8 SELF DEFENSE TACTICS EVERYONE CAN LEARN

Self defense is a skill you hope you'll never use, but one that could save your life.

You don't need to have years of martial arts training to effectively defend yourself against an attacker.

The techniques described here can be used by anyone, even people with no self defense training or experience.

Be sure to practice these moves at home with a friend or family member so you become familiar with them and are able to deploy them in a high stress situation.

1

BE AWARE, GET LOUD, AND MOVE.

The best self defense technique doesn't require any training or special knowledge, and it isn't a particular strike or defensive move. **When walking around, especially in an unfamiliar location or at night, stay aware.** This means don't look at your phone, take your headphones out of your ears, stay aware of your environment, and walk with purpose.

If someone does start threatening you from a distance, get loud and shout or scream. This is often enough to deter an attacker. As you shout, get moving and run away. Even the most experienced martial artists will tell you they always run away from an attacker if they can.

2

USE EVERYDAY OBJECTS

Keys or pens are common, everyday objects that can be used to defend yourself. **Hold a key or a pen between your middle or ring finger if you're feeling vulnerable or threatened.** If you're outside you can also **throw dirt or sand into your attacker's eyes, or spray perfume or hairspray into their face.**

3

USE ELBOWS, KNEES, AND HEAD

If you do find yourself in a situation where you can't escape an attack, **use your body's built-in weapons — your elbows, knees, and head, focusing on the attacker's vulnerable spots: eyes, nose, throat, and groin.** When using the moves we describe here, aim them at the vulnerable spots, not the chest or knees, which can be ineffective if you're not an experienced martial artist.

4

RESIST LIKE A TODDLER

If the attacker comes from behind and puts his arms around you, think of how toddlers and dogs behave when they don't want to be carried. **Drop your weight and lower your base by bending your knees and dropping your butt.** This will make you heavier and more difficult to move. While you do this, **thrash around and try to hit your attacker in the groin, if the attacker is male.**

5

PALM HEEL STRIKE TO THE NOSE

If the attacker starts to move in close, **use the heel of your palm to strike up under his nose, aiming for the nasal bone. Rotate your hips to throw the whole weight of your body into the strike.** If the attacker comes in from behind you, you can strike his nose with your elbow.

6 GROIN KICK

A knee or kick to the groin (if the attacker is male) might disable your attacker briefly enough for you to escape. If you've never thrown a kick before, this is something you will want to practice at home. This defense works if the attacker is coming straight toward you. First, stabilize yourself by standing with your feet about hip's width apart. **Lift your dominant leg off the ground, drive your knee upward, then extend your leg, drive hips forward, lean back, and kick.** Try to attack the assailant's groin area with your shin.

If the attacker moves in quickly, you might not have space for a kick, so use the knee instead.

7

ELBOW STRIKE

The elbow is a great weapon against an attacker, especially if they are up close. Striking with an elbow is also unlikely to throw you off balance, which is a risk when throwing a kick.

Before you strike, plant your legs firmly and tighten the muscles in your core. Bend your arm at the elbow, and as you shift your weight forward, strike your elbow at the attacker's face. Try to aim for the neck, jaw, chin, or temple.

8 HEADLOCK ESCAPE

Self defense techniques are all about temporarily disabling the attacker so you can get to safety. If the attacker gets you in a headlock, you need to first avoid getting choked, then try to escape. **First, turn into the attacker's side. Next, start striking the groin with open-handed slaps. This should cause the attacker to loosen his grip, then take your opportunity to get out of the attacker's grip and run.**

These tips are a great start and can help you stay safe if threatened or attacked. **Want to learn more?** Martial arts training will help you become even more confident and provide you with many more valuable self defense techniques.