

## Self-defense principles

- **Stay aware of people in your surroundings**
- **Stay with people, go to people**
- **Keep a barrier between you and the bad guy**
- **Attract attention**
- **Control his hips and his control his hands**
- **Use your strongest weapons against his weakest targets**

**1. Stay aware of people in your surroundings.** Not surprisingly, criminals exhibit predatory behavior in preparing to attack. They will try to pick a casual location to look for their prey. They will look at their intended victim far more and for longer periods of time than social norms. They will move when the prey moves. They will stop and look around for witnesses. They will often make several passes by the prey in a sort of 'dry run', seeing if the victim will react or to get a sense of how the attack might work. Pay attention! Who is looking at you? Has the same person or car passed by you twice? Does someone appear to be moving with you?

**2. Stay with people, go to people.** Do not ever let yourself be taken somewhere. Cops call it the "secondary crime scene" and most of the time it will be where your worst nightmare resides. If you are approached in a public place do not get in a vehicle with him. Do not walk around the building to the alley -- STAY where others can see you. His worst fear is the fear of getting caught, so you should drop to the ground if you need to in order to prevent him from carrying you away. On the other hand, if you are in your house or another location that is private, you need to GO to people. His worst fear is the fear of getting caught -- run out the door to a neighbor's. Crawl out a window onto the roof. Drive your car up to a diner or convenience store. Go where there are lights and others.

**3. Keep a barrier between you and the bad guy.** Use a barrier to block him or use distance to gain time. Keep your doors locked. Stay in your car. Force him to get through a barrier before he can get to you. Use a barrier of pepper spray. The more difficult you make it, the more time it takes him and that means he might be discovered.

**4. Attract attention.** The first thing he will say to you is "don't scream or I'll kill you". He's telling you exactly what will ruin his plan. Go ahead, ruin his plan -- create a disturbance, scream, throw things, blow the horn. If you think you should yell "fire" go right ahead. You can't count on others coming to your aid, but you want to appeal to his fear of getting caught and make him think that someone could hear you and be coming.

**5. Control his hips and his hands.** This might sound strange if you've not gone through the Rape Escape course, but the concept works. Control his hips to prevent penetration. If you can get your feet on his hips you can control the distance between the two of you. His hands are the weapons he will use against you. He will hit you, slap you, stab you or shoot you, but he has to use his hands to do the damage.

**6. Use your strongest weapons against his weakest targets.** His weakest targets are those that are most valuable, yet ironically, cannot be entirely strengthened. His eyes, throat, groin and knees are your primary targets. Your secondary targets are his face and his abdomen. Strong weapons that you can employ are your kicks using the bottom of your feet, your elbows, hammer fists and palm heel strikes.

From Women's Self- Defense Institute website