

Chapter 16: Protection ¹

Usually, the discussion of protection for preppers quickly gravitates to guns, the Second Amendment and gun control. It is a sign of the times. However, protection is more than guns and weapons. Protection can include finances, insurance and other forms of protection. This chapter is delimited and doesn't address these topics.

This chapter addresses guns and weapons. It simplifies protection into three groups and focuses on one of those groups, the defenders. It introduces some basic defense tactics and approaches to defense. And yes, it does discuss guns as well as less-than-lethal weapons.

Three Groups of Players

If a time comes where you are surviving an unexpected emergency for an extended period, there are three groups of players. This is true for the riot or extended snow storm scenarios as it is for the Yellowstone Caldera eruption or Katrina or Sandy. There are *defenders*, *aggressors*, and *peace keepers* (i.e. military/police). Conceptually, it is like playing the game of rock, paper and scissors where each group can trump the other group depending on the circumstances. The strategy used and developed is determined, in part, by the magnitude, duration, and type of experience.

Peace Keepers (Military/police) (Figure 16.1)– For this discussion, the peace keepers include the military, police and other rescue personnel. The primary purpose of the military/police is to maintain law and order. They will do so even if it steps on your second amendment rights. It is illustrative to review FrFrog's "Thoughts on Survival," particularly the second and third posts (FrFrog, 2008). In discussing post Katrina survival, he emphasizes this point several times. For the purposes of this discussion, it is worth reemphasizing several of his points.

First, the military including rescue personnel seek to maintain order. This includes relief agencies such as the Red Cross. This means confiscation of anything that might be considered a weapon including pocket knives and Leatherman tools. It means confiscation of medications. Think airline check in requirements. These groups seek control and to maintain order. This is their mission. It is not unexpected either.



Figure 16.1: Peace Keepers – The National Guard after Hurricane Sandy. They have more and bigger toys than aggressors or defenders. To think otherwise is foolish. Source: US Government – [file:\NationalGuardSandy[89].jpg]

¹ This section was written by Robert B. Kauffman who is solely responsible for its content. This article is copyrighted © Robert B. Kauffman, 2017.

Second, FrFrog (2008) discusses the attitude of rescuers toward victims. Think of it as role playing where they are the rescuer and you are the victim. This is this perception on their part. If you are self-sufficient and not seeking to be rescued, you are not playing the game correctly. You are not playing your role. Your roll is to play the part of someone who needs to be rescued. It can lead to conflict. Complicating this situation, FrFrog (2008) notes that many of the rescuers have an attitude where because you are prepared and self-sufficient, you somehow gained “unfair advantage” over your neighbors (see point #2 on his third post). For the purposes of this discussion, it reinforces a defensive posture of avoidance which is discussed in the next section.

Third, it is axiomatic that the military and police will be more powerful than defenders or aggressors. They will have bigger and better weapons. They have more personnel. And their mission is to maintain order (period). In the game of rock, paper and scissor, the military/police beat the other two options. This is not a criticism of the peace keepers. It is reality and if you think otherwise, you are mistaken in your perception of their role. Again, for those maintaining a defensive mode, it becomes a strategy emphasizing avoidance.

 Defenders – When surviving an unexpected emergency, most people will seek a defensive strategy. Normally, most people think of defense in terms of a home invasion. This is a good paradigm with which to start. By definition, it is a defensive position. You have your home and in it your possessions. You are protecting them from aggressors. In non-disaster times, the aggressor could be a lone intruder or burglar, and in a post-disaster situation, it could be your unprepared neighbors. Your strategy is one of avoidance and maintaining a personal “gag rule” of secrecy. Avoidance includes avoiding the military/police. Avoidance includes avoiding unwanted neighbors. What others don’t know about your possessions and protection measures can’t hurt you. Secrecy is a good strategy.

 Aggressors – Bradley’s (2011) classification suffices for identifying potential aggressors. He suggests three different situations that a person or family will encounter. In addition, the peace keepers (i.e. military/police) might be included in this classification also. The last group to consider is a zombie attack even though it is fictitious.

<c> **Good People Driven to Violence** – The first classification is where otherwise good people can be driven to violence by desperation. This group includes neighbors who are less prepared than you and covetous of your preparedness. In time of desperation, they may become violent. Bradley (2011, 328) suggests that “*The best way to avoid this potential confrontation is to be discreet and not broadcast that you have stockpiles of supplies.*” Essentially, this is implementing a “gag order” and maintaining secrecy.

<c> **Criminals** – According to Bradley (2011), the second group is criminals who are either traditional career offenders or they are exploiting the chaos created by the situation. These groups could be either small or large in size. Also, their impact and dominance depends on the magnitude of the disaster and the ability of the military/police to maintain some semblance of law and order. They could be good people driven to violence or they can simply be gangs of bad people. Again, the best defense is one of avoidance. Don’t broadcast your preparations.

<c> **Terrorists** – The third group is made up of terrorists who have a political or religious agenda. There is no negotiating with this group. Actually, the probability of encountering this group is slight because normally they have little interest in invading your home.

<c> **Zombie Invasion** – The zombie invasion is totally fictitious, but it is funny how it begins to permeate one’s thinking through television and movies, never-the-less. The classic publication in this

area is Max Brooks, *The Zombie Survival Guide – Complete protection from the living dead*. It is a complete survival guide dealing with a zombie invasion. It is important to mention this because the depiction of fighting zombies has no relationship to reality. Yet the common rules used in fighting zombies can easily permeate our thinking and how we deal with aggressors including head shots and viewing aggressors as zombies who don't fight back.

 Being a Defender – This discussion assumes that the reader does not plan to be an aggressor or a member of the military/police. This means that most people will be defenders, protecting their house and property. It begins with a strategy of avoidance and having a “gag order.” If you don't want aggressors visiting you, don't advertise your position.

A new way of thinking about protecting your house and property is to develop a defensive posture where you think of your house as a castle or fort under siege. If interested, the reader can easily expand upon this thesis on their own. It is not just having powerful firearms. It is about the tactical advantage gained by devising defensive tactics and using them effectively to defend your home and property.

Defensive Measures for Defenders

The following section focuses on defensive strategies for defenders. Many of the strategies are borrowed from the animal kingdom and represent strategies employed by animals to survive. Typical strategies used in nature include avoiding detection, defensive structures, communal action and bugging-out.

 Avoiding Detection – In the animal kingdom there are primarily two ways animals avoid being detected. These are staying out of sight and camouflage. Staying out of sight includes moving underground and being nocturnal. For preppers, avoiding detection includes having a gag rule and secrecy and avoidance strategies.

<c> **Gag Rule and Secrecy** – Your first line of defense is to maintain a “gag rule” of secrecy. Don't talk about being a prepper and don't talk about your preparations. Discussing this topic may seemingly have tinges of paranoia associated with it. So be it. Simply put, if people know you are prepared with stores of food and supplies for surviving an unexpected emergency, where do you think they will go in times of disaster? They will go to your house. If you told everyone how much money you had stored in your house, would you not eventually expect a burglar to attempt to steal it? And people do talk. Who knows whom else they have talked to regarding your preparedness?

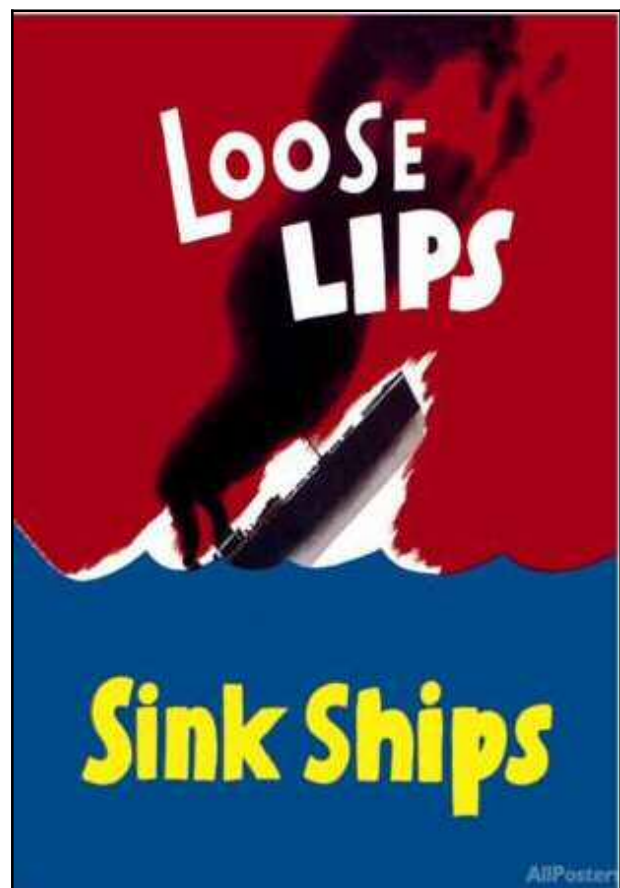


Figure 16.2: Loose Lips Sink Ships – In the theme of the WWII poster, preppers who don't want to be over run with visitors seeking refuge, keep their prepper preparation secrete and have a personal “gag order” not to discuss their preparations with others. Source: US Government – [file:\LooseLipsPoster.jpg]

Like the parlor game, the story can easily become magnified as it passes from person to person. The bottom line is to maintain secrecy and don't discuss your level of preparedness with anyone in your community. If they don't know you are prepared for surviving the unexpected emergency, they won't be knocking on your door in times of emergency. In WWII, one of the slogans was that "Loose lips sink ships." The slogan is equally applicable to preppers (Figure 16.2). Loose lips invites non-preppers.

You may be a "bug-out" site for relatives and friends. This is perfectly acceptable. As FrFrog (2008) notes, this can result in several unintentional consequences. First, you need make sure that this group understands your "gag rule." They won't adhere to it, but they need to know it regardless. In addition, they need to know that they are invited and their friends are not invited. Second, expect some of their friends to show up anyway. Expect people to talk regardless of your gag order. Third, specify what they should and should not bring. They may arrive in RVs and you may not have room in your driveway to accommodate them. In addition, parking these vehicles at your house is an invitation for others in your neighborhood to join the party at your house.

<c> **Avoidance Strategies** – Avoidance is seeking strategies of avoiding aggressors and peace keepers (i.e. military/police). Avoiding aggressors is obvious, but on first glance, avoiding peace keepers may seem questionable. The need to avoid the military/police and rescuers was described in the previous section. They are there to rescue victims. If you don't want to be rescued, avoid them and stay indoors.

Avoidance dovetails with maintaining secrecy. It is one of developing a mind set. It is one of thinking how others, including aggressors, could interpret your seemingly benign actions in ways that could harm you. In times of emergency, maintaining normal functions can have unintentional consequences. The RVs parked in your driveway is an advertisement for aggressors. A more benign unintentional consequence might result from the use of an electric generator at night. If your house is the only house in the neighborhood with lights on at night in an otherwise neighborhood with a black-out, your lights are like a bug lamp shining at night attracting every bug in the neighborhood (Figure 16.3).

 Defensive Structures – In the animal kingdom, typical defensive measures or ways of warding off an attacker include startling the predator, playing dead, creating a distraction, mimicry and defensive structures. For preppers, startling an intruder can provide temporary advantage. The bird playing injured can distract a predator. The same might work for a prepper. This section focuses on mimicry and defensive structures, including castles, forts, and star fortifications.

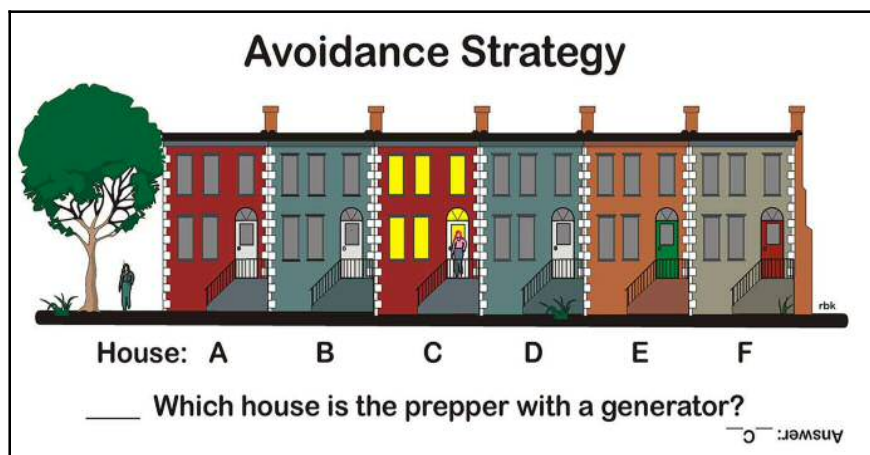


Figure 16.3: Lights On – Avoidance is often blending in with the surroundings. Lights and a generator are dead giveaways of prepper when all other houses are without lights. Source: author – [file:PR-LightsOn.cdr]

<c> **Mimicry** – In nature, mimicry occurs when an organism mimics its surroundings or other organisms in its environment. For preppers, mimicry has been discussed elsewhere. It is important for preppers to look like their surroundings. If your house is the only one with its lights on during what is an obvious black-out elsewhere, it might be prudent to keep your lights off at night to mimic your surroundings. If your house has three RVs parked in the driveway, it may be an indicator to others that your home is a fortification.

<c> **Castles and Star Forts** – Think of your home or bunker as a castle or fort. Avoidance involves making your home or bunker unattractive to aggressors. You have maintained a “gag rule” and secrecy. You have taken steps not to attract aggressors. Protecting your home could be as simple as standing at the front door banishing a shotgun to ward off aggressors. It may work unless the aggressors are your neighbors. Or, it may be a bullet proof door on a bunker that is used to deter aggressors. These actions may be sufficient to ward off aggressors. However, there may be some lessons learned from viewing your house or bunker as a castle or fort.

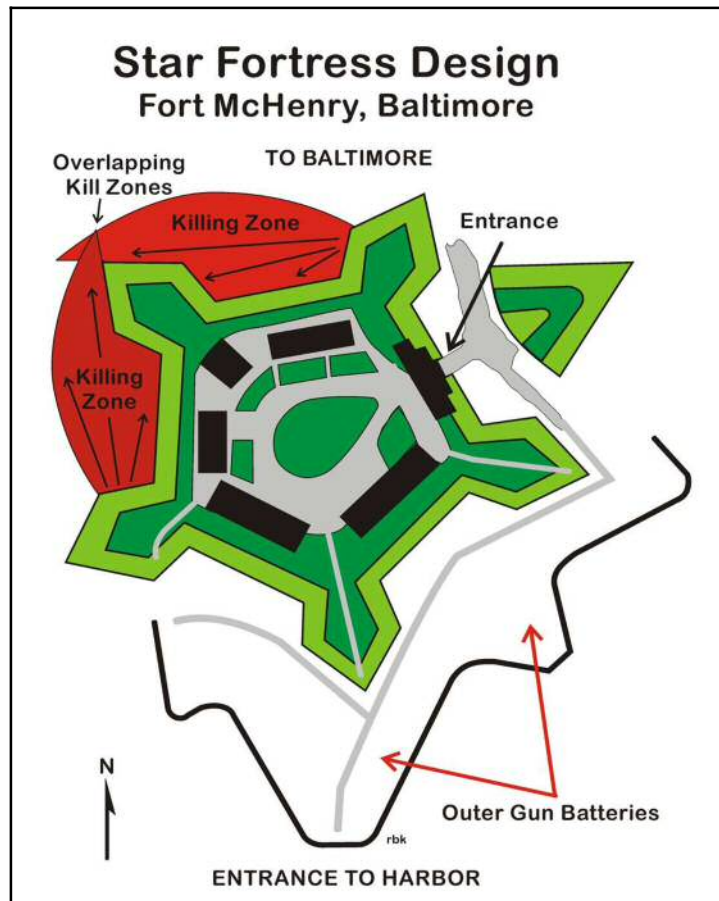


Figure 16.4: Star Fortress Design – Fort McHenry in Baltimore displays the classic principles of the star fortress design. Source: author. [file: \PR-McHenry.cdr]

In terms of defensive measures, it is conceptually sound to think of your home as a castle or fort under siege by potential aggressors. In military parlance, a strategy favoring the defender over the aggressor or the aggressor over the defender often reverses itself with the development of a new technology. With the introduction of gunpowder and exploding shells in Europe, the advantage transferred from the defender in the castle to the aggressor with gunpowder and exploding shells. Castles were no longer safe havens. The design of castles and forts represented the pinnacle of refinement for the defender.

It is worthy to mention that during a siege, those in the castle or fort don't travel far from the fort or castle. In addition, storage of food, water, and the other necessities of life becomes important and has been discussed elsewhere in the appropriate discussed elsewhere.

Built in 1789, Fort McHenry exemplifies the star fortress design (Figure 16.4). Its design typifies many of the principles in fort and castle design.

The fort was designed to protect Baltimore harbor and played a prominent role in the War of 1812. The fort held and stopped the advance of the British forces from capturing Baltimore. The event spurred Frances Scott Key to write the Stars and Bangle Banner.

From a design perspective, the fort was built in an era of exploding artillery shells. The movement was toward large earthen mounds for protection rather than steep walls which hindered scaling. In Figure 16.4, the emphasis is on earthen mounds to absorb the exploding shells. The fort still has vertical walls which require scaling, but they are more subdued.

The fort is a five sided pentagon with bastions or angular bulwarks extending outward at each of the corners (Figure 16.5). As diagramed, the bastions provide the defenders with several advantages. First, the bastions create flanks on each side of the main walls that are designed to create overlapping killing zones. Firing from the bastions create an “*enfilade*.” This is where the soldiers on the bastions are firing at right angle to the attacking troops. This increases their ability to kill attackers. Missing an attacker high or low is still likely to hit an advancing soldier.

The star fort design minimizes dead spots which are hard to defend. An enemy assailing the walls will look for a weak spot or a place which is difficult to defend. Older forts had round turrets which created a dead spot or a spot which was harder to defend. As shown in Figure 16.4, Fort McHenry is a typical star fort design that has overlapping killing zones.

The entrance is an obvious weak spot in the defense of any fort. Fort McHenry reflects the evolution of protecting the entrance. The first technique is to bend the entrance. This is accomplished by the bulwark in front of the entrance. Bending the entrance slows down the attackers and exposes them to additional fire power. Next, the front bulwark places the attackers in a crossfire. The narrow tunnel like entrance makes it difficult to advance to the inside of the fort if the entrance is breached.



Figure 16.5: Star Fortress Design – Looking north, the city and port of Baltimore are in the background. The scene shows the earthen mounding, the extending spears of the fort, and the overlapping killing zones. The outer gun batteries are pictured in the bottom right portion of the photo. Source: author. [file: \MCH1523.jpg]

There are several principles that can be applied to protecting the home. Building a moat around your house is probably not necessary. First, assess where aggressors are most likely to enter your home. Is it the front, rear, garage or basement doors? What can be done to fortify these entrances with locks and other barricades?

Second, think of maintaining the high ground or out-flanking the aggressors. As a rule, the opponent with the *high ground* has the military advantage. They have better command of the battlefield. *Out-flanking* your opponent means that you are on one or more of their sides. Perhaps there is a second floor porch which overlooks the entrance. This outflanks the invader at the door. Also, the defender has the high ground and tactical advantage.

Assume a small gang of aggressors are at your basement door. If you are on a porch overlooking the basement door, you may have both the high ground and out-flank them. If you have a cohort at a location on the opposite side, they may be deterred because they are out-flanked on both sides. Tactically, the

aggressors are at a disadvantage. Also, leave an exit for them to retreat. You want them to retreat. This may be a more affective strategy than waiting for the aggressors to come through the front door and then opening fire.

 Communal Action – Often, there is safety in numbers. A herd protects its individual members. This can occur through sheer numbers. Or it can occur by the stronger members creating a perimeter to protect weaker members and the young in the center. For preppers, one approach is to identify other preppers adjacent to you and develop a common support system for a time of crisis.

 Bugging Out – In the animal kingdom, escaping is a common defense mechanism. It is the flight portion of fight and flight. The prepper equivalent of escaping is bugging out. Bugging out is discussed in depth in Chapter 14.

Firearms for Defense

When discussing protection, the discussion usually gravitates quickly to firearms. In discussing protection, firearms are an important component in the discussion, but not the only element in the discussion. The discussion of firearms is controversial and with a myriad of tangential arguments. Illustrating and fueling these tangential arguments on an emotional level are two contrary signs that can be posted in the front yard to help ward off potential intruders (Figure 16.6). Which sign posted in your front yard offers you the most protection, either real and perceived?

As an unfortunate sidebar, gun free zones have become killing zones in many instances. In the 2012 Aurora, Colorado mass shooting, the perpetrator purposely drove past several other theaters because the Century 16 theater was advertised as a gun-free zone. In the 1999 Columbine shooting, the perpetrators choose the school because it was a gun-free zone. Unfortunately, there is considerable evidence that mass-shooters choose their sites because they are gun free zones where no one will shoot back at them. Hence, the adage “*Gun free zones are killing zones.*”

Firearms for defense are delimited to the defense of the person and home. Firearms for aggressors and military/police are not discussed since both are considered outside the scope of this discussion. Also, it is hoped that the reader does not seek to become an aggressor either. Regarding fighting zombies, hopefully they remain fictitious and there is no need to fight them either. The following are some considerations to consider in selecting firearms for defense for your home.



Figure 16.6: Which Sign Protects – For many, guns are an emotional issue. These two signs should help fuel this emotional response. Which of the two signs would you post in your front yard? Which of the two signs offers the most protection? Source: author. [file: \PR-Signs.cdr]

 Who is Responsible for Your Protection? – The issue is “*Who is responsibility for providing your protection?*” Is it the police or is it your responsibility? Let me take a different approach to this issue. If you answered the police, then answer the following question. If the police are responsible for protecting you from harm and if they don’t protect you from harm and if you are injured (e.g. robbed, raped, killed, etc.), can you sue the police for breach of duty? In other words, are they negligent? The answer is no. The police do not have a duty to protect you. There are other reasons for this, but for the most part the police are only able to act after a crime has been committed. This is a benefit of living in a free society.

If the police are not responsible for your protection, then who is? **You are!** You are responsible for your own protection. To do this you need the tools with which to do it. Hence, the second amendment. Essentially, as part of natural law, you have a God given right to protect yourself. The power to protect yourself is granted from God and not the government. Note the way the amendment is written. The amendment states that the government shall not infringe on your right. The government doesn’t have the right to deny you of a right which it doesn’t have the power to grant or take away.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed. [2nd Amendment to US Constitution]

One last recommendation. The second amendment and gun rights have come under fire (pun intended). State laws vary considerably from state to state. Check with your local authorities regarding the laws that affect you, your gun rights, and the use of your guns.

 Definitions – There is a lot of confusion regarding the terminology associated with firearms. The following definitions are provided to provide a better understanding of some of the terms associated with firearms.

<c> **automatic** – refers to guns that automatically reload the next shell into the chamber for firing. A typical mechanism uses some of the waste gases from the fired shell to eject the used shell and load the next shell into the chamber. Usually, a fully automatic will fire continuously once the trigger is pulled. A semi-automatic fires one round each time the trigger is pulled. [see fully-automatic and semi-automatic]

<c> **double action** – A double action gun means that when you pull the trigger, it both cocks the hammer and releases the hammer to fire the bullet. It is a double action because pulling the trigger completes the two actions at once (i.e. cocking the hammer and releasing the hammer). [see single action]

<c> **fully-automatic** – When the trigger is squeezed, the gun fires a continuous burst of bullets until the trigger is released. In some cases, the gun is configured to fire a burst of several bullets. This is in contrast to a semi-automatic where the trigger must be squeezed for each round to fire the bullet. [see semi-automatic]

<c> **revolver** (Figure 16.7) – A revolver has a rotating cylinder that stores the bullets. As the hammer is cocked, the cylinder advances



Figure 16.7: Revolver – The 357 Smith and Wesson is a typical example of a revolver. Source: Smith and Wesson – [file:\PR-Revolver[79].jpg]

the next chamber and bullet for firing. [see also single-action and double-action]

<c> **rifling** – Rifling is the spiral groves in the barrel of the gun that spin the bullet as it leaves the barrel. This results in a more accurate projectile. Rifling makes a rifle a rifle and not a shotgun. [see shotgun]

<c> **semi-automatic** (Figure 16.8) – When the trigger is squeezed, the gun fires one bullet and automatically reloads the next bullet into the chamber. The trigger must be squeezed again to fire this round. This cycle repeats itself each time after the bullet is fired. This is contrast to an automatic where the trigger fires continuously or fires a burst of bullets until the trigger is released. [see fully-automatic]



Figure 16.8: Semi-automatic – The waste gas from the bullet is used to eject and load the next bullet. The trigger must be pulled each time to fire the gun. The 45 caliber 1911 is a classic example of the semi-automatic. Source: Colt – [file:\SemiAutomatic1911[100].jpg]

<c> **shotgun** - a shotgun has a smooth bore barrel. It is not a rifle because the barrel does not have rifling or spiral groves which rotate the bullet as it travels down the barrel. It is akin to a cannon although some modern versions of cannons use rifling.

<c> **single action** (Figure 16.9) – A single action gun requires the user to cock the hammer manually. Pulling the trigger releases the hammer to fire the bullet. It is a single action because pulling the trigger releases the hammer which is a single action. [see double action]

 Selection Considerations for Defenders – As previously noted, firearms used for defense are delimited to the defense of the person and home. Firearms for aggressors and military/police are considered outside the scope of this discussion. Also, it is hoped that the reader does not seek to become an aggressor either. The following are some considerations when selecting firearms for defense of your home.

<c> **Collateral Damage** – If you use “double aught” buckshot (i.e. 00 buckshot), the seven to ten pellets in a 12-gauge shotgun have enough power to go through the invader, the wall behind it, and injure people behind the wall. Buckshot gets its name because it is designed to kill a buck (deer). You want a gun that does its job but doesn’t destroy everything else in sight. This important consideration is not to just think

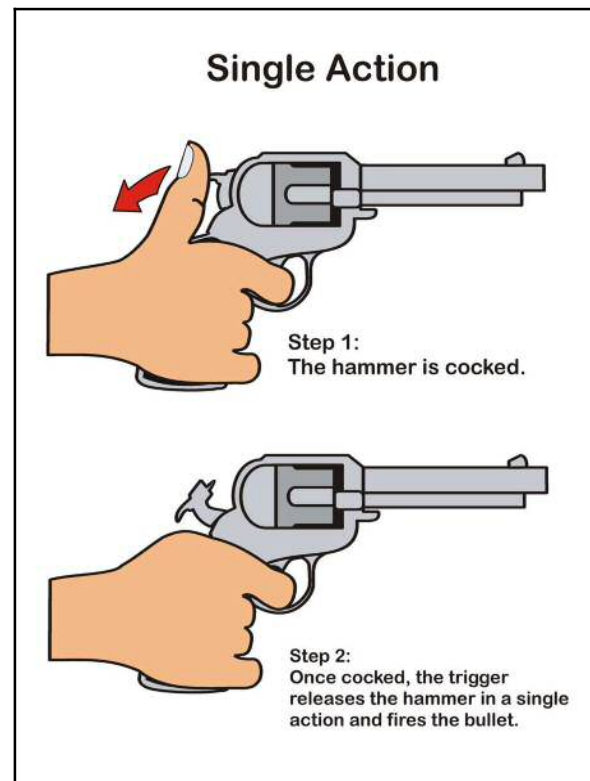


Figure 16.9: Single Action – The single action pistol requires the hammer to be manually cocked prior to firing. The trigger is released in a single action. Source: author – [file:\PR-SingleAction[144].cdr]

about the invader but to also think about potential collateral damage.

<c> **Maneuverability** – In a home, bunker or similar situation, the action usually occurs in a confined space. Hence, maneuverability becomes an issue. A large shotgun or rifle can be difficult to maneuver in a house or other confined space. A double barrel shotgun designed as a fowling piece can be awkward and difficult to maneuver in the confined space of a hallway or stairwell. The same is true for most hunting rifles. In contrast, a shotgun with a 30 inch barrel is more manageable. Also, handguns are maneuverable within confined spaces.

<c> **Ease of Use** – A weapon that is difficult to use is a weapon that is less likely to be fired. Consider ease of use. In times of stress such as in a home invasion, the simplicity of a revolver to use over an automatic may easily offset the other advantages of an automatic pistol. There is a certain simplicity in using a double barrel shotgun. Insert the shells. Close the breech. You are ready to go.

<c> **Safety** – A fourth consideration is safety. An automatic has the potential of a bullet remaining in the chamber when the clip is removed. This is virtually not a problem with a revolver. A double barrel shotgun with an open breech is proof positive that it is loaded or unloaded and when the breech is open, it can't be fired.

<c> **Psychological Considerations** – The sound of a pump action shotgun being loaded is universal and an unmistakable sound. The sound sends a message to any intruder. Its sound can be more of a deterrence than actually shooting the gun. A second message of the pump action is that it is a shotgun and that shotguns don't require great accuracy on the part of the shooter at close range to hit the target.

<c> **Use of Hunting Weapons** – Often, hunters have an array of weapons designed specifically for hunting will adapt the use of their hunting weapons for the protection of home and property. This group chooses its weaponry based on the type of hunting they perform. Or perhaps better stated, this group will adapt their hunting weapons to prepper situations. Birders have fowling pieces. Deer hunters have high-powered rifles capable of killing a deer at 100 yards or greater distance. In times of an unexpected emergency, this group uses its weaponry two ways. First, they believe that they will be able to hunt with their weaponry. In this respect, many have an attitude that they can live off the land. Second, they will adapt their existing weaponry to defending their homes. Their weapons tend to be long barrel shotguns or high-powered rifles. It is not that this isn't a viable approach. It is. However, in terms of many of the previously discussed selection considerations, the use of hunting weapons is less than optimum (e.g. see maneuverability and collateral damage).

 Revolver Versus Semi-automatic (Figure 16.10) – One of the standard debates is the debate between using a revolver or semi-automatic. The discussion here will not solve the debate either. In discussing what weapon to carry in a bug-out bag Stewart



Figure 16.10: Revolver Versus Semi-automatic – One of the standard debates is the debate between using a revolver or semi-automatic. The discussion here will not solve the debate either. Source: author – [file:\PR-GlockVRevolver.cdr]

(2013) advances the following argument for carrying a revolver over an automatic. His discussion is included here because it is a good summary for what to carry in your bug-out bag as well as addressing the general debate. In general, this author agrees with his analysis. Unless you are constantly using your gun, the revolver is easy to use, fairly foolproof, safe, and it will do the job.

Revolver vs. Automatic

I am certain to ruffle some feathers with my opinions about whether you should pack a revolver or a semi-automatic pistol. First, let me say that there are excellent revolvers and excellent semi-auto pistols. I would be happy to carry either one in a Bug Out. However, I choose to pack a revolver in my BOB for two main reasons:

Reason 1: Simplicity. I like how simple a revolver is. There's a barrel, a bullet, and a hammer. It's pretty hard for something to go wrong or jam. They are also very easy to load and unload. Semi-auto pistols have several moving and sliding parts. And, as much as hard-core semi-auto die-hards don't want to admit it, these guns occasionally jam. I've shot thousands of rounds through both revolvers and semi-autos. I've never had a revolver jam on me. I have had semi-autos jam on several occasions, I remember one instant vividly.

Reason 2: Caliber Flexibility. When it comes to choosing a caliber, I want something with knock-down power. If the situation has called for me to aim and fire my weapon at an attacker, I don't want to just injure him. I want to *stop* him – period. For this reason, I have chosen to carry a .357 Magnum 5-shot revolver in my BOB. .357 caliber revolvers will also fire .38 caliber rounds, which gives you some flexibility in sourcing ammo. If you're in a pinch, trying to find two popular calibers is easier than trying to find one. (Source: Stewart, 2013, pp.136-137)

This brief discussion won't solve the debate between carrying a revolver or semi-automatic in your bug-out bag or in general. However, if you consider yourself an occasional user of guns, you should probably consider a revolver for its simplicity, ease of use, safety, and being relatively foolproof.

 Gun Safety – Much like the discussion of gun ownership, gun safety is a loaded topic (pun intended). Storing guns in the house is another issue that is not going to be solved here. However, one word of advice or suggestion regarding having guns in the house. If you own guns, determine the “common practices” regarding what people and organizations in your state recommend. What does the gun store owner recommend? What does the National Rifle Association (NRA) and other organizations recommend? Things change. By knowing what the common practices are for having guns in your house, you protect yourself because you won't be too far from the norm or common practices. It is not a right or wrong answer, only what other experts consider is appropriate.

<c> **Training** – Most training focuses on handling, storing and transporting weapons. This is important. Additional training may include target shooting. In addition, readers should consider “situational training.” Situational training focuses on tactical situations a shooter may encounter through interactive simulation. Training should include situations which preppers may encounter. Remember the chapter on psychology and the effects of adrenalin. Adrenalin narrows a person's focus and takes away cognitive thinking ability. This is why training becomes important. With the loss of cognitive ability, training kicks in and assists people in doing the right thing.

<c> **Appreciation** – There are a lot of public service ads about locking up guns to protect children, etc. Learning about the dangers of guns is no different for children than learning that the stove is hot or any other hazard is hazardous. When I was young, my father took me to my uncle's farm where we shot the 25 caliber Favorite. He took a bar of soap and I shot at it. One of the bullets penetrated the bar of soap.

My father noted that the bar of soap has the same consistency as the human body. Guns can injure and kill. Lesson learned. My take away was an appreciation of the dangers of what guns can do. It was more than cognitive learning. It was on an experiential level.

The corollary is that if there are guns in the house, hiding them from the children only makes them more curious. They need to be made aware of the dangers. It was a lesson learned at the appreciation level.

Less-Than-Lethal Weapons

Usually, the discussion of protection gravitates quickly to guns. However, protection includes other types of weapons also. Bradley (2013, p.457) discusses several types of less than lethal weapons that can be used for self-protection. This author divides less-than-lethal weapons into two groups. The first group is specifically designed as less-than-lethal weapons and items that can serve in a dual role as a weapon.

 Less-Than-Lethal Weapons – These are weapons used strictly for defense or that are designed to disable but not kill the aggressor. These include Tasers, pepper spray, large knives, and the martial arts.

<c> **Taser** (Figure 16.11)– The Taser fires two electrodes that are connected to an electrical supply by wires to deliver a disabling electroshock to the victim. The shock is a high voltage, low amperage current. Taser devices are considered firearm and are held to the same standards. They can be carried either concealed or open in 45 states. Check your state regarding specific regulations. Note, if the cartridge is removed, the Taser becomes a stun gun.

<c> **Stun Gun** (Figure 16.12)– Also an electroshock devise, the stun gun applies an electric shock directly to the victim. It is a high voltage, low amperage current. Check with your state regarding laws and regulations involving its use.

<c> **Pepper Spray** – Pepper spray is an irritant that can cause pain, temporary blindness, and tears. Many of the sprays contain refined hot peppers. Some states have age limitations. Again, check with your state regarding specific regulations. Tear gas and other chemical spray can create the same effect.



Figure 16.11: Taser ® – The Taser is an electroshock device. Two electrodes are shot toward the victim and the high voltage low amperage current immobilizes the victim. Source: Taser – [file:\Taser[138].jpg]

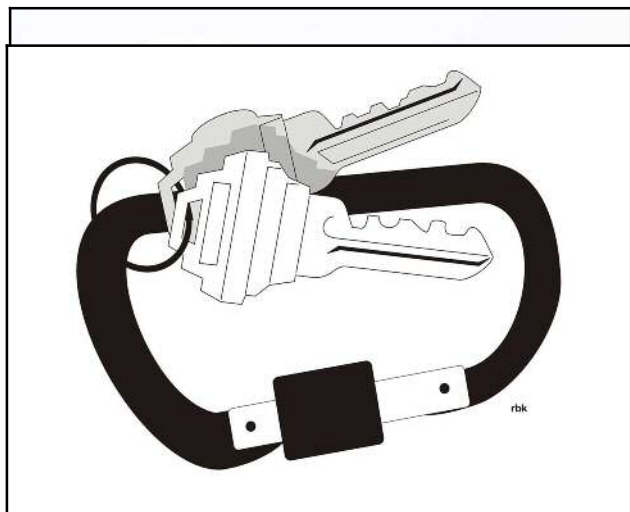


Figure 16.13: Brass Knuckles – Used as a key chain, the locking carabiner can be used as brass knuckles. The keys can be placed between the fingers to create a weapon. Source: author – [file:\PR-Carabiner&Keys.cdr]

<c> **Large Knives** – Referred to here, knives refer to large knives including hunting, Bowie, switch blades, gravity and a host of other knives. Most states have laws limiting the size of blade that can be carried. Again, check with your state regarding specific regulations.

<c> **Martial Arts** – Judo, karate, and the other martial arts can be used in defense. They require skill and training. However, the ability to perform them is always with the defender.

 Dual Role Weapons – Often tools and other artifacts can be used as a weapon. An advantage of these items is that they are not normally perceived as a weapon or if carried, they are with you as the tool. It is only if needed that they are used as a weapon. The carabiner is fairly benign, yet it can be used as a set of brass knuckles. The Maglite is an excellent light that can also serve as a club.

<c> **Carabiner** (Figure 16.13) – This author uses a locking carabiner to hold his car keys. It looks perfectly harmless and normal. However, the keys can be slipped off the carabiner and this author has a set of brass knuckles when the carabiner is slipped over the fingers if needed.

<c> **Key Chain** (see Figure 16.13) – The keys can be positioned between the fingers and they make an effective weapon when punching.

<c> **Maglite**® (Figure 16.14) – A Maglite with four D-cell batteries delivers quite an impact. The C-cell version can be used also. Although not as intimidating as a baseball bat, it has both the weight and length to be make it an effective weapon. Also, it can be used in time of emergency as a flashlight. This author carries a Maglite in his car in case of emergency.

<c> **Baseball Bat** – This is an old standby. When swung, a baseball bat can yield deadly results. In the movies, it is a favorite instrument used to bludgeon people, particularly by the villain.

<c> **Knife** (Figure 16.15) – Although it is included here, a pocket knife is not really designed as a weapon for defense. The Swiss Army knife carried by this author is mainly used for odd jobs and to open letters.



Figure 16.14: Maglite® – The four D-Cell Maglite® is a good flashlight that can easily be used as a weapon if needed. Source: author – [file:\PR-Maglite.cdr]

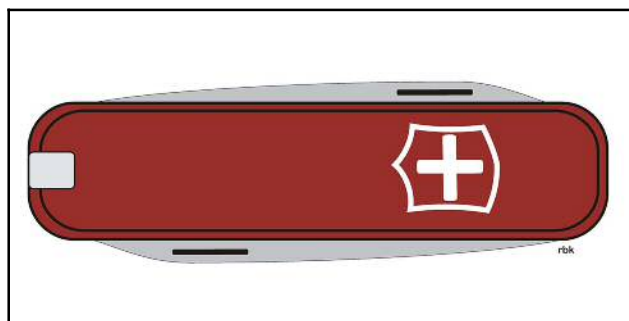


Figure 16.15: Swiss Army Knife – In a pinch, the normally benign Swiss Army knife can serve as a weapon. Source: author – [file:\SwissArmyKnife[144].cdr].

Summary

Usually, the discussion of protection gravitates quickly to guns. However, protection includes other types of weapons and defenses also. Three groups of players were identified. These were the defenders, aggressors, and military/police. In a game of rock, paper, and scissor, each of the groups can trump the other, if only temporarily. Preppers are defenders and invariably, their strategy is one of avoiding aggressors and often, it is avoiding the military/police also.

For defenders, the issue is how to defend one's home and family. Basic defense tactics were discussed including the star fort design and out-flanking the aggressors. In addition, this chapter provides a primer on weapons, both guns and less-than-lethal weapons. Protection is more than having guns. This returns the discussion to the strategy of avoidance. Without conflict or confrontation, a defender survives another day. This is the objective of prepping, surviving another day. Unfortunately, there may be occasions when avoidance is not possible and the defender needs to be prepared for these situations.

References:

- Anti-predator adaption (2017). *Wikipedia* February.
.https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-predator_adaptation
- Bradley, A. (2011). *Handbook to Practical Disaster Preparedness for the Family* (2nd ed). Self-Published.
- Brooks, M., (2003). *The Zombie Survival Guide – Complete protection from the living dead*. New York, New York: Three Rivers Press.
- FrFrog. (2008) "Thoughts on Survival." <http://www.frfrogspad.com/disastr.htm>
- Stewart, C., (2012). *Build the Perfect Bug Out Bag: Your 72-Hour Disaster Survival Kit*. Blue Ash, Ohio: Betterway Home Books.