

EAST COUNTY BUDOKAI

Aikido

Basic Self-Defense Safety Tips

To enhance your personal defense strategies, consider the following:

1. **Avoid shortcuts**, especially if they place your safety in jeopardy. For example, never park your car in back alleys or in dimly lit areas just to save yourself a little time and money.
2. **Avoid flashy jewelry and clothing that may attract unwanted attention.** It's sad to have to remove expensive jewelry and be conscious of what you wear before leaving your home, but the reality is that people are now getting killed for their athletic shoes and jackets as well as for their wallets. In the event that you are ever approached at gunpoint and asked to give up an article of clothing (or anything else for that matter) by all means, give it up. ***Nothing* is worth your life.**
3. **Never carry valuables in your purse.** Instead, distribute them on your person, or preferably, in a money belt.
4. **As you approach your vehicle or residence, have your keys ready.** The last thing you want is to be ambushed while you are fumbling for your keys.
5. **As you enter your vehicle, inspect the interior as well as the exterior beneath it.** Make it a habit to scan the areas around your home and your vehicle where a threat might be hiding and waiting.
6. **When commuting, always keep your windows up and the doors secured.** They will provide a measure of protection in the event of an attempt to carjack your vehicle. This will buy you a valuable fraction of time in which to react.
7. **Always keep your car in gear, even when stopped.** This way it's much easier to affect a quick retreat should it become necessary, and if you need to stop for a prolonged period, turn off the ignition, remove the keys and wait outside the vehicle. You don't want to be ambushed while trapped inside your vehicle.
8. **Never sound your horn unnecessarily, nor otherwise demonstrate acts of aggression toward other motorists**, such as passing dirty looks, offensive hand signs or flashing your vehicle's high beams. There is more than enough "road rage" on the streets and highways – so there is no sense in adding to it.

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9. **While in your vehicle or on foot, always be aware of your surroundings.** On foot, learn to use vehicle and store-front windows through which to conduct counter surveillance.
10. **Strongly consider the purchase of a cellular phone.** There are a variety of cellular telephones on the market that can be easily carried and used to summon help in the event of an emergency.
11. **Avoid passing directly through crowds of people assembled on the streets or sidewalks.** Crowds violate the integrity of your personal space, which is exactly what you're trying to maintain. Furthermore, many well-mannered individuals have lost their lives for stepping on the toes of the wrong person. Use time and distance as *your* ally – do not let it get used against you!
12. **If street gangs are active in your area, become familiar with their colors and learn to recognize their slogans and hand signs.** It would also be to your advantage to become familiar with the activities of hate groups and cults that may be active in your community.
13. **Avoid individuals with gang or drug selling affiliations.** The last thing you need is for a rival gang member to retaliate against them while they're in your presence for something unrelated to you.