

A Fresh Look at Alternate Weapons

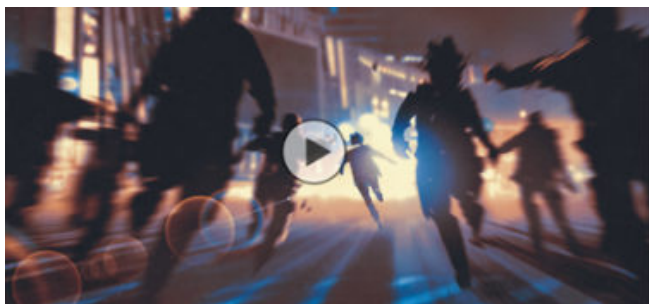
Alternative weapons are an area that many have looked at before, mostly listing the same sorts of weapons repeatedly. While being a big gun fan myself, I've never ignored the possibilities offered by other weapons and the reality that there may come a day when we can't use firearms to protect ourselves.

I've spent a fair amount of time in Mexico, where it is illegal to buy or own a firearm. There is one office in Mexico City where one can apply for a firearms permit in person and one gun store on a military base. Those who jump through enough loopholes and probably pay enough bribes can manage to get the proper license and buy a firearm. But this eliminates the majority of the Mexican population, as they can't afford to pay what it costs. If our Democrat friends in Congress had their way, that would be the case here as well.

We had a nice reprieve from attacks against our Second Amendment rights during Trump's presidency, but Biden and the political left are making up for it now, looking for every loophole they can find to eliminate those rights. Considering how they are ignoring the Constitution, I wouldn't be surprised at anything they try.

After the mass killing in Norway, where a bow-armed man killed five and put two others in intensive care, I suppose we can expect to hear the left complaining about the "bow and arrow loophole." They did something similar about black powder historic firearms and replicas back in 2016 when a man killed his neighbor with a replica black powder revolver he had purchased over the phone from Cabela's. That man shouldn't have been able even to buy that gun because he was a felon, but the store made a mistake, which the left now calls a

“loophole.”



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It's unlikely that the left will ever manage to get a full-bore win on eliminating gun rights, but that's not to say that they won't keep trying. While any significant attack wouldn't survive a challenge in court, if the Democrats pack the Supreme Court, as they've threatened, they could get away with demolishing the Second Amendment in all but name, as well as a whole lot more.

Let's Talk Self-Defense

While it isn't the only reason for the Second Amendment, the ability to defend ourselves from unlawful attack is one of the top two or three reasons it is so important. Guns are the ultimate self-defense weapon, functioning superbly as an equalizer for those who are not as strong or well trained in exotic hand-to-hand techniques.

It is a principle of American law that it is acceptable to use deadly force in self-defense. But there's a caveat to that; the courts have to agree that it was truly self-defense. As part of that, there are two tests used. The first is that the act of self-defense has to be because there was imminent danger of life and limb, and the second, called the "reasonable man rule," is that the action taken is that which a reasonable man would take.

That reasonable man rule can get us in trouble. What may have seemed like proper action at the moment, when you were under attack, may not seem so reasonable to people who have all the

time in the world to dispassionately analyze the situation when their own lives are not at risk. They might decide that excessive force was used in some cases, especially if the assailant didn't use a gun themselves.

A lot of this depends on the state you live in and the political/legal climate there. What might be seen as self-defense in Texas could see that same person end up with a lengthy prison sentence in California. Yet if the person defending themselves had used a weapon perceived to be less lethal, they might have beaten the charge, even in California.

We need to remember that the purpose of self-defense isn't to kill the other guy or even to do him great bodily harm; it's to keep him from doing that to you. That's all it is. I see a lot of preppers running around, bragging about their tricked-out AR-15 or their collection of guns, ready to take on the zombie apocalypse or their hungry neighbors after the SHTF. I have to wonder about some of these people because they seem just a bit too anxious for that day to come, where they can go rock and roll with their firearms to defend home and family.

The reality is, if we can use a less-lethal form of self-defense while still ensuring our survival, then there is a valid reason to do so. But be sure to catch my caveat in there; it still has to be something that ensures your survival. Don't take unnecessary risks, and that means both your physical survival and your legal survival as well.

Alternative Lethal Weapons

While firearms are the weapon of choice for survival, they aren't the only thing available. That's good because firearms require ammunition, and we may come to a time, in a post-disaster world, where ammunition becomes even harder to come by than it is today. Should such a time come, I will personally be saving every round I can, only using firearms

when I am forced to. I'll use other weapons whenever possible.

Bow

The bow is one of the best weapons ever invented. While it doesn't have the range of a rifle, its effectiveness is shown by how long it has survived. The bow, in one form or another, has supposedly been around for around 48,000 years ago. Other than the knife, I know of no other weapon which has been around longer.

With practice, the bow can be shot rapidly and accurately; but it has something that firearms don't have... it is quiet. In a post-disaster world, where shooting a gun might attract the wrong type of attention, a bow provides similar capabilities without the noise.

The other significant advantage the bow has is ammunition. Not only can arrows be reused, but you can make your own in a pinch. While arrow-making is a skill that requires some practice, it's much easier to make an arrow than finding the ingredients and making your gunpowder, bullets, and primers. After all, the American Indians were doing it for centuries before the white man appeared, and they did it without having sophisticated tools to work with.

Melee Weapons

While it is always best to keep the enemy at a distance in any fight, there may come times when that is impossible. While it might be theoretically possible to use a bow indoors, I really wouldn't want to try it. Nor would I want to try it if my adversaries were within 20 feet. While that might work well in Hollywood, it probably wouldn't work out well in real life.

This problem has existed for millennia, and people have found solutions for it. During the Middle Ages, many of the weapons used in battle were called "melee weapons, meaning that they

were used in melee, referring to a confused fight at close quarters. Battle axes, war hammers, and other weapons were merely adaptations of tools used by everyday people every day to complete their work. In many cases, the existing tools were used, as the people who were wielding them were peasants who couldn't afford anything better. Yet, they still killed people.

The same can be said for many martial arts weapons, which all came from peasants' tools. However, there is one big difference between these and the European melee weapons, in that they have developed the use of those weapons into a proper fighting form that can be taught.

I remember seeing a video of an ax-wielding attacker facing off against a trained swordsman several years back. While the person with the ax hardly had any training with it at all, he could rout the swordsman in a matter of seconds. That's because he could use his ax as a berserker weapon, whereas the sword doesn't function that way; it has to be used in a controlled manner to be effective.

There's a valuable lesson to be learned there. That is, it's not the weapon so much that counts, as it is whoever is using it. Learning how to use melee weapons effectively is much more important than buying the perfect battle-ax. That way, anything that comes to hand might be used in a pinch.

Would I take on a gun-wielding attacker with a melee weapon? Not unless I had no other choice. But there are still criminals who break into homes with nothing more than a knife, and if things are so bad in a post-disaster world that we have to resort to using them, we'll probably be facing off against similarly armed people. In those cases, reach is essential; a good melee weapon gives you more reach than your opponent might keep you alive.

One last thing I'd like to mention here is that many melee

weapons can be used as either lethal or less-than-lethal weapons, depending on where and how you strike the other guy. This is a true advantage as far as I'm concerned.

Knife

A knife is a great tool, but as a weapon, it's the weapon of last resort when nothing else is available. In that case, I wouldn't use that knife as a lethal weapon but instead as one to try and disable my attacker, making it impossible for them to attack me. To do that, I'd cut their arms as many times as possible rather than trying to stab their bodies. They have to extend their arms to attack or defend, putting them within my reach. On the other hand, I have to extend my arm to attack their body.

Less-than-Lethal Weapons

Any time you choose to use a less-than-lethal weapon, it should be backed up with lethal ones as well. When police attempt to use less-than-lethal rounds for a shotgun, they have other officers standing by with real bullets in their firearms. This allows them to preserve the suspect's life they are trying to apprehend without putting their own life in jeopardy.

That's a bit harder to do when you're by yourself, but not impossible. First, it requires having both lethal and less-than-lethal weapons available to you, not just less-than-lethal ammo for your primary firearm.

There are two keys to making this work. The first is being able to drop your less-than-lethal weapon if that proves to be ineffective, and the second is being able to draw your sidearm quickly. So don't even try doing this until you work at drawing your sidearm and getting a sight picture quickly.

The other thing that has to go with using any less-than-lethal

weapon is a plan for what to do with the perpetrator after incapacitating them. That would typically mean tying them up in some way and turning them over to the police. But in a time where there is a breakdown of society, would that even be possible? Maybe; you could at least try, tying them up and dropping them off on the doorstep of City Hall if nothing else.

Less – Lethal Shotgun Rounds

I have been impressed by a number of the less-lethal shotgun rounds that I have seen, impressed enough to use them. However, I have to apply the previously mentioned caveat: I wouldn't load them in my shotgun unless I had backup available. From what I understand, those rounds don't have a lot of range, so I wouldn't count on my ability to unload that shotgun and reload it with a lethal round if I need to.

Suppose I were to use those less-lethal rounds in a shotgun without backup. In that case, I'd have the shotgun on a sling to change weapons quickly and make sure there was enough of an obstacle between the attacker and me so that I would have time to react, should they continue the attack.

One important thing to know about these rounds is that the aim point is the belly button. The idea is to force the assailant to buckle over in pain, not to cause them harm. Shots in the face or on the sternum can still be lethal.

Rubber Bullets

While this may seem like a contradiction with what I just said, I can see no situation where I would use rubber bullets in a pistol. Pistols are close-range weapons, and if I had rubber bullets in my pistol, I wouldn't have time to reload if they closed with me.

Tasers

Tasers are one of the more popular non-lethal self-defense weapons. But they have one major flaw; most of them can only be used within arm's length of the attacker. That puts you in a dangerous position, one that you want to avoid. At arm's length, it's easy for them to either prevent you from using that taser or take it away from you and use it themselves. That's too risky to me.

On the other hand, the taser pistols that the police have are possible if they are legal in your state. While they only have about a 20' range, they will incapacitate someone. Here again, I wouldn't use it because of the close range unless I had backup.

Pepper Spray

Pepper spray is another popular alternative weapon, but there is no place I could see where I would carry one unless I were in a state that didn't allow me to have a firearm. But then, those states probably wouldn't enable pepper spray either.

Sonic Weapons

I've always been intrigued by sonic weapons. The Army and Navy have both now developed and fielded these. They are intended to incapacitate an enemy, which fits ideally with the idea of self-defense. While we can't buy the military versions and probably couldn't afford them anyway, smaller civilian versions are available.

I'm not sure how effective the civilian versions are, but I have thought about buying some and placing them in a way to serve as one of the defenses for my home, with the ability to trigger them remotely. Even if they slow attackers down, that would be advantageous.

Conclusion

While there is a place for non-lethal and less-lethal weapons, our priority must be defending ourselves. Even so, the political climate might make it such that being able to use something besides a firearm could be desirable, especially when facing off against attackers who are not shooting guns at you. However, just because someone isn't shooting a gun doesn't mean that they are not using deadly force. Please don't allow them to outdo you with more firepower.

At the same time, I can see several places where alternative weapons, especially lethal ones, could be used against adversaries who aren't armed with firearms or in a post-disaster scenario. The important thing is to get some training and practice before that happens to use those weapons effectively.



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