

3 Proven Ways To Survive An Active Shooting

Over the weekend, we were surprised by what was initially reported as an active shooter situation in the shopping mall near my home.

It turns out it wasn't, but that word didn't get out before the police had descended on the place and put the entire shopping mall on lock-down ... on a Saturday of all days. I was good though; as much as I was tempted, I didn't rush off to the mall to help the police.

What the flap was all about was an armed robbery of a jewelry store. The only shot fired was to break the glass of a display case. But those hearing that shot had no way of knowing whether it was the opening shot in World War III, a murder happening in the mall, a robbery or terrorists going on a killing spree. The sound of gunshots tends to instill fear in people, and rightly so.

Because of where I live, odds were extremely high that there were armed people in the mall, carrying concealed. As it turns out, it was the action of one of those "good guys with a gun" who put an end to the ill-fated crime and captured all seven of the suspects.

Unless criminals are intent on murder, most use guns merely to intimidate. The last thing they want is to shoot someone, or even worse, kill someone. The rap for second degree murder (murder committed in the process of committing another felony) is much worse than it is for armed robbery. So, when confronted by victims who are armed, most will give up or turn tail and run.

To a large degree, this defines the difference between most active shooters and other types of criminals.

Simple Hack That Lets You Hit Any Target From 100 Yards

Active shooters are intent on murder and on murdering as many people as they can before someone takes them out. Their use of guns is intentional, buying their moment of fame by committing atrocities that continue to surprise and horrify the population.

The act of being an active shooter, committing mass murder is all about numbers. Shooters feel that the more people they can kill, the more glory and fame they can receive. That's why they study the actions of shooters who have gone before, seeking to learn from their mistakes and outdo their horrific acts.

But that doesn't mean that you and I need to be victims. Just because someone is killing, doesn't mean that we have to allow them to kill us. There are things we can do, any of which will increase our chances of survival, even survival of a mass killing as well planned out and executed as the Las Vegas killing, which accounted for 59 people killed and over 500 injured.

There are only three different strategies which can be employed in these situations.

Which one will work best in your situation is impossible to tell beforehand. There are many factors which can affect the effectiveness of any of these. So ideally, you need to be ready to implement any of them at a moment's notice.

Before getting into that, I feel it's important to remind you that it's not your job to save the world. You're not Captain America, Rambo or Superman, as much as you might like to be. While you might be tempted to be the hero of the moment, just as I was tempted on Saturday, your real job is to save yourself and your family. If doing so requires being the hero,

that's fine; but if not, then putting yourself at risk by trying to be the hero, many accomplish nothing more than putting your family at risk too.

Run

The best defense you can have against an active shooter is to be somewhere else. When I heard about the potential active shooter situation on Saturday, I was at another store, several miles away. Even if it had been an active shooter, there was no way that they could see me, let alone hit me.

Chances are slim that you'll actually be in the target zone of an active shooter. But if you ever find yourself in that position, the best thing you can do is get out of there and do so as rapidly as you can. Staying put merely ensures that you are on the target list. Leaving can scratch your name off that list.

"But won't running make you a target?" someone might ask. That's clearly the wrong question, as if you are there, you are already a target. The worst thing it could do is to move your name up the list a bit, but you won't be the only one running. The single most common reaction to dangerous situations like this is to run. So there will most likely be lots of people running all over the place.

The difference you need to make between yourself and them is that you need to keep your cool and not run in fear. Some of those people could actually end up running right towards the shooter, because they are just running, without thinking; a pure fear reaction. You, on the other hand, need to be running to safety, which means that you need to logically determine where the shortest route to safety is and find the easiest way to get there.

To do this, you should have already mapped out all the exits in your mind. This habit needs to become part of your

situational awareness. As you enter any area, you should automatically scan the area, looking for potential danger and threats. Part of that scan should also include noticing where potential exits are, including windows and other not so normal exits.

One of the big advantages that running has, in addition to getting you away from where the shooting is happening, is that it is harder to hit a moving target. You can make yourself an even harder target to hit by weaving or zig-zagging as you run, forcing the shooter to constantly readjust their aim, if they are aiming at you. Of course, they might not be aiming at you, but I wouldn't recommend looking over your shoulder to see.

ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE

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Hide

Of all the options, hiding may be the worst. There are few places you can hide in your average public building, where you can not be found. The owners of these buildings and the businesses in them don't want there to be places where people

can hide easily, as those places make it much easier for people to commit crimes. So they purposely design their spaces to eliminate any good hiding places.

But even if you do find someplace to hide, that only offers concealment, not cover. There is little in the average building which will stop a bullet. Perhaps if you can manage to lock yourself in the bathroom you'd be safe, assuming that the bathroom is constructed with cement walls. But normal walls, furniture, store fixtures and merchandise won't do a thing to stop a bullet. About the only thing you can find in a typical office, which has a chance of stopping a bullet, is a well-filled filing cabinet.

Granted, if you can't run, hiding is a natural reaction; but that doesn't make it a good one. It merely shows why you need to keep your head and not react out of panic. Even so, hiding can at least make you a less obvious target, which may keep the shooter from taking aim at you.

Hiding in Schools

Many of the security devices which are being developed for use in schools can be considered to be ways of hiding. The idea is usually to provide the teacher with some way of locking the door from the inside and keep the shooter out. This allows the whole class to hide in place, rather than running down the hallways and presenting themselves as obvious targets to the bad guys.

Granted, the classroom itself is not any more bulletproof than any other public building. Even cinder blocks won't stop a bullet. In my testing, the only bullets stopped by cinder blocks or brick were .22LR. I was even able to punch through them with .380 ACP, although I will have to say, the .380 bullet didn't have much velocity or structural integrity left after going through the cement block.

Nevertheless, using these devices is better than most other options available to schools, because it keeps the children out of the shooter's line of sight. While an active shooter could indiscriminately shoot through the walls, into classrooms, their chances of hitting anyone in such a case would be minimal.

Fight

I've left fight for last; because that is the last option we should choose. I realize that it goes totally against the grain of many of us (including myself), especially those of us who carry concealed. But any time you choose to fight, you are putting yourself in danger. We all see ourselves as being the victor in those situations, but it may not work out that way. But even if we do end up victorious, we may not survive unscathed.

The other risk in fighting is that of hitting an innocent bystander. Mass shootings happen when there are lots of people. That greatly limits your ability to shoot back at the shooter, without inadvertently hitting an innocent. Should you do that, you are criminally liable for it.

The Denver, Colorado shooting at the premiere of the Batman movie is a perfect example of this risk, as well as the appropriate reaction to it. There was a man there with a concealed carry permit, who was carrying that night. But he decided that the crowded theatre was the worst possible environment in which to get into a gun battle. So his pistol stayed holstered. Instead, he got down on the floor, making himself as small a target as possible.

Yes, there are times when it is appropriate to fight, but it is best to leave that as a last line of defense; only to be used if the other options are not usable or practical. When you do, you have to keep your head about you, thinking it through and not just reacting. There will always be others

there and have a responsibility to look after their safety as well.

Having said that, when it does come time to fight, fight to win; fight aggressively. Don't just try to scare the shooter off or to injure them in some way to force them to quit. Shoot to kill and keep on shooting until you are sure they can't return fire.

Always be aware of people in the background, as well as those who might run across your line of sight. Don't let yourself develop tunnel vision, where you are so focused on the shooter, that you don't see what else is going on around you. Tunnel vision is a good way to ensure that you'll end up hitting an innocent bystander by mistake.

Fighting when You're Unarmed

Fighting an armed gunman when you are unarmed is never a winning proposition.

Even so, there are times when it is appropriate. If a gunman comes into a room where you are and opens fire from the doorway, blocking your exit, you may as well fight, even if you left your gun in the car.

In such a situation, your chances of survival aren't real good, no matter what you do. So, if a number of people gather together to rush the shooter, it actually increases your chances of survival, even if you are unarmed. There is no way that the shooter can shoot at everyone at the same time. While they may hit a few of the people rushing them, the rest can reach the shooter and take them down.

This is a risky move, not something to be taken on lightly. It is a move of desperation. Nevertheless, it is better than just standing there, waiting for your number to come up and the shooter to take you out. In my opinion, it's better to go down trying, then to just go down.



Improve your chances
to survive a mass shooting event

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