



An armed Civilian Defending Himself Against the American Terrorist Group - Antifa

Defensive Knives for Urban Environments – Part I

It's not a surprise to anyone that the world has become much more dangerous. During the past few years, the level of violence in the West has soared exponentially. The surge of violent crimes in the last few years has been in direct proportion to the rise in mass immigration – both in Europe and the United States.

Criminals today have considerable experience with violence and intimidation. They are frequently armed and often work in groups. They're looking to inflict maximum damage as quickly as possible. Against these odds, the traditional martial arts approach of a one-on-one technique-based unarmed combat is not practical.

The FBI recently released a report stating that there is a 1 in 396 chance of being violently attacked in the U.S. However, many people still hide their heads in the sand, believing, "It'll never happen to me." Most

people have unrealistic expectations about what traditional unarmed training can accomplish against modern threats – it's time to rectify that mindset.

The Key Insight in Today's Threat Environment

To prepare for survival a fundamental shift in how people think about personal protection is necessary in the current environment. The importance of arming yourself with a weapon extends far beyond merely possessing the tool; it's about developing a comprehensive skill set necessary for effective defense.

Handguns are of course the most effective defensive tools, but for many people they are difficult to obtain. The availability of handguns for self-defense varies significantly based on location and legal frameworks. The restrictive nature of handgun laws in most European countries greatly contrasts with places like the United States. However, even in the U.S. there are significant variations in handgun accessibility within the United States, with some states having more restrictive processes than others.

Don't Have Access to a Handgun – Then Your EDC Should be a Knife

Most people getting into self-defense never consider starting with knife training. When I tell potential students to arm themselves with a knife, they look at me askance. They don't fully grasp that any attack can be a potentially life-ending one.

The stigma around knives is a significant factor – the psychological and cultural barrier affects people's defensive tool choices. Knives are often

associated with criminal violence, gang activity, or premeditated harm. The media portrayals typically show knives in criminal rather than defensive contexts.

While awareness and avoidance are absolutely the first and best lines of defense, they may not always be sufficient in today's increasingly violent environment. The statistics on armed criminals paint a concerning picture, and the reality is that many jurisdictions where firearms are heavily restricted still allow the legal carry of knives.

The practical advantages of knives as defensive tools include:

- Legal availability in most jurisdictions
- No ammunition or power source required
- Compact and concealable
- Multi-purpose utility beyond defense
- Reliable mechanical function
- Silent operation

In addition, knives provide a psychological deterrent especially against multiple attackers. Several years ago, I was walking near Grand Central Station and as usual I was watching my 6. I looked at the reflection of a store window and saw a man running quickly towards me from behind - (I believe his intention was to push me down and take my bag). I turned and he suddenly stopped; I pulled a knife out of my attaché bag – he froze, looked shocked and then ran away fast.

The Role of Knife Training for Self-Defense

In a world where the wrong look, speech or association with the wrong religion or political party can get you killed – it's time to face the facts, the odds are against you. Of course, many people will never face a violent street attack, however you don't want to be that one exception. In recent years Europe has been having an epidemic in random stabbings.

European Stats:

- In 2024 the UK had more than 53,000 knife attacks
- In France there are more than 120 knife attacks per day
- In Germany there are 60 knife attacks per day

U.S. Stats:

In 2023 there were 1.8 million assaults in the U.S. with personal weapons. Most were with handguns and knives.

So... How can you Protect yourself?

If you can't get a handgun, protect yourself with a knife.

The key is to be properly trained, understanding local laws, and developing the mindset and training behind the tool are often more important than the tool itself.

The Best Self-Defense Knife for Your EDC (everyday carry)

Any sharp knife with a sturdy point can be used for self-defense, however many countries/cities have specific laws about blade length, concealed vs. open-carry, and where knives can be carried. Even when

something is technically legal, it can still draw unwanted attention from both the public and law enforcement.

The focus of this article is compact knives for urban environments. I recommend a compact knife with a blade of less than 3-7/8," this is considered legal in many U.S. states. Some European countries have a limit for blade length of 12 cm (4.7 inches). So, anything from 3"– 3.5" is good both functionally and legally. In addition, a 3" blade can quickly de-animate any violent attacker.

Considerations

- Many knife attacks are sudden attacks or ambushes
- Keep as much distance between you and any stranger
- Anyone can be seriously injured in a knife attack
- Draw your knife if you feel your life is in danger
- Carry a soft attaché bag to use as a shield if needed
- There are no hard or fast rules - anything can happen

The Most Important Part of a Knife is?

Without doubt – it's the handle - Moreso with compact knives since the knives tend to be smaller. The handle is often overlooked by many people, but it's absolutely critical for both safety and functionality. With compact knives especially, you're working with less real estate for your grip, which makes handle design even more crucial. A poorly designed handle on a small knife can easily lead to your hand slipping onto the blade during an engagement.

Key aspects that make a handle effective include the grip texture, a shape that fits your hand securely, and having some kind of guard or choil to prevent your fingers from sliding forward. The balance point matters too - a well-designed handle helps you maintain control even when applying force.



**(A finger choil is an unsharpened indentation or notch located under the end of the blade edge, closest to the handle. Finger choils are specifically designed to accommodate your index finger to avoid your hand slipping forward cutting yourself)*

Folders vs. Straight Blades

Folder - Pros

Portability: Much more compact and pocket-friendly when closed

Safety: Blade is protected when folded, reducing accidental cuts

Legal advantages: more acceptable in cities - fewer restrictions

Concealment: Less intimidating, blends in better in social situations

Versatility: Can be carried in more locations where fixed blades might be prohibited

Folders - Cons

Mechanical complexity: parts that can fail (hinges, locks, springs)

Cleaning difficulty: Harder to thoroughly clean, debris can accumulate in the pivot area

Deployment time: Takes longer to open, requires two hands or practice for one-handed opening

Strength limitations: The hinge and lock create potential weak points under extreme stress

Maintenance: More components require regular maintenance and can wear out. I once had a high-quality folder and at one point was unable to open it, there was a piece of lint caught in the mechanism

Fixed Blades (Straight)

Fixed Blades – Pros

Strength: No mechanical joints - blade and handle are one piece

Reliability: Fewer moving parts means less that can break

Immediate deployment: Always ready to use, no opening required

Easy maintenance: Simple to clean and maintain thoroughly

Durability: Generally last longer with heavy use

Better ergonomics: Handle can be optimized without accommodating folding mechanisms

Fixed Blades - Cons

Size/bulk: Requires a sheath, making it less convenient to carry

Legal restrictions: More heavily regulated in many jurisdictions

Safety concerns: Exposed blade increases risk of accidental injury

Social perception: Can appear more threatening or tactical

Limited carry options: Restricted from many locations

*Additionally, there are also a myriad of restrictions in Europe and the U.S. they include: Automatic/switchblades. Butterfly knives and OTF (out-the-front) and automatic knives are restricted if blade length

exceeds 8.5 cm (3.346") Some locking mechanisms can affect legality in some countries. "carrying" vs. "possessing" often have different legal definitions.

*Takeaway

What to carry

A 3" - 3.5" single edged locking folder, with a grippy or rubbery handle, the knife should have a choil, no famous name on the knife or any reference that it's a defensive or fighting knife, a fast sheath or quick-draw mechanism, make sure the blades profile doesn't look dangerous, and have a reason for carrying knife.

*A small straight blade will always be more reliable however it's more difficult to explain to a jury that you use it for whittling.

Knives to Avoid

A 4.5" or larger double-edged fixed blade in black, a collection of multiple knives, plastic types of knives that are able to circumvent security scans.

**Coming Up - Defensive Knives for Urban Environments – PART II*