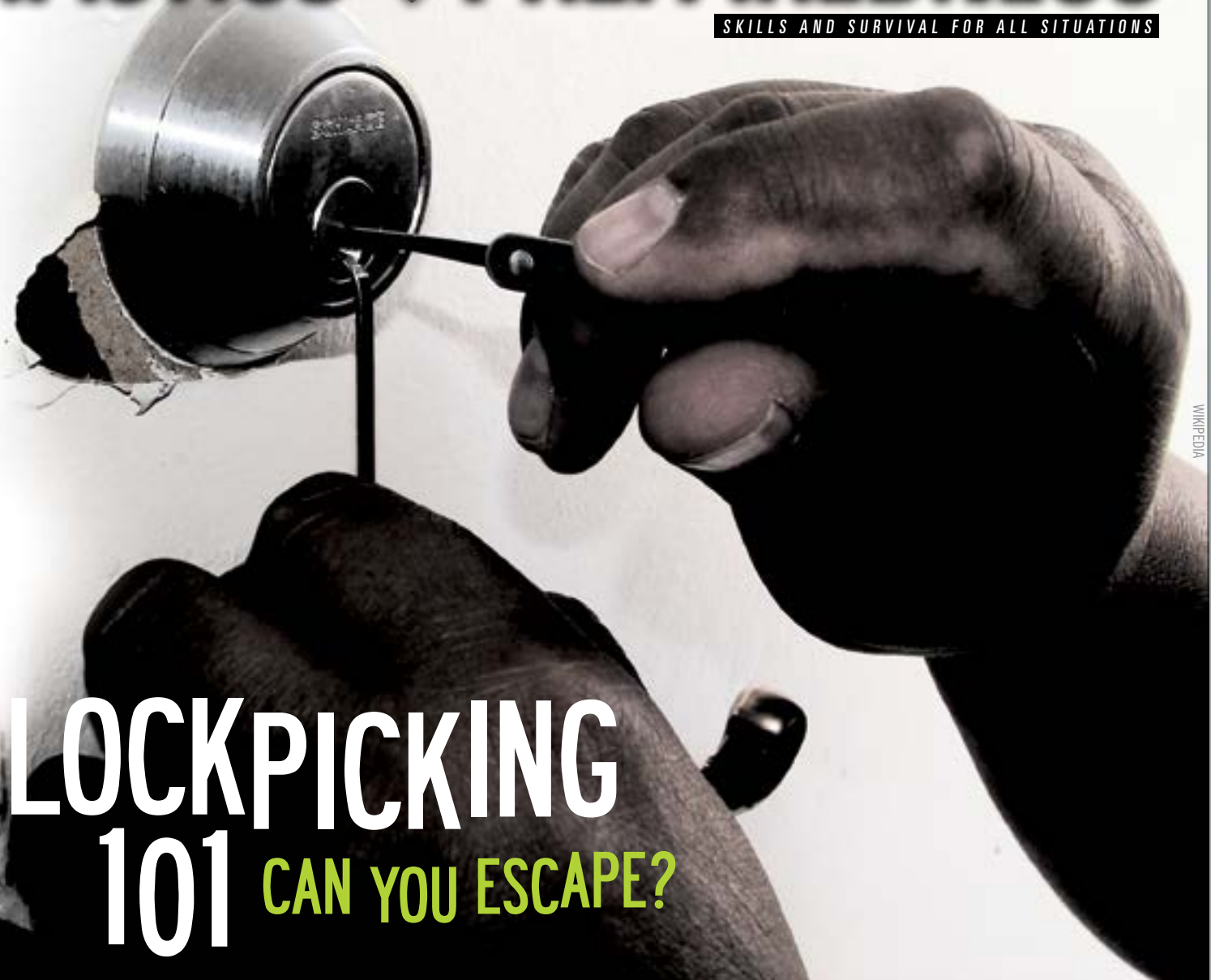


# TACTICS AND PREPAREDNESS

SKILLS AND SURVIVAL FOR ALL SITUATIONS



WIKIPEDIA

## LOCKPICKING 101 CAN YOU ESCAPE?

**I don't think it is possible to understand the benefits and limitations of locks in protecting your own property if you don't understand how they work.**

**BY KELLY ALWOOD**

I have also said in Urban Escape and Evasion class, "everything you need in a disaster or emergency situation is there, it's just locked up". There are many practical reasons that you might need the knowledge and skills to open locks. Have you ever lost a

key or forgotten a combination? Would you like to be able to defeat a padlocked gate if you needed to escape a building fire?

Most people live in one city their entire lives because everything needed to survive is there. Everything is in a store or ware-

house for some type of storage, and everything is secured by a lock. Now think about how many keys you have. How many locks do you open daily? Your car, home, office, storage unit, shed, boat, tool box, gate and locker at the gym all have locks. With every lock you own, you also increase the risk of denying yourself access to your own property.

For all of these reasons, *continued on next page*



FORCE  
ON FORCE

# GUN FIGHTER'S SCRIMMAGE

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN  
YOUR DEFENSIVE PLAN  
GETS PUSHED ASIDE?

In sports we scrimmage, team against team.  
In boxing or martial arts we spar, man on man.

BY **ANDREW BLASCHIK**

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**A**irline pilots use simulators to learn how to work through problems they may encounter without actually killing themselves or others. And when it comes to gun fighting, we use force on force training to play out potential deadly situations in a safe environment.

I have come in contact with many people who talk about their firearm carry choice and

how their mindset with self-defense scenarios will play out, and I agree that it is good to think ahead with plan A, but Mr. Murphy always reminds us to have plan Bs. More than likely, your personal plan will get pushed aside at some point.

The time and commitment required to become a safe and proficient self-defense practitioner knows no limit. When I explain

anatomy of the human body or the three target zones we need to be able to hit to new students, I sometimes get that deer-in-the-headlights look. I ask simple questions like: What makes you think that you will have your entire magazine capacity to eliminate a threat? What makes you think that the lights will be on? What convinces you that you will have both of your hands to use? Is it possible



***How do you know what you are (and are not) capable of with your self-defense mindset if you never go against another living, breathing, thinking person?***

you will need to fight with only your support hand? These questions, of course, are never asked at the time that you purchase your handgun, because the sales guy is not selling you training, he is selling you a product and if you don't have good plans for its' use, this can be a dangerous cocktail.

How do you know what you are (and are not) capable of with your self-defense mindset if you never go against another living, breathing, thinking person? You don't know what you don't know. This is the reason we must use some type of force on force in our self-defense training. My company, Tactical Firearms Academy (TFA), uses a product called Simunitions™. "Sims" have been in use by the military and law enforcement for many years, but more recently, the company opened up to the private sector. Simunitions is restricted and requires attendance of an instructor training program. Unlike airsoft or paintball, Sims use a real firearm that is converted to fire a "soft" projectile that is filled with a colored marking paste. Getting shot with a real bullet can result in injury and or death, but getting hit with a Sim round will hurt to the extent that you will not want to

get shot again. Sims can cause great bodily injury if misused or used with improper safety gear, but "over-padding" for training detracts from the learning value.

At TFA, the Force on Force course is open to all students who have obtained a concealed weapons permit (including out of state). There are no other prerequisites, as many people believe that they are ready for street carry and self-defense merely by having a CCW. At the start of a class many students have a "run and gun", "lots of shooting" paintball mindset. This is normally discouraged once the first Sim round makes contact.

There are many parameters that must go into a Sims class. First is the safety aspect. Sims use real firearm platforms, so that requires multiple people to inspect that all of the firearms are converted correctly. The color blue is used to signify a gun has been converted. Second is the safety equipment that is used by the student; at TFA we provide all the necessary safety equipment. Third is the role player. This is a trained person (or people) that maneuver the student toward training objectives by acting or manipulating the scenario to move in a specific direction.

The role player and the trainer work closely to achieve a specific result in the particular student. We hold to a ten-student maximum and average five to seven scenarios in a nine-hour day. Each scenario is debriefed, and after a student runs through a blind lesson, they are allowed to be the "fly on the wall" so they can see and hear how others handle the same type of situation.

After the safety briefing we put the students through a standard square range drill. This is a skill builder like one might encounter in any tactical shooting class. One drill focuses on barricades and use of cover. These also have the benefit of getting the student familiar with the use (and accuracy) of the Sim pistols. All of the scenarios are run blind, so the student does not know what to expect. This prevents copying what they observe and forces them to practice decision making.

For another drill, we use plastic torso targets and move students through with instructions to hit those 3D targets twice each. Two is not a magic number of course, but it requires follow-through and helps clarify that one hit is rarely sufficient. Students can see the hits on the black torso targets afterward

just as they would see holes on a paper target at the range. After one run through we put role players behind the plastic targets and send the students through again with the same rules to use cover and score two hits on the torso. When they encounter incoming rounds, bad habits of not using cover properly are quickly broken. Takeaways from this drill include: running out of ammunition, exposing too much of your own body (and getting hit as a result) or coming out from cover in the same place (and getting hit) and not being ready to engage when you leave cover.

We run the famous Tueller Drill. The student is put 21 feet from a role player and without warning that role player charges. Learning points from this drill include: how fast a person can cover ground, improper shot placement on your attacker, students sometimes get their gun knocked away or even turned against them. It also shows that just because you shoot someone it does not mean they will stop attacking. Students sometimes complain that they can't see the marking paste on the attacker. This reveals that the student is assessing hits rather than behavioral cues.

We also set up vehicle scenarios that include: leaving work, leaving a mall and occasional carjacking. Students may be assaulted in the vehicle, walking to their vehicle or not at all. It is always amazing to watch people engage without first trying to defuse the situation or just turning around and leaving. Female students often initially perform better than males when it comes to this type of decision making in our classes. We sometimes see, "I have a gun and I can use it" attitudes rather than the humble "I prefer not to use this" mentality.

Some no-shoot type scenarios include: a role player being deaf or mute looking for pocket change or help. Students often unnecessarily draw a weapon and get "arrested" or get shot by someone else who sees you pull your gun. We have even had a student shoot a role player robbery victim that he thought was the robber. That situation revealed how important verbal communication is.

Typical responses from students during the debrief is that watching someone else is very beneficial and sometimes more eye opening



**Students run the Tueller drill, where an attacker is 21 feet away and charges without warning.**

than running the scenario themselves. Many students are surprised to not score hits at close ranges, or wonder why they didn't think to just turn and walk away. "I forgot to call 911" is often said. People often don't think to communicate to defuse a situation or are willing to get involved in a third-party scenario without collecting enough information before acting. As a trainer, I look to news outlets for scenarios to use. We must learn from other's mistakes. The scenarios do not have to be complex and can be as simple as how fast things escalate or how close you can be and miss your target zone. We generally don't get into gun fights at the gun range, but we do see that bad habits or training scars carry over to what we do on the street, as can good ones.

When a paper target does not shoot back, move, think or act, many people will get lulled into a false sense of competence about what they are capable of or what will be likely. Safe, accurate, efficient operation of your firearm is a foundational skill. Effective force on force training immediately gives you the benefit of knowing your limitations more clearly as the basis for making good decisions when it comes to self-defense. Force on force training is not intended to be a shooting course, it is a decision making and critical thinking exercise that makes use of the shooting skills you already have (or don't have).

Tactical shooting courses teach weapon manipulation and accuracy, and if you get a really good trainer, the mindset behind using a firearm. Force on force training will challenge those skills and reveal how your thought process will work against thinking people within a changing environment. It will also show you some things to focus on the next time you do dry and live fire training sessions. We can't play out every scenario possible, but this experience is a wakeup call for the unknown. You don't know what you don't know. ✓

#### BIO

*Andrew Blaschik has been the owner and operator of Tactical Firearms Academy ([www.tacticalacademy.us](http://www.tacticalacademy.us)) since 2001. He started KGB Armament ([KGBarms.com](http://KGBarms.com)) in 2006. Andrew's certifications include Master Instructor with the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors (IALEFI), licensure as a firearms instructor for law enforcement and Criminal Justice Standards & Training Commission (CJSTC) Florida Department of Law Enforcement and he serves as an instructor for the police academies for Broward College, Institute for Public Safety and Miami Dade College School of Justice.*

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