



SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

6 EASY STEPS TO AVOID DANGER



WATCH YOUR SIX:

IMPROVE YOUR SITUATIONAL AWARENESS IN 6 EASY STEPS

The most important aspect of being a responsibly armed American is practicing good situational awareness. This means actively engaging in viewing your surroundings—you need to be making decisions, not just letting things happen. Here are the six basic elements to help you observe and avoid potential danger. By using these elements of situational awareness, you will reduce the chances that you will ever be involved in a deadly force encounter.

1

GOLDEN RULE

*DON'T GO ANYWHERE WITH YOUR GUN YOU WOULDN'T
GO WITHOUT YOUR GUN*

2

DITCH THE TECH

STAY OFF THE PHONE

3

STAY ALERT

NOTICE WHO NOTICES YOU

4

PARK IN WELL-LIT AREAS

AVOID DARK PARKING AREAS

5

DON'T TAKE SHORTCUTS

STAY THE COURSE

6

USE YOUR SURROUNDINGS

YOUR ENVIRONMENT CAN AID IN YOUR DEFENSE.



1

GOLDEN RULE:

*DON'T GO ANYWHERE WITH
YOUR GUN YOU WOULDN'T
GO WITHOUT YOUR GUN*

Being a responsibly armed American means being just that—responsible. Carrying a gun does not make you a superhero and it does not make you a vigilante. It makes you an individual who is better prepared to deal with a deadly force encounter when you have no other option than to defend yourself or your loved ones. If you know the area and know places you should avoid, avoid them. The hair on the back of your neck never lies...if you feel like you might be in danger, you probably are. Yes, you may have every right to travel anywhere you wish—but when doing so could put you in danger, the best course of action is to avoid dangerous areas altogether. If you are forced into a dangerous area because of your job or some other real and important reason, then you need to be extra vigilant. Don't go looking for trouble. Never start thinking that just because you have a gun you will be OK.



2

DITCH THE TECH

STAY OFF THE PHONE

Stay off the phone! Activities like wearing earbuds or headphones, sending or reading texts, or talking on the phone show that you're not paying attention to anything else around you and therefore make you a prime target for predators. Don't live in Condition White. (See an explanation of the Cooper Color Codes below.) Always be monitoring your surroundings and make sure you see what is moving into and out of your personal space. Pay attention to new areas you're entering, and keep an eye out for identifiers of violence such as gang graffiti or packs of young men. Remember to SEE these things and make note of them. Don't just look at them or past them—really see them and think about what they mean. You need to see potential risks in order to avoid them, and you can't do that while your nose is buried in your smart phone.



3

STAY ALERT

*NOTICE WHO
NOTICES YOU*

Violent predators look for an easy meal. Once they see a potential mark, they will likely stalk that mark in order to size up the situation and see if they can move in to strike without being noticed. (See Item 2 above.) The best way to ensure you are not the victim of a sudden assault is to make sure you notice who is noticing you. Has someone taken more than a passing interest in you? Does that person appear to be following you? If you change directions, do they change directions? Do you feel like this person is paying you too much attention? You can keep from looking like a victim by doing the following: Walk firmly and with purpose, ensure that everyone around you understands you are engaged in your surroundings, and make enough eye contact with those who pass to assert that you are paying attention without making so much eye contact as to appear aggressive. If you look like prey, you will be preyed upon. If you take away the element of surprise by noticing who notices you, a predator will move on to another target.



4

PARK IN WELL-LIT AREAS

AVOID DARK AREAS

Many times, victims of a violent attack meet their attacker halfway. Whenever possible, avoid parking in dark or secluded areas—predators prefer to operate in the dark, so you must deny them this advantage. If you are forced to park in a dark or secluded area, this is where your flashlight comes in. Walk with your flashlight in your weak hand, sweeping where you're walking with the light's beam. This will communicate to anyone who can see you that you're not an easy target. Don't be afraid to shine your light into any dark corner or potential hiding space. If a person approaches you, shine your light directly in that person's face. Doing so will give you a tactical advantage. When you're forced to park in a secluded area, back into your parking space. This will not only make a quick exit easier, but many criminals associate a vehicle backed into a parking spot with law enforcement and will likely want nothing to do with you.



5

TAKE THE LONG WAY HOME

STAY THE COURSE

Shortcuts have a nasty tendency to be dark, secluded, and off the beaten path. Predators are opportunistic by nature: what they're counting on is that victims will present themselves as targets by making themselves vulnerable to attack. Like always parking in well-lit areas, making sure you do everything you can to avoid dark and isolated places will do more to prevent an attack than almost anything else. Always remember that the most effective way to deal with violence is to avoid it. You might be in a hurry, but don't think it's reasonable to save time by putting yourself at risk. Remember: it CAN happen to you. There is no need to invite an attack by heading into an area that might be occupied by an attacker.



6

USE WHAT YOU HAVE

STAY THE COURSE

Learn to look at your surroundings like a detective: take everything in and understand its potential. That isn't just a window; it's a way to see into and out of a building or a vehicle, it's a way to get into and out of a building or vehicle, it's a mirror, and it's a source of very small, very sharp pieces of glass. This may sound strange, but once you make the decision to carry concealed, you're entering into a world of extreme consequences and will have to operate accordingly. Everything counts now: you need to make note of every exit, every window, every table and chair. You need to notice whether vehicles in your area are occupied or empty, whether they're running or not. Could the people inside those vehicles help you or hurt you? Does being higher up on a hill allow you to see farther? Could you use a parked car or a park bench as an obstacle, thus slowing an attack, by keeping it between a potential adversary and you? Being in tune with your surroundings and exactly what is happening in your area is of the utmost importance, as is your ability to use those environmental factors to your advantage. Escape routes, sources of cover, and potential dangers are all parts of your environment.



6

COOPER COLOR CODES

STAY THE COURSE

The idea of color codes to describe a person's level of situational awareness was developed by the late Col. Jeff Cooper, considered by many to be the father of modern defensive pistol techniques. Long before it became fashionable, Col. Cooper was teaching people how to avoid confrontations and how to win the confrontations they could not avoid.

WHITE — You are completely oblivious to your surroundings.

YELLOW — You are alert and engaged with your environment.

ORANGE — You have identified something that may be a threat, but you are not in any immediate danger.

RED — You have identified a threat and are now forced to react to it.



Join The USCCA And You'll Get The Education, Training & Self-Defense Insurance You Need To Be The Protector Your Family Is Counting On...

Owning a gun and being ready to protect yourself, your loved ones, and maybe even complete strangers is an **honorable responsibility**.

The fact is, most people aren't willing to do what is necessary to **turn the tables on a violent attacker**. They aren't willing to ask themselves the tough questions. They aren't willing to train themselves to be accurate, effective, and responsible with their guns. And they aren't willing to think about what happens **AFTER** the shooting stops and the smoke clears...

After all, there are hundreds of decisions that need to be made in order to be **fully prepared and fully protected** when using your gun in self-defense.

And that's why the USCCA is here: *To help good, responsible Americans make informed decisions.* We **empower** our members so they know exactly what to do in a life or death situation.

We advise them on what to carry and how to carry it. We help them save money and make the most of their time by training effectively, both at the range and at home.

And we protect them AFTER they pull the trigger in self-defense.

Whether you've been carrying a gun for years or you're just thinking about it, the USCCA is here for you. And thanks to our 365-Day Money-Back Bulletproof Guarantee, you can confidently activate your membership today and take a closer look at what true **peace of mind** looks like...

Be The Protector Your Family Is Counting On...
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