

FRONT SIGHT

FIREARMS TRAINING INSTITUTE



Practice Guide
Edged Weapons

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Disclaimer

This Practice Guide is not intended as a substitute for the safe and professional instruction provided in Front Sight's Two-Day Edged Weapons Course.

THIS IS NOT A TRAINING MANUAL. FRONT SIGHT STRONGLY ADVISES YOU AGAINST PRACTICING THE TECHNIQUES IN THIS PRACTICE GUIDE UNLESS YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE TWO-DAY EDGED WEAPONS COURSE AT FRONT SIGHT.

Front Sight assumes no liability for any damages or negligence that may occur through the use of this Practice Guide.

Students wishing to pursue training should contact Front Sight at (800) 987-7719 or www.frontsight.com.

Front Sight recommends that all procedures and techniques mentioned in this guide be performed in an open level area free of obstacles. By using this guide, the reader accepts the responsibility for any and all accidents, damage or injuries that might occur.

PART ONE

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The Purpose of This Practice Guide

At Front Sight, our goal is to make you as good as we possibly can during the time you spend with us. That, however, is only part of the process to gaining lasting skills in the use of edged weapons and establishing a combat mindset. When you leave Front Sight, it becomes your responsibility to practice the techniques you learned during your course at Front Sight.

To assist you in your continued practice, we have created this guide. It reviews many of the techniques taught in the Two day Edged Weapons Course and reviews key elements of the Empty Hand Self Defense Course as well. You can practice independently or with a training partner. Additionally, the use of a training device such as a heavy bag may prove beneficial.

Therefore, we believe the best approach to your training should be varied; incorporating solo, partner and device training regimens. We also encourage you to seek additional training thereby advancing your knowledge and capability.

Practice diligently; practice often; and by all means — practice **CORRECTLY!**

Safety Considerations

To get the most out of your practice sessions there are some safety considerations that should be addressed.

First and foremost, know your own limits. Edged Weapons training can be rigorous and very demanding. Consequently, injuries can happen if you push the limits or act carelessly.

Before beginning any rigorous training regimen it may be prudent to consult your family doctor. Please understand that every individual has limitations. Recognize your limits and practice accordingly.

Proper equipment is important. The appropriate protective gear will help to avoid injury when training with a partner or on your own. When using real (live) blades, you should tape the edge to avoid accidental injuries. When working with a partner, eye protection is a must. If you have any questions regarding appropriate training gear the staff at the Front Sight Pro Shop will be happy to assist.

Stretching is a part of training. You should stretch at the beginning and end of each practice session. Make sure you are warm and loose before you practice.

On occasion, wear your normal daily attire when practicing.

Try to practice your groundwork on a mat. We agree that in most cases confrontations will not happen in nice, safe, soft areas; and there is some value to practicing in realistic locations. However, if you injure yourself practicing groundwork on a gravel driveway you will not be of much use until you recover. Certainly not a condition of readiness.

Levels of Awareness

Two of the best weapons you have in your arsenal are readiness and awareness. These two weapons can be carried without a permit and directly influence your ability to defend yourself or a loved one.

At Front Sight we talk about the Color Code of Mental Awareness. Progressing from White to Black the code defines levels of awareness. Condition White is blissfully unaware of your environment and those actions taking place around you. Condition Black on the other hand is fully engaged in defending yourself. At this point you are physically involved in the engagement. So where do we want to be in terms of color code?

Condition Yellow is our safety maintenance objective. In Condition Yellow you are alert and aware. As you move through your environment your head is up and your eyes are open. Certainly there will be other thoughts going through your head in the course of your daily activities. Try however, to reserve a little space in your brain to monitor your surroundings. The old phrase, "What's wrong with this picture?", should come to mind. Be aware of people moving towards you or those that look out of place. We are not endorsing paranoia but more a condition of realistic vigilance.

So stay alert, stay in Condition Yellow.

The Five Levels of Competence

Intentionally Incompetent: Believe it or not, there are those who own and carry firearms that clearly know of their incompetence, but lack even the slightest bit of courage or motivation to improve their skills. The **II** avoids training out of laziness and fear of further exposing his incompetence to others. Graveyards are filled with the **II**. Sadly, the **II** often take those who count on them most — partners, family, and team members — to the grave with him. Unfortunately, the **II** cannot be helped to any substantial degree due to his lack of motivation to retain any training. Time wasted by coddling the **II** is better spent on the student who wants to improve. Fortunately, we rarely see the **II** at Front Sight.

Unconsciously Incompetent: The **UI** does not know that he does not know. The **UI** represents approximately 95% of all gun owners and includes people, for example in the police and military, who carry a gun for a living. The **UI** is incompetent but does not know he is incompetent because he has had no training or poor training, and has not yet experienced a tactical situation, which would clearly demonstrate his inadequacies. Examples of the **UI** can be found everywhere. The police officer who boasts that he has never had to draw his pistol in 10 years of duty is a lucky **UI**. The officer who only practices shooting his weapon a few times per year in order to pass the mandatory range qualifications is **UI**. The gun owner who buys a gun and box of ammo, fires a few shots at the range and then places the gun in his closet, confident he can use it effectively to protect himself is **UI**. The hunter who only shoots once a year to sight-in his rifle before going hunting is **UI**. Military personnel who receive basic rifle training, but have not handled a weapon **with live ammunition** in over six months are **UI**. Unfortunately, the **UI** often learns of his ineptitude for the first time under the most extreme stress situations. When the flag flies, the **UI's** first lesson may be his last.

Consciously Incompetent: If the UI survives his first lesson, and is smart enough to place the blame on the man in the mirror, the UI automatically graduates to the level of CI. The CI now knows he does not know and seeks help in acquiring the proper skills in the use of his weapon. The CI is a motivated student of weaponscraft. Although the CI is still operating at a level of incompetence, the CI recognizes his faults and in doing so can focus his efforts toward reaching a level of competency.

Consciously Competent: With proper training and practice, the CI develops into the CC. The length of time needed to develop from CI to CC is directly related to the quality of the training and the motivation of the student. The CC is able to manipulate his weapon and clear malfunctions in a safe and efficient manner. The CC understands the principles of marksmanship, shot placement and ammunition management. Quick assumption of field positions and the use of cover are familiar concepts to the CC. The CC has adopted the combat mind set as his own. As the level indicates, the CC is very quick and competent, but must constantly think about what he is doing. Every decision and action occurs as a result of an intricate thought process and has not yet reached a reflex response level. The CC will respond effectively to most stress situations that do not require split second decisions or actions.

Unconsciously Competent: As the fifth and ultimate level of competence implies, the UC has programmed his mind and body after thousands of repetitions to react in a fraction of a second with consistent responses that require no perceivable thought process. The UC functions flawlessly even under stressful situations because the UC's extensive training overrides his conscious thought process. As you can imagine, the UC is not common in today's society. This sad fact is due more to lack of proper training than to lack of motivation. Here are a few examples of the UC in action. In the heat of a gun battle, a pistolero hears a "click" as his hammer falls on a defective round. He reflexively taps the magazine, rack-flips the action and delivers two rounds into

his adversary's chest without consciously recognizing that his gun had malfunctioned. Upon sighting a trophy, a hunter slings up as he drops into a steady sitting position. He fires, manipulates the bolt on recoil — without the rifle leaving his shoulder or his eyes leaving the game — producing a one-shot kill and he does it all in less time than it takes to read this sentence. The combat shotgunner, confronted with a rapidly deteriorating hostage situation at 10 yards, immediately aims his front sight at the outside ear of the gunman, then confidently delivers half of the shotgun's pattern to the gunman's head.

At Front Sight we take motivated people, conscious of their inadequacies or not, and develop their minds and bodies to a level of competence that transcends 95% of the people who carry firearms for a living. For those who are already competent, Front Sight will challenge your abilities and elevate your competence to the unconscious plane.

Note: Although this manual reviews edged weapons techniques, understanding our limitations and realizing our true motivations to train are none the less important.



Edged Weapons Discussion

Presenting a deadly weapon to defend ourselves is a choice we make only when threatened with death or serious bodily harm. Whether we engage in empty hand defense first is immaterial. In some cases the use of empty hand techniques may be necessary to provide the time and distance needed to present our weapon. Similarly, we may feel that the situation can be controlled with empty hand defense only to realize that the adversary is more intent on doing us harm than first thought. It could be argued that you should present your weapon at the first opportunity. Whatever the rationale, presenting a weapon escalates the seriousness of any engagement.

The practice and use of edged weapons techniques have developed over hundreds of years with contributions from all corners of the globe and all cultures both past and present. Many different systems have evolved over the years, some useful and some not so useful. Choosing to study a particular system should be a function of applicability. For instance, mastering the sword may be beneficial in developing balance and coordination but useless in a street self defense scenario.

At Front Sight we have elected to study and train in the use of the folding knife or pocket folder. This choice is based upon the following reasons: The folder is easily carried and easily deployed whereas carrying a large fixed blade is not quite socially acceptable. Also, the techniques involved in using a folder are simple and easy to learn. With a little practice one can be comfortable with several reliable techniques that can be employed in a self defense situation. Of course, additional training is always encouraged and regular practice is a must. Edged Weapon techniques are very similar to Empty Hand techniques. Both rely on balance and speed. Footwork is a key element.

As you progress in your ability, you will find that constant movement is a base element to knife fighting. Moving quickly and efficiently requires constant control of balance. You must be able to lunge, parry and sidestep all with great speed. You must also be able to use both arms and legs if needed. We will review some empty hand strikes and kicks with this in mind. Having an edged weapon does not eliminate the need for hand or foot strikes to balance or counter. Care must be taken during practice to avoid injuring an extended limb.

Success in Defending Yourself

In order to survive a violent encounter you must be willing to commit yourself to the fight. In many ways survival is more mental than physical. It is not the size of the dog that determines the outcome of a fight but rather the amount of fight in the dog. This manual will review in static form some movements and techniques you can employ when defending yourself with an edged weapon. The techniques discussed are proven successful and are not gender or size specific. You must remember when practicing that violent confrontations are extremely dynamic and unpredictable. The review outlined in this manual is limited by the static presentation of the adversary. We are attempting to highlight key elements and classic positions for the techniques described. How you stand, what you strike with, where you strike and basically what is your desired outcome are all influenced by the dynamics of each particular confrontation. The one constant factor must be your desire to survive. With this total commitment in hand you employ any technique you have learned and your chances of survival are increased. Understand clearly that any altercation involving a knife will most likely end with all parties getting injured to some degree. Your objective is to minimize your injuries.



Safety Equipment can include eye protection, rubber training knives, focus mitts, and pads.



Common knife types. Fixed blades are on the left and folders are on the right

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Establishing a Balanced Stance

Any and all actions you take in defending yourself launch from the foundation you have established. Power, range and ultimate effectiveness all depend upon the strength of your stance. You must be able to guard, strike and move in any direction on demand.

To establish a balanced defensive posture, start from a normal walking gait and stop with your support side leg forward. Hold your arms straight up and drop straight down bending the elbows. This provides approximate positioning for the arms. Keep the elbows close to the body and stagger the hands with the support (lead) hand forward. For Defensive Posture #1 the hands are held slightly higher than the waist. For Defensive Posture #2 the hands are held at chin height to allow line of sight while staying close enough to guard the head. Open hands in both positions indicate a defensive intent.

Immediately demand that your adversary stop their advance. By loudly demanding, "Stop right there!" you draw attention to your predicament from anyone nearby. Additionally, you serve notice to your adversary that you are prepared to take action. Finally, vocalizing forces you to breathe which helps to keep you loose and flexible.

If the situation escalates then a ready (fighting) position may require closed (fist) hands. Strikes can be delivered with both empty and closed hands. The elbows stay close to the body to guard the mid-section and the hands (fists) stay up and close to guard the head. Keep your weight evenly distributed slightly forward on the balls of your feet.



Natural walking gait.



Hold your arms up.



.Defensive Posture #1



Basic Fighting Stance

Defensive Posture

Think for a minute about the term self-defense. A person or group of persons under some type of attack are attempting to survive the attack by defending themselves. A fast retreat is a form of self-defense. In the course of defending yourself you may benefit from the aid of a bystander. Indeed said bystander may call for help on your behalf. So assuming a defensive posture initially may indirectly provide an advantage by identifying you as the victim.

Violent attacks and the follow up defensive maneuvers can happen so quickly it may be impossible for a bystander to tell the good guy from the bad guy. Naturally, there may be times when you may have to strike immediately without warning. It should go without saying that defending yourself is the priority. We can worry about the bystanders later. However, staying in condition yellow, being alert and thinking ahead may afford you the opportunity to escalate your defense in a sequence. In this case you would start from Defensive Posture #1 and demand that your potential adversary stop their advance.

If the advance continues you would escalate to Defensive Posture #2 and again demand that they stop. Doing so in an area where other people are present would signal your need for assistance and identify you as the potential victim. Additionally, as mentioned previously, your attacker now knows that you mean action. Continuing this sequence would involve defensive movement on your part and parrying your adversary's advance.

At this point it would seem apparent that further action is required. You could employ any of the strikes you have learned or if you are better equipped, present your weapon. In any event, succeeding in defending yourself is a job to take seriously.

Commit yourself to the fight totally and without reserve.
Survive!



Defensive Posture #1

Distribute your body weight evenly and slightly forward on the balls of your feet. Issue the command, **“STOP RIGHT THERE!”**



Defensive Posture #2

Hands held chin high, thumbs barely touching, weight evenly balanced on the balls of the feet. Remember to again vocalize your demand, **“STOP RIGHT THERE!”**



Basic Fighting Stance

Your weight is evenly distributed with knees slightly bent. Arms are relaxed and in close to the body with your hands in front of your jaw.

The Parry

Take advantage of your adversary's forward momentum and parry their advance by sidestepping and deflecting their attack with your lead hand. This action will hopefully give you the distance and the time to make a defensive decision. If you can safely retreat, than do so. If you have a weapon than this may be a good time to present it. Stay defensive in posture and continue to demand loudly that your adversary "STOP!"





Position of Advantage

Defensive Strikes

In order to defend yourself, it may become necessary to strike your adversary. The strikes introduced in the 2 day empty hand course include jabs and crosses which can be delivered open hand or with fists. We also cover elbow and knee strikes and round kicks. If you have to go to the ground then bicycle kicks in addition to round kicks can be employed as well and with great success. Whatever strike you choose, deliver it with your total commitment to survive the attack.

Strikes can be practiced using a heavy bag or with a partner using focus mitts and kicking shields.

Jab

A lead hand strike, straight out and back with fist or open hand. Remember to bring your hand right back to guard position.





Using a jab successfully can provide some time and space needed to present your knife.

Cross

Delivered with the rear hand either open or closed (fist). This strike travels across the body. Remember to open your stance slightly and rotate your hip. Keep your lead hand in guard position.



Thrust your rear hand straight out at your adversary. This action crosses your body, hence the name. To achieve maximum force rotate your hip towards the adversary and push off the ball of the rear foot.



Executing a powerful cross can provide the time needed to present your knife.

Open Hand Strike

Striking with an open hand can be just as effective as using your fist. In many cases using your open hand can prevent injury to your knuckles and fingers. Also, the softer nature of the heel of the hand allows contact with the adversary's head and jaw without causing injury to your hand. A rule of thumb is to use hard striking areas (fist) on softer targets and softer striking areas (open hand) on hard targets.



Hammer Fist

Striking with the bottom, or knife-edge of the fist to the temple, mouth, or nose of your adversary.



Trachea Strike

This strike is extremely effective when your adversary is very close. Drive the web of the hand into your opponent's throat. Remember to open your stance slightly, rotate your hip and strike through your adversary.



Rear Elbow Strike

This strike is extremely effective when your adversary is very close. Remember to open your stance slightly, rotate your hip and strike through your adversary. Ideally, you should secure assailants head with a grip around the back of the neck.





Open stance and rotate hip. All strikes must be delivered through the target.



Once again, powerful empty hand strikes can provide needed time and distance.



Note: Elbow strikes can be delivered by either arm and from a variety of angles. Practice this basic strike then try the lead arm. Additional training is recommended.

Knee Strike

To deliver this devastating strike effectively the adversary must be drawn close. You do this by stepping deep and grabbing the adversary by the head, neck or shoulders. Lead with your hips and launch your knee into your adversary in an upward angle.





Try to drive your knee through your target. Continue to strike until the adversary is subdued.



Continue to strike until successful or exhausted.

Front Kicks

The strongest muscles in your body are your leg muscles. It stands to reason that if you can employ your leg in a strike then a substantial amount of force can be delivered to your adversary. The front kick is basic and effective. Key elements include opening your stance, leading with your hip and rotating your hip through the strike. Remember to follow through with your strike. Visualize a point that is past your target. This allows the force to carry through the contact area and cause the most disruption.





Your target is typically below the waist of your adversary.

Follow through and recover to a balanced stance quickly.



Round Kicks

The round kick is another basic and effective kick. Key elements include opening your stance, leading with your hip and rotating your hip through the strike. Remember to follow through with your strike. Visualize a point that is past your target. This allows the force to carry through the contact area and cause the most disruption.



Open your stance and drive the hip towards your target. Try to kick with your shin and point your toe.



Your target is typically below the waist of your adversary.



Follow through and recover to a balanced stance quickly.

Ground Work

There may be times when in the course of defending yourself you end up on the ground. In the Two Day Empty Hand Course we cover some basic kicks from a grounded position. Also we cover some escapes from ground attacks.

Bicycle Kick

This very effective kick can be delivered rapidly and repeatedly until your adversary is repelled.





Continue kicking until you have a chance to recover to a balanced stance.



You can track your adversary from this turreted position until you have an opportunity to recover to a balanced stance.



If you do get pushed to the ground remember to tuck your chin and roll your back. Keep your hands and elbows close. Do not slap the pavement to break your fall. Roll with it. Deliver bicycle kicks, side kicks or round kicks from the ground.





You can strike several areas effectively from the ground.



Round kick delivered to the knee or sciatic nerve.

Escape from the Ground I

In some cases an attacker may have trapped you on the ground and may be on top of you continuing the attack. In the Two Day Empty Hand Course we introduce and practice some basic escapes.



Tuck your chin and thrust up with the pelvis, throwing your attacker off-balance.





Trap your opponents upper arm while getting your feet outside of his.



Keeping your adversary's legs and arm trapped, roll over to reverse the position.



Maintain contact and push your way out of the engagement.
Recover to a balanced stance quickly.





Escape from the Ground II



Wrap your legs around your opponent to disrupt his balance while simultaneously plucking his arms to the sides.





Reach across over the shoulder while your other hand controls his wrist on the same side. Grip the wrist that you have on your attacker's wrist.





While maintaining control of your attacker's wrist, slide your hips to the side and drive his wrist to the back of his neck.

Escape from the Ground III





Slide your hips back to create some working space while gripping the back of your attacker's neck with one hand while your other hand controls his other arm.

Bring your knee on the same side as the arm holding the neck up to your attacker's chest and throat while dropping the other leg around his knee.





Using your hold on his neck, pull his weight forward and use your legs to sweep your attacker's legs out from under him. Use the momentum to roll on top of your attacker. Recover your balance by posting both hands on the ground.





Immediately follow up with strikes to end the fight.



Wrist Lock I



Grip your attacker's wrist with both hands. Thumbs on the back of his hand while fingers overlap on the inside of his wrist.



Keep his hand close to your body and apply pressure at a downward angle towards your attacker's thumb. Maintain pressure as you ride your attacker to the ground.



Wrist Lock II



Grip attacker's wrist with both hands; thumbs on the back of his hand and fingers on the inside of his wrist. Rotate his arm so his fingers are pointing up and his palm is facing him.





Keeping his hand close to your body, apply pressure forward with your thumbs while your hands and arms apply downward pressure.



Arm Bar



One hand controls the wrist of your opponent while your other hand applies pressure just above the elbow joint.

Opposite page: Drive your opponent down by applying pressure with your hand that is above the elbow. Keep their wrist and arm close to your body for control until your attacker is on the ground.



Escape from a Headlock

Protect your neck by shrugging your shoulders and turning your chin into your attacker's body. Grasp your attacker's wrist with the arm farthest away from his body to prevent him from striking your head and face.



Using the arm that is closest to your attacker, strike him in the groin.



Using the hand closest to your opponents body, reach up and over their shoulder and grasp underneath their jaw.





Pushing up with the hand underneath his jaw, straightening up as much as possible. Use your hip and leg to break your attacker's balance.





Sweep him to the ground while maintaining control of his arm and follow up with multiple strikes as necessary.



Escape from a Bear Hug (Under the Arms)



When grabbed from behind, drop your weight down low to prevent being slammed into the ground.



Strike the top of
your attacker's
hand as hard as
you can like you
are knocking on a
door.



Using both hands,
grab your
opponent's top
hand.



Once you have his top hand free, step out and spin outside of the attacker maintaining control of his wrist and hand.





Maintaining control of his hand will lead into a wristlock which you can use to take your opponent to the ground.



Escape from a Bear Hug (Over the Arms)

Drop your weight low to prevent being slammed into the ground and begin to create space to work by shifting your hips from side to side.





Once you have enough space, strike your attacker's groin to loosen his grip.





Continue to work free while gaining control of one of your opponents arms.





Establish an arm bar and drive your opponent to the ground.



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Presenting the Knife on the Ground



After delivering a kick or two from the ground prepare to present your knife.





Present using a one handed opening technique which reserves the support hand for defense.





Execute slashes or stabs as needed and look for an opportunity to regain a standing position.



Gripping the Knife

Controlling your knife is the most important element in determining the outcome of the fight. If you lose control of the blade or your grip is weak or you drop the blade while changing grips you put yourself in a very dangerous position. There are times when it is appropriate to change grips or hands but you must be deliberate and efficient to avoid losing control.



Thumb forward (Saber) grip.



Reverse grip edge to the rear. Useful in blocking and defensive techniques as well as stabbing.

Full (wraparound) grip. Useful in preventing takeaways.





Reverse grip, edge forward and thumb on butt. Another variation of the reverse grip with unique applications.



When practicing it would be prudent to tape the edge of the blade to help avoid injury.

Presenting the Knife

The period between initial contact and full deployment of your blade is a very precarious time. You can use some empty hand techniques to provide time and space needed in order to present your blade but there is always a fraction of an instant when one hand is occupied and you are somewhat vulnerable. It is crucial that you present quickly without dropping your blade. There are several methods you can use.

A one handed technique is preferred and allows your support hand to defend if needed. On occasion you will have enough time to employ both hands but if you practice regularly with one hand you will become proficient and eventually the use of two hands will seem redundant. Most folding knives have some mechanical aspect built in to aid in one hand presentation. Whether it is a piece that catches your pocket and opens the blade as you remove the knife or it is a thumb stud or loop that provides a purchase allowing your thumb to easily open the blade or a roll and flip design (butterfly) there is definitely a way to present one handed.



Knife on top has a loop designed to give the thumb a purchase. Knife on bottom has a notch that catches the pocket and opens the blade as the knife is removed from the pocket.



Determine the design of your knife or pick one that you are comfortable with and practice one handed presentations.



Notch on knife snags pocket and opens blade during extraction if your knife is designed to do so.





Otherwise, use the thumb stud to push the blade open. This method can be employed in a stealth mode as well allowing the blade to be opened quietly.



Stance with Knife Presented

When using a knife to defend against an unarmed attacker it is common to use a knife forward stance. In this stance the knife hand and weapon side leg are forward. A reverse grip can be employed successfully as well.



Forward stance, forward grip



Forward stance, reverse grip



The dynamic nature of a knife fight will naturally result in the defender being in a multiple of positions and stances. In this case the defender is in a knife to the rear stance and is using his support hand to fend or parry. Keep in mind that when facing an opponent armed with a knife, your support hand runs the risk of getting cut severely and repeatedly. If maneuvered into this position when facing an armed attacker quickly recover to a blade forward stance.

Blade Techniques

Slashing and Stabbing

When using your blade to defend yourself it is likely that you will need to be aggressive and in some cases on the offensive. It is not realistic to think that you can sit back and wait for an attacker to strike or charge and be able to defend merely by hacking or stabbing the onrushing attacker. You must blend defensive moves with offensive moves taking advantage of whatever opening that presents itself. In many cases you will use your free hand to grab, parry or strike while maneuvering your blade into position. The next few pages will illustrate several options available in terms of targets and free hand utilization. Accuracy demands practice so review your techniques often.



Slash to the Neck



Back slash to the Neck



Reciprocal palm heel strike as knife is withdrawn.



Slash to the midsection



Reciprocal strike to the heart.



Heel strike disrupting vision.



Follow with a stab through the ribs to the heart. Delivered knuckles up and blade flat.



Series of slashes to the neck region and the midsection. A very useful technique is to take advantage of a blocked strike and essentially feeding off your opponents moves. If your strike is blocked immediately switch to another target that naturally feeds off the motion involved.

For example, you are blocked from the opponents neck and immediately switch to the midsection. Note that the free hand is kept in use throughout the engagement.





Stab underneath the sternum.



Knuckles up
blade flat.



Knuckles down
blade flat.



Stab to the ear canal. Extremely effective.





Stab to the eye.





Remember to alternate with free hand strikes.



Stab under the chin.



Using a reverse grip, downward stab just above the clavicle.





Blade flat, knuckles up or down for a stab through the ribs.





Stab on a slightly upward angle just below sternum. The braced thumb forward grip may be applied in this instance.





Blade flat, knuckles up or down for a stab into the armpit or underneath the ribcage.





Blade flat, knuckles up for a slash across the forehead or across the inside of the thigh.



Defensive Blade Use



You can use your knife initially to discourage aggressive advances. However, be prepared to accelerate your efforts on a moments notice.



In the initial stages of a fight your attacker may try to deliver any number of strikes. You can respond by taking what is offered and slashing or stabbing the advancing limb.





Stabbing the kicking leg.



Slashing the grabbing arm.



Employing a reverse grip to block an overhead attack. After blocking the strike bring the blade back on the attackers arm and cut deeply.

PART FOUR

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Defending Against an Armed Attacker

In the Two Day Empty Hand Self Defense Course you are introduced to methods of defending yourself against an armed adversary. Unarmed defense against an armed opponent should be attempted **only** if there is no other acceptable alternative. Whether your adversary initiates their attack with a weapon presented or in the course of hand to hand defense with this adversary, they present a weapon, you should be ready to defend yourself. The weapons used for training included a handgun, knife and stick. This does not imply that these are the only weapons you may encounter. Be ready for the unexpected.

In the course of defending yourself you may be able to secure your adversary's weapon and use it for your defense, so stay alert. Again it must be stressed that violent encounters are extremely unpredictable. The pictures in this manual are static representations of a very fluid, dynamic and potentially volatile series of movements. Each frame highlights key elements of the technique. When practiced regularly, the speed and flow of the movements will improve. These techniques are best practiced with a partner.

In the following pages we will show defense against a presentation of a weapon and defense against an armed attack. There is a difference between presentation of a weapon and an attack with a weapon. When an adversary presents their weapon to you they usually want you to do something and the weapon is the threat. Many times the adversary will press the weapon against some part of your body. If, in your judgment, all that's at stake is your wallet or material possessions, it may be prudent to comply rather than fight against an armed attacker.

On the other hand if an adversary is attacking you or you fear you will be injured or killed even if you comply, then it is time to fight with utter determination and ruthlessness.



Weapon Presentation from the Front

Open Hands with thumbs (Defensive Posture #2). Act submissive, both verbally and physically. Prepare mentally to explode into the **A Frame** defense.



Bring your hands down quickly to your adversary's wrist. Step deep and turn your body launching your shoulder into your adversary while at the same time bringing his weapon hand to your side. Get the weapon to the side of your body as fast as you can while turning your body quickly to the side.



This must be an explosive movement on your part. Pull back on your adversary's wrist as you launch your shoulder into their upper body.



Tuck the adversary's weapon arm securely into your armpit and wrap and lock with your hand. Immediately strike your adversary with elbows or knees. Continue to strike until you are successful or exhausted.





Weapon Presentation from the Rear

Open hands held shoulder high. Act submissive. Try to glance over your shoulder to confirm that there is a weapon being held against you. It is to your advantage if the weapon is actually touching your back.



Quickly step behind and deep. Drop your arm and hook adversary's arm at the wrist.



Continue the flow with an elbow strike to the adversary's head. Continue strikes as needed. The key element in this technique is the continuous flow of movement.



Continue striking your
adversary.



Strike until successful
or exhausted.

Weapon Presentation to the Head

Open hands held shoulder high. Act submissive.





Bring hands up to Defensive Posture #1. From there your hands and arms need to explode upwards and grasp the slide and frame of the gun while using your legs to drop six to eight inches.





Once you've established a firm grip on the gun, drive the muzzle towards your opponent's face.





Once the muzzle is towards your attacker's face, pull the gun down and away from him.





Pull the gun in close and gain distance from your attacker. To ensure the gun is ready to use, begin by tapping the magazine to ensure it is seated.





Rack the slide back while flipping the ejection port to the ground and release. Point in at your attacker with your finger on the trigger if he is still a threat to you and engage as necessary. If you determine your attacker is giving up or retreating, go to the ready with your finger straight. Issue verbal commands as appropriate.





Weapon Presentation to the Throat From Behind

Hard to say whether one position is worse than others when a weapon is involved. However, this position requires maximum commitment on your part to survive. Again act submissive, stay loose. As you start to raise your hands in submission be ready to explode into action.



Hook adversary's wrist and hand with both of your hands. Pull down while arching your neck back away from the blade.



Step behind the adversary and duck under his arm. Keep the adversary's arm locked to your chest.



Continue stepping through with the other leg positioning yourself slightly to the side of the adversary. Keep your grip the entire time. This will result in a twisting of your adversary's position.



Tuck the adversary's arm under yours.

Remember:

Pluck, Duck and Tuck



Lock the adversary's arm by bracing the back of your hand against his elbow.



Grasp the back of the neck as before. Drive your knee into your adversary's head.



Drive your knee into the adversary's head as many times as necessary while maintaining your lock on the arm.



Don't forget your After Action Drills!



Weapon Presentation From the Left Side

Body language and demeanor should be submissive. It would be natural for you to look at your adversary. Add a slight turn towards your adversary as well.



Open hands held up
with thumbs
touching.

(To illustrate the
technique we have
changed the
perspective.)



Bring your hands
down quickly and
grab the adversary's
wrist as you would do
for an A-Frame
defense.

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As you bring the adversary's wrist past your side step towards them.

Tuck the adversary's arm under yours and lock it in as before.



With the arm locked in place pivot your upper body and deliver elbow strikes to their head.



Grasp the back of the neck and bring your opponents head down; liberally apply knee strikes as necessary.





Weapon Presentation From the Right Side

This application for a right handed person differs slightly from the last in that you will take a side step into your adversary instead of a full step. All other aspects of the A-Frame defense stay in effect.



Establish a controlling grip on the adversary's wrist. Pull down and back while sidestepping towards the adversary.





While sidestepping towards your adversary thrust your head into their nose and mouth. Continue the defense by tucking the arm under yours.





Achieve a secure lock on their arm by bracing with the back of your hand. Deliver repeated elbow strikes to the head.





At some point shift to knee strikes and continue striking to the midsection or head.





Continue striking your adversary until successful or exhausted.





Weapon Presentation to the Side of the Neck

Again a submissive demeanor will help catch your adversary off guard.



Hands come up at first appearing submissive but then you explode into a two arm thrust that extends past your adversary. As you thrust towards your adversary use your forehead to make contact with any upper body area. Any impact to the chin, face or shoulder will serve to disorient and stun your adversary.





Continue through and finish with a wrap of the adversary's arm holding the weapon. Lock in place as before and position yourself to deliver elbow and knee strikes as you have trained.





Once your opponent is off balance, hook your free hand behind his neck and pull him down in order to deliver knee strikes to his face.





Deliver as many knee strikes to your attackers face as necessary in order to get him to stop the attack.



Defense Against an Overhead Attack

An attack is very different from a presentation. You know danger is coming so there is no need to act submissive. Get ready for action and move with total commitment. Timing may play a role here. You are looking for an opening so when it comes, do not hesitate. This defense works with any weapon being used in an overhead approach. (i.e. Club or stick.)



Shoot your arms out
and at an angle and
lunge for your
adversary.



Push the arm holding
the weapon down and
begin to wrap it up
with your outside arm
while using the inside
arm to strike at your
attacker.



Knocking your adversary off balance with your head butt gives you the time needed to slide down into a wrap and lock of the arm holding the weapon. Proceed to deliver elbow strikes.





Continue to deliver
elbow strikes.



Transition to knee
strikes.



Continue until successful or exhausted. Perform After Action Drills.





Defense Against a Straight Thrust

Timing is crucial here. You will attempt to block your adversary as they thrust the weapon directly at you. You will use your hands to block their thrusting arm and their shoulder at the same time. At some point you commit to executing the A-Frame Defense.



Make your grip as secure as possible.
Pull down to disrupt the balance of your adversary.





Wrap and lock as before. Deliver elbow strikes.





Continue with elbow strikes.

Follow with knee strikes.





Continue to deliver knee strikes until successful.





Perform After Action Drills after you have subdued your adversary.



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