*This is an article that I often reference and use for handouts at self-defense classes/clinics. I don’t agree with all of it. In fairness, I will post entire article and comment where I disagree. To the author’s credit he states that the information was taken as is from the websites posted with little or no changes. And like him, I believe I could have come up with many on my own. Original posting* [*https://rethinksurvival.com/29-must-do-safety-tips-every-woman-must-know/?fbclid=IwAR1KrfUO4C3EIVztDT5IfNYZDHuSTIVpJEAB2NbQ-bT-koxpK\_EBRiMj\_oM*](https://rethinksurvival.com/29-must-do-safety-tips-every-woman-must-know/?fbclid=IwAR1KrfUO4C3EIVztDT5IfNYZDHuSTIVpJEAB2NbQ-bT-koxpK_EBRiMj_oM)

*Must Do Safety Tips Every Woman 15 and Older Must No*

**29 Must-Do Safety Tips Every Woman 15 and Older Must Know!**

By Damian Brindle Jan 20, 2016.

Recently, both my wife and niece have had “encounters” with ne’er-do-wells while out and about in public places. I won’t go into specifics but it did raise their threat levels to approximately DEFCON Zero–it only goes down to level one for the military, you know-and, therefore, promoted me write this.

And, though it’s a sad state of affairs that I even have to do this, I felt it was my duty to them and to you to share some of the more useful safety tips for women and even for men too… anyone who may be alone in public from time to time.

Of course, while I could have come up with most of these on my own, I wanted to ensure I covered the bases and so I found a handful of very useful articles that I was able to reference below; please take the time to read each of the referenced website articles for additional safety tips.

That said, information was taken as-is from the referenced websites with little to no changes.

Now, in no particular order, here’s **29 must-do safety tips every woman 15 and older must know** and practice daily…

From [Cosmopolitan.com](http://www.cosmopolitan.com/lifestyle/advice/a4364/safety-tips-every-woman-should-know/):

### 1. If walking by yourself, get off your cell phone.

A lot of people think that being on the phone is safe because the person on the other line can call 911, but that rarely works out. Chatting can distract you; it’s better to be aware of your surroundings.

[Editor’s note: This is my biggest pet peeve I see these days. Ladies, please keep your head up and be aware of where you are, who may be around you, and even where somebody may come from. These people strike fast and seeming “out of nowhere”. A few seconds distraction while you’re on your cell phone or digging in your purse for car keys may be all they need.]

### 2. If you return to your car and see that a van is parked right next to the driver’s side, enter through the passenger side.

Predators often use vans and will disguise it as a family car, even using “Baby on Board” decals.

[Editor’s note: I would suggest that any relatively large vehicles–even SUV’s–should make you wary as they are plenty large enough for such nefarious use, often have dark tinted rear windows, and now look “less suspicious” than vans do since they’re all over the place.]

### 3. You return to your car and it has a flat tire. Back away.

Return to wherever you came from (restaurant, store, etc) and call for help. Once assistance arrives, approach your car. If someone comes up to you (even if they are a woman) and wants to offer help, politely say, “No thank you.” If a man, he could be a predator. If a woman, she could be the lurer.

[Editor’s note: It’s a shame people can’t offer legitimate help these days but the sad fact is that YOU have to assume folks are up to no good. It only takes ONE wrong encounter to learn this lesson.]

### 4. When leaving the mall late at night, ask a security guard to walk you to your car.

Do not go up to just any security guard. Go directly to the kiosk and ask for them to assign an officer to escort you. Predators sometimes dress up like men of the law.

[Editor’s note: This one never occurred to me but I can see how it could happen. If you can’t find help as directed above then attempt to find somebody who looks like an employee behind the sales desk inside the store where you were–not just the mall personnel–and ask them to escort you.]

### 5. If someone tries to grab you, twist your arm up and down and yell, “Stop!”

Do anything you can to draw attention to yourself.

[Editor’s note: Doing anything you can to make you “not worth the trouble” is a good idea… flailing about, punching, kicking, screaming, biting, yelling… anything and everything if you must. Assuming they’re trying to catch you off guard… now catch THEM off guard.]

*[Barnes Defense note: In addition to what has been said above, I would suggest even stomping on the attacker’s foot or kicking them with a knee in the groin.]*

### 6. If someone is chasing after you, run away in a zig-zag pattern.

This will exhaust your attacker.

[Editor’s note: And likely exhaust you too! The important part is to just RUN… fast, far, and without looking back.]

### 7. Don’t check-in on Foursquare or Facebook when you arrive somewhere.

Instead, check in as you leave. This way no one will be able to digitally stalk you and know your every move or when you’re not home. Along the same lines, avoid tweeting or Facebooking from vacation, especially if your account is public, as it’s a way of letting the world know that your home is unoccupied.

[Editor’s note: **How about don’t check in anyway**? I think it’s a silly new use of technology regardless. At the very least it \*may\* be a way for bad folks to track your history and, therefore, figure out where you may be in the future. For example, if you’re checking in at a nearby gym every Tuesday and Thursday, well, that’s like saying where you’ll be EVERY Tuesday and Thursday!]

From [PowerToChange.com](http://powertochange.com/life/personalsafetytips/):

### 8. Awareness: Your first line of defense.

Most people think of kicks to the groin and blocking punches when they hear the term “self-defense.” However, true self-defense begins long before any actual physical contact. The first, and probably most important, component in self-defensce is awareness: awareness of yourself, your surroundings, and your potential attacker’s likely strategies. The criminal’s primary strategy is to use the advantage of surprise. Studies have shown that criminals are adept at choosing targets who appear to be unaware of what is going on around them. By being aware of your surroundings and by projecting a “force presence,” many altercations which are commonplace on the street can be avoided.

[Editor’s note: This is the biggest problem I would suggest most women have these days… being too engulfed in their iPhones, kids, and whatnot. Keep your head up and alert… check your smartphone when you get home.]

[*Barnes Defense note: self defense by being aware of what is going on around you. Even when you are engaged in a deep conversation, it is easy to lose focus on everything around you. Make is a practice to keep your head up and see what is going on around you.]*

### 9. Your right to fight.

Unfortunately, no matter how diligently we practice awareness and avoidance techniques, we may find ourselves in a physical confrontation. Whether or not you have self-defensce training, and no matter what your age or physical condition, it is important to understand that you **CAN and SHOULD** defend yourself physically. You have both the moral and legal right to do so, even if the attacker is only threatening you and hasn’t struck first. Many women worry that they will anger the attacker and get hurt worse if they defend themselves, but statistics clearly show that your odds of survival are far greater if you do fight back. **Aim for the eyes first and the groin second**. Remember, though, to use the element of surprise to your advantage–strike quickly, and mean business. You may only get one chance.

[Editor’s note: Like I said before, do ANYTHING and EVERYTHING you can to make you “not worth the trouble” to them. And, if you’re looking for a solid course that teaches no-nonsense self defense, check out [Coach David Alexander’s B.E.T. course](https://coachdavidalexander.wordpress.com/b-e-t-self-defense-system/); I reviewed it a while back and suggest it’s one of the better and easier to remember and practice courses out there for normal folks like you and I.]

[*Barnes Defense note: Most importantly the attacker is not playing by any rules, and neither should you. There is a saying. Fight at if you are the third monkey on the ramp to Noah’s Ark….and brother, its starting to rain. Additionally I can’t emphasize strongly enough to get some self defense training. Not all martial arts are taught with a self defense orientation. If you are going to carry a weapon, get training. Also always able to get it in a second. This might mean putting the knife, gun, pepper spray, whatever in the same place all the time. Practice pulling it out. Practice alone will commit what ever techniques you learn. A good instructor will fine tune your technique to help you be even more effective. NOTHING WORKS 100% OF THE TIME. DO NOT EXPECT A SINGLE TECHNIQUE TO WORK EVERY TIME.]*

### 10. Pepper spray: Pros and cons.

Pepper spray, like other self-defense aids, can be a useful tool. However, it is important to understand that there can be significant drawbacks to its use. For example, did you know that it doesn’t work on everyone? Surprisingly, 15-20% of people will not be incapacitated even by a full-face spray. Also, if you’re carrying it in your purse, you will only waste time and alert the attacker to your intentions while you fumble for it. Never depend on any self-defense tool or weapon to stop an attacker. Trust your body and your wits, which you can always depend on in the event of an attack.

[Editor’s note: I would encourage you to carry pepper spray but, like the above states, if it’s not literally in your hand or within split-second arms reach, it will do little good. This is one of my gripes I have with my wife and niece, they both have pepper spray but I’m willing to bet they couldn’t get to it if they needed to… maybe they don’t even know where it is any longer, I don’t know. This, sadly, is how fast attackers can strike.]

### 11. Avoiding a car-jacking.

Lock all doors and keep windows up when driving. Most car-jackings take place when vehicles are stopped at intersections. The criminals approach at a 45-degree angle (in the blind spot), and either pull you out of the driver’s seat or jump in the passenger’s seat.

[Editor’s note**: If they want your car THAT bad, they can have it.** This is about keeping YOU safe and unharmed. That said, keep your darn car doors locked!]

From [TheNonProfits.com](http://www.thenonprofits.com/safety.htm):

### 12. Women have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit (doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc.) DON’T DO THIS!

The predator will be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in the passenger side, put a gun to your head, and tell you where to go. AS SOON AS YOU GET INTO YOUR CAR, LOCK THE DOORS AND LEAVE.

[Editor’s note: Yes! I’d suggest that smartphones are the biggest culprit here. Get in the car and get on the  move. There will be plenty of time to check it later in a safe place… you car is not a safe place any longer.]

### 13. ALWAYS take the elevator instead of the stairs.

Stairwells are horrible places to be alone and the perfect crime spot. Do not get on an elevator if there is a weirdo already on there. (Of course bad men don’t always look bad.) Do not stand back in the corners of the elevator. Be near the front, by the doors, ready to get off or on. If you get on the elevator on the 25th floor, and the Boogie Man gets on the 22nd, get off when he gets on. Don’t ride the elevator with him if you are not comfortable.

[Editor’s note: **This is a tough one. Avoid the stairwells because they’re notoriously bad places to be OR be stuck in a metal box with a bad man? Neither sounds tenable**.]

### 14. If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control, ALWAYS RUN!

Police only make 4 of 10 shots when they are in range of 3-9 feet. This is due to stress. The predator will only hit you (a running target) 4 in 100 times. And even then, it most likely WILL NOT be a vital organ. RUN!

[Editor’s note: This might be the perfect time for that zig-zag pattern mentioned above. The important part, however, is to RUN… just run. You might wrongly believe that getting shot is an immediate “death sentence” but this is just movie and television drama. Most gunshot victims–even those shot multiple times–often survive given modern medical intervention. Play the odds and run.]

### 15. Tips to saving your life, if you have gotten into a violent situation:

REACT IMMEDIATELY – If he abducts you in a parking lot, and is taking you to an abandoned area, DON’T LET HIM GET YOU TO THAT AREA. If you are driving, react immediately in the situation, and crash your car while still going 5 mph. If he’s driving, find the right time, and stick your fingers in his eyes. He must watch the road, so choose an unsuspecting time, and gouge him. It is your ONLY defense. While he is in shock, GET OUT. This sounds gross, but the alternative is worse if you do not act. RESIST – Don’t go along with him: Run, if you are able: DON’T EVER GIVE UP! You DO NOT want to get to a crime scene.

[Editor’s note: Again, make you “not worth the time” and turn the tables using your own element of surprise. And when they say “gouge him” in the eyes they mean push the eyeballs all the way back into their head until you can stick our finger inside their eye socks. Yup, it sounds gross but you only get one chance here to make a first impression. Watch [Coach David Alexander’s B.E.T. course](https://coachdavidalexander.wordpress.com/b-e-t-self-defense-system/) as noted above.]

### 16. Always keep your distance when walking past strangers on the street or in dark areas.

[Editor’s note: Even if this mean deliberately crossing the street to do so. It’s better to be a more difficult target across the street rather than one of opportunity a few feet away.]

### 17. If you are walking alone in the dark (which you shouldn’t be) and you find him following/chasing you: Scream “FIRE!” and not “help”.

People don’t want to get involved when people yell “help” but “fire” draws attention because people are nosy. RUN!

[Editor’s note: I don’t know about this one. I’d like to see statistics but whatever you yell, don’t stop yelling and scream at the top of your lungs because your life may well depend on you doing so.]

### 18. Find an obstacle, such as a parked car, and run around it, like Ring Around the Rosie.

This may sound silly, but over the years, 5 women have told Pat Malone that this SAVED THEIR LIVES. Your last hope is getting under the car. Once you are under there, there are tons of things to hold onto, and he will not be able to get you out and will not come under for you (most likely). Usually they give up by this point. The catch here is that YOU MUST PRACTICE GETTING UNDER THE CAR. You must have a plan (he will have one); know if you will be going on your back, front, from the side or back of the car. It must be practiced.

[Editor’s note: This was interesting advice and something I wouldn’t have thought to suggest, the getting under the car part anyway. The good news is that many cars are tall enough that this could prove a viable option but there are no doubt some vehicles–such as sedans or coupes–that I don’t see most people being able to shimmy underneath because they sit too low to the ground. Running around something may be a good idea.]

From [KevinCoffey.com](http://www.kevincoffey.com/women_safety/women_safety_tips_from_a_woman_cop.htm):

### 19. Getting into the attacker’s car when he pulls a gun and orders you to get into his vehicle.

Most attackers don’t want to shoot you … they want you to get into the car so that they can drive you to a deserted place and torture you. Don’t comply. Run screaming. It is MUCH more likely than not that he will just move on to an easier target.

[Editor’s note: Better to be non-compliant now while you’re not on their turf than later on when you are. And as stated above, run in a zig-zag pattern and don’t worry too much about getting shot… they usually miss… usually.]

### 20. Pulling over when a man drives alongside of you pointing at your car pretending something is wrong.

If this happens, drive to the nearest well-lit and populated gas station and look the car over yourself (or ask an attendant). Never pull over. Believe it or not, many women have fallen for this for fear of their car spontaneously exploding in the middle of the road. Not likely.

[Editor’s note: Right. If the car got you this far it will get you to the nearest well-lit area with people.]

### 21. Trusting a clean cut, honest looking stranger.

I see mug shots of every sex offender in the state of Florida. They do not look like monsters. They often look like they could be your friendly grocer. They are every age between 15 and 90, and probably beyond. Only a small minority actually look scary. I just read a case yesterday of a man with only one leg who beat up his victim with his crutch before he raped her. Who would have ever thought that a one legged man would be a rapist?

[Editor’s note: Yeah, who would have guessed? **Though gut instinct is important, bad people can come from all walks of life and all age groups. That said, it can’t hurt to**[**be aware of local sex offenders in your area**](http://www.familywatchdog.us/)**.]**

### 22. When having your car serviced, give the attendant only the car keys…

…as they have key duplicators readily available, and they generally have your address, etc. on file. I didn’t mean to make anyone uncomfortable with this, but I am at work right now reviewing files, and realized that this email is a way I can reach many women at one time. I have the dirty job of reading all these files, and it makes me feel good to know that I can share some inferences from what I have learned. This is not an exhaustive list of what not to do, but just some things that I have observed more than just a few times.

[Editor’s note: I figured everyone knew to only give your car key to mechanics but maybe not. Remember, not every bad person is an opportunist… some are planners, which makes them even worse.]

From [YouQueen.com](http://youqueen.com/life/the-top-18-personal-safety-tips-every-woman-should-know/):

### 23. Make eye contact.

The best thing you can do is let others know that you see them and could identify them if need be. When you pass someone on the street, look them in the eye and give a polite nod of the head to acknowledge you see them very clearly.

[Editor’s note: There may be a fine line between a “polite nod” and an “unwanted advance” to most men, particularly bad ones. Remember that these folks aren’t right in the brain to begin with, may be high on drugs, having withdrawals from NOT being on drugs… who knows. The point is to keep your eyes up and to ensure they know you know you’re aware of them.]

*[Barnes Defense note: I had an aikido instructor say that the key was not walk past a group of people, attempting to be timid and restrained, but to acknowledge the people, look them in the eye, and show respect. So much of the horrific behavior these days comes from the horrible way people treat each other. The downside of such a looking someone in the eyes – staring if you will – is that it could be taken as a daring them to do something. Also, if they realize you would recognize them, then if they attempt to do something to you, they might be tempted to “eliminate” any loose ends. There are not any answers that work 100% of the time. Understand that all of these are designed to mitigate potential risk.]*

### 24. Walk with purpose.

Stand tall and keep your posture so that it represents authority. The less you look like a victim, the less likely someone will target you as such. So, pull your shoulders back, keep your back straight and your stomach in and walk in a way that lets the world know that you will not go down without a fight.

[Editor’s note: Best to stand tall, keep your head up, and be aware. You’re not trying to negotiate the fall of the Berlin Wall here.]

### 25. If you see something suspicious, report it.

Don’t worry about whether you’re overreacting or being overcautious. If you think something is out of place, make a call to the authorities. It’s always better to be safe than sorry. That’s what the police are there for. It’s better all the way around if they can be proactive instead of reactive.

[Editor’s note: Even if it turns out to be nothing it’s always better to be safe than sorry. I’m sure the police would rather respond to a “nothing” event than be too late to a “bad” event. Of course, use some judgement here and rely on your gut… no need to turn in the group of teenagers nearby because they’re just being dumb teenagers.]

### 26. Set boundaries and enforce them.

If someone comes too close for comfort, tell them and force them to move back and give you your space. Don’t worry about whether you’ll come across as short or impolite. If your safety is at stake, it’s no time to be nice.

[Editor’s note: There is something to be said for personal space and you have every right to say “back off” if somebody is too close. Remember, it’s not about being impolite… it’s about your safety.]

*[Barnes Defense note: An additional benefit of this technique is if they keep coming toward you, with some exceptions such as deafness or mentally challenged, they have made it clear they have bad intentions. This is especially useful at the gas station, if you are fillig up your car, and someone starts walking toward you for no apparent reason, put up your hand as in signaling halt, yell with intensity “Stop right there. Do not come any close to me!”. If they continue, they have signaled their intent.*

### 27. If someone tries to force you to a different location, do not go.

Research has shown over and over again that if someone intends to move you, they also intend for you to not make it out alive. Whatever you do, never get in a vehicle with someone regardless of what they tell you because it isn’t going to be good.

[Editor’s note: This could be in their vehicle, your vehicle, or even on foot. You’re likely always better off making your stand here and now and NOT on their turf. Let that inner actress free and make the scene of your life!]

### 28. Never, ever give up!

No matter what happens, never stop fighting. Unleash your inner bitch and let her go. If you’re in a fight for your life, make sure you’re the one who wins. It’s time to play dirty and let the cards fall where they may. Also, realize that even if you’re injured (which you most likely would be in a self-defense situation), it doesn’t mean it’s a critical injury. Just keep fighting and have faith that you will persevere. The only thing that’s important is that, at the end of the day, you’re the one who lives to see another day. You want to make sure you come home every night and get the time you expect and deserve with your family and friends. Don’t let someone else rob you of your dreams and goals. If they choose you as a target, make sure they know that they just made a critical error in judgment.

[Editor’s note: Like has been said many times above, be “too much trouble” for them, fight like hell, and *never* give up. Odds are that they will eventually give up.]

One last tip I didn’t see mentioned above:

### 29. Park in a well-lit area at all times.

Darkness is the enemy’s territory. If you can’t see them coming you’re at a serious disadvantage and that’s just the way they like it. Always, always, always ensure your vehicle and even the path you take to get to and from your vehicle is well lit. And, while carrying a flashlight may be of use, it’s NOT the same thing as effective area lighting.

One last point I wanted to make here is that I didn’t see but one possible mention of the bad guys working in teams. The assumption is that they always work alone. While this may usually be true don’t discount two or more individuals–even men and women–working together to quickly overpower and disorient you. It’s a sad reality but becoming more common, in my opinion.

I’m sure there are other potential safety tips for women, particularly if we’re talking about being at home alone, but I wanted to focus on safety tips while alone and out in public places.

Men: don’t feel you’re above any of this. You can be as much of a target as women can be here.

Please take a moment to pass these tips along to family, friends, neighbors, co-workers… anyone you feel could benefit from this knowledge. And, really, all of us could use the reminder from time to time. 🙂

*Barnes Defense Add*

*30. Learn to see how things around you could be used as a weapon. Women – if your wearing stiletto high heels – if your grabbed from behind, stomp on the attackers instep with your high heal. If you remember you are carrying a pencil or pen, consider where you could thrust it into the body to do the most good. I truly believe most people are good. Try not to live your life in a constant state of fear. If your getting a gut feeling that something bad is getting ready to happen, then get out there as efficiently and as quickly as you can.*

*31. If they are trying to rob you, just give them the money. I had another martial arts instructor put it this way, if they want a “renewable resource” – such as money – give to them. If they want a “nonrenewable resource” – such as life, limb, child, etc, then fight like hell!*

For those travelling alone, consider this [Female Solo Travel Guide](https://www.bankrate.com/credit-cards/female-solo-travel-guide/) which includes dozens of additional tips to make use of as well as these [10 Safe Places to Travel](https://millionmilesecrets.com/guides/safe-places-female-solo-travel/) and this [Woman’s Guide to Personal Safety](https://www.safety.com/womans-guide-personal-safety/).

Remember, stuff happens when you least expect it and definitely when you’re least prepared for it.

Take care and please: **be aware, be prepared, and be safe**.

## By Damian Brindle

## Barnes Defense adds were from Bill Barnes at BarnesDefense.com (Instructor@barnesdefense.com)