However, anything that you can put between you and them is better than nothing.

This being said, here is a basic explanation of the system. With proper training, diligent practice and the right mindset, it is the best set of tools for the job.

I will use as an example, a situation that begins at contact distance and moves to greater distances. This will serve to illustrate all the shooting positions.

### AT CONTACT DISTANCE (ARMS LENGTH):

- Defend with your weak arm or push away from your opponent, as the situation requires.
- At the same time draw and if needed fire, using a gun retention or "speed rock" position.

### AS YOU BEGIN TO INCREASE THE DISTANCE (A YARD OR TWO):

- Transition to a two hand hold and begin raising the gun to eye level.
- If need be, at this short distance, you can fire from a point shooting position.

### CONTINUE TO MOVE AWAY AND HOPEFULLY TOWARD COVER (ABOUT 3 - 7 YARDS):

- As the distance increases and the gun comes up to eye level, use a flash sight picture by placing the front sight center of available mass. No need to worry about the rear sight yet.
- Continue to fire (if necessary) and keep moving.

### AS THE DISTANCE INCREASES AND YOU TAKE COVER:

- Assess the situation. If you have not stopped your antagonist, consider why not? Are you

missing? Slow down - front sight, press the trigger... Are you hitting but he's not going down due to drugs, body armor, poor shot placement, etc? Slow down, consider shooting for the central nervous system - front sight, press the trigger...

- At this point (medium distance), proper use of BOTH sights becomes critical. Remember the basics, sight alignment, breath control, trigger squeeze...

### IF THE DISTANCE INCREASES MORE OR YOU ARE USING LOW COVER:

- Switch to the Roll-Over Prone position.
- Maintain effective use of cover, focus on the front sight and press the trigger.

### KEEP IN MIND THAT THROUGHOUT THIS OR ANY DEADLY FORCE ENCOUNTER YOU SHOULD:

- Be giving loud, simple verbal commands (STOP! STAY AWAY! DROP THE KNIFE!)
- Adjust your use of force (Force Continuum) as the situation changes.
- Reload as needed, (hopefully from cover), as soon as there is a break in the action.
- Scan to look for other subjects, break tunnel vision, etc. - "Check Six!"

I use this example only to show how your shooting position needs to change as the distance / time changes. Is it a lot to learn and practice? YES! Is it worth the effort? MOST

DEFINATELY!

One drill that can be used to practice this system goes something like this...

Start at arms length from your target. Block or strike with your weak hand as you draw and fire two rounds (double tap) from a gun retention or "speed rock" position.

As you take a step or two to the rear, switch to a point shooting type position and fire a couple more rounds.

Continue to move rearward, raising the gun to eye level. Flash sight picture... front sight center of mass... several more rounds... keep moving...

Somewhere in the mid-range distances (I don't like fixed distances on the range - they're not fixed on the street.) take cover, reload, assess and fire a few more rounds.

Transition to a Roll-Over Prone position and fire a few more rounds... scan, reload... End of exercise.

In the beginning you would practice this VERY slowly. Fire, then move, stop, fire, move again, etc. As you progress, the tempo increases. Done properly by an experienced shooter, this entire drill flows as one continuous fluid exercise.

Having developed a selection of tactical tools in the form of several properly trained and regularly practiced shooting styles or positions, is the ONLY real way to maximize your survivability. In short, if at all possible, look at the front sight and press the trigger. I'm alive today because I did exactly that!



# Low Cost & Free Firearms Training: Putting it all Together

Over the last few issues, we've covered the quickest way to become a faster shooter, how to use dry fire to lock in firearms skills, using airsoft as a supercharged version of dry fire, and how to use the same mental rehearsal techniques that Olympic medalists use to become a better shooter.

In addition to saving money and time and helping you shoot better in the shortest amount of time possible, there are some additional benefits that preppers in particular will appreciate. First, in a time of increasing regulation and ammo shortages, one or more of these training methods will ALWAYS be legal. And second, in a SHTF scenario where you have to get people up to speed as quickly as possible while using as little ammunition as possible, these

methods can't be beat.

If you subscribed after any of these past articles ran, don't worry. They are all sections from my upcoming book that we'll be releasing this summer and all Lamplighter subscribers will have an opportunity to get it at a discounted rate.

Today, we're going to talk about how to put dry fire, airsoft, and mental rehearsal together into an organized training plan and I've got to start off with a well known quote, "Practice doesn't make perfect—Perfect practice makes perfect." Put simply, the strategies that I've covered will lock in muscle memory VERY quickly and it's important that you use them to lock in good technique rather than bad technique.

There are four training situations that we're going to cover: during a firearms class, after

a firearms class, daily formal training, and daily informal training.

### **DURING AND AFTER FORMAL TRAINING**

The best way to lock in efficient technique is to start using these training strategies during or immediately after a training session with a firearms instructor. One of the ways that I do this is stay up on the line for an extra minute or so every time there's a break. I've never been to a group class where I could actually handle my firearm on the line during breaks, so I run through one or more of the following:

1. Practice the muscle motion of the technique we just covered with empty hands, eyes open.
2. Practice the muscle motion of the technique we just covered with empty hands, eyes closed.
3. Visualize myself running through the technique we just covered with perfect efficiency.

In one minute, I can run through a technique using any of the three strategies about 10 times or about 5 times if I break it down into components. These extra 5-10 perfect repetitions, several times during a class, can make a big difference. Remember, anytime you are learning a new skill you not only have to develop new muscle memory, but UNLEARN your old muscle memory. The

more perfect repetitions you can run through in as short of a period as possible, the quicker you'll be able to lock in your new techniques.

As soon as you finish your class for the day, ask your instructor if you can stay a few minutes and run through some of the skills you learned with an empty firearm. There's few things more frustrating than teaching a class where the students don't take what you're telling them seriously so you'll usually find instructors will be very happy to let you run through dry fire drills on the range once they confirm that it's a cold range. If they don't want you to do dry fire on the range, then make sure to get somewhere where you can run through the techniques you learned as soon as possible...even if it's just sitting in your car with your eyes shut doing mental rehearsal.

### **DAILY FORMAL TRAINING**

My training protocol is specific to my situation, which is defending against a lethal threat. My primary firearm is normally a handgun, and I usually carry concealed. When my primary firearm is my long gun, I open carry my handgun. The reason I say this is because you may need to add or change the specific skillsets that you practice from the ones that I use. As an example, if you're training for either cowboy action, the Bianchi Cup, IDPA, or IPSC, you'll want to add in specific sequences that you'll be using in competition.

I have an airsoft range set up in my office/



warehouse area, so I train at least once a day and usually end up taking a couple of additional shooting breaks during the day. This is admittedly an ideal situation, and I haven't always had this option available. One alternative that I suggest is to set up a few targets in your garage and practice airsoft and/or dry fire every day when you get home from work—just make sure to ALWAYS remember proper safety protocols with both airsoft and dry fire.

One of the secrets to rapid improvement in firearms skills is how frequently and regularly you practice them. If you can run through 50 repetitions per day (a few minutes) for 20 days a month, you will not only have 1,000 repetitions per month, but since you're doing them every day, you won't lose any proficiency between sessions. Of course, if you can do 100-500 repetitions per day, that's even better.

**Here's another way of looking at it. Let's say that your options are to do one of the following:**

1. Run through 1,000 repetitions the 1st of every month.
2. Run through 50 repetitions every weekday of the month.

Let's say that the last day of the month is a Saturday and you need to use your firearm for real. If you did all of your training for

the month on the 1st, then it would have been roughly 30 days since you last had trigger time. If you're spending a few minutes every day, then you would have had a little trigger time each of the last 5 days.

This is VERY similar to comparing someone who works out REALLY hard once a month to someone who works out a little bit every day. The person who works out a little bit every day will beat the once-a-month guy every time.

These are the skill sets that I train using a combination of airsoft and dry fire:

- ▶ Drawstroke, (open/concealed) sight acquisition, trigger press, follow-through, reset.
- ▶ Move to cover while drawing.
- ▶ Transition from long gun to handgun.
- ▶ Failure drills.
- ▶ Reloads Support hand
- ▶ Fight to your gun. Start with hand to hand and transition to my gun.
- ▶ Unorthodox positions. Seated, laying down (all directions), rolling, recovery & getting to cover starting on the ground.
- ▶ Low light

One other thing that I've covered before, but that's worth repeating is that I usually combine calisthenics, heavy bag work, and weights with my dry fire and airsoft training. I

do interval training where I workout for 20-60 seconds (wearing my firearm) and switch to firearms training during the rest periods. I'll repeat this cycle for my entire workout and really like the combination of high intensity physical activity and firearms training.

**Here's an example training session from yesterday (all with my Glock in an in-waistband holster):**

1. **4 sets of jumping lunges** firing 3-6 rounds (airsoft handgun) between sets while drawing from concealment and moving side to side, changing mags when necessary
2. **4 sets of kettlebell clean & presses** engaging 2 targets with 3-6 rounds between sets while drawing from concealment and moving to cover, changing mags when necessary.
3. **4 sets of pushups** firing 3-6 precision headshots between sets, changing mags when necessary.
4. **4 rounds on the heavy bag**, firing 3-6 rounds at both the heavy bag and a paper target between sets, changing mags when necessary. (The purpose of this is to practice transitioning from fighting with my hands to fighting with my firearm.)
5. **10 SLOW dry fire repetitions of drawing**, acquiring my sight picture, trigger press,

and follow through with my sidearm.

6. **10 dry fire repetitions of drawing**, acquiring my sight picture, trigger press, and follow through with my sidearm.
7. **10 dry fire repetitions of drawing**, acquiring my sight picture, trigger press, and follow through with my sidearm, while moving to cover.
8. **39 SLOW dry fire repetitions of drawing**, acquiring my sight picture, trigger press, follow through, (rack the slide) and repeat with my sidearm and snap caps. (39 rounds because I have 2 15 round mags and one 8+1 mag set aside for dry fire with snap caps.)

It's not that long...a couple hundred reps with different muscle groups, 50-100 rounds of airsoft, and 69 dry fire repetitions. The key is that if you do something similar every day, it adds up to thousands of repetitions per month. And don't worry about doing any specific exercise. I usually do additional sets of fighting-based calisthenics where the movements focus on the core and recovery after being knocked down, but you can do any kind of exercise you want or none at all.

You don't need airsoft to do any of these exercises, but most people find that they practice more often with airsoft than with just dry fire. If you decide not to train with airsoft and only use dry fire, I'm going to share something with you that I learned from



author/ shooter Steve Anderson in his book, “Refinement and Repetition: Dry Fire Drills for Dramatic Improvement” that changed the way I do dry fire.

When doing dry fire alone, Steve suggests, and I second, that you rack the slide for the first shot and then continue releasing and pressing the trigger for subsequent shots until you reholster. This lets you focus on acquiring and reacquiring your sights without being distracted by having to rack your slide between each shot to reset the trigger.

Remember, you can even run through these drills if you don’t have your firearm with you by shutting your eyes and running through the drills in your mind. Don’t underestimate the value in mental rehearsal. Your brain doesn’t know the difference and repeated studies have shown that mental rehearsal is almost as good as—and sometimes better than—live practice,

especially when it’s used in combination with high quality live practice.

Every day, I run through slightly different drills. Some days I focus more on fundamentals, and some days I work on more advanced skills. Today, I’m going to be training with my AR-15 on a sling and my 1911 in a Serpa belt holster. I’ll be working on the following:

1. React to a threat at different angles with my AR.
2. Left handed cornering with my AR.
3. AR mag changes.
4. Engaging multiple targets while moving to cover.
5. Transitioning from AR to 1911 and engaging instead of reloading.
6. Type 1-3 malfunctions with dry fire and snap caps.

If you use airsoft for training, I STRONGLY suggest that you follow-up your training sessions with a little dry fire time using your real firearm. You’ll benefit from handling your firearm on a regular basis and knowing the feel of the trigger, but there’s an even bigger reason. One of the biggest factors in how successful you’ll be with your firearm under stress is your belief level in your skills. If you train primarily with airsoft and don’t convince your brain that the training carries over to your real firearms, then you won’t have the confidence that you need under stress.

## DAILY INFORMAL TRAINING

In addition to “formal” training, I also suggest that you incorporate mental rehearsal into your training by either running through drills or scenarios in your head throughout the day. I do this when I’m at stoplights, when I’m standing in line, and before I go to sleep at night.

Sometimes I run through specific drills like acquiring my sights, reloads, or failure drills, but usually I run through scenarios like what I’d do if I was suddenly involved in a carjacking, holdup, or home invasion where I’m currently at wearing what I’m currently wearing and using whatever weapons I have available.

In my car, this involves visualizing what I’d do with my coat and seatbelt while drawing. In bed, it involves grabbing my light, getting my handgun out of my safe, evaluating triggers to decide if I have time to get my body armor, long gun, and tac vest, and the best way to keep my family safe.

## IN CONCLUSION

*As I said in the opening of this series, these training techniques have been proven over several decades by elite units such as the US Navy Seals, Soviet and Russian Spetsnaz, GSG 9, British SAS, and US Army Special Forces, Detachment Delta, and Olympic gold medalists. They’re used by professional and amateur competition shooters around the globe and, in many cases, they’re the difference between first place and 5th or 6th place. Keep in mind that they don’t use these techniques because of limited budgets—they use them because they’re the absolute best training tools that they have available to them.*

*In short, they work and they work very very well if you will use them and I strongly encourage you to start doing so. At a minimum, start using mental rehearsal to run through drills and scenarios on a regular basis. You’ll be pleasantly surprised at the impact that it has on your shooting.*



# Spotting Concealed Weapons & Profiling

*Staying alert includes being able to spot a person who is or may be carrying a concealed weapon.*



As you observe people there are certain things you should be looking for that may indicate the presence of a weapon.

For example: As a person walks only one of his arms swings. His coat is left open in cold weather. A shirt is buttoned only at the top and the tail is hanging loose over his waistband. A person sees you, looks down toward his hip, then avoids eye contact.

According to Robert Gallagher, a former NYPD detective who studied over 1,000 arrests by New York City cops, people who try to conceal guns develop special behavioral characteristics.

Some of these traits are now taught to the U.S. Secret Service agents for crowd assessment during presidential and dignitary

protection assignments.

According to Sgt. Robert Stash, a gang specialist with Chicago PD, most people are right-handed and when they greet other people they use their right hands.

Let's say you see a bunch of gangbangers hanging around and someone walks up and greets them using his left hand. It could signal the presence of a weapon.

People who hide an illegal gun in their pocket tend to hold on to it to prevent its outline showing through the clothing. Someone with a gun in his waistband tends to keep a hand in the nearest pocket to hold the gun and keep it from falling below the waistband.

People who carry an illegal handgun tend not to use a holster. If they have to drop the gun and run, they don't want to be caught with and have to explain an empty holster.

## COMMON METHODS OF CARRY INCLUDE:

- A right-front pocket or the appendix area of the waist-band. Over 80% of armed suspects carry their guns in this location, according to Gallagher.
- A right-rear pocket or the waistband between the right hip and the small of the back.
- The left hip waistband (cross-draw position) is the least popular.

Shoulder, ankle or other exotic holsters are



seldom used by street gangsters.

When looking for concealed weapons, look for things that don't look right.

Look for a jacket that doesn't hang naturally. An uneven hemline may indicate the presence of gun in the coat pocket. When an armed person moves, the heavy object will swing. Being aware of this, a subject may hold onto the hem near where the gun is to keep it steady.

I have this problem with my SigTac coat because the holster is on the chest. A buddy of mine sews holsters into his coats under the armpit and it allows the coats to hang evenly, even when unzipped.

A mode of dress inconsistent with the weather - a coat, jacket or vest on a hot day. Or a coat left open on a cold, windy day may provide quick access to a gun.

A shirt draped over dress slacks may offer concealment to a handgun. Un-natural

bulges, a jacket carried over the arm, a hat being carried instead of worn, all suggest the possibility of a weapon.

Body language signals to watch for.

We tend to use our elbow or forearm to press, touch or make contact with the weapon to confirm its presence.

We tend to hold a pocket where the gun is from the outside. We tend to pull up pants or adjust our clothing repeatedly to counteract the weight of a gun and its effects on clothing.

A gun strapped to an ankle or stuffed in a boot may cause the person to favor that leg so as not to jostle the gun more than necessary. When we walk, we may allow the non-gun arm to swing naturally and restrain the other arm to steady the gun or hide any tell-tale bulge.

We may walk with our gun arm held away from the body, to avoid banging into the gun and possibly dislodging it.

If you carry weapons, you'll pick up some tells just because you're being hyper-critical of yourself.

Personally, I find that I pull down or even out my shirt tails when I get out of my car to make sure that my in-waist-band holster is covered.

I am also careful to only reach up to high shelves with my left hand and to bend down at the knees instead of at the waist so that the butt of my firearm doesn't print on my shirt.

Another tell that I have is that when it's really windy and I'm wearing a shirt that flaps too much in the wind, I find that I hold my arm somewhat awkwardly do keep my firearm from showing.

When I'm carrying in a compression shirt holster, with my firearm under my armpit, I find that I push my arm out from my body to move it backwards.

With knives, if I don't see a clip sticking out of a pocket, I look for worn pocket corners and a telltale bulge in the pocket.

Since I am a big fan of neck knives, I look for cordage or non-decorative chain around the neck.

### **Don't be afraid to profile.**

Profiling isn't foolproof, but it does tip the odds in your favor. A few things to look for:

### **Face, neck, and hand tattoos.**

Especially tear drops or "mean" looking tattoos. Keep in mind that they're permanent, so the tattoos could be a reminder from a former lifestyle. I have known several very gentle men through the years who still have gang and prison tats from their younger years.

### **"I'm a badass" look and swagger.**

Oftentimes it's a false front, but it can also be a tool to get psyched up.

### **Red or blue bandana.**

Specifically on the head, on the arm, or hanging out of a waistband or pocket. Keep in



mind that bandanas are great survival tools and lots of people carry them.

### **Age, sex, and dress.**

The fact is that most violent criminals are young males who dress like street thugs. It's important to note that after the collapse of the peso in Argentina, middle aged muggers regularly dressed in suits and hit targets in the banking & business districts.

### **"Aware" vs. "Unaware."**

Criminals, law enforcement, military, and Lamp-lighters all have the trait of being more aware of what's going on around them than the average person. If you spot someone who is obviously aware of what's going on around them, there's a pretty good chance that they're either a potential ally or potential enemy and worth further examination.

### **Response to authority.**

When uniformed law enforcement enters

a crowded room, try to look at the facial expressions of others in the room. You'll quickly notice what a polarizing effect they have.

### **Counter-profiling.**

One of the things that I try to do is appear as if I'm not as aware as I actually am so that people won't profile me as being switched on. If I am with other people and can sit facing a wall that has a mirror on it, I will. I use my peripheral vision to profile people. I smile a lot and try not to look serious. I try to wear clothes that are more hiking/ camping rather than tactical.

And then there are certain facial expressions to be aware of.

Bad guys with guns and bad intentions often avoid eye contact until they are ready to strike. They believe that by avoiding eye contact you will be less likely to pay any attention to them. They also believe that by avoiding eye contact you will be less likely to identify them at a later time.

Bad guys planning their attack may tend to sneak a quick glance at you, then look away. They want to know if you've noticed them and are showing any signs of heightened awareness.

The bottom line is this: You should assume everyone you come in contact with is armed, until you're satisfied they are not. Anyone exhibiting any of the cues described above is considered a possible threat until you are comfortable they are not.



This doesn't mean you need to be paranoid, worried, or that you have to give everyone a thorough examination to look for weapons. It just means that you accept the fact that everyone you meet may have a weapon...whether for good purposes or bad purposes.

When someone approaches you, quickly observe their hands for weapons, their waist area for bulges or signs of concealed weapons and their body language for signs of weapons or bad intentions. If you're more than 3 feet away, you can do this with your peripheral vision without taking your eyes off of their face.

Keep distance between you and anyone you consider suspicious. Be prepared to use cover. Know your options and decide in advance how you will handle any problem.

Don't just look, observe. Watch for body language and facial cues. Bad guys usually aren't too bright and they almost always tell you in advance what they are up to, you just have to know how to read the signs.