

Restraint Escape Carry: 16 Ways To Go Undetected

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Having an escape plan is a basic tenet of survival.

While a prepper's escape plan is often a good indicator of his overall state of preparedness, carrying a restraint escape kit doesn't make him an evasion artist any more than owning a first aid kit makes him a physician.

The restraint escape kit is one facet of an escape plan, which is part of a survival plan that includes preparation, skills, training, planning, awareness and fitness in each of the basic areas of life. Knowing how to use and carry it, is another part of the deal.

You already know about the Survival Sensei Restraint Escape Kit from [my previous article on Survivopedia](#) about restraint escape kits. SS REK is a kit that I've designed to address shortcomings in commercially available kits, and now I'm going to tell you more about how to (and how not to) carry restraint escape gear.

Stay tuned, more is still to come about techniques specific to escape and evasion.

What Not To Do

Many vendors designing and selling restraint escape gear should know better than to hide it in wallets, glue it under a Rolex, attach it to or carry it in anything you are likely to be unceremoniously relieved of when mugged, much less abducted.

Unfortunately, some vendors are more interested in moving product than in your well-being, which is unacceptable. Some of the good guys currently teaching restraint escape are failing to [think like bad guys](#). Police officers and soldiers may not be interested in taking your watch or wallet from you, but criminals are.

Some criminal organizations in the business of kidnapping strip victims down to their underwear and/or take their footwear once they are transported to a site where they can be held. Victims not ransomed are sometimes killed, sometimes prostituted and sometimes sold. The stupid and lazy criminal is a stereotype Hollywood uses to entertain and parents use to get young children to sleep.

Now that you know how a criminal acts, avoid these places to put your restraint escape gear unless you want it discovered and taken at the outset of the ordeal:

- Wallet
- Survival kit (Even a small kit is a target if stored in your clothing or worse yet, in or attached to a bag.)
- Fake credit card
- Watch band or under the watch (Especially an expensive watch. I have had watches as cheap as \$15 stolen right off my arm.)
- In jewelry that someone in a hurry could imagine to be of value
- Bag or pack
- Behind a badge, in a badge wallet or ID

- In or attached to a gun belt or load bearing equipment
- Bundled together or packed together in a Kit bulky enough to be found in a pat down and carried from the skin out.

The Balance Between Ideal and Convenient Carry

I carry restraint escape gear daily, so I understand the need to balance best practices with convenience. A REK or PSK (Personal Survival Kit) is not going to do you any good unless you have it when you need it.

People tend to leave gear behind if it is inconvenient to carry, so some degree of bundling of gear may be necessary in order to have the tools on hand that are necessary for you to escape the restraints most likely to be used on you.

If you decide to carry it all together in a single kit, justifying that you won't carry it otherwise, at least consider carrying it in a kit that you can stash under layers of clothing, cheek, tape or deep carry in the event that your situation becomes dire and you have time to do so. I do not recommend planning on having time to hide RE gear at the last moment, because it may be too late by the time you realize that you need to do so.

If you are unlawfully restrained, it is unlikely that you will know beforehand what type of restraints will be used or in what position [you will be restrained](#). If you are restrained with your hands in back and the tools you need are in front, you won't be able to reach them and vice versa.

You need to be able to reach your tools whether your hands are in front of you or behind you. This can be accomplished by carrying two sets of tools, carrying them on your wrist, hands or feet, tying them to a cord that circles your waist, wearing them so they can be lowered or dropped into your hand, and so on.

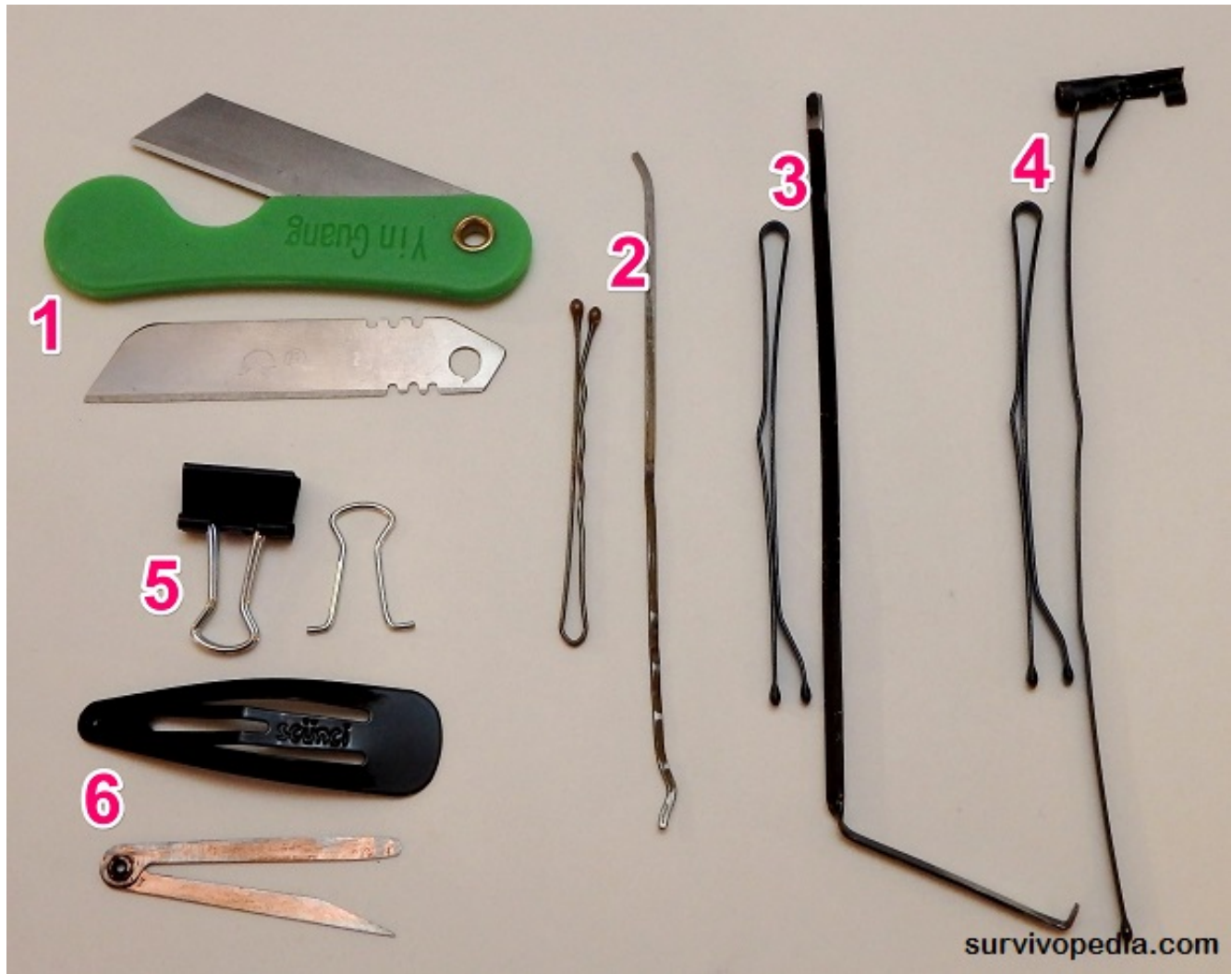
It doesn't matter how you do it. It only matters that the method is effective when you need it to be.

Carry For Your Environment

In jurisdictions or situations where the danger of being searched is high and/or the consequences of being caught carrying RE gear are severe, then carry everyday objects that can be quickly modified to serve the same purpose, e.g. mini binder clips can be carried as money clips and the handles used in place of handcuff keys.



If you have long enough hair, wear hair clips and bobby pins.



In deciding on what to carry, this is what you must take into consideration:

- Am I in a permissive or non-permissive environment? What are the risks and my exposure to those risks if I am caught with RE gear? What is my risk and exposure if I don't carry RE gear and I end up needing it? Are there laws that apply to RE gear in the jurisdictions I will travel through?
- Who are my potential enemies? What are their MO's, motivations and capabilities? e.g. in one part of the world I frequent, a common method of murder is to bind the victim and tape a plastic bag over the head of the victim. It's cheap, convenient, relatively quiet and doesn't make a big bloody mess. It's also a death you just might be able to escape if you are aware of the threat and properly trained and equipped.

Carry Options for Restraint Escape Gear

Carry options are only limited by imagination. Any given method is only effective with gear of the right size and shape, so I modify my RE gear to be adaptable to a great number of carry options, some of which are:

Elastic Loop Carry

The RE Modules can be folded in half and carried in elastic handcuff key loops sewn on many belts designed for concealed carry. The elastic loop also serves as the belt's tag.



This method is convenient in that your belt can be moved to whatever clothing you are wearing that day without having to move the tools. You can also sew elastic webbing loops onto other belts you own or even some articles of clothing. If you do, use a slightly wider elastic loop which enables you to store the kit laid flat. This makes the kit more difficult to detect in a pat down.

SERE Belt Carry

Laid flat, both RE Modules, the E&E Module, money, a friction saw and a couple of last ditch ingestible items all fit in mine without any noticeable bulges and room to spare.

The Black Ops by Oscar Delta is the best design I have found to date because it constructed like a taco that closes at the top with a thin strip of Velcro. This makes it easy to retrieve tools from the belt without dropping them.



The belt looks like a high quality version of countless other web belts and does not have a paramilitary look to it or the gimmicky molded buckles used to hide gear that are common.

Suspended Carry

It's not cheap to buy a restraint escape kit and have it sewn in to each article of clothing you own, but it is affordable to add "suspender buttons" to your trousers and shorts so you can hang tools by a Kevlar thread/trip line for retrieval.



The line serves double duty as a lanyard for small tools to prevent them from being dropped out of reach into the dark by hands that are cold, wet, muddy, sweaty, bloody and/or injured.

You will most likely be operating at significantly less than 100% due to a mix of fear, fatigue, stress, pain, hunger, thirst or exposure. With this method, only two sets of RE tools (one accessible in front and one in back) are necessary since they can be moved each time you change clothing.

Hang tools so they lay behind reinforced areas of clothing like the flies, seams, tags, etc. and in areas that don't typically get touched in a pat down.

Safety Pin Carry

Low tech and simple are often underrated these days. All modules of the SS REK come with a subdued safety pin to affix them inside. Most kits worth carrying can be adapted for this method with a safety

pin, a little Gorilla tape and/or vinyl tape and a hole punch.



Safety pins are also useful tools in their own right. The inside of your underwear is one of few places your gear is likely to go unnoticed if you are forced to strip down to your drawers and change clothing, which is SOP for some organizations.

Fly Button Carry

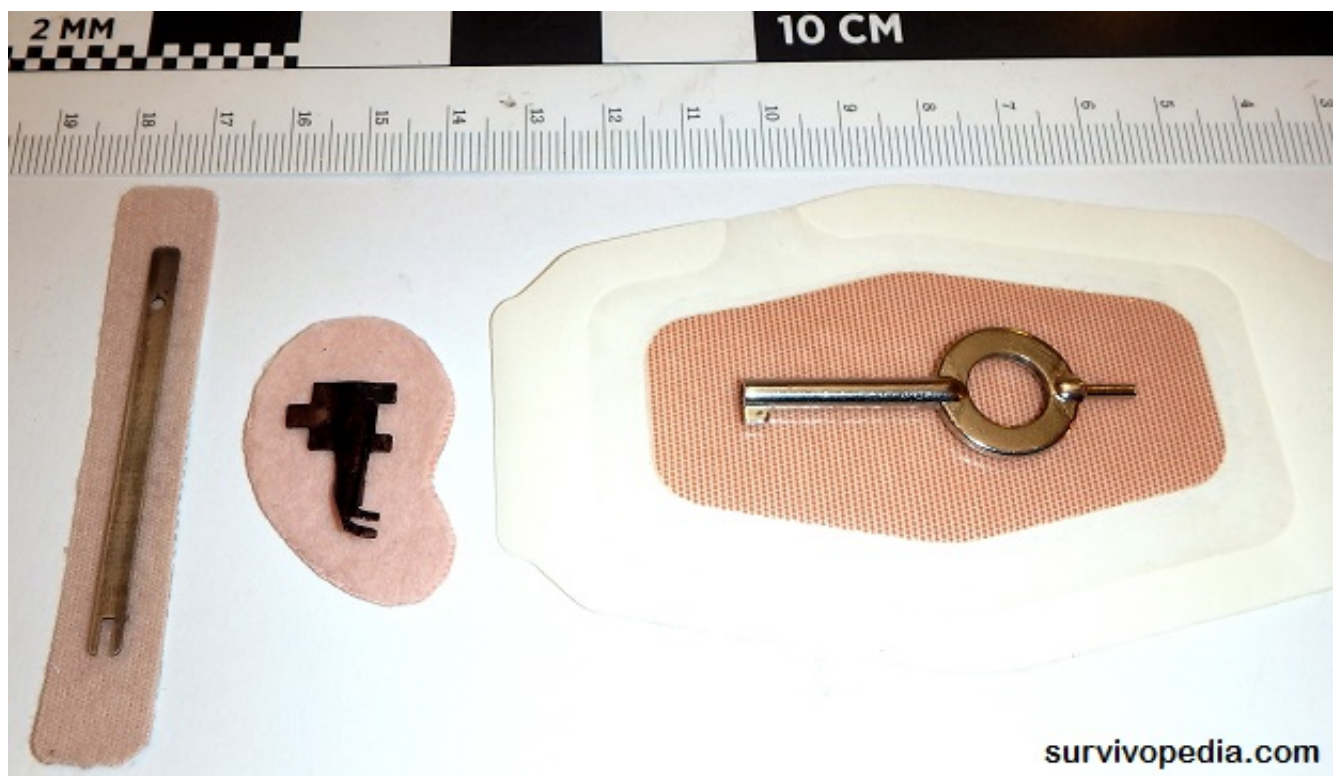
Like a suspender button, you can loop a thread or cord over the button of button fly trousers. This is also a popular carry method for Go Tubes or Stash Tubes and an RE Module and most of the E&E Module or up to \$1000 US in a 2.6" tube using this method.

Under Tag Carry

RE modules are small enough to fit under the tags of some clothing brands. It is hard to feel tools underneath semi-rigid leather tags and it is a small matter to remove a tag from one article of a clothing to another.

Moleskin or Band Aid Carry

You can stash a cuff key and/or shim under a patch of Moleskin, Molefoam, a Band-aid or similar dressing from your First Aid Kit before going into a high threat situation. Make it look real and use the flattest cuff key possible. The E&E portion of the kit includes an extra pocket for a handcuff key modified for flat storage.



Using bandages, medical devices, casts and even surgical implantation is a method of smuggling that enjoys a long and storied history including the famous Lincoln assassination, but Ed Calderone (Ed's Manifesto, Libre Fighting Systems, TAD Black Box Course) arrived at the idea independently and would like to receive credit for it.

Considering his contributions to the field, I would be the last person to deprive him of that. (Well ... that and the fact I don't want to get hung on a meat hook and used as flesh piñata for one of his Black Box courses) ... so, "Great job Ed!" :)

Patch Carry

The SS REK is sized to fit under Velcro flag patches on uniforms and in Velcro Covert Patch Pouches which are carried underneath a flag patch or on top of the Velcro on uniforms and hats and have an interior pocket to hide REK or E&E gear on a uniform, hat or anything else with a flag patch.



Smuggler's Underwear

There are several brands of underwear on the market that have stash pouches designed into them. They range from hidden secret pockets to just well-placed pockets.



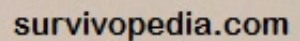
I travel to places where armed robberies are common enough that anybody who is streetwise carries an old cellphone in their hand or pocket in public and carries their newest phone in their underwear.

If it is so common why does it work? Probably because typical MO is that criminals will board a bus, one puts a pistol to the driver's head and the other goes down the bus with a bag and a handgun telling everyone one to drop their wallet and their phone in the bag. If you don't comply, they shoot you in the face and move on.

The laws are so easy on minors that in many countries that it's mostly minors doing the robberies. In this case, the criminals are young, scared, in a hurry and don't have time to search people ... even foreigners. You need to stay situationally aware. That means understanding your enemies, their motivations, their situation, their capabilities and the same for yourself.

Jewelry or Accessory Carry

Escape kits or tools can be built into necklaces, earrings, hair clips, eye or sun glasses, bracelets, rings or any other accessory. To be effective, you want to avoid: looking like an escape tool, the appearance of being valuable, looking paramilitary in nature or standing out in any way.



Objects hidden in plain sight are most useful immediately after capture or during transportation because they will likely be found later on.

Most shoes come with a built-in friction saw in the form of shoelaces. Depending on the material used to restrain you, your shoe laces may work as a friction saw in a pinch, but it's a simple matter to replace factory shoelaces with heat resistant, high strength, abrasion resistant cordage. A friction saw is a piece of cordage with loops tied on the ends and work similar to a wire survival saw.



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The saw is threaded through restraints, you put your feet through the loops and use a bicycling motion to cut through restraints by generating heat. This technique can be used to cut para cord without a knife by using the cord to cut itself.

Friction saws are effective against duct tape, zip ties, rope or Zip Cuffs, but you may need to use a handcuff shim, bobby pin or other object to thread the saw between the bindings and your skin if it is tight. Tying a knot in the center will give the saw extra bite to cut rope made of natural fibers but knots are less effective when cutting synthetics.

Para cord works, gives you a source of cordage and comes in so many colors that it's not difficult to find one that looks normal on boots, but Technora and Kevlar look less para military and are more resistant to heat. Sheathed Kevlar looks sharp on dress shoes. Just cut the cordage to length, burn the ends and add some aglets or improvise a pair from clear tape for a temporary, field expedient solution.



At least one model of handcuff key is made to be crimped onto a shoelace in place of an aglet, hiding in plain sight.

Shoe Carry

Placing escape gear on the feet, or in footwear solves the problem of accessing a tool whether you are restrained with your hands in front or in back. Footwear often has complex lines, taped seams, insoles, soles and heels, making them a favorite of smugglers for hiding small objects.

Tools hidden in footwear are best used early on in the ordeal because captives are often relieved of their footwear at some point, but some of the best opportunities to escape often occur shortly after capture or during transportation. In some cases, abductees have been forced to give up their shoes but allowed to keep their socks.

Caching

At some point, it may be to your advantage to cache RE gear. You need to have RE gear on your person to start out with, but many escape tools are tiny so it is not unreasonable to carry a little extra. You will not likely be able to cache gear in the van used to abduct you ahead of time, but what about the trunk of your own car? Kids fatally trap themselves in car trunks often enough that interior trunk releases are now mandatory, but older vehicles don't typically have them, they can be disabled and your chances of escape improve if you have freed yourself from restraints prior to opening the trunk and making a break for it.

Hiding an RE Module, a light source and a side arm in your car trunk can improve your chances of survival should you be stuffed into the trunk of your own vehicle by an opportunistic criminal who has underestimated you.

In the US, if a criminal armed with a handgun attempts to transport you, the chances the motive is robbery are almost nil and your chances of survival after being restrained and transported drop to single digits without an RE kit. Your chances are statistically far better if you fight and run ... but this is only in the US and you have to make the call based on the circumstances and your abilities or lack thereof.

Percentage-wise, even if you are shot with a handgun during the escape attempt, you are 5 to 6 times more likely to survive than if you allow yourself to be bound or cuffed and put inside a vehicle. Given the opportunity, you may decide to cache some of the RE gear you carry or have obtained during the ordeal to prevent its discovery.

A glue dot or a little tape can help you seemingly defy the laws of physics to cache RE tools or hide them in a search of your person. Methods as simple as taping the kit to the bottom of a foot have escaped detection and enabled successful escapes.

It is also a sound practice to cache resources to aid in self recovery including backup RE gear in your area of operations. If you do manage to escape, it will likely be with precious few resources and stealing or using social engineering to get what you need can increase risk of recapture. Putting caches in place can be a simple insurance policy. Caches can be simple and inexpensive but need to be accessible 24/7/365 without anyone taking notice or being able to trace the cache back to you by any means if discovered.

Cheeking

Given the opportunity, you may be able to sneak a tool into your mouth. A slim shim is easiest. Definitely wouldn't try for more than a handcuff key and a bobby pin unless you are a magician and have gone so far as to make a dental prosthesis or have a flap surgically installed in your mouth. Like most techniques cheeking effectively takes practice.

Ingestion

Swallowing items for later retrieval is another option if capture is imminent, but the technique is dangerous, so you should make a risk-reward assessment according to your circumstances.

Candidates for swallowing are small non-ferrous, non-magnetic objects without any sharp edges making them less likely to damage the GI tract or get stuck in it which may require medical intervention to remove. The best candidate is a plastic hideout cuff key compatible with a reach around tool such as a bobby pin which should not be swallowed. Small button compasses have been swallowed by pilots and some instructors will tell you to do it, but that is risk-reward call.

I would absolutely not swallow a magnet or pairs of powerful rare earth magnets like I carry to use as a general direction compass by placing it on a small non-ferrous float or suspending it from a thread to point to magnetic North.

Once a magnet makes it's way into the intestine it can attach to another magnet or a ferrous object, pinching off the intestine or the blood flow to an intestine which can be fatal. If either of the objects

have a sharp edge or there is a small metal object such as a tiny flake of metal from grinding an object or using flint and steel in your GI tract, it could perforate your intestine.

Body Cavity Carry

This carry method is common enough that every culture seems to have it's own euphemisms for carrying gear in the rectal cavity, the colon or any other body cavities you may happen to possess.

I get that this is not a topic for polite conversation or one where you are going to want to put in a lot of "range time" and is dangerous, but it is something people at risk should be aware of, should they find themselves in a desperate situation requiring such extreme measures. This technique is somewhat taboo to discuss, unpleasant to think about and surely more unpleasant to do ... especially in situations where the pucker factor is so high you could scant drive a toothpick betwixt your cheeks with a sledge hammer.

Unfortunately, survival often entails going outside comfort zones and getting past cultural taboos. Ingestion and rectal insertion are dangerous and I certainly do not advocate this as an EDC method, but I did take this into consideration the design process.



This carry method typically involves placing the items to be carried inside a stash tube which is hidden in the rectum. The tube should be made of a material that is at short term biocompatible (at minimum), be as small as possible and free of any sharp edges.

It is possible to pack a kit in a tight bundle without any sharp edges and tie it inside a condom. Obviously form factor and minimalism are of utmost importance here so an Altoids tin probably isn't going to be a good candidate.

According to Don Rearic's research on the topic, at least one desperate prisoner carried a small stash tube for 15 years or more, carrying it high enough in the colon to not be found in cavity searches. The SS REK is small enough that most of it can be packed into a stash tube and keistered for later retrieval.

The longer a stash is carried, the larger it is and the less biocompatible it is, the greater the danger will be to your health and the greater chance of discovery will be. See above for why a magnet and a ferrous object or more than one magnet in your GI tract can be fatal.

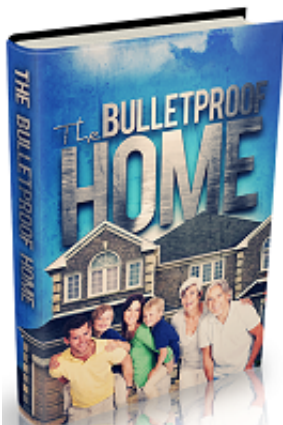
Disclaimer from the Author

This topic may hurt some feelings and make some of you sad or otherwise uncomfortable. Even for the rest of you, it will take many of you outside your comfort zone. I try to keep my material family-friendly and generally positive ... not Pollyanna positive, but optimism, proactivity and courage save far more lives than reactivity, negativity and fear mongering.

Restraint Escape is about [improving your chances to survive certain harsh realities](#) of the world we live in, so if you are a child or emotionally fragile, please stop reading and get parental consent or guidance before continuing. Survival and restraint escape involve tools and techniques that are dangerous, may be illegal in some jurisdictions and which can get you killed if misapplied.

The author of this article is not a physician or a lawyer. This material is not presented as legal counsel or medical advice and is not intended to encourage or train the reader for any criminal activity. The author's intent is to make readers aware of information that criminals already know in order to better protect themselves and save lives. The author does not advocate attempting to escape legal restraint or arrest by law enforcement. Attempting to escape legal restraint by a police officer is a quick way turn a misunderstanding or lesser crime into a felony or possibly even a funeral.

But still remember that anarchy and disaster don't follow the rules, and the skills that you have will be your only mean of survival.



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your defense techniques to survive
disaster!**

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