

# What to do if you get caught in a riot

In today's dynamic world, unexpected situations can arise, challenging us to think on our feet and respond appropriately. Riots, often fueled by social, political, or economic tensions, can erupt with little warning, leaving individuals unexpectedly caught in the midst of chaos.

Being prepared to navigate such situations is crucial for personal safety and well-being. In this article, we will explore the importance of understanding riot dynamics, staying informed, and making swift decisions when faced with the daunting challenge of being caught in a riot.

While we won't delve into specific suggestions, we will emphasize the significance of being equipped with a clear mindset and the ability to adapt in order to increase the chances of making the right choices when it matters most.



## How do you get caught in a riot?

The question lingers: "How did circumstances lead to this point?" but people might also wonder, "What compelled you to be present in that situation?"

In contemporary times, I make a conscious effort to steer clear of becoming a focal point. My vehicle bears no political marks, and I refrain from wearing any statements on my clothing. Above all, I steer clear of gatherings where crowds unite with the purpose of making a statement.

Yet, the situation isn't as straightforward as it seems. There are instances where you can't be silent. The urge to stand tall and express unwavering beliefs can be overpowering. The

desire to endorse a cause, to advocate for law and order, for instance, can be compelling.

However, it's important to recognize that the chaotic frenzy of a full-fledged riot is devoid of any semblance of law or order. Perhaps you find yourself in the midst of it due to occupational obligations, such as being a member of an ambulance crew. It could be that your business, your very livelihood, is situated within the war zone. Alternatively, it might be a matter of unfortunate timing, where you get caught in the middle of it, leaving no clear paths of escape.

## **Recognizing early signs**

The propagation of violence is swift and contagious, permeating its surroundings without delay. Police officers shoulder the burden of enduring verbal abuse and even spitting incidents. They are advised to remain impervious to provocations, avoiding entanglements in debates or altercations with confrontational, vociferous protestors. This approach is sensible.

However, on numerous occasions, demonstrators frustrated by the absence of reactions will escalate the confrontation. The tolerance for their unruly conduct becomes a source of empowerment, emboldening them further.

Evident signs of an impending intensification in hostilities are not hard to identify. The moment the crowd begins to forcefully press against police lines and barricades, it's a clear signal to step back. As projectiles like bottles, bricks, or rocks are launched toward law enforcement, a change of location becomes imperative. When opposing groups blend into the scene, fights erupt within the gathering, windows shatter, and the initial sparks of fires ignite. The window for securing your safety rapidly narrows.

# You're caught in the middle

Traditionally, seeking assistance from law enforcement is ingrained in us. Yet, this approach falters when the threat of a riot looms. When the command is finally issued for police intervention, finding oneself caught between the police and the rioters is the most perilous position.

The police will be moving with a single purpose: heading directly into the turmoil. In this chaotic scenario, discerning allegiances becomes an impractical task. Their objective centers on dispersing the crowd, and those apprehended will be ushered behind the front lines for processing and transport.

Intentionally discomfiting tools like pepper spray, tear gas, and rubber bullets come into play. As the realization dawns that the situation has spiraled beyond control, the window of opportunity to react effectively may have already closed.

The prospect of having to fight for survival becomes a stark reality. The allure of being an observer or becoming a part of the headline story loses its charm. It's time to tuck away the phone and exit the scene before the mob's actions escalate into acts of violence or trampling.

## Surviving unforeseen riot situations

Amid the chaos of a riot, the question of survival becomes paramount. Here's how to navigate the perilous situation:

**Stay mobile:** In the midst of the tumultuous commotion that characterizes a riot, maintaining constant movement emerges as a fundamental strategy for survival. When confronted with aggression or being pushed, resisting the urge to stand your ground is crucial. Engaging in physical confrontations can

exacerbate the situation, leading to further trouble. In cases where self-defense becomes necessary, it's imperative to adopt a mindset of disengagement, aiming to create distance from the turmoil. Employ swift, calculated movements to break free from any potential entanglements and swiftly shift away from the immediate danger zone.

**Prioritize safety over possessions:** When positioned within your vehicle as a riot unfolds, seizing any opportunity for an escape route takes precedence. Hesitation has no place in this scenario. Overlooking traffic rules in favor of prompt action might be necessary to ensure your safety. The moment a mob surrounds you, the window of escape could close abruptly, leaving you exposed to potential harm. In such cases, abandoning your vehicle and transitioning to a swift, foot-based exit becomes imperative, forestalling the escalation of the situation.

**Break away from crowds:** In the heart of a crowd that's teeming with disorder, your path to safety involves gravitating towards the less densely populated fringes. A continuous movement away from the epicenter of danger is a strategic course of action. Even if this necessitates altering your intended route, the goal remains to distance yourself from the immediate hazard. Progressing toward the outskirts of the crowd not only minimizes your exposure to potential risks but also increases your chances of a safe exit.

**Utilize cover:** Amid the chaos of a riot, strategically seeking refuge behind sturdy barriers becomes an essential survival tactic. Solid obstacles, ranging from discarded signs to sections of plywood or even the lid of a garbage can, can serve as makeshift shields, safeguarding you from projectiles and potential gunfire. Taking cover behind these impromptu barriers enhances your ability to shield yourself from harm, providing a tactical advantage amidst the chaos.

**Stay upright:** When confronted by physical aggression that

leaves you on the ground, displaying unwavering resilience becomes a pivotal strategy for regaining control of the situation. Fighting back with determination is essential for re-establishing your footing. While protecting your head from potential blows, your determination to stand again is key to reclaiming a position of advantage and ensuring your continued safety.

**Identify rear exits:** Seeking momentary refuge within a building amid the tumultuous rioting environment requires a prudent approach. While back exits may lead to quieter streets or alleyways, caution is warranted as this option carries inherent risks. Identifying these alternative exits becomes essential, offering a potential route away from the mayhem. However, an understanding of the building's layout is crucial to avoid potential traps and ensure safe passage.

**Familiarize yourself with the area:** Anticipating potential trouble before it materializes involves a proactive approach of familiarizing yourself with unfamiliar surroundings. Studying maps ahead of time grants you the advantage of understanding escape routes and identifying nearby landmarks. This geographic insight acts as a valuable reference during emergencies, allowing you to navigate confidently toward safety.

**Carry essential gear:** Equipping yourself with a range of protective gear serves as a frontline defense strategy. Items such as a convertible day pack with ballistic panels, a bike helmet, pepper spray, a stun gun, small impact weapons, a flashlight, and a water bottle play pivotal roles in deterring attackers and providing a level of personal protection. The combination of these tools empowers you to navigate through the chaos with a higher degree of safety.

**Understand the law:** Navigating the intricate legal landscape during a riot requires a comprehensive understanding of the boundaries that govern self-defense. While carrying self-

defense tools can offer a measure of protection, it's imperative to recognize the limitations imposed by the use of force laws. The potential challenges of employing deadly force amid a riot's chaotic atmosphere underscore the necessity of carefully assessing the risks and implications.

**Blend in:** Blending into your surroundings emerges as a tactical choice, particularly when faced with a confrontational crowd. Opting for clothing that doesn't attract undue attention is paramount. Steering clear of attire with political slogans or affiliations ensures that you don't inadvertently become a target. Instead, choose outfits that provide coverage and comfort, featuring long-sleeve shirts, jackets, long pants, and sturdy shoes.

**Stay informed:** Maintaining awareness of current news and unfolding developments, especially those related to planned protests and potential unrest, assumes critical importance. This knowledge allows you to make informed decisions about alternate routes and avoidance strategies. Staying attuned to the evolving situation equips you with the information necessary to navigate through uncertain times with a heightened level of vigilance.

**Secure valuables:** When confronted with the prospect of unrest that threatens your business, proactively safeguarding valuables becomes a necessity. Whether through removal or relocation, implementing protective measures ensures that valuable assets remain out of harm's way. This forward-thinking approach minimizes potential losses and reinforces your ability to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of riot-related risks.

In uncertain circumstances, your ability to think on your feet and make swift decisions can make all the difference. By staying vigilant and prepared, you enhance your chances of emerging from the midst of turmoil unscathed.

# Facing the reality of riot aftermath

Recent riots, often ignited by protests calling for social justice, carry an ironic twist when considering the unlikely prospect of post-riot justice. While the right to protest is essential, blocking roads, causing disorder, damaging property, setting fires, and inflicting harm have no place within those rights.

Unfortunately, this crucial distinction appears to elude certain figures of authority. In the aftermath of a riot, the chances of witnessing accountability are slim. Should you fall victim to an attack during such turmoil or witness your business succumb to destruction, the likelihood of apprehending those responsible remains low.

Curiously, if you resort to self-defense, you may find yourself facing legal consequences while your assailants are portrayed as innocent victims. Instances abound where individuals who vandalize property or assault law enforcement officers have their charges dropped by prosecutors with left-leaning inclinations.



## Escalating troubles

A glimmer of optimism in these times would be welcome, yet the future appears more ominous. The absence of substantial penalties only emboldens criminal behavior, leading rioters and anarchists down a perilous path where they sense impunity even for their most lawless actions.

This unsettling trend means that a stronger application of force might be necessary to halt this cycle of senseless destruction, should society choose to do so. The ongoing

efforts by certain liberal politicians and media to vilify and defund law enforcement, coupled with constraints on officers taking appropriate measures to uphold order, exacerbate the issue. The reality dawns on citizens that their safety and security rest primarily on their own shoulders.

## **Concluding**

In the midst of this shifting landscape, the responsibility lies squarely with individuals. Vigilance and avoidance stand as essential strategies. Being prepared becomes a paramount necessity. As we navigate through these unpredictable times, recognizing the potential outcomes and making informed choices becomes a collective imperative.