

"Powerful and Easy to Use Tips for Pro's or Beginners..."

HOW TO

DEFEND YOURSELF

IN 3 SECONDS OR LESS



**The Self-Defence Secrets
You NEED to Know**

PHIL PIERCE



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How to Defend Yourself in Three Seconds (or Less): The Self-Defense Secrets You NEED to Know!

“Easy to follow with great tips!” – Micheal J Taylor

“An excellent read for martial artists and those interested in self-protection for any level of training and or experience.” – Andrew Curtiss, Examiner.com

“Smart stuff, and not at all what you may have assumed.” – Paul Coleman, BookPumper

“Lots of useful tips that you can easily incorporate into your life.” - Cheryl Eaton

Phil Pierce

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What Can You Get From This Book?

- **Do you know the ‘trick’ to talk your way out of any situation?**
- **How to unlock your brain’s secret power?**
- **How can you win every single fight?**
- **The one easy body position to instantly improve your chances?**
- **Do you know the visual triggers that signal an incoming attack?**
- **How can you train your brain to deal with panic?**
- **The 3 Second rule**
- **How to fight...even when you can’t see!**
- **How you defend against punches, kicks and more**
- **The killer ‘mistake’ with most people’s favourite technique**

The simple aim of this book is to unlock your body’s natural, powerful instincts and open your eyes to some of the little-known secrets of easy self-defence.

Clue: It’s not like it is in the Movies and nothing like you’ve seen in a Martial Arts class!

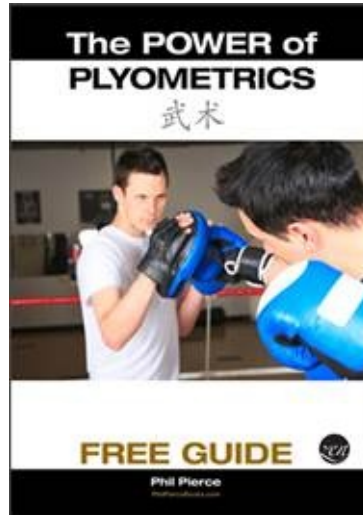
The techniques and methods within this guide are all designed to flow in the way your body wants to move and nothing requires hours of training or revision to understand.

This down-to-earth, no-nonsense approach has something for Pro's and Beginners alike!

Ever wondered what it takes in a real life or death situation to make the right choices? Or how to dominate any violent encounter on the streets? You may be surprised at the answers...

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How to Use this Guide the Right Way (And the Half-Wrong Way...)

For many people the temptation is to jump straight to the techniques at the back of this book and start to figure out how to beat the living daylights out of the next person to give you any trouble!

Sure you can do that, and the physical techniques alone offer a distinct advantage over someone with no knowledge, but without the surrounding understanding of the rest of this guide you will only be getting about half of the picture.



It's important to note that aspects such as preparedness and psychology make up a massive part of self-defence. In fact the majority of incidents I have witnessed or been involved in could have easily been resolved far before any punches were even thrown.

In jumping straight to the techniques you can easily miss some very important elements and deprive yourself of something that could, when the chips are down, make all the difference.

Don't End Up in Prison! (A Foreword)

Some of the techniques in this book are powerful. Lethally so.

There is a very fine line between Self Defense and becoming an attacker yourself. As discussed elsewhere in this guide, the power of adrenaline clouds our judgement when things get hairy and it is at these times we are at the biggest risk of making a stupid decision.



Self Defense is just that; defense.

We NEVER use these methods to attack beyond ensuring our own safety.

The laws around the world are different in every country and it would be difficult to detail the specifics for everyone but as a rule of thumb 'Reasonable Force' is the way to assess any situation.

Your physical actions to defend yourself should be appropriate to the threat you face and, if you have the chance to escape, you should always take it. Not just because it makes sense but because this is often a legal requirement.

In a court of law, defending one's person or property against a threat is usually permissible. Sticking around to inflict further damage however is not, and will land you in prison.

Always take a second and consider your actions, take a deep breath. How will what you do be seen by others?

Good: You block an attacker, strike him in the face once and run away.

Bad: You block an attacker, strike him in the face repeatedly and kick him when he is down.

Good: You shake off an aggressor who grabs you, kick them low once and run away.

Bad: You shake off an aggressor who grabs you, kick them low once and run away then come back later with your friends and beat them to within an inch of their life.

Can you see the difference?

From the Author

Over the years I have trained in more Martial Arts and Self Defense systems than I can count. I don't claim to have mastered them all, but I've seen a lot.

Some have been traditional, some modern. Some have been very effective, some not just useless but downright dangerous!

Every violent encounter is different and while it's impossible to predict what will happen every time I have, in my youth, been the victim of several incidents in which I was assaulted, mugged or just attacked for no-reason. (Looking back it may have been a rough part of town!)

But it was these incidents that drove me into the world of Martial Arts and, thanks to my unfortunate experiences, I have always been acutely aware of the reality of violence. It is ugly, unpredictable and 90% of so-called 'training' counts for exactly nothing.

The problem is that when adrenaline kicks in and our most primal instincts come in to play we are, beneath it all, animals. Scrapping for our life.

This is embedded in thousands of years of our evolution so anything ,and I mean anything, that runs counter to intuition is almost certain to go out of the window when things get real.

So those complicated blocks and twists, all those bizarre acronyms for remembering self-defense methods and all those technical Martial Arts classes will probably count for, at best 10% of what you do in a real life-or-death situation.

Repetitive drills perfecting these techniques can significantly improve that percentage but why fight against our instincts when nature has already wired us to protect ourselves anyway?

The aim of this guide is a no BS approach to self-defense. The methods within this book may seem simple, perhaps overly so, but that's the point. Anything more is just clouding your natural instincts.

There are no complicated techniques, no acronyms to remember and no suggestions that should take longer than Three Seconds...

- ***Phil Pierce***

The 3 Second Secret

The choice of 3 Second Self Defense is not just for a snappy book title. In almost any violent encounter with an aggressor most of the damage is done or the incident is resolved within a few seconds.



That's not to say fights don't last longer – they do, but remember we aren't talking about a bout wherein two opponents duke it out until one is the winner. We are trying to escape a threat and remove ourselves from danger – something that can, and should be achieved much quicker.

There may be a chase or there may be a scuffle that lasts 10 minutes, maybe more, but the finishing technique, the one that stops the threat and gets you safely away usually happens in three seconds or less.

It's also worth noting that this doesn't always mean physical combat. Within Three Seconds a potential aggressor can be turned away or defused through the correct use of body language or verbal cues, without even lifting a finger.

In fact if we consider the implications of situational awareness and making yourself as difficult a target as possible it could be argued that three second self-defense becomes zero second self-defense. The fight was over before it started because you were never there, never chosen as a victim or slipped away unnoticed.

Whether you are a 20-year veteran of Martial Arts or a complete beginner looking for tips on staying safe it's time to re-examine what we know about safety on the streets.

So while three seconds may seem a short amount of time it can be the most important few seconds of your life...

Unlock Your Brain's Secret Power

The 1,2,3 Approach



If you remember the start of this guide it said there would be no acronyms or pointless systems to remember in this book.

This holds true because the 1-2-3 approach isn't some manufactured system. It's actually what our bodies are programmed to do anyway. In a tight spot this is what we have going on in our brain – whether we realise it or not. But for some reason many people train against this grain and thus confuse natural instinct.

1-2-3 is a combination of fight AND flight.

Boiled down to the simplest components 1-2-3 is essentially; Avoiding the threat, counter attacking the threat, escaping the situation.

That's it. I said it was simple!

- 1. Avoid the threat.**
(A dodge, a block or interception, anything)
- 2. Counter Attacking**
(A return strike of any type)
- 3. Escaping**
(Remove yourself from the danger. Run!)

Now don't go trying to memorise the wording of this approach. The whole point is that we don't need to because it's already built in. This page is just a reminder to let your body act how it should.

Society makes most of us overthink everything on a daily basis and in an aggressive situation this can be life-threatening. It's time to switch off the overthinker (your attacker obviously has!) and just act.

By focusing on 1,2,3; Avoid, Counter and Run, we remove any unnecessary thought from the process and enhance our built in ability to defend ourselves.



How to Win Every Single Fight. Ever.

Fighting Fit

What is the first thing you think of when considering self-defense in a dangerous situation?

Screaming Karate chops?

Bruce Lee?

How to kill a man with one touch?

How about running away?

It might not be your first thought but it should be.

In a street situation the winner is always the one that walks away, the one unscathed. The easiest way to achieve this is to not be there, not get caught up in the altercation in the first place. You automatically win by not being a victim.

The ability to run away and protect ourselves from danger has saved more lives than any other single technique in history. It should be the absolute first line of defense in a threat situation.

In the animal kingdom two instincts battle for dominance in any given encounter with a predator. Fight or Flight. We will get to the fighting later but as humans we have developed an unnatural aversion to legging it when a situation gets bad.

It's hard to know why and be 100% certain but the media has a lot to answer for. If we recall any of the latest batch of movies and TV shows our hero almost never runs away, and if he/she does they almost always come back later to settle the score.

This is usually a monumentally stupid idea in real life but the concept that tough guys don't back down has been passed on through generations of storytelling and is thoroughly ingrained in modern society. So much so that today we think of running away as a cowardly dishonourable practise.

Sure you may have had your face kicked in and lost half of your higher brain function but at least you stood your ground...

You may struggle to stand it in future however since your spine was irreparably damaged...

The fact is that escaping from a situation is actually the single smartest move in any given self-defense situation. Be it before or after violence.

Honour is a fluid concept and you should be far more concerned with being alive to later tell your friends about the incident than how tough you acted when it happened.

If you struggle to come to terms with this consider it a tactical retreat. A fight, not of fists, but of intellect. By choosing to escape on your terms you automatically gain the upper hand.

Most aggressors will not be bothered with chasing someone after they rabbit from a scene. This is because the nature of a predator is to attack an easy target. Once you require even a little effort they simply lose the motivation.

There are many ways to make yourself a more difficult target, most detailed elsewhere in this guide, but once the situation is escalating toward violence (or a threat situation is looking likely) escaping is usually the best way to diffuse it.



So assuming we remember to run how far do we need to go?

There is no easy answer to this. Every incident is different.

As I mentioned most individual aggressors won't even chase you at all but a small amount might. This chance is increased if there is a group. This comes from pack mentality. Again we can look to nature - just watch how African Hunting Dogs work.

In any case I would advise being able to clear an **absolute minimum** of **half a mile** if needed away from the scene at an **average pace**. This gives you the opportunity to gain distance, seek cover or hide within a large radius.

Personally I recommend being able to run a **full mile** at an average pace. We always err on the side of caution and this distance gives you a **comfortable advantage** over any untrained assailant.

Of course your attacker could be a marathon runner or a parkour expert...but this is astronomically unlikely. Professional athletes are pretty rare anyway but those dedicated to sports and fitness are usually focused on just that and far less inclined to cause trouble in the first place. Much in the same way that practising Martial Artists are actually far less likely to be caught in a fight because of their

dedication to the morals and tenets of the style.

This does however mean you need, at a minimum, to be fit enough to run half a mile. It sounds like a lot but really isn't. A short bike ride and a quick jog once a week will get you in shape quite quickly and even if these aren't your thing any cardio exercise that gets your heart rate going will help.

The Big Three:

- Running
- Cycling
- Swimming

If you are interested in learning more techniques for improving combat fitness check out my other book; "Fitness Hacks: How to Cheat Your Way to a Better Body".

(Incidentally the second line of self-defense would probably be to just hand over your wallet or money in a mugging situation. If you can avoid any altercation it is advisable. Violent encounters are unpredictable by nature and so if you are being hassled for your phone or money just hand it over – they are replaceable, you aren't.

The techniques described herein assume that regardless of our actions we still fear for our life.)

How to Fight Blind

One of the worst situations to be in is when we lose the ability to see our opponent in a Self Defence incident.



Of course losing any one of our senses is a problem, but not being able to smell is unlikely to affect your ability to stay safe on the streets. (In some places it may reduce distractions!)

Losing or damaging our vision, however, is a major handicap if we need to protect ourselves. There are a number of ways it can happen; a strike to the eye, sweat, or most commonly, a strike to the nose causing the eyes to well up. (This actually works both ways so can be used to your advantage).

Needless to say protecting our face and head is of paramount importance, this is a point emphasized many times within this guide.

When you are blinded though, you must turn to your other senses for

awareness. We have Touch and Hearing as our backup weapons.

- Listen carefully for noises, sounds of footfalls or talking.
- Reach with your hands while still protecting your head. If you can touch something you can strike it.

Try this exercise;

1. With a partner try hitting a moving focus pad. Pretty easy right?
2. Now close your eyes and try the same. Almost impossible.
3. Finally reach out and grab the edge of the pad with one hand and strike it with the other. Despite having your eyes closed, and the pad moving, you will be able to hit it.

Even with no sight we have an instinctive awareness of our own body, its reach and position. Think about it. If you close your eyes you can still touch a finger to your nose. We can, therefore, hit something we can't even see providing we can touch it with the other hand.

This guiding hand only needs a light contact for us to be able to engage our other hand, leg, knees or elbow, although a punch or Palm-Heel is easiest.

This exercise can be repeated with increased movement or even distance, using voice and sound to also guide a partner to the striking target or focus pad.

The Truth about Panic

Training for Adrenaline

Adrenaline is a wonderful thing. It enables us to be alert and focused, it instantly wakes up the body in an unexpected situation and it can stimulate muscles beyond their normal capacity. Heck, adrenaline can even save lives when injected for allergic anaphylaxis. (As a peanut allergy sufferer this one is particularly appealing)

But Adrenaline also has a darker side. It throws your body into overdrive, pushing every system beyond its normal limits causing confusion, irrational behaviour and a massive come-down after the event.

In self-defense terms Adrenaline gives us clarity and focus in a violent encounter and enables us to fight harder, run faster or last longer than usual...but at a cost.

Adrenaline also triggers panic. Panic is the dangerous by-product of the hyper-mode our body goes through in a threat situation.

Panic clouds our judgement, distorts our decisions and can make us act on pure emotion. This can be especially dangerous when we are angry or vengeful, feelings that could easily occur after an attack.

So what can we do?

There is no easy answer to this question because different people react different ways.

The most common method for relaxation is deep breathing. Try breathing in for a 5 count, holding for a 3 count and out for a 5 count.

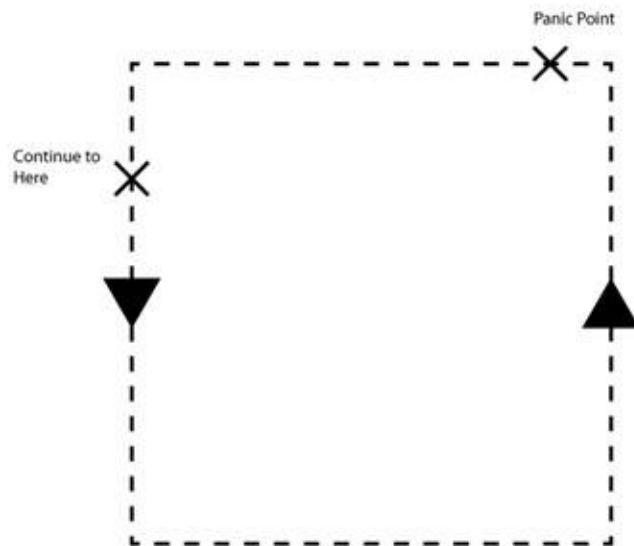
Also be aware of your shoulders. Most people tense these under pressure and they rise up toward the head. Even with a good guarding block you can relax the shoulders.

Training for panic

If you could train your mind to deal with panic it would be a big help, right?

I once trained with famed Martial Artist Chris Crudelli. (If you've ever spent any time in Europe or Asia you may have seen his excellent Martial Arts based TV shows.) His approach of combining traditional Chinese Martial Arts and Self-defence always appealed to me but one technique he espoused that particularly impressed was the method of 'practising' panic.

Quite simply it is very hard to fool the body into reacting like it would in a real life-or-death situation. Somewhere, no matter how deep, our brain always knows when it is training. *I.e.* not really under threat. The way to get around this is to take away the one thing it always needs – air.



IMPORTANT: Don't attempt the following exercise if you have any medical conditions or without supervision. This is just an explanation of a technique that worked for me; try it at your own risk. Oh, and don't push yourself too far, it doesn't help!

To induce panic in a controlled way try the following exercise:

- Within a gym or large area work out a route around the outside.
- Start by walking around this route at a normal pace.
- After one lap, now hold your breath.
- Keep walking as before at the same pace
- Eventually you will start to feel desperate to breathe (Panic sets in)
- Get to the point when you really need to take a breath
- Take 5 more steps and raise an arm to signal this point
- After the 5 steps breathe normally and relax.

During this last part your body is experiencing panic, or as close to the real thing as you can get. The desperate need for air triggers the adrenaline and all the associated reactions with it.

If you can learn to control this sensation, relax your body and mind, you can eventually control the panic reaction.

The exercise can be ramped up by jogging or even fighting for short period while holding your breath.

Top Tip: Don't do it until you pass out! This can cause long term damage!

How to Be Better Prepared Than 90% of People

The following are some considerations for general self-defense and awareness. Many of these are far beyond what anyone may need to undertake, and indeed we hope to never have to use them, but in being prepared for the worst case we are able to easily deal with situations that aren't as severe.

Again, instead of trying to remember every aspect of these just try to understand the main point. Self-defense is, in essence, simple and we should take with us only the bare knowledge we need to survive. Anything else can confuse our natural, and often best, instincts.

Awareness

General Considerations

On the day you are attacked, will the weather be hot or cold? Will your assailant be large or small? Will there be more than one? Will they be strangers or people you know? Will they use weapons to assault you? Do you expect them to invade your home or vehicle? Or will you encounter a threat while walking someplace? Do you expect the attack to take place near pavement or on wet grass? Do you think that it will occur during daylight hours or after dark? Will it happen in the morning when you are full of strength and energy, or after a long and exhausting day at work?

Even individuals who train with the greatest dedication, and for the longest amounts of time, will not be able to predict when and where they will need to use their training. It is important to be prepared for anything.

Still, there are a few things that you can always count on. The attack will happen quickly, and you will likely be caught off guard. There will be little time to think before you will need to defend yourself. The attack will be violent. It will not go as planned, or follow the patterns used in your training. You will need to adapt quickly and without stopping to consider which techniques to utilize.

Environmental Considerations

In order to remain ready to defend yourself at any time, you should pay close attention to your environment. The weather often plays a significant role in your clothing choices. Consider the ways that those clothes could affect your mobility.

Your shoes may be especially important if you need to flee from an attacker. Do you typically wear tennis shoes, sandals, or high heels? Each of these options

will affect your ability to run. What if you are barefoot when you are attacked? Would that hinder your movements?

Are you typically carrying an object such as a lunchbox, purse, brief case, or backpack along your travels? Do you overload your arms with groceries? How would these objects affect your ability to defend yourself? Could they be used to your advantage in some way? Or do they make you more vulnerable to an attack?

Projection

Even before an attack occurs, it is possible to project your intent towards a potential assailant. This can occur inadvertently, and work against you.

However, you can also use this knowledge to purposefully send nonverbal messages to the people around you. You can control what you project. This projection does not have to be an honest portrayal of yourself, as long as it works to your advantage. There are many helpful strategies which involve misdirection or distraction. It is worth considering these techniques before they are needed.

Escalation

Similar, to your ability to utilize nonverbal communication, it is also possible to escalate a physical confrontation past the point of control. Every situation has the potential for various levels of aggression. Keep in mind; you may need to explain your actions to a law enforcement officer after everything is over. Whenever possible, it is best to defuse the situation as early as possible.

Passive body language and no threatening behaviour can go a long way to neutralising a situation. This guide is not focused on every detail of this (That will be included in a future book) but simple things like the open hand guard (see later) will help a great deal.

Small misunderstandings, can get physical much too soon with the wrong

verbal and body language. It is similarly possible, for a small scuffle to turn lethal in a matter of moments. Take advantage of any opportunity you get to diffuse the situation.

Warning Signs

Before a physical altercation, there are often signals which indicate that the aggressor intends to attack. Staying alert will aid you in noticing these valuable hints that danger may be imminent. These signs may also prove helpful when attempting to validate your actions before a court of law.

If your opponent exhibits tense shoulders, clenched teeth, a furrowed brow, narrowed eyes, or clenched fists then you may indeed be in physical danger.

This may sound obvious but such features can easily be overlooked when we are fatigued or distracted.

If an individual's skin begins to turn red, then this indicates that they are becoming angry or upset. A complexion which turns pale and/or white signals that their flight or fight response has been activated. This natural physiological event drains the blood away from the face, and towards the limbs to prepare for a fight or other physical action.

Priorities

In every situation, your priorities will be different. You will need to become aware of these priorities in order to work towards the best outcome. If you are attacked within your own home your priorities might involve your loved ones, or your personal property. In a mugging, attempted rape, or out-of-control argument, your priority might rest in protecting only yourself from harm.

Any event will carry its own variables, which will help you decide how you will act to eliminate the threat. It is best to consider your options through a process of internal dialogue, before you find yourself in any of these situations.

This will help you know how to respond without wasting time when there is little to spare.

Escaping the immediate danger should always be of a top priority. Even if an attacker is in your home it is far better to escape and alert authorities than to risk life and limb for some valuables.

The only case wherein sticking around holds some importance is when other, more vulnerable people are involved. In this situation the same principals of Block, Strike, Escape apply but you must try to strike with enough force to incapacitate an attacker and give yourself enough time to allow both you and the friend or family member to escape.

Preparedness

“If anything can go wrong it probably will go wrong at the worst possible time.” (Murphy’s Law)

Being prepared begins in assuming a non-escalating, “ready position”. This is sometimes referred to as the “head’s up position”. If you expect trouble, then you will need to do everything possible to prevent yourself from becoming an easy target. You never want to be caught looking downward, with your hands inside of your pockets.

Ready position brings your hands out and up to the height of your chest. This prepares you for any impending action, without creating a threatening posture. In many situations, it is important to prepare yourself without intensifying the reaction of a potential opponent. There is no need to yell and leap into an intimidating karate stance anytime you feel uneasy.

Balance

To establish good balance, assume a position with your feet spread shoulder width apart, and with one foot placed before the other. Angle your body a bit to minimize the target area presented towards your opponent.

Note how this type of positioning allows for fast movements. It also provides greater protection for your groin and solar plexus regions. This minimizes your risk of taking a direct hit from an opponent. It is essential, that you are able to maintain good balance, should you receive a blow or shove from an assailant. You will also want to be ready to move quickly to defend yourself.

Considerations of Balance

Inner Ear Mechanism: This mechanism is responsible for your body’s equilibrium. It can be negatively affected by viruses, ear infections, and other physiological deficiencies.

Physical Stabilizers: Your body uses its skeletal structure to maintain balance, and support your body weight. It also uses muscle control to help maintain balance while holding a stressful or awkward position.

Sensory Perception: Visual and kinaesthetic sensory feedback combine to paint a picture of spatial understanding. Together, these cues allow you to know which way is up. Sensory perception problems can lead to ailments such as vertigo or motion sickness.

Breathing and Mindset

The way in which you act and how you breathe are closely related. For one thing, your breathing can alert a perceptive assailant to your next move. This occurs through visible clues like your respiration rate, how fast you blink, and changes to the color of your skin or eyes. These clues can also broadcast the state of mind you may be in at any given time. You can use these kinds of signs to your advantage, by controlling them.

By demonstrating that you are not intimidated by an aggressor, you may discourage them from continuing their threatening behaviour. The image projected towards your opponent can be a big factor in determining what will happen next. The other factor is the way you breathe. Breathing affects your current state of mind. This is why breath work plays such a large role in the practice of meditation.

If you are breathing heavily, without having exerted a lot of energy, then it is likely a physiological symptom of stress. Similarly, slowing your breath is a physiological response deriving from the “Fight or Flight” response. This response is designed to avoid unnecessary precursors to action, such as thought.

The best option is to practice proper, deep breathing exercises which will provide greater control over the surge of adrenaline pumping through your body. It is also useful in preventing hyperventilation and other extreme reactions to stress.

Psychological Preparation

Many theorize that about ninety percent of a confrontation occurs inside the minds of the participants. Yet, few individuals spend a similar proportion of their time training their minds for a physical conflict.

Thus, it is necessary to reiterate how important it is to train your psyche in order to be fully prepared to defend yourself. You must ready your mind for any actions that the body may need to perform. Although we can never be fully prepared for the unexpected taking a couple of seconds in advance to slow the breathing and plan an escape route gives you an immediate edge over the person acting without reason.

In fact just reading this book starts to activate parts of the mind we don't often use. Essentially just the act of thinking about a self-defense situation is often the first step to being successful in one.

Verbalization

Voice is another powerful clue to someone's state of mind during a stressful event. Being able to speak in a confident and powerful manner is typically one of the first things to vanish when your body is in duress. Fortunately, you can train your vocalization abilities in order to maintain that confidence despite a stressful environment.

One way to do this is to practice speaking while hitting pads in a training environment and responding to mock attacks. These types of activities will teach your body how to maintain strong vocalization in the wake of an altercation.

Of course it's not all Martial Arts training. Just the ability to project in public speaking will aid you in verbalising your confidence.

These skills can have a significant effect on an assailant. Pairing a verbal stun, with a physical strike can assist you in gaining the upper hand over an opponent. This technique takes full advantage of the small window of opportunity created

by the shock attributed to the pain from a solid strike.

Another benefit of vocalization is the ability to sway the perception of onlookers. Vocalizing your stance can help these onlookers become aware of the justification behind your actions. The testament of these individuals may become invaluable should the need arise to justify your actions before a court of law.

Eg. Shouting “Stay Away!” or “Leave me alone!” will be seen far more favourably than the other guy cursing and threatening you.

Be aware that every confrontation contains three perspectives. These include your perspective, the opponent’s perspective, and that of any innocent bystanders. Each of these can be vastly different. Communication can act as a bridge between your perspective, and that of a witness.

All three perspectives may be shared with a law enforcement officer, who will be responsible for determining whether you will be charged with a crime as a result of defending yourself physically. The way in which each perspective is communicated to that individual can drastically affect your perceived credibility.

Response to the Threat

The legal definition of a threat is a perception that your life or wellbeing, or that of someone near you, is in imminent danger. Taking this definition into consideration, you will need to be able to communicate a reasonable justification for your deeds. Your explanation will need to answer several questions, including those in the list below. Establishing a justification may be necessary to demonstrate to a court of law that your actions were appropriate and necessary.

1. Could you have found a way to escape?
2. Were you in real danger?
3. Does your attacker still pose a threat to your safety?
4. Would another rational individual have responded in the same manner, if they faced same circumstances?
5. In what way did the attacker make you feel endangered?

Identifying a Potential Threat

By being aware of your surroundings and paying close attention to the individuals in your area, you may be able to pick up cues that an attack is imminent. There are also signs which can assist you in identifying the most dangerous types of assailants.

Behaviour: Is the individual acting in a way which makes them the centre of attention? Do these actions make sense within the environment? Does anyone else seem uncomfortable? Are they looking you in the eye or avoiding contact?

Hand Position: Where are the individual's hands located? Are they holding anything which may be used as a weapon?

Posture: Is the potential assailant standing near a doorway to block your escape? Are they limiting your movements or trying to surround you? Do they seem tense or relaxed? Based on the postures of other individuals in the area, does it seem as though anyone else is acting with them?

You can turn the same close attention to yourself. Consider what kind of vibe you are giving off and whether you might be exacerbating the situation. This skill will be particularly important if you are come into conflict with an individual who is emotionally disturbed, or a police officer who might misinterpret your intentions.

General Self-Defense Priorities:

1. First, protect your brain. Strikes to your head will slow you down or take you out of the game altogether.

2. Keep your hands up and ready for action, but do not escalate the situation. Be sure to lift your arms in a manner that cannot be interpreted as threatening.

3. Utilize body language cues. Keep your eyes facing forward, your shoulders back, and your feet spread apart. Eye contact can intimidate your attacker.

4. Do everything you can to avoid a physical altercation. Demonstrate that you do not wish to fight. Show any potential witnesses that you are not the instigator of the situation. An important part of self-defense is legal defense after an altercation occurs.

5. Use vocalization tools in an attempt to avoid a physical altercation. Make an effort to avoid your assailant with phrases such as: “Calm down, I’m sorry.”, “Stay away! Get back!” or “Leave me alone, I don’t want to hurt you!”

6. Also vocalize, along with your actions. This is another way to demonstrate to onlookers that you are not the attacker. Use phrases such as: “Get Down! Stop! Get Back!”, “Stop Doing this to yourself!”, or “Stop Hurting Me!”.

7. If you are attacked you will need to act swiftly to protect yourself. You will also need to stop just as swiftly, when the aggression has ended. You **MUST** stop too.

Being Assertive!

You will need to convey one important message to a potential assailant; **you are not an easy target.**

Part of not becoming a victim is knowing your rights in an encounter.

ÿ No individual has the right to harm or threaten you

ÿ No individual has the right to steal from you.

ÿ No individual has the right to make you feel endangered.

ÿ No individual has the right to threaten your home or family.

ÿ You do have the right to defend yourself if necessary and appropriate.

What to Do When Things Have Gone Wrong:

If the situation hasn't gone to plan or you haven't been able to escape as intended you must consider the implications; the aftermath of what just happened.

Injury Assessment

When the confrontation has ended, you will need to assess for injuries before moving. Start by trying to wiggle your fingers and toes. This will help you discover any broken bones, or torn muscles. Next, try to locate any sharp pains, blood, or any numb, cold, or hot areas.

Use your tongue to check for split lips or cracked teeth. Slowly go over the rest of your body, one piece at a time, to assess any injuries. Try to relax. If you do discover any injuries, then you will need a calm head to determine what actions to take next.

Turn your attention to your perceptions. Note whether your heartbeat is fast or slow. Ask yourself if you feel dizzy, or if your vision is impaired. Try to focus on objects nearby, and then others which are far away. Also, note any sensitivity to light. These kinds of observations will help determine if you have a concussion.

Next, try to find someone to help you with your injuries if you have them. If you call someone to assist you, be as specific as you can about your location and injuries. This will aid them in locating you, should you lose consciousness before you are found. Do your best to stay calm and positive. Will power is an amazing tool in the survival game.

If you are bleeding, then try to locate the source. Use whatever you have available to press against your wound, in order to slow the bleeding. Every limb has a compression point, which can be helpful in controlling the bleeding in a badly damaged limb. If bandages are available, then pack your wound to create a

seal.

Top Tip: Handkerchiefs may seem outdated but they are excellent tools for treating cuts and folding as impromptu bandages. Consider carrying one.

If the blood soaks through a layer, apply another without removing any other layers, to avoid disturbing the clotting process. It may be possible to use a plastic ID card or cellophane coated cigarette box to staunch the bleeding.

In the event that you have an object, such as a knife, lodged in your body, do not attempt to remove it. The object may be the only thing preventing you from bleeding out. Wait for medical assistance.

If you are badly injured, such as by a deep cut, broken bone, or internal bleeding, then try to stay as still as you can. Moving around could exacerbate your injuries.

In the event that you have escaped unharmed, move your attention to your clothing. The condition of your clothing may provide valuable evidence if you were assaulted. Before undressing, allow a law enforcement officer to document your appearance. In the event of a rape, this is particularly important. If you have been raped then a Rape-Kit should also be collected by the emergency room staff before showering.

Try to determine, whether any of your wounds could have made contact with your assailant's body fluids. If that is a possibility, then you will need to be evaluated for blood borne pathogens. These kinds of evaluations are particularly important if you have been bitten.

Plan of Action

Before an altercation occurs, take the opportunity to consider what you would do if it did. Plan what you would do both during the attack, and immediately afterwards. When you are in that kind of situation, it will difficult to think clearly. You might even find yourself in shock, or distracted by the adrenaline rushing through your body.

Top Tip: Save a bullet pointed plan in your phone

(Most modern phones allow for notes to be saved. By recording a few simple tips you can ensure you have a reference even if you cannot think clearly after the event)

Shock is a natural chemical reaction, which can occur in response to injuries, or stress, such as that derived from being interviewed by a police officer. It is not unusual to experience uncontrollable shaking. Some individuals will be haunted by recurring dreams for several days afterwards. Rest assured that these are all healthy and natural responses. If you do not feel ready to answer questions from law enforcement, because you are not feeling well, or your thoughts are all jumbled, then you can request some time to calm down first.

Responsibilities

When you are no longer in danger, it is time to recognize your responsibilities. If you have wounded someone then it is your responsibility to report the occurrence to the authorities. Expect to be asked numerous questions about the event. The way in which you speak and approach these questions will affect the outcome.

By following the approaches to de-escalation and passive behaviour you can drastically reduce the odds that you will be seen as the offender.

The police will use your responses to gauge whether charges will be filed. This will determine whether you will be going home, or to jail and eventually prison. Being the first to contact police after an altercation will add to your credibility. This may prove invaluable should you require a legal defense in a court of law.

Evidence

After a physical confrontation, there may be valuable evidence on your person. This will be especially important should your assailant manage to escape before the authorities arrive. This evidence should be collected and, if possible, used to obtain a conviction in the future.

Genetic testing has become increasingly popular in court cases. It is worth reiterating, that in serious cases, if you have been attacked or raped, then you should not shower, wash your hands, or change your clothes before being examined. Bits of your assailants DNA may cling to stray hairs, or skin beneath your fingernails.

Once you are safe, have been examined by a medical professional, and have answered all questions asked by law enforcement, you should sit down and write your own statement. Be as detailed and accurate as possible.

Your memory can change and fade over time. It is best to capture the events as soon as possible.

It may help to begin with an outline of the big events. Then fill in all of the blanks and details between them. This will assist you not only in any legal battle, but also as you begin on the path to psychological recuperation.

Essential Tools

If you are interested in regular training for self-defense there are generally three categories in which to practice

- Techniques: involve learning proper forms, positions, and the technical variables within a potential confrontation.
- Exercises: are the activities used to develop an individual's skills and limits to increase their overall performance.
- Drills: gradually combine qualities like awareness, rhythm, and timing to acquire the psychological mindset required for a successful defense.

Hand Strikes:

Most people automatically think of punches when it comes to a fight. But here's the bad news; if you hit someone with a full strength clenched fist punch there is an excellent chance you will break some fingers.

Punches work well against soft areas like the stomach or even throat but if you accidentally hit someone on the forehead you can forget using your fingers again for the rest of the night.

Consider instead the palm-heel-strike as your go-to default technique. (See later) Other strikes include:

- Claw hand
- Elbow
- Hammer Fist
- Finger Jab
- Thumb Gouge



A simple palm heel strike



A simple straight punch

Kicks:

Don't go high with your kicks. Keep them low and aim to either push an opponent away or strike a sensitive area to incapacitate them (Knee, Groin etc.)

- *Front/Thrust kick*
- *Heel stamp*
- *Snap/Toe strike*
- *Side Kick*

- *Round Kick*



A simple shin kick

Targets:

Target zones are sensitive or special areas to aim for in neutralizing an attacker's mobility. Most of us know the groin is especially susceptible in men but also consider:

- *Ears/Eardrums*
- *Throat*

- *Jaw*
- *Eyes*
- *Nose*
- *Solar Plexus (Center of chest)*
- *Knees/Elbows*
- *Fingers*
- *Toes*



Elbow Strike to Jaw

The Power of Distraction and Evasion

Never underestimate the power of Distraction to diffuse a situation or Evasion to avoid further conflict.

The basic principle of distraction is a deflection of aggression away from yourself. Many would think of this in the physical aspects of self-defense, *e.g.* throwing your keys or objects at an attacker. This can work but the most inventive and effective use of distraction I have come across is in the verbal phase of a conflict.

When violence is imminent there will usually be an escalation through shouting or aggressive talk. Your attacker will be building their own levels of aggression in this phase and the whole thing will be directed at you.

You can often deflect this aggression and completely distract your opponent by posing them a completely unrelated (and non-aggressive question). The more random and confusing the better. This calls a halt to their rising anger and spins their train of thought off in an unusual direction.

E.G

“Did you see that Purple Car?”

“Do you know what time the last train is?”

“Have you ever been to Burkina Faso?” *Etc.*

Anything off-the-wall and unexpected. Suddenly they are off-guard and you have an opening to escape. (Not to stick around or escalate the situation)

This is a technique that has been popularized across Martial Arts and Self Defense systems in the last few years. Look into Geoff Thompsons “Fence” technique for further reading on many aspects of self-defense.

Evasion

The importance of running away has already been discussed in this book but if an attacker or group gives chase there a few steps you can take to minimise the chances they will find you.

Shape – At a quick snapshot we can recognise the form of someone. If they run we are looking to find that shape we have already registered. By adding or removing headwear, changing or discarding a coat or bag you can change the way you appear at a glance.

Color – Similarly we can establish color and patterns easily after a quick look. In an evasion situation you can discard clothing to change how you look. The best approach is to go from light to dark or vice versa as this is the quickest method of recognition.

Blending – Anyone familiar with a certain series of video games will be aware of just how useful blending in can be. A pursuer will be looking for someone moving quickly and erratically. If you can blend in with a crowd, pretend to be someone in a coffee queue or a group of passing friends odds are you will be much more easily overlooked

Grappling in Self Defense

Going to Ground

Where are all your awesome grappling recommendations? – I hear you say.



There are two reasons I haven't included much in the way of ground fighting tips in this guide.

Firstly is my experience. In all honesty I have very little when it comes to grappling styles and it would be a disservice to you, the reader, if I started suggesting things I have no knowledge of.

This isn't because I have avoided these styles. I have nothing but respect for them. I have simply not found a club I have been able to attend long enough to gain an authority on the subject.

Conversely, for some reason, there has always been a plethora of excellent

striking and self –defense classes around me that I have been fortunate enough to take advantage of.

However I definitely did not want to leave out a crucial part of self-defense, if indeed grappling turned out to be one. With that in mind I undertook in-depth research and enquired with some of the best Martial Arts and self-defense clubs in the country and tried to find out how valid grappling is in real-life.

The answer brings me to my second reason for its lack of inclusion. Ground fighting (grappling) is generally NOT recommended for a self-defense situation.

Almost everyone I spoke to espoused the benefits of learning ground fighting but not for street defense. This is because A. You don't know what the ground will be like and B. You don't know how many people you will have to engage.

If the floor is covered with glass (as in many nightclubs), or rocks for example, the last thing you want is to be throwing yourself on it.

If you are taking on an aggressive group of kids locking yourself into an arm bar with one of them leaves you dangerously exposed to the rest. Not to mention the danger of being at a height disadvantage to all around you.

There are some limited cases where good grappling skills will come in useful on the street. If conditions all line up you may be at an advantage but these are rare and remember this guide is all about 3 Seconds. If you can't get in, get out and run it's probably not much use to you.

Recommendations

If you'd like to learn more (and I still recommend them for fitness and technique) look into the following:

- Brazillian Jujitsu
- Traditional Jujitsu
- Judo
- Sambo
- Wrestling

While getting into a grappling situation is a very bad idea it is worthwhile knowing what to do if you find yourself taking a fall...

How to Fall Properly

It may sound odd but falling correctly is quite an art form. In a real life self-defense situation you don't want to be on the ground, for many reasons we've already covered. But, if you do find yourself taking a tumble, landing correctly can make the difference between being able to quickly get back up or face-planting and taking yourself out of the fight.

The Break-Fall

The break-fall is a technique practised in a variety of martial arts including types of Judo and Jujitsu. The basic principle is that you shape your body to reduce the damage taken when you hit the ground and spread the impact across a larger surface area.

You can investigate the detail of this technique in any of the numerous videos online but in essence you are aiming to lightly strike the ground with the flat of your palms as your backside and lower back hit the deck while tucking the head in to stop it impacting the floor.

1. You know you are going down, accept it and prepare to act.
2. Start to fold your body down starting at the lowest joints and moving up through the body, basically taking control of the descent.
3. If falling backwards tuck your head into your chest to prevent it hitting the floor and knocking you out.
4. As the majority of your body hits the ground slap your palms firmly (but not forcefully) into the ground to spread the impact. This could be forward or backwards depending on your descent.
5. Breathe out. Try to breathe naturally and exhale as you impact to reduce body tension.
6. If falling from some height, carry the motion into a roll in the natural direction the body is moving.
7. Come to a stop – and **get up, quickly!**



Spread your impact when landing on the floor

How to Protect Yourself on the Ground

If you do find yourself in the unfortunate position of being on the ground with the threat of an attacker still on their feet it's important not to just curl up in a ball and expect a kicking. Doing this just makes you an easy target.

You still have a number of options and, while you are at a disadvantage and should get up as quickly as possible, you aren't down and out yet!

If we consider the change in dynamic for a moment, all that has changed is the height at which a conflict can now take place. You still (hopefully) have all your limbs available to protect yourself while the attacker can't feasibly use their arms without bending down to your level.

Of course the attacker's mobility will now be far greater than yours and they can move with much more ease than you.

If you land awkwardly, try to roll onto your back as quickly as possible to free up the use of your limbs.

- 1. In the very first instance when you find yourself on the ground protect your head. (Remember, this is the light switch for the body!) Put your hands up to either side of your head (Like you are cupping your ears), with elbows pointing forwards covering the sides of your chest.**

This step is to minimise any attack that may occur quickly after they see you go down.

- 2. Bend the knees. This again protects access to your torso and sensitive organs, creating a barrier with your limbs.**

3. **Asses your situation. If the threat is to the side try to spin to face them so you can utilize your legs for kicking and see what is happening.**



Protect all the important parts of your body while exposed on the ground

Striking Back

Make sure you are still seen as a danger to the attacker even while you are on the ground. Unless they are extremely determined most aggressors are simply opportunist and the moment you become too much hassle they will give up and leave.

Your ability to strike with your hands will be minimal so your legs become the go-to technique.

Try to imagine a cornered snake here. This is your approach while grounded. You are lower and perhaps smaller than the threat but you can still lash out with a quick and painful strike if needed, keeping the attacker wary.

The simplest and most natural strike from this position is a kick.

With the attacker in front of you bring one foot up ready to snap a kick out quickly and aim low – for their shin or knee. (Try not to aim higher; it may throw you off balance).

If they are slightly further away and your upper body is at less risk you can plant both hands on the ground, raise your backside and snap a kick out further. This can often catch them off guard and even if this doesn't connect it can offer a vital few seconds distraction as they recoil out of the way, giving you chance to get up.

Don't worry too much about the type of kick in this situation, just aim to hit hard with the heel or sole of the foot. Technique is less important than being quick, powerful and creating space for yourself.



Snap a kick at an opponent's knee or shin to give yourself space

If they try to get on top of you...

If an attacker evades your kicks and tries to physically get on top of you,

to either inflict more damage through punches, or god forbid attempting some form of sexual assault, it's time to utilize the stronger muscles in your legs.

Many Grappling Martial Arts use a simple concept of a 'guard' while on the ground. There are numerous types but the main principle is of controlling an attacker's body while on the floor.

In the spirit of simplicity we want the most natural and effective forms. There is no need for technical names or Martial Arts styles here.

In the case you notice your opponent is just trying to get on top of you;

Use your legs!

With your back to the floor, quickly bring up one or both feet and the soles to face the attacker with your knees bent. If they still close in use the strength of both legs to push them away with your feet and ideally kick to the groin or knees. Remember to keep your hands ready to protect your head and upper body.

If they are already close, between your legs or leaning over you;

You can use hand strikes to keep them at some distance but here you need to free up at least one leg to utilise its power. If you find you don't have much movement with your legs try rocking slightly from side to side.

Wedge a knee between their arms and chest, creating space and potentially using it as leverage.

Bring up a foot and plant the sole on their hip bone then push hard and fast. This pivot point should change the balance position.

If they are close enough to use their hands odds are you can use yours too. If possible remember the palm-strikes from earlier. Or go for a simple eye gouge. (There are no rules here!)

Top Tip. The underside of the nose is also incredibly sensitive. Even a

light push here can dissuade someone.

Remember this isn't UFC. Get them off you, get up and escape. Don't try for any complicated locks or submissions.

Now you've managed to get the attacker to back away with a kick or perhaps you've spotted a gap, it's time to get up. The right way...

How to Get Back Up

“Duh” – I hear you say. “Just put your feet down and get up!”

While this approach works for your average toddler taking a tumble, on the street simply planting your hands down and getting to your feet causes a big problem in that it ties up the majority of your limbs in the motion.

Think about how you would normally get up off the floor. One or both hands push you up and your feet tuck underneath to bring you upright.

In this scenario you have nothing left to guard yourself should an attacker make a move.

Instead we want to allow at least one leg or one arm the freedom to protect our face or important parts as we get up. This is an approach sometimes advocated by styles such as Krav Maga where you may have to fight your way back up from a disadvantaged position.

- 1. From your defensive floor position pick a moment when you see a chance to get up (A moment when your attacker is distracted or half-off-guard)**
- 2. Lift one leg ready to kick out forward, giving yourself space to get up**
- 3. Lift the opposite hand to cover your head as you ascend**
- 4. Make the kick if needed and as you bring it back in tuck it under your body**
- 5. Use this leg to now push to your feet, all the while covering your head and face with the free arm.**
- 6. Back on your feet!**



The hand guards the face, the kick pushes an opponent away then tucks back underneath to push you to your feet.



Tuck the feet back beneath you to get up

Note: If you are not confident in your balance you can leave either both feet or both hands on the ground but make sure one or the other makes a move to protect yourself!

Principle before Practise

I know that by this point you are keen to get to the actual techniques and learn how to start taking out muggers, rapists or anyone that looks at you funny, but wait just a moment.

I wanted to include a selection of the actual movements and physical defense techniques because I think it's important to balance the practical and theoretical but I can't stress enough how important a deep understanding of the principles behind self-defense are BEFORE you ever tackle any physical tactics.

Consider these principles your foundation for self-defense. Without a solid base of understanding your physical actions will likely be shaky and unpredictable. Which can make things even worse given that violence is already a pretty shaky and unpredictable experience anyway!

Ensure you have read and fully understood, on a personal level, the previous chapters before believing yourself confident to face situations in the real world. It's one thing to read about adrenaline and stress affecting you but until you truly experience it it's common to think "oh, that won't affect me" or "I'll be ok because I will just do X". The truth is we won't *just* do anything, and it's likely we will be completely overwhelmed at the time.

I say this not to focus on the doom and gloom of the situation but to stress how important understanding how to use your mind and body is before you put any of it into practice.

So take a second. Look once more at the topics covered here (and elsewhere), and think about how *you* would react.

Your Self-Defense Goals

When working out what techniques to use in a situation it is often best to think of what you want to achieve from the scenario before using any movements take place. Trying to do this when the adrenaline is pumping becomes near impossible so take a notepad and think now in advance about the kind of things you want/need to achieve if you were attacked.

Of course not ending up injured is an obvious goal for most people, but beyond this you can analyse how things would play out in an ideal situation. For example, self-protection goals can usually be broken down into 3 tiers; Essential, Important and Optional.

Essential goals are just that; the overall crucial principle behind looking after yourself. There won't be many of these.

Important goals are those which should be seen as a priority, fuelling the overall Essential goal, but they can also be overlooked if absolutely necessary.

Optional goals are "nice to have". They can help and will make life easier but don't worry if you can't achieve them.

Examples:

Essential:

- Protect yourself from harm
- Escape the scene

Important:

- Avoid any violence initially
- Keep your hands up to protect your head
- Block or avoid any attack
- Stay on your feet
- Neutralise or counter-attack the opponent if needed

Optional:

- Find Police and report the incident
- Keep your limbs free (Not getting tangled up)
- Maintain distance
- Make a lot of noise and remain confident
- Use keys or coins for distraction
- Keep palms open
- Mix high and low techniques for more effect.
- Deliver powerful, effective strikes

Note that these goals are somewhat fluid and may move between categories as priorities shift between individuals. As a simple guideline try to focus on avoidance, escape and evasion rather than thinking of just how badly you wish to beat your opponent.

You will also see that not all of these are ‘hard’ physical techniques. Some are more ‘soft’ skills aimed at improving your overall response.

Take a notebook and spend a few minutes thinking about which of these are most important to you (and consider others not listed here). If, for example, you place escaping highly (as you probably should) then establishing a basic level of fitness will be very important. If however you know you are an excellent runner but not very strong you may wish to focus on developing striking power through drills or simple strength building exercises.

Or perhaps you value the ability to be loud and confident but you are normally quiet and shy. You may need to learn how to switch this on.

It is beyond the scope of this book to explore every potential facet of our physical and mental ability but most people already know their own abilities and limitations.

As you work down your list look at each point and compare against your own strengths and weaknesses. This will give you a broad blueprint for developing self-defense skills and a guide to which practical techniques will work best for

you.

Powerful and Simple Self Defense Techniques

The following pages show OPTIONS for self-defense in a number of situations and body areas. They really are options though because there is no 100% right and wrong in most incidents, the only important thing is that you DO act.

In fact the only wrong approach would be to do nothing.

The techniques are designed to be powerful, simple and largely intuitive so they should be easy to pick up and flow in a natural manner. You don't like them? That's fine too – they are only a starting point to get you thinking of the right approach for you.

One type of defense is great for one person while it may be useless for another. Are you 6'6" but built like a beanpole? – Reach is your friend. Heavy-set and shorter? – You will have stability and power. Adapt these methods for your own use.

Where is?...

Wondering where the defense against a flying kick or Samurai Sword wielding madman is?

It's impossible to detail the appropriate defense and counter attack against every possible aggressor. People come in all shapes and sizes and with a huge variety of abilities. Some are drunk, high, or just plain crazy and some are none of those. Because of this it is not worthwhile trying to figure out how to defeat every variable.

You will see there aren't hundreds of techniques listed here. This is again intentional. We aren't trying to learn some complicated system; simplicity is the key to effectiveness. Most attacks follow the same lines and so we can usually prepare for the most common threats and the direction they come from without

getting bogged down in learning hundreds of methods for countering rare and unusual attacks.

It is better to be proficient at a small amount of the most useful techniques than poor at every technique.

About The Images

They say a picture paints a thousand words and images certainly do help in understanding what movements and combinations look like.

The pictures in this guide are designed to give you an overview of what techniques look like when performed but they aren't perfect. There's a part of me that would love to have 100% accurate representations of the self-defense techniques included but I ultimately realised that life isn't perfect either.

Including images of intricately arranged blocks and flawless stances would be a false representation of the real world.

The real world is dirty, noisy, rough and imperfect on every level.

Hence these pictures though clear, aim to show the broad techniques applied in a realistic, if not perfect manner, all performed by a mix of people. Not all Self-Defense veterans with years of experience in combat arts.

You will find that the broad movements, the key points, are the most important with regards to self-defence. Keeping your hands up, protecting your head and delivering a good strike and escape all deliver better returns for your effort than spending hours obsessing over a foot position or complicated joint lock.

Thanks to those people who helped me out with these pictures in performing techniques. Many of you asked to be anonymous but you know who you are!

Note: To avoid repetition, the very first and last move in many of the techniques has not been illustrated since it is almost always the same.

1. Any technique starts with the open-hand guarding block
2. Any technique ends with the return to open-hand guarding block, a scan (look around) and escape, (running away).



Techniques: The Guarding Block

The ‘guarding block’ or just ‘guard’ is where it all starts, as far as physical self-defense goes. If you take one technique from this book let it be this and you will already be 50% better protected on the streets.

As you may have seen in the myriad Martial Arts out there when a scrap kicks off it is important to have our hands up protecting the most important part of our body – the head.

(Remember, the head and brain is like a light switch; the control for the rest of the body. If it gets turned off it’s going to go dark. We don’t want that!)

While most arts use this guard they are doing one fundamental thing wrong for a real life street encounter. They use clenched fists.



Traditional Fighting Guard

You see, keeping the hands up, elbows pointing down is a solid stance protecting our face head and, if done correctly our ribs, but doing this with clenched fists has several disadvantages:

- It shows aggression
- It shows you are prepared to fight
- It shows you may know some Martial skills
- It tenses the arm

The right way:

Instead try the same position but with open palms facing the opponent. In an almost supplicating gesture. It signals a lack of aggression which could be vital if the incident is caught on CCTV for example but it is also just as effective (if not more so) as the traditional clenched fist guard.

Open hand guard:

- Is a Calming Gesture
- Appears non-aggressive
- Gives away no-information about your abilities
- Relaxed and easy to strike from



Open Hand Guard

- 1. Place feet a comfortable distance apart. Usually about shoulder width. Your body should be slightly turned away facing at about a three-quarter angle.**
- 2. Elbows are pointing down to protect your sides**
- 3. Most Importantly – hands are open and facing the opponent in a calming gesture. One is slightly ahead of the other (The lead hand)**



Easily adapted into a counter attack or push

How to Use Your Upper Body

The upper body is your go-to area for striking and blocking an opponent. Not because it is necessarily any better than using legs or knees but simply because it is more natural. In a tight spot when adrenaline clouds our judgement we usually fall back on our most primal instincts.

Think about it. If you look up and noticed something falling toward you what is the most natural reaction? If you answered anything except *cover your head* you are probably fooling yourself.

We instinctively use our hands as a primary defense tool in most circumstances in which we are unable to run away. Capitalise on this instinct by learning a few effective, easy techniques involving your hands, elbows and arms.



Generating power in upper body techniques is much more closely related to core strength than that of our arms. Our core ultimately drives the movement of a limb and so if you are keen to improve your punching and general striking power then push-ups, sit ups and back raises are far more effective than you might think. (Not to mention being beneficial to overall fitness – see Fighting Fit

section)

Recommendations:

Based on my experiences the following training systems may help more with this area. All styles have strengths and weaknesses. Investigate locally to find out what works for you, the following are just suggestions for further reading:

- Keysi Fighting Method
- Wing Chun Kung Fu
- Boxing

How to Make a ‘Proper’ Fist

Firstly bear in mind punches, as far as self defense goes, are limited in application. Even though it’s the first technique most people think of I would suggest never striking with a punch to an opponent’s head – there is too much bone and you are likely to break some fingers. Those areas are ideal targets for palm-heel strikes or hammer fists.



Punches are good however for soft tissue targets. The stomach, ribs, kidneys and even throat make excellent striking zones.

Making a simple fist:

1. Open the hand out wide
2. Curl the fingers into the palm
3. Tuck the Thumb away and underneath

- The striking area is the set of knuckles nearest your arm. (Typically)
- A fist doesn't need to be tense all the time. Only tighten up just before striking

Top Tip: It may sound obvious but never put your thumb inside when making a fist. This is a fast way to break a thumb!

Vertical vs. Horizontal:

One of the oldest debates in Martial and Combat arts is whether you should hold your hand Vertical (Thumb on top) or Horizontal (Thumb to the side)



Vertical or Stand-Fist Punch



Horizontal Punch

Kung Fu and compact Chinese Arts like Wing Chun traditionally favour the former but many styles like TaeKwonDo and Kickboxing go for Horizontal.

Numerous theories espouse the benefits of one way or another.

Vertical fists are said to be quicker, easier to slip through an opponent's guard and improve body, wrist and hand alignment.

Horizontal fists are thought of as longer reaching and hence more powerful on delivery.

So is there a right way and a wrong way?

Yes. Well, sort of.

Ultimately the best position is the one that works for you. Just as everyone has certain techniques they find easy and others they can't quite nail, you will find that one fist feels natural while the other doesn't.

You can always develop a weaker strike through repetition and practice but it's much easier to play to your strengths and use the one that feels right for you.

Most people will find their fist naturally falls to about 45 degrees when extended but if yours doesn't that is nothing to worry about.

Find your Natural Position

One way to find your natural Fist shape:

1. Stand completely relaxed, arms at your side.
2. Focus on something away from your body, perhaps the other side of the room.
3. Without thinking make fists and bring your arms up straight out in front.
4. Observe whether your hands are vertical or at some kind of tilt.

This should be the natural bodily angle for your punching fist.

Defense against a Swinging (Haymaker) Punch

High Block, Palm Heel

A big swinging punch is one most commonly seen thrown by drunk, unprepared or untrained aggressors. Luckily it is also easier to counter than many techniques.

This combination flows straight from guarding block and intercepts any mid to high level attack. It follows up with a devastating strike to the face and, as always, the escape.





1. From the open hand guarding block raise the nearest arm to intercept the attackers swing (Most untrained attackers will swing a punch). Keep the arm relaxed and bent to deflect the energy
2. At the same time bring your rear arm straight up and forward, hard and fast. Keep the fingers out of the way and aim to hit with the hard part (heel) of the hand.
3. Strike to whatever you can reach. Nose and jaw are the most obvious targets but throat or eyes can also work. Once contact is made push the

opponents head back.

As the opponent staggers bring both arms back to guard. Scan around and make your escape.

Defense against a Straight Punch

Straight Block, Back Fist,

This technique comes into play if an attacker uses a straight punch in a direct forward motion. This is typically rarer as it requires some knowledge of striking on their part. Straight punches cannot be blocked directly, they are too powerful, and instead we deflect and dodge, pushing the power of the attack past us.







1. From the open hand guarding block shift your body weight to the side a small amount. (Not much, just enough to be out of the path of the strike)
2. At the same time use your forward hand to slap the attacking punch away and slightly down. (Forearm also works well). Again not too far.
3. Using the momentum from the block bounce your forward hand back and onto the bridge of the opponent's nose. (Or side of head)
4. (Optional) Instead of a back-fist, use the side of your hand to make a hammer-fist strike in the same manner.

5. Return arms to guard. Hopefully the opponent has eyes watering and/or broken nose. Scan around and make your escape.

Close Range Defense

Close Guard, Elbow Strike

A technique focused on a close range threat of any kind, this method employs one of the most powerful strikes available; the elbow. Once an attacker is too close for an effective punch or palm strike we guard our head and strike short and fast.



1. The open hand guarding block is pulled tighter as the opponent has created a threat by closing within our space.
2. As always one leg is slightly ahead of the other. This front leg is the same as our striking arm
3. Cover the side of your own head and chest by bringing the hand to the side of the head (as if listening to headphones) or by keeping the rear arm near your jaw. The elbow still points down covering the chest.
4. At the same time bring the forward (opposite) elbow horizontally into the attackers head aiming typically for the temple area (but eyes, ears or jaw works well too). Twist the body with this motion for extra impact.
5. Repeat if needed or jab the elbow hard into the area at the base of the neck, aiming for the collar bone. This often breaks easily.
6. Push the attacker away and recover into guarding block. Scan around for danger, and then run away.

Front Choke Defense

Pluck and Kick

If an attacker grabs us with both hands, attempting a choke or strangling motion, there are a lot of different defenses available. The most effective is the most instinctive; bringing our hands up to address the choke immediately. This employs speed and reactions to defeat power and strength.









1. The attacker catches us unawares and grabs the throat from the front
2. Bring both hands up quickly, over and inside the attacker's hands.
3. In a fast motion yank (Pluck) the hands away and down. We are not fighting with strength but speed, quickly plucking the opponents' hands away.
4. Follow up with a fast kick to the groin.
5. Scan and escape or if needed apply a palm strike or knee then escape

Defense against a Collar Grab

Reach over and twist

An attacker grabbing our collar can seem like a scary event but they have actually just given you a great target on which to use leverage against them. Once again we employ speed and surprise to counter their strength and aggression.









1. An aggressor grabs the collar with an outstretched arm and threatening motion.
2. From the open hand guarding block, in a circular motion we quickly reach over the top with our opposite arm and grasp their hand in ours. (Note you can use the whole hand or place a thumb on top and fingers underneath)
3. While holding their hand firmly quickly snap yours back down and to the side. While pushing hard and fast into their elbow from your other arm.
4. This creates a lever twisting your opponent's face to the ground and giving you complete control

5. Neutralise the attacker if needed with a kick or strike to their elbow and escape

How to Use the Lower Body

The lower body is a high reward, high risk area when it comes to self-defense.

Using kicks and Knee strikes can be incredibly powerful and the muscles that engage are some of the strongest in the body BUT we need our legs to stay upright and so flinging your legs around like Van Damme is an extremely BAD idea.



The real benefit however, of lower body attacks, is that they are usually unexpected. As mentioned in the Upper Body section most people instinctively use their arms in a threat situation. For this very reason a swift low kick will be much more likely to catch an opponent off guard and give you the precious distraction you need to escape. (Remember we aren't 'fighting', our first priority is to escape the situation)

My recommendation is a one-two combination using both upper and lower

body.

First – block, intercept or dodge an opponent’s attack high-up, then counter with a sharp and low kick to a sensitive area (Shin, knee, groin etc.)

Then run.

This approach uses our natural instinct to block with our upper body followed quickly by an unexpected low section counter attack.

Recommendations

Many traditional styles focus heavily on kicking, TaeKwonDo perhaps most famously, and while they do help you develop strength, speed and technique in your kicks they are also usually too high and too elaborate for real street use.

For this reason you may wish to take what you have learned in a traditional art and adapt it for more practical use. Some of these systems may help:

- Krav Maga
- Thai Kickboxing
- Styles of Kickfighting

Lunging Attack Defense

Pushing Block, Round/Side Kick to Knee

This sequence is a great defense for a lunging type attack or, as before, a straight punch. We deflect the initial strike and counter with a powerful low kick before, as always, running.





1. From the original open hand guarding block we twist and use the momentum to palm an attack away from the direction of the body removing the initial threat.
2. Follow up by kicking hard with the front leg, low to the side of the opponent's knee area. (Lift the knee, twist the hip and strike with the laces-part of the shoe or sole)
3. The kick can be aimed successfully at any soft or sensitive target but the side of the knee is a great target. Ribs can also work in this angle.
4. Don't wait for the attacker to recover. Again, arms are up, scan around

and make your escape.

Swinging or Haymaker High-Punch Defense #2

High Block, Low Kick

Very similar to the High Block, Palm Heel this method instead follows up with a low kick to a sensitive area. This combination of high and low makes it difficult to predict for the enemy.



1. From the open hand guarding block raise the nearest arm to intercept the

attackers swing (Most untrained attackers will swing a punch). Keep the arm relaxed and bent to deflect the energy

2. Follow up at almost the same time by kicking hard with the rear (Opposite) leg aiming for the groin.
3. Remember a groin strike may double the attacker over – don't get head-butted as they go down
4. Don't wait for the attacker to recover. Again, arms are up, scan around and make your escape.

Knee Striking

Just like the elbow, the knee is a very powerful but very short range technique best employed when you have no distance to run or perform a full length strike.



1. With the opponent at close range and no space to escape we reach up to grab either the shoulders or head to stabilise the strike.

2. Bring the rear knee up hard and fast while bringing the opponent down at the same time.
3. After striking push away, bring the arms up and escape.

Defense against a Groin Kick

Leg Twist and Kick

This one is mostly for the fellas out there. If someone goes for a big swinging kick toward the groin it only requires a small movement to make their strike ineffective. At the same time we position ourselves to counter attack afterwards.







1. From the open hand guarding block the attacking kick comes in.
2. Twist your waist and front leg a small amount in the direction of your rear leg closing off the open groin area.
3. As the front leg pivots lift it slightly and if possible deflect the enemy kick.
4. With the leg and knee already raised you can step and side-kick to the opponent's standing leg, (Try to strike with the sole of your foot to their Knee). Or Step in and Palm-Strike to the face.

5. Finish with your hands up, check around and escape

Techniques: Extras

A threat doesn't always come from a direction we are facing and doesn't always come from a punch or kick. The following are a couple of defenses against common threats from non-linear approaches. They can be combined with some of the previous strikes to enhance effectiveness.

Wall Defense, Against Attack From Behind

If you ever get caught with your back to an attacker (like in a restroom) this can be an effective counter. Assuming we haven't registered the threat until we have been hit this method allows us to defend our head, get arms up guarding and counter all in one movement.







1. When facing a wall or surface we are pushed or attacked from behind.
2. Firstly our hands come up either side of the head to stop us hitting the wall. This also is the start of a guarding block.
3. Pivot the head and quickly look over your shoulder at the attacker, hand on the wall.
4. Side kick backwards hard and fast, aiming for the mid-section.

5. Caught off guard the enemy is doubled over. Disengage, keep the arms up, look around and escape.

Bear Hug Defense, Attack From Behind.

More often targeted against women, this threat actually engages both the attacker's arms leaving us ultimately free to counter with either of our own.















There are several steps to this defense and you may find any of them are effective. Do not feel that you have to undertake all of them. Once you are free, make your escape.

1. When facing away we are grabbed from behind.
2. Snap the head back aiming to break the attacker's nose. (If they aren't smart they may be too close and get caught by this)
3. Stamp your foot down aiming to crack the attacker's toes or feet.

4. If neither of these resulted in your release now quickly bend your legs, drop your weight and bend slightly forward thrusting the arms out in one motion. This makes it very hard for anyone to hold on to you.
5. Freeing an arm/elbow, spin in the loosened grip and reverse elbow strike your attacker on the side of the head, repeat if needed on the other side.
6. Once freed from the grip, keep the arms up, scan and escape.

Secret Tip: The Most Common Killer Mistake When ‘Aiming Low’...

If you’ve spent any amount of time studying Self Defense systems online or in books you will notice a recurring theme that always seems to surface. When dealing with a male aggressor ‘Aim Low’.



The swift kick to the groin is a staple of so many Martial Arts and Self

Protection schools that it has almost become a running joke.

If in doubt kick him in the nuts!

Now the first thing to understand is that the reason this is so popular is because it is, when done correctly, an immensely effective technique. Ask any man who has suffered accidental football to the balls and he will tell you all about the mind numbing pain and horrifying ache that suddenly overcomes us after a strike to our most sensitive of regions. Now imagine that strike is no longer accidental but a full strength kick and we have a crippling insta-win technique to disable any potential attacker of the male persuasion.

BUT...

There is one thing 90% of systems forget in teaching this all-winning tactic. Hit someone in the nuts and they double over in pain, smashing anything in their way.

Chances are you need to be close to deliver a decent groin kick and not have it spotted from a mile off. Because of this you will be near your enemy when you strike.

As the knee or foot goes in he snaps forward in pain and WHACK! You've been head-butted on the nose. (As someone who has received a broken nose I do not recommend it. Blood can choke you in the throat and eyes water making it impossible to see properly)

So why are there so many groin kicks in this guide and elsewhere? Because it is an effective technique but needs to be combined with a proper guarding block.

If you have the hands up protecting your head, as discussed before, you have much more control over your strike. You can choose to stabilise by holding a part of the enemy, twist away if close, or block your face and head as he doubles over in pain.

This way you combine perhaps the most powerful offensive technique (The groin kick) with the best defense; (The open hand guard).

So remember 'Aim Low'...but only if your hands are up high!

Dynamite Drills and Effective Exercises

Drills are generally a specific exercise repeated under different circumstances, over and over until perfect.

While the aim of this guide is instinctive Self Defense without the need for constant training you can improve your preparedness drastically by regularly drilling the techniques in different situations.



Instinct is, after all, not a conscious action, and so if we practice something enough it becomes a part of who we are, rather than something we have to think about and then perform. If we are intimately familiar with say a block and strike combination it becomes part of muscle memory. Then when it is needed in real life we just react. No thinking, just action.

Of course this is the ultimate aim but repetitive drilling of every technique is unrealistic for many people in a normal daily life. If however you have the time and space, or if you are already a member of a Martial Arts club the following is

a great approach to developing effective drills for any self-defense exercise.

1. Take a single technique you wish to learn. *E.g.* A Palm Strike
2. Practise this technique on the spot with a partner, striking a focus pad.
3. Next, practise the same technique on the pad but moving forwards then backwards a number of steps with the partner.
4. Now do the technique with the partner on the pad but moving around in a natural manner.
5. Finally perform the technique moving around with the partner in many different ways, at many different distances and with irregular timing.

Single technique

To

Single technique moving forwards and backwards

To

Single technique moving around with a partner

To

Single technique moving around with irregular timing.

Next you can add another aspect, say the high section block and repeat the process until you have a full block and counter exercise.

All the time the aim is to gradually increase realism by changing speed, distance and how predictable the target is.

Pressure Testing

The final step is pressure testing. Now we try to get as close to a real violent encounter as possible. The defender can utilise any number of blocks and counter attacks against an unknown attack or direction.

This can be stepped up by:

- **Dimming or changing the lighting**
- **Adding Noise**
- **Adding Multiple Attackers**

- **Limiting the Defenders abilities. (E.g. One hand is tied behind their back)**

Weapons

Weapons add a whole new dimension to self-defense and are worthy of an entire book on their own. This book is mainly focused on interpersonal unarmed self-defense, not weapon attacks; however a few simple concepts can be applied to minimize risk should an attacker utilize a weapon.

Note that we are still (and always) trying to use intuition and natural reactions when it comes to being attacked. In this way many weapon strikes can be defended in the same way as a swinging punch.

If you are interested in using a weapon yourself it is recommended to employ it as a distraction to help you evade the situation and not to get into fight. A thrown set of keys or ash tray tossed as a distraction is a better choice than attempting to bludgeon the attacker with them!

Basics:

Knives: *Knives are messy and risky weapons. In most altercations both parties will end up getting cut. If escape is not possible try to maintain a bodily distance from the blade. This could mean kicking low to escape or blocking at a range.*



Guns: Thankfully rarer than knives in most parts of the world, firearms are extremely dangerous and if possible you should not even attempt to disarm a potential attacker. If you must, first focus on moving your body out of the line of fire then counter attack. Here it is **CRUCIAL** that you disable the opponent's ability to fire at you. Break their fingers, blind them, or ideally remove the weapon because otherwise running is suddenly a bad idea.



Bats: With a baseball bat or swung weapon like a stick. Instinct tells us to get out of range and we should, especially if we can run away but if cornered or trapped the second best place to be against a bat attacker is up close, right next

to their body.

*At this distance the bat has no power and the attacker has lost momentum.
This may run counter to intuition in many circumstances.*



Thank You (And A Free Book!)

I can't stress enough that any real life or death encounter will probably not go to plan and most of the techniques you see here (or anywhere else) will be forgotten. Trust in your instinct and never be afraid to run. If you can't run then try to calm the situation, if the attacker wants your money hand it over – it's only money.

It's only after all of this and if you still genuinely fear for your safety that you should start to think about blocks and counter attacks. They are always a last resort.

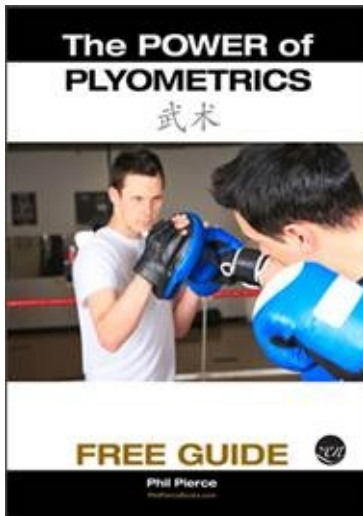
So thanks for reading this guide. I work hard to create useful and easy to follow guides for Martial Arts, Fitness and Self Defense. I hope you never have to use it!

Given that you now have a better understanding of self-defense, please help others and give this book a review if you found it useful!

Positive reviews make a world of difference to authors and other readers alike.

Finally, for a **COMPLETELY FREE** guide check out my site at:

www.PhilPierceBooks.com



Thanks again and stay safe.
- ***Phil***

Recommended Reads

Knowledge is arguably the best tool in Self Defense. This book will hopefully offer you an excellent foundation in understanding how to look after yourself out there but there are many other excellent books worth a read if you wish to broaden your knowledge base and develop a deeper understanding.

Including:

The Fence – Geoff Thompson

<http://bit.ly/17Qj31r>

Self Defense Tips Everyone Should Know – Neal Martin

<http://bit.ly/1aIZgEs>

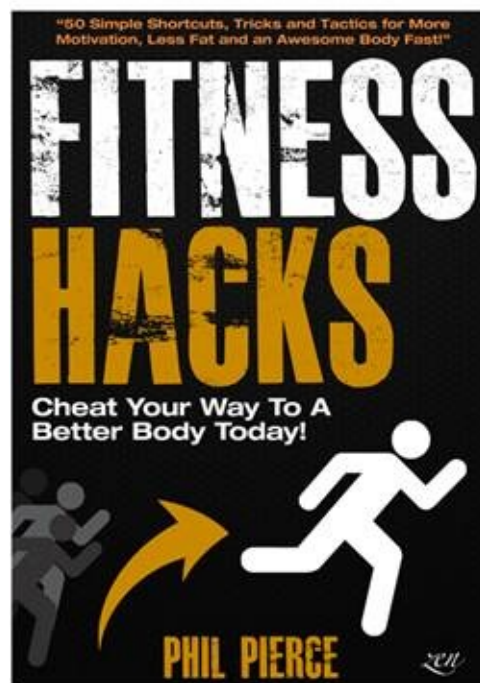
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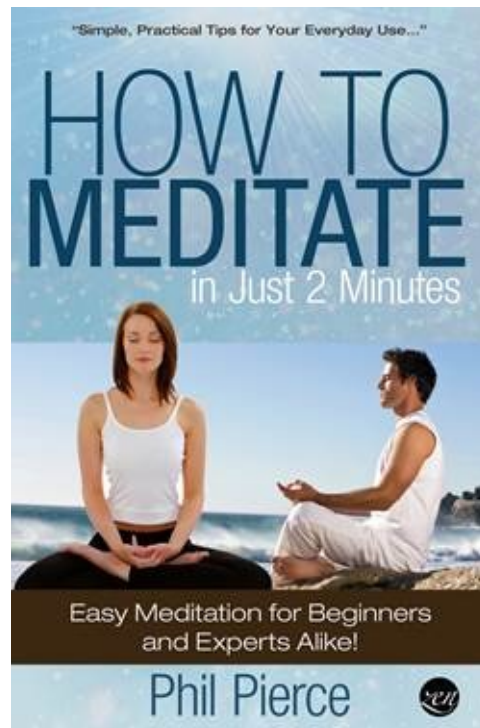


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