

Intro to Self Defense Basics Class (90 minutes)

With STUDENTS before class: (May want to make a sign with this info!)

waivers,

phones off,

jewelry off,

nails cut,

tag pre-existing injuries with tape,

no gum,

bathroom,

water

(5 min) Opening

- **Instructor** All sit in a circle, remarks about the class (briefly what we will cover, introduction to basic self defense)
- **Assistant** introduces **outline** that students will have to take home with them.
- **Agreements:**
 - take responsibility for your own learning
 - full force on techniques
 - support self and others
 - mistakes okay
 - don't compare
 - have fun!
- **Briefly all self introduce:** name and or one two sentences (start with instructors).

(10 min Intro) (group sitting).

- Has anyone taken a Self Defense Class or Martial Arts class before?
- Quick name go around.
- We will teach **full force strikes to targets** -- we think of self defense as a spectrum with physical techniques at the far end of self defense strategies.
- We are going to **start with Personal Safety and how to live in the world**
- Then we will focus on applying that how we live, starting with **boundary setting**.
- We will cover **verbal techniques** and learn a few very **straightforward and effective strikes**.
- Questions.
- (If we pass 2:30 PM: If lots of questions, assistants can **write undiscussed** ones on a sheet of paper and we will try to get to them again at the **end**).

(10 min) Warmups

Circles

Ready stance

Before we get to strikes and NO!'s,

1. Instructor will give preparatory warnings
2. We will all shake out limbs and make as much noise as we can!

Palm Heel

Knee to groin

(PH to KTG)

Roundhouse elbow to ready stance

(RHE to PH to KTG)

Back elbow

Hammerfist to groin

TARGETS (face, gut/solar plexus, groin, knees, feet)

Question: When are you allowed to take action?

It is always best to avoid a fight, “the best fight is no fight” but **when do I have the right to take physical action?**

Answer:

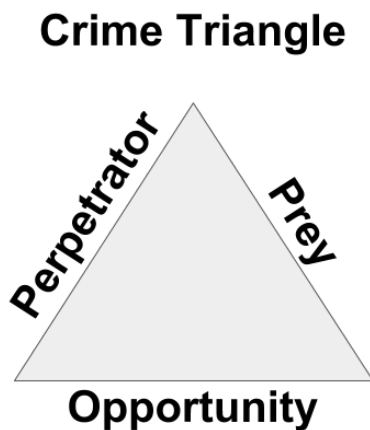
There are 4 criteria for you to have the right to use Self Defense according to the state of California Jury Instructions -- look them up for more detailed information. **I can't give you legal advice** but I can give you an overview of the Jury Instructions. Here are the 4 criteria:

1. The threat has to be **real**: not an annoying child messing up your clothes with his/her dirty hands.

2. The threat has to be **immediate**: cannot chase or hunt someone down.
(Example: someone yells at me from across the room)
3. You **tried everything else**: physical defense is a last resort -- did I make eye contact, did I use my body language and voice?
4. **Just enough force - context.**

Taking physical action is a worst case scenario situation -- which we will then come back to this a little later in class.

(5 min) Crime Triangle



Predators wait and pick **easy prey** and **opportunity**.

Opportunity: don't give this to Predator

- Pay attention to **surroundings**
- Pay attention to **who is around you**
 - Don't take dangerous shortcuts through bushes, etc.
- Avoid secluded areas
- Don't leave wallet/phone unattended
- Never leave car running to do errand

- Lock Windows/Doors
- No strangers in home
- Don't be isolated with someone you **do not trust**

Predator: May try to lure you in

- Guy with arm in Sling = Ted Bundy

Prey: A Predator looking for in “good” or “easy” prey:

- Vulnerable, weak person -- not necessarily small or female
 - Gait do's and don'ts
 - Posture
 - Split Second Glance: don't have to meet their eyes
 - Your message to Predator: “I see you. If you're up to no good I know it, and I am not an easy target.”
 - After glance keep head level (Don't Look Down)

(5 min) Walk Strong!

STAAR

Stride: gait

Tall: posture

Arms: natural swing

Awareness

Relax: stay calm, cool, and collected

Striding Exercise -- All get up and practice

Takeaways

- 7 Seconds you are assessed
 - Easy prey?
 - Easily intimidated?
- Be aware: **surprise** is one of a predator's most important tools (**opportunity**)
- Avoid environments that are conducive to crime (deserted parking lots, parks, trails) (**opportunity**)
- Present yourself as a **fighter**:
 - walk assertively with purpose, head high, shoulders back (**not-prey**)

Safety Hack:

Make wide turns

Predator **waiting by vehicle** + looks to others like a boyfriend waiting at car

Waiting inside corner in parking garage

- Harder to grab you or your stuff
- Gives you more time to respond

Car by your car and only two in lot in the lot and it is right next to yours

- What should you do?

If you were being followed on the freeway

- What would you do?

If you are being followed home

- What would you do?

(2 min) TARGETS REVIEW

(15 min) Basic Thumb and Choke Escapes

- Two-handed escapes, using whole body
- One handed escapes with whole body
- Spin choke escapes

(5 minutes) AWARENESS COLOR LEVELS

White (babies & sheep) Don't allow your smartphone or iPod to block your sensory inputs and make you a target.

Yellow (Aware - Maintain Situational Awareness Whenever You Go in Public)

Pre-anticipate - Establish baselines and look for anomalies A baseline is what's "normal" for a given situation.

Know where all your exits are.

Know where you are. (Cross streets, landmarks)

Orange (Alert - if something doesn't look/feel right trust your intuition and go to alert)

Have a plan: "If they do ____, I will do ____" (Avoid or Anticipate)

Red (ACTION)

Awareness



- Scan
- Assess
- Anticipate

Situational Awareness - Alertness

Develop a habit

- Who is around you?
- What are they doing?
 - How could that affect you?

Preemptive action - Anticipation

Stay out of harm's way

- Keep eye on iffy person
- Keep distance from them (Avoidance)
- Leave (Action)
- Other actions to make it harder for perp to strike (Action)

Situational Awareness and Crime

- Even **if** you can dial 911, help is **minutes** away, things can happen in **seconds**

First 4 seconds you are orienting yourself

- You may be taken by surprise; You are orienting yourself to know what is happening

First 20 seconds best chance of breaking away

- Even after 20 seconds, **keep fighting** because many attackers give up when they encounter continual resistance.

Scanning

- Know what is to the right, to the left, and behind you.
- **Active scanning:** Periodically peep over your shoulder
 - Unobtrusively (not obviously); not projecting worry
 - Don't be afraid to give a "split second glance" to let iffy person know you are **aware** of their presence.

Scanning exercise

- *Break into pairs*
- *Partner places one of several item at 6 o'clock,*
- *Person must peep over shoulder to name item -- don't move body, just shoulder and head*

Believe your ears: The brain processes **sound 20% to 100% faster** than sight.

Distractions and Attention

- Be able to **HEAR** what is around you and **SCAN** even routes you know
 - Especially for routes you know -- ESTABLISH A NORMAL
 - PAY ATTENTION if anything is different
 - noises/sounds -- yelling, pops, running
 - Smells -- fire, etc.
 - LEAVE -- especially if active shooter
- Mental preview before you head out
 - You have everything you need
 - Know where everything is
- Car keys accessible/ know where bus pass is
- Organize bags
- If you need to talk, text, or phone
 - Step out of walkway with back to a wall
 - Make it quick
 - Head on a swivel -- look around

TAKEAWAYS

- Our brains are wired to keep us safe through intuition.
- Intuition is a feeling resulting from the subconscious brain processing your surroundings.
- You can practice and improve your intuition.
- Your intuition never lies. Learning how to interpret it is key.

(10 min) Water/refreshment/potty break

(10 min) Warmups Again --with No!

Ready stance

Palm Heel to Knee to groin

Roundhouse elbow to ready stance, then Palm Heel to Knee to Groin

Back elbow

Hammerfist to groin

20 min Intuition, Awareness, Body Language and Voice (group sitting)

*I am going to start by talking about **4 points of self defense** we might take for granted:
Intuition, Awareness, Body Language and Voice.*

Let's break these down -

1st Point: Intuition: What do you think of when you say the word "Intuition?" (let them answer)

Always looking out for you, uh-oh feeling.

- **Where have you felt unsafe?** Call out.

Now close your eyes and imagine a place where you felt unsafe. (wait 10s)

- **Where in your body did you feel it?** (wait 10s to let them think)

Your brain is a super machine and it may be picking up on something and feeding that "uh-oh" response to your brain before your frontal cortex can process it. We want to make sure we are to our intuition and boundaries.

2nd Point: Awareness: Let's look around the room and notice something you did not notice before. (wait 5s) Call out.

Be aware of your surroundings, look around and be aware of what you are doing:

- Where are you?
- Where are you in relation to safety?

- Who is around you?

Be aware of how people are interacting with you and what signals your body is giving to you.

Intuition and **awareness** are great tools when paired -- especially when it comes to self defense as there are a lot of moving parts.

3rd Point: Body Language: Body language, examples. (no voice for both) Let's imagine I'm at a bus stop and someone is approaching me who is triggering that internal "uh-oh" alarm.

Out in public demo take 1 (me and Assistant)

Aggressor (Assistant): stares, comes too close and presses up behind me.

Me: Passive Body Language, shying away, staying on my phone (me)

I stop the scene and let them answer these questions:

What's happening here?

What am I doing?

What is my body language saying?

Am I safe?

Could I identify this individual later?

My summary:

My body language is passive, I'm not making eye contact and ignore the situation in hopes that it will go away. And that's a natural reaction, but it's one that can be changed with some body awareness.

Out in public demo take 2 (me and Assistant)

Aggressor (Assistant): stares, tries to come too close. (**stops+turns away or walks on**)

Me: (No voice), ready stance, eye contact, congruent face, tracking and putting away my phone.

I stop the scene and let them answer these questions:

What did I do differently?

Why does this matter?

My summary:

This is aggressive body posture. Statistically speaking an assailant is not looking for a fight. He's looking for easy access. Assertive posture and eye contact is the opposite of that.

Ask: Now, what is a tool I could be using and I am not?

15 min Teach Voice with Ready Stance (group standing)

4th Point: Voice: Most attacks can be stopped by a single determined act of resistance, something as simple as the word "NO." (I yell no loudly).

(Get everyone up into a standing circle here)

Everyone yells "NO."

After yelling "no" I let them answer these questions:

Feel anything?

Why is it important?

My answer for why important:

If you can yell, you are breathing.

If you are breathing, you are able to fight through a freeze response.

Let them answer these questions:

What does yelling do? - Empowers

Who hears you? - attacker, others, YOU

Everyone individually yells "No" at 50%.

Everyone individually yells "No" at 100%.

Ask: What else can we yell?

My summary:

We can make it clear that we **don't know this person**.

We can give **descriptors** and **orders** to the people around us.

We can continue to say "**NO**" **over and over** again.

We don't have to be original here.

Let's try each of us yelling something.

(**Teach ready stance** now -- hands in front, palms out, dominant foot back, feet in forward parallel stance)

(Do one more round of other things to yell).

10 min Physical response (break into corners)

Out in public demo take 3 (me and Assistant)

Aggressor (Assistant): again stares, comes too close and tries to presses up to me. (**Goes away from my actions**).

Me: Voice, ready stance, eye contact, congruent face, tracking and putting away my phone.

Out in Public demo take 4 (me and Assistant)

Aggressor (Assistant): again stares, comes too close and tries to presses up to me. (**Steps into my face menacingly**).

Me: Voice, ready stance, eye contact, congruent face, tracking and putting away my phone. I use voice "go away, no, I don't know this person" -- (**I do not hit and call "time out"**).

Out in public demo take 5 (finishing out this scenario)

Aggressor (Assistant): can be verbal, stares, approaches, gets in my face and tries to grab me. (**aggressor's head goes back from palm heel - to expose aggressor's groin, aggressor then falls forward from knee to groin**)

Me: Voice, ready stance, eye contact, congruent face, tracking and putting away my phone. I use voice "can I help you, stay there, back off, go away, no, I don't know this person" -- **palm heel to face + knee to groin**.

5 min Other strategies for creating witnesses and de-escalation **(group sitting)**

1. **No trouble strategy-** "I don't want any trouble", "I don't want to fight you"

Aggressor tries to pick a fight demo.

Aggressor (Assistant): Walks by, bumps into me on purpose + acts tough (**walks away with "parting shot" comment**)

Me: Apologize and de-escalate

2. **Outside help -**

Panhandler gets aggressive demo.

Aggressor (Assistant): Gets loud at me and has a problem with me even though I don't know person (**backs down when 911 is going to be called**)

Me: I break freeze by calling out to a **specific student to call 911 (then use my voice, leave me alone)**

5 min Boundary setting practice

Fight set X2 ask for volunteers to demonstrate setting boundaries (us if no one)

Demo with students (Aggressor still Assistant) (Rosanne coaches to help with ready stance, looking, not backing up, what to say, etc.)

1. Panhandler getting too aggressive.
2. Someone asking for directions on the street.

17 min Aggressive standing attacks and counters

For the last fifteen minutes we will go over what to do when you do have to resort to more aggressive means of self defense.

These are the attacks we will learn to counter: (Assistant and I demo all 6 attacks with counters)

1. Front attack (lapels or shoulders)
2. Grab from behind and grab under arms
3. Grab from behind over arms

Techniques:

FRONT ATTACK:

Palm heel (to nose, chin face)

Walk through knee to groin (KTG) or knee to head - if aggressor is on all fours

BACK GRAB UNDER ARMS

Roundhouse elbow + turn (to head behind) -- show hair grab variation (Grab own head)

Elbow straight back

BACK GRAB OVER ARMS

Move hips and hammer fist to groin

EXTRAS: If want to go over:

1. Hair grab -- grab aggressors hand on your head, RH elbow + turn, palm heel, KTG
2. Grab one hand or arm from behind (roundhouse elbow to back and turn into ready stance)
3. Grab from behind or in front (Sukui Nage)

15 min Close

Freeze/adrenaline response management - voice, breath, keep moving

Full force - don't back down, don't stop and go full force until you are safe.

(Assistant asks: What did you taking away)