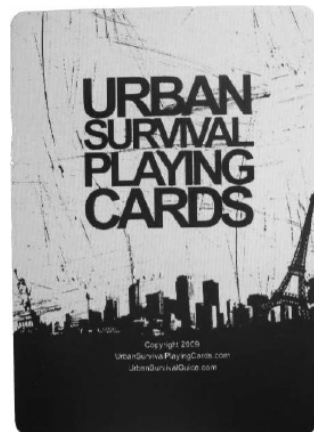




Lamplighter Calendar and Resource Center



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In The Real World, Most People Don't Have A Fully Stocked Retreat They Can Escape To. Even If You've Planned Ahead And You Do, There's No Guarantee That You'll Leave In Time Or That You'll Be Able To Make It There.

Your First Plan Must Be To Survive In Place.

Welcome To The Lamplighter Report!

I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for your membership to The Lamplighter Report. This issue is packed with some powerful information that will help you to prepare you and your loved ones in the event of terrorist attack, natural disaster, economic collapse, or a pandemic.

In Future Issues, “Lamplighter Report” readers will get....

- My ESSENTIAL Survival “How-To’s” (3 - 5 EACH MONTH)
- New “Off-The-Grid” Books, Videos, and Sites I’ve discovered
- My Private “Intel Report” on Global, National and Local Situations I’m Monitoring
- Real Life “Case Studies” of How other Families are Preparing
- “What Went Wrong” - My Analysis of COMMON Mistakes That Most Preppers are Making and much, MUCH more...

The Lamplighter Report



January
Issue

THE LAMPLIGHTER REPORT INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR OFF-LINE MEMBERS

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COURSE AND WHY YOU SHOULD GET
SIGNED UP, PLEASE READ THE COURSE
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Dry Fire

The Fastest Way to Lock in Firearms Skill

Dry fire is one of those topics that people like to talk about, but few actually do. I can understand that...I don't find it to be particularly exciting, and it's kind of frustrating only going through the motions with a firearm when I know how much fun it is to actually shoot.

But the benefits of dry fire are overwhelming...and if you really want to become proficient with your firearm, it's important to understand that a combination of dry fire and live fire will help you do it much quicker and cheaper than live fire alone.

If you're a fan of boxing or MMA, one of the most relatable ways to look at dry fire training is to realize that it is a shooting version of shadow



boxing. Many professional boxers “shadow” throw the nine basic punches 1,000 times per day, for a total of 9,000 shadow punches every day—perfecting their technique, timing, efficiency, muscle memory, and speed without undue stress on their body. Dry fire will give you the same benefits.

In addition, dry fire training will almost guarantee that you don't fall victim to the most common handgun shooting error—jerking the firearm in anticipation of recoil.

Not everyone's like me and some people DO want to practice dry fire techniques, but they still don't get it done because they don't have a clear action plan of what to do when they are doing their dry fire training. It becomes easier to just put off dry fire training until tomorrow instead of figuring out exactly what drills to do. We'll cover that, too.

Dry fire training will help you focus on all of the fundamentals of shooting...right up until the firing pin hits the primer. And it will allow you to focus on all of these fundamentals without paying for ammo, range time, gas, or having to clean your firearm. From a teaching perspective, it programs your mind without any concern for recoil and the downward flinch and low groups that come from anticipating recoil.

We're mainly going to cover fundamentals today, but I'm also going to show you some of the drills that I use that will REALLY spice up your dry fire drills. But first we need to lay a solid foundation and go over how to properly practice dry fire as well as some specific drills you can do to help you lock in good, fundamental shooting techniques.

If you want to know how much you should practice dry firing, a good rule of thumb is that you should dry fire 20 to 50 times for every round that you practice live fire. It would be great if you could practice every technique 1,000 times per day like a professional fighter, but that's not realistic for most people.

Still, try to do as many as your schedule allows. The one major exception to this is that you should slow down or stop as soon as your form falls off. Doing dry fire training with poor or inconsistent form will only hurt your ability to develop high quality muscle memory. Remember, we want to lock PERFECT technique into our muscle memory...not a combination of 80% perfect training and 20% sloppy training.

The high ratio of dry fire to live fire is most important during the learning phase. The logic behind it is based in part on the fact that when you train with live fire, any misses are a waste of time, money, and muscle memory. Once you've got the muscle memory locked in with dry fire, you can spend more time on live fire training because you won't be wasting time, money, or muscle memory.

The other part of why you want to spend so much time

locking in and perfecting techniques with dry fire is because it allows you to completely ignore the "boom" and recoil, and focus on proper technique. Breaking down the process like this will help you get many more rounds on target, more quickly, than with live fire alone.

Since we're dealing with a firearm designed to cause lethal damage, I've got to tell you the obvious advice of making sure that your firearm is unloaded when you're handling it and that you don't point it at anything you don't intend on destroying. I don't mean for this to be a downer, but anything having to do with a firearm, ESPECIALLY dry fire training, is serious business.

I said this before, but it's worth repeating. The general concepts behind these drills will work for ANY type of firearm...pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle and any type of action...single, double, DAO, pump, break, bolt, semi-auto, etc. Because of popularity and for ease of reading, I'm going to focus on semi-automatic pistols. If you're

not training with a semi-automatic pistol, please adjust the following rules accordingly.

Safety RULES (not guidelines or suggestions... they're RULES.)

1. Get rid of all distractions: electronic, two-legged, and four-legged, while you're training, and make sure that your mental state is un-altered, clear, well rested, and that you are able to safely manipulate a firearm.

2. Make sure to remove the magazine, fully rack the slide three times, lock the slide open, visually inspect the chamber and physically inspect the chamber by inserting a finger to confirm that your weapon doesn't have any ammo in it.



1. Fire Team.

Normally each fire team leader will determine the formation for his own unit. Thus, a squad may contain a variety of fire team formations at any one time and these formations may change frequently. The relative position of the fire teams within the squad formation should be such that one will not mask the fire of the others. It is not important that exact distances and intervals be maintained between fire teams and individuals as long as control is not lost. Sight or voice contact will be maintained within the fire team and between fire team leaders and squad leaders. All movement incident to changes of formation is usually by the shortest practical route. There are four types of fire team formations.

a. Column

- 1) Permits rapid controlled movement.
- 2) Favors fire and maneuver to the flanks.
- 3) Vulnerable to fire from the front.
- 4) Provides the least amount of fire to the front.

Column

b. Wedge

- 1) Permits good control.
- 2) Provides all-security.
- 3) Formation is flexible.
- 4) Fire is adequate in all directions

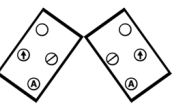
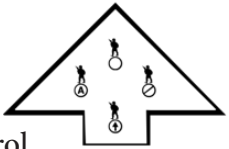
c. Skirmishes Right (Left)

- 1) Maximum firepower to the front.
- 2) Used when location and strength of enemy are known.

d. Echelon Right (Left)

- 1) Provides heavy to front and echeloned flank.
- 2) Used to protect an open or exposed flank.

**Fire without movement is indecisive.
Exposed movement without fire is disastrous.
There must be effective fire combined with skillful movement.**



2. Squad.

The squad leader prescribes the formation for his squad. The platoon leader and squad leader may prescribe the initial formation for their respective subordinate units when the situation dictates or the commander so desires. Subsequent changes may be made by subordinate unit leaders. The characteristics of squad formations are similar to those of the fire team. The fire team is the maneuver element in squad formations.

a. Squad Column. Fire teams are arranged in succession one behind the other.

- 1) Easy to control and maneuver.
- 2) Excellent for speed of movement or when strict control is desired.

3) Especially suitable for narrow covered routes of advance, maneuver through gaps between areas receiving hostile artillery fire, moving through areas of limited observation, and moving under conditions of reduced visibility.

4) Vulnerable to fire from the front.

5) Used for night operations.

b. Squad Wedge. Same as fire team formation for the wedge.

c. Squad Vee.

- 1) Facilitates movement into squad line.
- 2) Provides excellent firepower to front and flanks.
- 3) Provides all around security.

4) Used when the enemy is to the front and his strength and location are known. May be used when crossing large open areas.

d. Squad Line. Same as fire team formation for skirmishes.

Understanding how team formations are most effective can be a lifesaver in urban situations. Next month I will show you combat signals that may save your life.

For day to day, low threat life, you don't need to do much about this. It's not very common in heavy traffic, since the followup to throwing things is to rob the occupants of the vehicle. It's MUCH more common at night when traffic is light. As the economy continues to slide, it is important to know what to look for and how to respond to this threat.

If you see one or more people standing on an overpass where it doesn't make sense, stay in your lane until 1-2 seconds before going under the overpass and quickly change lanes. As the practice gets more common and drivers get wise to it, the bandits get smarter too and start using teams, radios and throwing items off of the "back" side of the overpass instead of the "front" side. When things develop to this point, it becomes wise to simply change lanes before going under an overpass.

In conclusion

There's enough of an overlap between prepping and executive protection that I encourage



Combat Formations

Developed by the US Navy and US Special Operations Command

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Given a combat environment (day and night), and individual combat equipment, participate in unit combat formations per the reference.
2. Given a combat environment (day and night), and individual combat equipment, obey hand and arm signals per the reference.
3. Given a combat environment (day and night), and individual combat equipment, obey special signals per the reference.

OUTLINE

A. GENERAL

Fire team and squad combat formations are groupings of individuals and units for efficient tactical employment. The factors influencing the leader's decision as to the selection of a particular formation are the mission, terrain, situation, weather, speed, and degree of flexibility. Combat formations and signals enable the leader to control the fire and maneuver of his unit when moving to and assaulting an enemy position.

B. BASIC COMBAT FORMATIONS

everyone who can go through one or more local executive protection classes. Not only have I learned a considerable amount from going through the training, it has also given me the opportunity to get to know some VERY highly skilled EP professionals.

I've found that, with rare exception, EP professionals and people who take EP classes are also preppers by nature. Even better, by nature they have gamed out numerous scenarios in their heads, have their ideal teams in mind, defensible locations picked out, and are just looking for the right people to fill in the holes. If you go to a class with the same outlook, you're likely

to make some great long term friends who you can call on if the SHTF.

As an additional bonus, if you can get a non-prepper friend or family member to willingly take an EP class with you, "for fun," you'll probably leave the class with someone who's become fully aware of the need to prepare.

3. Remove any live ammo from the room where you're doing dry fire training. If you use dummy rounds, empty them from your magazines until you can see the follower on every magazine you intend to use and can confirm that they're empty.

4. Pick a backstop that will stop any negligent discharges. Another way of looking at this is to quickly calculate the cost of a negligent discharge and decide if you could live with it. For me, when I do dry fire training at home, this means that I do my dry fire in our basement facing an outside wall so that the most likely outcome of a negligent discharge would be some sheetrock repair, possibly bracing a damaged (non load bearing) stud, possibly replacing a section of wiring, and a slight chance of ricochet damage.



5. Always treat your firearm as if it's loaded—even during dry fire training. This means using proper gun handling discipline at all times. All of my friends who have had negligent discharges have had them with "empty" firearms.

6. Always know what's beyond your target and backstop.

7. Never point your gun at anything you're not willing to destroy—and that goes for TVs, people in the next room, next door neighbors, cars, etc. This is serious business and your first and only negligent action could kill someone, ruin your life, and possibly put you in jail. As mentioned in rule #4, calculate the potential cost.

8. The transition from dry fire back to live ammo is a particularly critical time.

When you finish your dry fire training, the first

step you should take is to take down the target that you used. According to the instructors at FrontSight, practicing "just one more time" is one of the most common reasons that dry fire training negligent discharges happen. Removing your dry fire target is one more way to ensure safety.

When you re-introduce live ammo, repeat the following phrase out loud until your firearm is holstered or stored securely, "Live ammo, Live weapon. Live ammo, Live weapon." It's important that you say these words out loud the entire time you're handling your firearm when you're transitioning from dry fire to live ammo.

The transition from dry fire to live ammo is so critical that some trainers even suggest storing the weapon that you are doing dry fire training with for a half hour or more before re-introducing live ammo.

As an additional safety measure, you can run a piece of paracord through the barrel so that it sticks out of both the muzzle and ejection port, use a snap cap, or a Blade-Tech training barrel insert. **None of these are a replacement for the rules above. They should be used in addition, not instead of the above rules.**

Too much stress? This is serious business. You're training with a tool that's designed to destroy things at a distance. If you aren't completely confident about having the discipline to follow the rules above perfectly, then have a firearms instructor work with you until you are.

Now that we've got that covered, let's start training!

Consistent Grip. Having a consistent grip is the foundation of shooting. I believe it was famed firearms instructor, Colonel Jeff Cooper, who said that if he had an hour to spend training someone with a pistol, he'd spend 50 minutes of that hour teaching them how to consistently obtain a proper grip.

After going through the safety steps I mentioned, grab the firearm that you want to start training with and take a couple of minutes to REALLY pay attention to how it feels in your hand(s). Take note of how every square inch of your hand feels and what it's touching. You don't even need your firearm in your holster right now. Just hold it in your hand(s) using whatever technique you have been taught or adopted.

This may seem kind of "touchy-feely", but if you're training for the possibility of using a firearm to defend yourself in a lethal force encounter, it makes sense that you take the time to "get to know it."

In general, I'd tell you that you want to have a "natural" grip on the firearm. Here's an example of what your natural grip would be when firing one handed.

1. Bring your hands up to your face and make two fists.

2. Pick a target to punch.

3. Very slowly, go through the motions of throwing a punch with your shooting arm.

Stop the punch when your arm is outstretched and is perpendicular to your body (making an "L"). Rotate your fist so that if you were holding a pencil or broom, it would be at a 45 degree angle to the ground.

If you were to release your fist, put your firearm in your hand, and make your fist around the firearm so that your sights are lined up with your target, you'd have your natural one-handed grip. By rotating your hand so that if you were holding a pencil or broom it would be straight up and down and bringing it together with your support hand, you'll roughly have your natural two-handed grip.

Instructors differ on the nuances on the best grips, so I'll simply encourage you to get competent instruction and train what they teach you. I've done formal training with numerous Spec Ops guys, local and federal SWAT operators, mercenaries/security contractors, and one notable champion speed shooter, and their techniques are all slightly different based on their

experiences and biases. In their common quest for efficiency and effectiveness, most of them have ended up with VERY similar techniques, so don't get too hung up on minor differences from one instructor to another.

Your grip will be slightly different from firearm to firearm. My grip is different with my Glocks, 1911s, and with my revolvers. Grip angle is different, the girth of the grip is different, and the shape is different, varying from a square with Glocks to a rectangle with 1911s to an oval with revolvers. That being said, my grip on my Glocks is exactly the same every time. I know the feel of the grip against my hand and I know when it's off slightly without looking. The reason I'm able to do this is that I took the time, several times, to consciously pay attention to how the firearm feels in my hand(s).

I pay attention to what each joint of each finger is touching and how it feels. I pay attention to the pressure on the webbing between my thumb and index finger. I know how far forward the thumb on my shooting hand goes and what it is touching. I know where my index finger will touch the trigger and I know what the side of the gun feels like when my finger is off the trigger.

On my subcompact, I know that my pinky slides under the grip with my subcompact mags and touches the front of the mag on full size mags.

As you're holding your firearm, take a minute to identify these same specific feelings on your firearm.

Now move your hand slightly, figure out what's different and what you will do to fix the situation if you feel the same in the future.

As an example, if you grab your firearm, the webbing between your thumb and index finger should be as high up on the grip as possible. If you recognize that you don't have the right pressure against your webbing, you know that you need to move your grip up on the pistol.

As another example, I know that when I grab a 1911, my first knuckles are all straight in front of the

front of you during ideal conditions. I increase this to 3-4 seconds if either the car in front or the car behind me are tailgating. In the case of the car in back, they'll usually go around if I give them enough room.

See the bottom of the tires in front of you. When you pull up to a stopped car at a light or stop sign, make sure that you stay back far enough so that you can see the pavement and bottom of the tires of the vehicle in front of you. In general, this will put you far enough back that you can go around them without having to back up first. This guideline will put shorter people a little further back than they need to be and taller people a little closer than they need to be, so you'll want to experiment some.

Timing. With EP details, drivers do their best to miss regular traffic jams, trains, and other predictable delays.

Identifying potential threats. For EPs, this includes ambushes, attacks, and embarrassing situations. For the mere mortal, it means identifying and avoiding unnecessary risks. As an example, I live in earthquake country. I know where chemical plants are near me and know how to avoid them if necessary. Identifying dangerous parking lots or low light situations is another example of this.

Surveillance detection. Detecting a tail may be a life or death situation for the principal of an EP. For you and me, it may not be life or death, but it is still a smart thing to do. You may have accidentally cut off a driver who got laid off, lost his dog, and who's wife left him that day and not even realize it. I have a handful of turns between the interstate and my house. If anyone follows me for more than 2 of these turns, I turn early or late to see if they keep following me. I've pre-identified routes that I can take that only add 30-60 seconds to my drive.

Thankfully, since I don't have any clear and present threats, this discipline will hopefully never protect my family from a violent attack. That being said, the cost of developing it over the last few years is basically

non-existent. If I ever do NEED the skill, I won't have to learn it under stress and I will have had years of daily experience practicing it.

I will say this, though. Being constantly aware of the cars behind me and their behavior DOES have everyday benefits. While I can't be sure of it, I would put money on the fact that my observation skills have

kept me from being rear-ended multiple times. I've pulled off to the side of the road multiple times when I've had to stop suddenly and I knew, from watching, that the person behind me was not paying attention to the road.

Alter your route and timing. High risk targets and protection details for high risk targets do everything they can to keep from having their movements be

predictable. At the most basic level, this means changing when and how you go to & from work and other regular appointments. Even if you're not a high risk target, you might want to try different time & route combinations for your regular trips so that you can become more aware of your area and to see if there isn't a quicker combination. AT LEAST become aware of your habits and the things you would change if you needed to become unpredictable.

Overpasses. This one has personal significance for me. In many African, Central American, and South American countries, bandits will throw logs, cinder blocks, and tree trunks off of overpasses to disable vehicles so that they can rob or kidnap the occupants. This happened to a very good friend of mine in Mexico City when we were in college.

Her mom, brother, and her were on their way home from the airport at night when her brother (driving) saw a couple of kids throwing a tree trunk off of an overpass they were about to go under. There wasn't really any time to react, but he did manage to swerve and have the tree trunk hit the side of their Jeep rather than the front. It blew their tire and they drove on the flat and then the rim, destroying the rim, until they got to help. They didn't get hurt, but another mom and daughter got killed later that night on the same road.



to use at restaurants. When we go out of town, we hardly tell anyone...and when we DO tell people that we're going out of town, we do it in private. And, we don't talk about what we own. This makes for some awkward situations with overly curious people, but I've learned to accept that.

A good friend of mine has had the opportunity to do some VERY impressive things, both in the civilian sector and in the military. He's accomplished things in both arenas that make him a ripe target for all sorts of bad guys. When his family goes on vacation, they not only use a different last name, but he also says that he's a history professor at the local community college. That shuts off conversations with the majority of people who don't like discussing history and provides great conversation with those few who DO like discussing history.

You're going to have to figure out how open or covert you want to live...and then accept the fact that it's incredibly difficult to be both social and covert. Family and friends who you talk with in confidence may or may not understand your desire to stay covert. Even if they do, the passage of time tends to make people think, in error, that things that you once told them in secret are now open to the public.

Keep loved ones on your weak side. When guarding a principal, bodyguards keep their principal on their weak side so that they can push/pull them to cover AND use their primary weapon. When I walk with my wife, she's always on my left hand side. When I carry either of my sons, it's with my left arm. If we're all together, my wife knows that if something happens, her job is to get our boys to safety and it's my job to distract, defend against, and/or destroy anyone trying to hurt them.

Spare food & hydration.

In addition to the general guidelines mentioned above, here are some location/situation specific guidelines that EP professionals use that you can implement immediately.

Around The House.

When returning home, do a quick check to make sure that your "castle" hasn't become someone else's "castle" while you were gone. Are any lights/windows broken? Are multiple security lights suddenly malfunctioning? Are pets responding normally? Is your door locked? Does your alarm beep like it should when you open your door?

As a quick note, during "normal" times, if you know that an intruder is in your house, your best course of action is to call 911 and retreat to somewhere where you can provide updates, descriptions, and take pictures.



On this topic, are your firearms secured so that an intruder won't be able to find them and use them on you? If you don't carry weapons, do you know where traditional and improvised weapons are near your door?

I LOVE fire extinguishers. Quoting Clint Smith, "Spray them with the white stuff and hit them with the red thingy." Do you have plenty of metal fire extinguishers?

New fancy compact fire extinguishers have their place, but it's hard to beat the versatility of a big old metal fire extinguisher.

What is normal? Observe what normal is...for your neighbors, for your neighborhood. Cars, coming & going, etc. It will not only alert you to people and events that are out of the ordinary, but it will also help you get to know your neighbors better. You'll quickly see who's social, who races off every morning with a scowl on their face, who always waves and has a smile, etc. You'll also see who notices you and who is oblivious to the world and completely un-aware.

In your car.

Proper reaction gap. Everyone knows that you should keep a 2 second gap between you and the car in

front strap and I know how that feels. If my hand is wrapped around the grip too much or not enough, I know what I need to do without looking to correct my grip.

Besides acquiring a bad grip during your draw stroke, one of the most common corrections that you'll need to make if you've got shorter fingers is during the process of reloading. On a semi auto with a thumb side mag release, most people can't touch the mag release button with their thumb when they have a proper grip on the firearm.

To fix this problem, people generally "cant" their firearm or rotate it in their grip so that their thumb can reach the mag release button. At some point between when you depress the mag release button and when you get ready for your next shot, you're going to need to reacquire a proper grip. Most people do this without thinking and have poor muzzle discipline during the procedure. I want you to focus on making these changes in your grip while maintaining proper muzzle discipline.

Take a couple of minutes and move the gun back and forth between a good grip and a grip that needs to be fixed. Make sure that you maintain proper muzzle discipline. Specifically, work on your response when you find yourself grabbing the firearm in the following ways:

1. Too low of a grip.
2. Too high of a grip.
3. Web of your hand away from the grip.
4. Bottom of your grip away from the butt of the grip.
5. Two handed grip with your support thumb on top of your shooting thumb. (Leads to a "snakebite" or two slices across the top of your support thumb when your slide flies back during recoil.)
6. Firearm turned too far clockwise.
7. Firearm turned too far counterclockwise.



After you have gotten comfortable with the difference between the feel of a good grip and a bad grip, grab your firearm a few times while looking at it and then look away or with your eyes shut. Finally, following the dry fire safety rules, lay your firearm down on a table or the ground within arm's reach, shut your eyes, grab it and pick it up 20 times in a row. Each time you pick it up, evaluate whether or not you are holding it correctly. If not, identify what's wrong and adjust it until it feels perfect, open your eyes to confirm, then set it back down.

You'll want to get similarly familiar with any weapons that you might use for self-defense. For now, let your brain focus on training with one particular firearm until the grooves in your memory are worn deep.

Trigger Press

The next skill we're going to go over is a smooth trigger pull/press. Visually and physically confirm (again) that the firearm is unloaded. Then bring the empty firearm up and aim it at something you don't mind destroying and slowly pull the trigger straight back...the smaller and more precise, the better. Your trigger finger shouldn't squeeze like you're making a fist or push off to the side—It should press straight back. You should keep aiming as you pull the trigger and your aim should never come off of the intended target, even when the trigger breaks and the firing pin is released to strike the primer on your bullet. You should press the trigger slowly enough that you don't know when the release will happen.

As you continue to practice keeping your sights lined up all the way through the trigger press, you'll be able to speed up your trigger press without any impact on your accuracy. In general, don't press the trigger so fast that your sight alignment gets messed up, but keep trying to squeeze the trigger faster.

Re-rack the slide on your firearm between dry fires (while maintaining muzzle discipline) and practice

your trigger press 10 times. Specifically, you're trying to condition your mind to do three things with this drill: Aim all the way through the trigger press. Squeeze the trigger instead of jerking it. Keep the firearm aimed at your intended target instead of trying to compensate for recoil by pushing the point of aim down.

While practicing this, it's very common to notice something that you never noticed while shooting live fire—a sticky or jerky trigger. This can make a smooth trigger press much more difficult, and it is a good sign that you need to clean and lubricate your firearm.

Do repeat sets of 10 until you can keep your sights on target all the way through your trigger press for all 10 repetitions, then try this fun training technique:

Pick a target that is roughly at the same height as your eyes, aim at it with your firearm and lay the coin on the front sight (this may not be possible on all pistols) and pull the trigger. Your trigger squeeze should be so smooth that the coin stays on the front sight and doesn't fall off as you're squeezing the trigger. The release of the hammer may vibrate the coin off. That's out of your control and OK.

Follow through. Now we're going to add on follow through. As you're dry firing, think about getting a proper sight picture, firing, and then following through by getting the proper sight picture again as quickly as possible. You won't have recoil to worry about when dry firing, so your sight picture should stay constant, but this is a good time to repeat the refrain, "sight picture, trigger press, sight picture."

If you're fuzzy on what a "sight picture" is, it's what you see as you're looking at a target when you have your firearm lined up for a perfect shot. Generally, this means having the front sight perfectly centered between the rear sights, front and rear sights lined up vertically, and the intended target immediately over the top of the front sight.

Practice dry firing 10 times focusing on reacquiring your sights immediately after the trigger breaks.

Repeat this drill until you can quickly reacquire your sights after pressing the trigger, then move on.

Trigger reset. After you discharge a firearm, the trigger only needs to go forward until the sear re-engages for the next shot. On double action pistols, this may be ½ the distance that your finger traveled for the first shot, or less. If your trigger or your finger travels further forward after a shot than the point where the sear re-engages, it's called "over travel" and it's not good.

Over travel leads to inconsistent follow-up shots. From now on, unless you're shooting the last repetition of a set, every time you dry fire, keep the trigger pressed until you have racked the slide. Then slowly let the trigger go forward until you feel/hear the click of the sear re-engaging and immediately press for your next shot. Mastering trigger reset is absolutely VITAL to being able to put multiple rounds on target quickly and your sequence will become:

Sight picture, trigger press, sight picture (follow through), trigger reset, trigger press

The combination of follow-through and trigger reset will help you get on target MUCH faster for controlled pairs and other multiple shot strings. Practice dry firing 20 times, putting together the entire sequence. Go only as fast as you can without compromising your form:

Sight picture, trigger press, sight picture, trigger reset, trigger press

Bringing your firearm up into your line of sight.

You should practice this drill using both one and two hands.

When you can pull the trigger smoothly and consistently, it's time to move on. When you're shooting at a range, you'll see people go through all sorts of contortions with their heads while they're shooting trying to get their eye lined up with the sights on their firearms.

In a violent force encounter, your focus will normally be drawn to what your brain interprets as the most

not acting like you're on edge all of the time. Just try to look as lost and confused as everyone around you. If a situation arises where you need to let someone know that you're "switched on," then that is still easy to switch into that mode.

Cover for status is also an important tool for identifying threats. Who doesn't belong? Does the kid with the droopy pants and the puffy coat and the crooked ball cap smoking in front of the 7-11 at noon on July 4th fit in? Or is there a possibility that he's looking for a victim?

"Cover for action" could be called the twin sister of "cover for status." Cover for action is having your appearance match your actions. Climb a utility pole with shorts and a t-shirt on, and someone will probably call the cops. Get out of a utility van wearing jeans, work boots, a tool belt, hard hat, and climbing gear and nobody will even remember seeing you climb the pole.

Ask someone their date of birth, social security number, sexual habits, and other private medical questions in a mall, and you'll get slapped. Put on a nametag and hand someone a detailed survey on a clipboard with a 10c bic pen tied to it in a doctor's office and they'll tell you more than you REALLY want to know.

If you notice people who don't have a cover for their actions, take it as a sign to pay closer attention to them.

Funnels and Channels. Funnels and channels are areas that restrict or control movement and make movement controllable and/or predictable. They're something that you HOPE your enemy will go into if you're trying to attack or ambush them. In the insect world, it's where many cunning spiders spin their webs. In the mouse world, funnels and channels are normally where we set traps in hopes of having the greatest chances of success.

Executive protection specialists try to avoid funnels and channels with high risk principals as much as possible. Some examples are construction zones, underpasses, roads where traffic stops for trains, long hallways in malls, alleyways, gates into parking lots at night, or even walkways to your house.

Unless you consider yourself a high risk target, you probably don't need to worry about being the specific target of an attack. But this plays out in helping you keep from being a target of opportunity. The practice of identifying funnels and channels combined with identifying multiple exits can make a speedy exit MUCH faster as well.

Movie theaters are an example of this concept that most people can relate to. Normally, when the movie is done in a medium to large theater, everyone gets up and slowly waddles down the stairs and out one of two exits. The rows of seats create channels that funnel everyone to the isles, funnel everyone down the stairs, and funnel everyone back along the outside walls and back together to exit a common door.

If you've got to go to the bathroom, you know how agonizingly slow this can be.

But EVERY theater also has additional marked exits that people could go out. At the front of the theater, at the back of the theater upstairs, or sometimes along the walls. These exits fight against the channeling and funneling that the aisles are trying to accomplish and let a few rebels get out quickly and efficiently.

By simply identifying these additional exits in advance, you can avoid unnecessary waiting during normal times and they could make the difference between surviving and dying after a fire, explosion, or natural disaster.

Where else does this play out? Malls, churches, sporting events, offices, or anywhere else where large groups of people might have a planned or unplanned incentive to move at the same time.

Give as few (accurate) details as possible. Details help predators identify targets, opportunities, and the best times to strike. For executive protection specialists, you can increase your safety level considerably by keeping your day's itinerary and other plans as secret as possible.

The same holds true for individuals, but this is a TOUGH one for social people. We don't tell people where we live, unless we've invited them over. I rarely use my last name. Oftentimes, we make up a name

our family, this means that I have stocked our cars with extra clothes for myself, my wife, and our kids. It's nothing fancy...but it's in place.

Redundancy and contingency plans: Redundancy and contingency planning are key principals, whether you're doing executive planning, running a company or key project, doing activities in the back country, or just day to day life. Here are some specific areas that executive protection specialists focus on that you can benefit from.

1. Contingency meetup plans. As an example, "If we get split up, we'll come back to this location every top-of-the-hour and half-hour and stay here for 5 minutes. If we don't meet up after 3 hours, we'll meet at home."

Or, "If an earthquake or similar event happens and we don't have communications, I'll pick up our son from school and we'll all meet at home. If neither of us can get home or it's untenable, we'll post a note if possible and meet at Joe's house. If that's untenable, we'll post a note if possible and meet at church.

2. Contingent communications plans. These could be cell phones, radios, whistles, or "If local phone service goes down, we'll both get in touch with your sister (in another part of the country) by all means possible (phone, voice mail, text, email) and use her to get back in touch with each other.

3. Have Primary, Alternate, Contingent, and Emergency (PACE) routes to your destination.

4. Have PACE plans for medical care. I know where the hospitals are in my city. I also know where private surgical centers are, veterinarians, fire departments (Paramedics), veterinary supply stores, EMT supply stores, and basic drug stores like Walgreens...particularly in the parts of the city where I spend the most time.

When I travel to other cities, I spend about 5-10 minutes before I leave and find where these resources are located near where I'm going to be. I probably should memorize addresses, and phone numbers and/or write everything down like I would on a protective detail, but simply having a picture in my mind of where facilities are puts me WAY ahead of the curve.

On the topic of medical care, EPs who have medical and especially advanced trauma training are in higher demand and get paid more. Likewise, get all of the medical training you can justify and keep the supplies you need close at hand.



I don't spend a ton of time on this. As I've gotten older, I've found that the simpler I keep my habits, the more likely I am to keep them as active habits.

Match the baseline. Everywhere you spend time has a "normal" or "baseline" look. Taking on this look

is called, "becoming the 'grey' man" and the discipline is called "cover for status." At a dress ball, it may be formal wear. At the beach, bikinis, Speedos, and other swim attire are the norm. At a park in the summer, it might be shorts and light weight shirts. At that same park in the winter, it might be heavy coats, hats, and gloves. Wear any of these four outfits at any of the other three settings and you'll stick out like a sore thumb.

As a note, this can happen in a situation where you have to stop at a gas station on the way to a formal event, which, is another reason to plan ahead as often as possible.

In executive protections, there are basically two ways that you can go...overt and covert. Said another way, either look intimidating or look invisible by matching the baseline.

As a bodyguard for yourself or your family, it's normally better to be the grey man and stay invisible. You can do this by not wearing excessive tactical clothing, using your peripheral vision to scan the room, and

serious threat. In addition, as your pulse rate shoots up, your vision will go from being able to see everything in front of you to tunnel vision—similar to what it would look like if you had an empty paper towel cylinder up to your eye.

We want to take advantage of this tendency instead of fight it, so we want to train our mind to bring our firearm up so that our sights will be in our line of sight rather than forcing our head and eyes to line up with our sights.

Put another way, let's say that you're holding your firearm at your side and you spot a target. At this point, your head can freeze. You don't need to move your head at all from the instant of threat recognition until you have completed your trigger press and follow through. Simply bring up your firearm and adjust the firearm as necessary so that your sights are in line between your eyes and your intended target. You're already familiar with this concept from using a punching motion to find your natural grip.

What you need to do to develop this is to stand with your firearm at your side or sit with your firearm on your lap or on a table and repeatedly pick out a target and bring your firearm up so that the sights line up between your eye and your target.

There are 4 variations to this drill:

Primary hand, single handed
Primary hand, with support
Support hand, single handed
Support hand, with support

Repeat this drill at least 20 times with your primary hand both single handed and with support before moving on. Initially, either focus completely on your primary hand or spend twice as much time on your primary hand as your support hand. In an ideal world, you would have enough time to become equally proficient with both hands. If that's the case for you, then split your training time evenly.

Aiming With Your Eyes Shut.

You should do this drill using one or two hands.

This drill helps strengthen the mind-muscle connection to lock in your natural point of aim so that it's the same as the point where you're focusing your eyes.

With your firearm at your side, look at the target that you were using on the last drill. Now, shut your eyes, bring up your firearm until you think it is aiming at your target and open your eyes to confirm. Adjust your firearm as necessary so that it's aimed correctly and take note of how everything feels and repeat the drill.

You'll find that this is much easier if you keep your firearm close to your body as you raise it up and "punch" it straight out rather than swinging it up in an arc. Coincidentally, this is also the most "efficient" way to raise a firearm and the method used by people who regularly use firearms in lethal force encounters.

This drill may take a few sessions to master, but once you do, you'll notice a dramatic improvement in your ability to engage targets quickly.

This particular drill is very valuable for several reasons. The first of which is that you may find your sights broken or obscured at some point when you NEED to fire. If you know that your natural point of aim will put rounds on target, you will be less likely to hesitate.

Second, despite repeatedly training to aim with their sights, there are numerous stories of law enforcement who shot attackers and don't remember seeing their sights...they only remember seeing the barrel of the gun pointed at them by an attacker and the biggest fire they've ever seen coming out of the end, and firing back. By training so that when you raise your weapon, your sights naturally come into alignment with your eyes and your target, you're more likely to be able to put rounds on target under extreme stress.

From a self defense standpoint, there's an even more important reason for training bringing your firearm

up to your line of sight rather than moving your eyes so they line up with your firearm.

In “Sharpening the Warrior’s Edge” Bruce Siddle goes into detail about how your ability to focus on close up objects diminishes with high pulse rates induced by stress. Focusing the eye is a function of the parasympathetic nervous system and it works very well normally. Once stress levels and pulse rates go up, your body switches over to the sympathetic nervous system. This happens somewhere between 145 and 175 beats per second. Unfortunately, the sympathetic nervous system isn’t very good at details like focusing on objects close to you...like your sights.

So, if you practice bringing your firearm up into your line of sight and train to find your natural point of aim, you’ll be much more likely to be able to get off accurate shots under extreme stress when you may or may not be able to focus. This is important, both because you want to be able to stop violent threats as efficiently as possible and because you are responsible for every round that you fire.



There are 4 variations to this drill:
Primary hand, single handed
Primary hand, with support
Support hand, single handed
Support hand, with support
Repeat this drill at least 20 times with your primary hand both single handed and with support before moving on.

3 “Position” Draw Stroke

This draw stroke is sometimes called the 3 position draw stroke, 4 position draw stroke, 3 part drawstroke, or 4 part drawstroke. The confusion comes from the fact that there are different naming systems for the same drawstroke.

1. “Holster” -- Firearm holstered, hand off of the firearm.

2. “Grip” – Firearm holstered, correct grip on firearm.
3. “Position 1” – Firearm just clearing the holster.
4. “Position 2” – Body square to your target, firearm at chest level, tilted outward with the butt of the firearm against your chest. This is where you disengage and reengage your safety, if you have one.

Without a firearm in your hand, you would be making a fist with your palm up against the side of your chest like you would if you were preparing to throw a “formal” martial arts punch. If you were to fire the firearm from this position, the slide would not hit your chest like it would if the firearm was straight up and down. Conceptually, you should have your firearm aimed at your target from this point on, so that you can fire at any time and make solid hits on your target.

There is debate on what to do with your support hand at this step. The two big schools of thought are 1. To grab the center of your shirt and pull or 2. Hold your hand up near your face in a defensive position, since it’s likely that you’ll be drawing after being startled and that’s where your hand will go during a normal startle response anyhow.

5. “Position 3” – Firearm is pushed out into firing position with the sights on your firearm coming into alignment between your eyes and your target. The motion from Position 2 to Position 3 is a simple punch.

There’s also debate on whether to hold your support hand in front of your chest to “catch” your firearm as it’s moving forward or to have it follow behind and “catch-up” between position 2 and position 3. Personally, I am a fan of “catching up” or just shooting one handed, but the experts that I’ve trained under are split down the middle on which technique is better.

com. You’ll have the option of viewing your house as a map or as an overhead picture. Choose the overhead picture option, zoom in to the 2nd or 3rd highest setting, and print it out.

You might need the help of someone who knows some computer trickery to make this happen. Since you can’t print satellite images from Google, you have to do a screen capture (Prnt Scrn), copy it into a word processor or graphics program, change it into landscape mode, and THEN print it out. It will look better if you have a color printer, but I print out on black and white and it’s definitely usable.

If you don’t want to go to the trouble of figuring out this method, you can simply take a piece of paper and a pencil and draw out your house and the houses around you. It doesn’t need to be fancy...the whole purpose of this is to train your brain.

Next, mark every place on the map that you can see from a door or window from your house. This will end up being a series of overlapping arcs. I like to shade this area in. The reason this is important is because anyone who wants to see a door or window on your house will have to be in this shaded area. From an executive protection standpoint, it means that anyone who wants to surveil or cause harm to the principal will need to be within these arcs.

The way that I use this information is that I look at our house through the eyes of a burglar or home invader. Where would I need to be to have a clear view into the house? Where would I need to be to see when the occupants are turning off lights to go to bed? Where would I need to be to see which occupants are coming and going? Where would I need to be to see whether or not they lock the door or set an alarm when they leave?

Then, if I see people in those places that I don’t recognize, I immediately take note of them. I don’t panic or get freaked out. I just take note of them. I regularly write down license plate numbers or discretely snap pictures with my phone. If they’re sitting in their car on either side of the street in front of my house, I’ll drive or walk up to them and ask them if I can help them.

Please understand, I don’t have any specific threats that I’m concerned about. I’m just aware that home invasions happen 8 times more often than house fires and I want to protect my family. I don’t invest much time or effort in doing this, but I have the peace of mind of knowing what’s going on around me and any strangers in front of our house know that they’ve been seen, acknowledged, and could probably be identified in a lineup if they decided to do anything stupid.

When dealing with predators who are simply looking for easy prey, being acknowledged is oftentimes enough to cause them to move on to another area.

Another example, is spotting someone sitting in a van right next to your car in a parking lot. I’ve helped film scenarios built around this and we found that a lone man could easily shove a lady into a van, incapacitate her, shut the door, restrain her with pre-cut duct tape or zip ties, get in the driver’s seat, and drive off inconspicuously in under 15 seconds.

So, if you’ve got a situation where you find a “creepy” person or people in a van next to your car, you can walk on by and approach from a different angle to see if you get a better feeling, get in your car from the other side, or, if possible, ask security to walk you to your car.

Alternate Exits: This is a simple one, but vital for executive protection specialists. When you go anywhere, always try to quickly pick out multiple conventional (doors) and unconventional (windows) exits. In the movie, “Fireproof”, Kirk Cameron’s character finds himself trapped in a burning house and hacks through the floor and crawls out through the crawlspace to escape. It’s not important that you don’t walk around with an axe to hack through floors—what’s important is to train your mind to see egress possibilities around you.

The reason for exiting could be a gas leak, accidental explosion, terrorist attack, fire, earthquake, robbery, active shooter, or simply avoiding someone who might cause an unnecessary confrontation.

Weather planning: A good executive protection specialist will not only take care of their own needs for inclement weather, but their principal’s as well. For

Lessons from EP

Written by Dr. Leonard M. Breure, PhD

After my first son was born, it struck me JUST how important my role as a protector was. When it was just my wife and me, I knew she could handle herself with or without weapons. But when our tiny, innocent son was born, my need to be able to protect my family went through the roof.

As a result, in addition to other empty hands and firearms training, I went through 70+ hours of formal executive protection training that helped refine my skills as a protector, a planner, and as a prepper.

If you're not familiar with "executive protection," it is another term for bodyguard, except that bodyguards are traditionally hired "by the pound" and executive protection specialists have skills and training WAY beyond simply throwing their weight around. The use of the phrase "executive protection" became popular in 1970 when the White House Police Force was renamed the Executive Protection Services. When they again changed their name to "Secret Service Uniformed Division" in 1977, the phrase "executive protection" went into wide use in the civilian sector.

There is a huge overlap between the disciplines of executive protection and preparedness. In fact, the job of a skilled EP (executive protection specialist) is 95-99% preparation and only 1-5% reaction. There are several lessons that have been paid for with the blood of others that we can benefit from... not only after a disaster when we're in survival mode, but tomorrow when going to work, the store, or to see a friend.

Most of the proponents of "be your own bodyguard" are only interested in fighting, but the best professional bodyguards plan for, identify, and avoid trouble more often than they "go loud" and have to use violence or lethal force to protect their subject.

One of the best examples of this is the US Secret Service. President G.W. Bush received approximately 3000 threats per year during his presidency. President Obama received about 30 per day or 11,000 per year initially, but quickly dropped back down to "normal"

levels. With all of the threats, credible threats, and planned attempts that have been made on our leaders, the last one that was semi-successfully pulled off was in 1981. (I'm not counting the airplane or rifle "attacks" on the White House as being even semi-successful)

To continue that example, we're not going to focus on the handful of times that Secret Service had to go loud and eliminate the threat of a potential assassin... we're going to focus instead on what they did the other 60,000 times to keep our presidents safe. Specifically, we're going to focus on the skills and thought processes that the Secret Service and executive protection specialists use to avoid trouble for them and their subjects/protectees/principals.

Fortunately, most aspects of executive protection are not very complicated. They become complicated by the sheer number of simple things that executive protection specialists must do right. The sooner you start practicing a few of these skills and disciplines, the better you will be at them and the quicker you'll be able to add on additional ones.



You will have one HUGE advantage over executive protection specialists—when they go on the job, it's normally because their principal either has an active threat against them, or because they have a high profile and are a good target. When you go "on the job," it's to protect yourself or the ones you love. There's no immediate threat, and you get to learn on the job.

With that, let's look at some of the practices that bodyguards do to keep their principals from being attacked.

One of the things that bodyguards do is to look at places where they know their principal will be and find the best spots to do surveillance and/or attack from.

Let's take your home as an example. If you can, pull up an overhead shot of your house from maps.google-

DRY FIRE THE FASTEST WAY TO LOCK IN FIREARMS SKILL

In general, if you are in a situation where you are in control of your pulse, such as in competition or a combat veteran, it's better to use 2 hands and the "catch" method will allow you to put rounds on target more accurately and quickly. If, on the other hand, you're training to defend yourself in what will be your first—or one of your first—lethal force encounters, you're better off training to "catch up" to minimize the chance of shooting your support hand.

Practice going through the following sequence 10 times using only your strong hand:

Holster, Grip, Position 1, Position 2, Holster -- Pay attention to your grip, that your firearm is pointed towards your target in position 2, and that you can holster your firearm without looking at your holster.

We're starting to stack multiple muscle sequences on top of one another and it's VITAL that you only go fast enough that you can repeat these techniques smoothly, efficiently, and exactly the same way every time. If you're getting flustered or messing up, S L O W down. You'll develop speed more quickly by becoming efficient than you will by moving fast.

Repeat if you're not smooth and efficient, otherwise, go through the following sequence 10 times using only your strong hand:

Holster, Grip, Position 2, Safety off, Position 3, Position 2, Safety on, Holster.

Repeat if you're not smooth and efficient, otherwise go through the following sequence 10 times using only your strong hand:

Holster, Grip, Position 2, Safety off, Position 3, Trigger press, Rack the slide, Position 2, Safety on, Holster.

Variations on this that you'll want to practice are:

Strong hand only.
Strong hand with support.
Support hand only. (I don't practice drawing with my support hand and then using a 2 handed grip because I would use my strong hand to draw unless it was injured. If it was injured, it's not likely that I could use it for support.)

Drawing From Concealment

You may be fortunate, like me, to have a range that allows you to draw from concealment. As they've gotten to know me and my gun handling discipline, they'll even put me on an end lane and let me use an ankle

holster or shoulder holster. Most people aren't so fortunate, and even if you are, dry fire practice will make your draw much more efficient, smooth, and fast.

This is a very important skill to practice with dry fire because of the likelihood that you'll end up with a cover garment pulling your trigger as you reholster. It's also extremely likely that you may point the firearm at yourself at some point during your presentation.

I practice dry fire from concealment at my office 3-5 times a week with whatever I happen to be wearing at the time. It's important that you practice this with as much of your wardrobe as possible so you can see which techniques will work best with all of your clothes. As an example, my shirts clear differently based on how heavy they are, how long they are, and how tight they are. I've developed a one handed stroke to clear my cover garment, clear my holster, and present my firearm with the clothing that I wear on a daily basis. Most importantly, I test and confirm that it works hundreds of times a month.

Personally, I carry on my strong side hip, inside the waistband. What I do is draw my hand back along my body, clearing any cover garments, if I'm wearing one. Next, I hook my thumb up under my shirt(s) behind the butt of my firearm, move my hand forward



over my firearm, and push my hand down as I grip the firearm and then pull it clear of the holster. The downward “push” helps me get a consistent grip on the firearm, and the muscle memory is transferrable when I’m carrying in a Serpa holster, which requires a downward push to release the retention.

****Sometimes my shirt tail or coat gets stuck between my hand and the grip on my sidearm and I’ve found that I can push the firearm forward to remove the shirt. As a note, if there’s any chance that your shirt could get inside your trigger guard as you re-holster with your method of carry, you need to figure out another technique for re-holstering. All of my holsters cover my trigger and thousands of dry fire repetitions have proven to me that this is a safe and effective option for me. It may not be for you.****

Your draw stroke is going to be somewhat different depending on how you carry. In waist band (un-tucked), in waist band (tucked), 3:00 carry, appendix carry, crotch carry, cross draw, compression shirt, belly band, ankle holster, shoulder rig, purse carry, and in the pocket all require slightly different techniques, but here are the common elements:

- 1. Clear your cover garment.**
- 2. Acquire your grip.**
- 3. Clear your holster and continue with the 3 part draw stroke.**

If you intend to carry concealed, go through the following sequence 10 times:

Clear your cover garment, Grip, Position 2, Safety off, Position 3, Trigger press, Rack the slide, Position 2, Safety on, Holster (This simply adds clearing your garment to the sequence.)

Here are 9 other dry fire drills that you should do if you intend on eventually using the skills with live fire. We’ll go into more detail on these in my upcoming book:

- 1. Emergency and tactical reloads.**
- 2. Malfunction drills.**
- 3. Single handed reloads (using your primary and secondary hand...both emergency and tactical).**
- 4. Drawing and firing with the gloves that you normally wear (if you’re in a cold climate).**
- 5. Drawing and firing with your coat on.** You may very well determine that your draw from under your coat takes so long that your only reasonable action is to find cover before attempting it. If this is the case, incorporate finding cover into your dry fire practice.
- 6. Drawing and firing after being knocked down** (lay on the ground and practice drawing, aiming and firing from all orientations.) I’ve even started scenarios laying on the ground with a door laying on top of me to simulate someone kicking a door in/down.
- 7. Drawing and possibly firing while moving for cover.** Don’t move extra slow, simply so that you can fire a shot before you get to cover. If you need to get to cover, get to cover...if you have time to shoot before you get there, fine. If not, get to cover and then pop out to shoot around your cover.
- 8. Work with a flashlight.** Including identifying targets, acquiring your sights in the dark, and knowing what in the heck to do with the flashlight during malfunctions, and reloads.
- 9. Draw and aim your firearm while in your garage, sitting in your car.** It should be obvious, but do not do this if there’s a possibility that your neighbors will see you.

And here are some advanced drills that you can do:

- 1. Put your hands in ice water, snow, or**

salty ice water for as long as you can take it...30 seconds if you have arthritis up to 2 minutes, and then go through your drills. It’s your choice on whether to dry your hands off or not.

2. Do calisthenics/workout until you’re out of breath and then do your drills. If you notice that you’re a little shaky and your fine motor skills aren’t working quite right, go through your drills then. You won’t be able to simulate the exact fight or flight response, but you can inoculate your brain to many aspects of it by doing firearms training when you are out of breath and or when your muscles aren’t responding the way you expect. This may cause you to simplify your techniques considerably.

3. Video tape your technique and analyze it. Most new digital cameras have a video feature that you can use for this, or you can even use a \$10-\$20 web cam if the frame rate is smooth enough. As you analyze yourself, look for wasted motion. Try going through your drills at ½ speed and playing back at 2x speed.

4. Practice malfunction drills with snap caps. (plastic shells that are the same size as real ammo that will cycle through your firearm) Practice failure to return to battery, slide lock malfunction, double feeds, and stovepipes if you’re using a 1911.

5. With a partner, have them stand to the side while you press the trigger. While remaining aimed at the target, have your partner grab the slide of your gun and forcibly rack it backwards with approximately the same force as

you’d get with a real discharge. Practice trigger reset, managing the recoil and reacquiring your sights as quickly as possible. If you have snap caps, you can also do malfunction drills and reloads using this technique.

6. Dry fire training time is also the perfect time to practice keeping your sights on target while moving. The most accurate description that I’ve seen for this technique is calling it a “duck walk.” In short, stand like you’re going to start walking forward, drop your center of gravity about 6 inches and then move forward keeping your waist at exactly the same height. Put another way, bend your knees so that your belt buckle drops 6 inches and then keep it at that height as you walk.

Imagine that you’ve got a rail running through your belly button towards your target that is straight as an arrow. The rail doesn’t go up or down or right or left...it simply goes straight and your belly button needs to follow it.

This will give you a stable, consistent shooting platform so that you can aim, make accurate follow-up shots, and even make precision shots with enough practice while moving.

Another way to practice your duck walk is to do it while holding a video camera instead of your firearm. Ideally, your technique will be so smooth that your video looks like you’re simply zooming in with no bounce or waving back and forth. You can practice it going forward, backwards, side to side, or even going up & down stairs.

Next month, we’ll cover using airsoft to put your dry fire training on steroids!