



SHOSHIN RYU  
— MARTIAL ARTS —

# **WILMINGTON NC SELF DEFENSE GUIDE**

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY SHOSHIN RYU OF NC**

[www.ShoshinNC.org](http://www.ShoshinNC.org)



## WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

For the beach lovers. For the late night crowd. For the early risers. For the students. For the parents. For the tourists. For the locals. For waiters, waitresses, bartenders and hostesses. For the artists. For everyone who is lucky enough to call Wilmington home.

This guide was created to help you keep yourself and your family safe. We urge you to read through this guide, share it with friends, and come join us for a class. We'll do all we can to empower you with the tools and mindset that could save your life.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

In this guide we'll go through the mindset and tips that can help keep you safe in Wilmington and beyond. We'll start with information that can help you avoid dangerous situations, and finish with self-defense techniques you can use should you be involved in an altercation.

With everything in life, practice makes perfect. It's important to practice the awareness tips every day so you can train your mind to be alert. Keep this guide handy so you can remember which times of year, times of day, and places in town are more dangerous than others. Also keep in mind safe locations and resources.

Most importantly, train. Train your body. Train your mind. Train your weapon (If you have one, or are one). The more you can train yourself to not be a target, the more likely you won't be one.

Let's begin . . .

## AVOIDING DANGEROUS SITUATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTS

Although you can't be sure to always avoid violent situations, there are some places where criminals are more likely to target victims. Criminals look for easy targets, and people who are distracted and not paying attention make an easier target than someone who is alert and aware of their surroundings.

Criminals also look for locations and situations that offer them a high value at a low risk to them, including . . .

### POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS PLACES AND SITUATIONS

#### ★ Poorly lit ATM's or gas pumps

Only go to ATM's or gas pumps that are well-lit, ideally during the daytime, in safe parts of the city.

#### ★ Shopping cart with unattended purse, phone, keys etc

Keep your valuables close to you and ideally hidden from plain view.

#### ★ Parking lots, decks and street parking

During the holiday season there are usually numerous reports of breaking & entering into vehicles because items are left on seats (again less daylight allows for more opportunity). Some of those included ID's with home address, credit cards etc.

Don't unlock your car from too far away – it takes seconds for a criminal to get in without you seeing or knowing it.

Be aware of cars parked around you.

Don't leave items in plain view that you don't want taken from inside your car especially identification, mail showing your home address etc

Once you're in your car, make it a habit to lock the doors immediately

#### ★ Your home

When you arrive or leave your home, do you watch your garage door go all the way down? It takes just seconds for someone to get inside.

## DON'T LOOK LIKE PREY — CREATE A GOOD HABIT OF BEING SITUATIONALLY AWARE AT ALL TIMES

Criminals don't just want to attack in locations that give them a higher chance of success (dark, desolate areas with high value items that are easy to steal), but they also want to attack people who are less likely to defend themselves.

It's very important to be aware of your surroundings at all times, and to project confidence so that you don't look like an easy target.



### Here's how you can do it:

- ★ Stay off your phone. When you're distracted, you're at risk.
- ★ Project confidence. Walk tall with your shoulders back, and your eyes off the ground. Look around you and be aware of your surroundings.
- ★ Travel in a group.
- ★ Know your surroundings and look like you know where you're going. If you are lost, don't show it — walk quickly and confidently back to a populated area as quickly as possible.
- ★ Carry minimal stuff . . . use pockets or wear a cross body bag. If you do carry something, carry it in your non-dominant hand so your dominant hand is ready.
- ★ Switch your daily route up because you never know who is watching.

## DEALING WITH AN ATTACKER

### WHAT TO DO WHEN BEING TARGETED

No matter how much effort you put into staying away from dangerous locations and not looking like an easy victim, you can still be targeted for an attack. If you sense that you're being targeted, here's what to do:

★ **Listen to your gut.** Evolution has trained us to sense danger when it's coming, so don't dismiss it when you get the feeling that something isn't right. If the hair on your arms or neck stand up, or you get a feeling that something is wrong, that's a good sign that you need to be hyper aware and ideally leave the area.

★ **Distancing.** We all underestimate how quickly it takes for someone to run toward us and do us harm. By the time a potential attacker is within 20 feet, it's too late to avoid an altercation if that person wants it to happen. This is why it's important to try to disarm the situation while the potential attacker is far enough away to do so.

★ **Communication.** Speak up for yourself! Your voice can be a powerful weapon. If you see someone approaching who looks like they may have bad intentions, your first step is to loudly, directly and confidently tell them to back up or go

somewhere else. Doing that will let them know that you are aware they are a threat, that you will not be a quiet, passive victim, and it can also alert others to their presence as well.

★ **Fight vs flight.** The best way to avoid being the victim of a violent crime is to not be in the same location as someone who wishes to do you harm. If you sense that something isn't right, and you have the physical capability to run, then you should do so to protect yourself. This doesn't work in every situation and may not be a good idea if there are others around who all need to stand up together, but if you are by yourself and can get away safely, do it.

White: Unaware and unprepared. If attacked in Condition White, the only thing that may save you is the inadequacy or ineptitude of your attacker. When confronted by something nasty, your reaction will probably be “Oh my God! This can’t be happening to me.”

Yellow: Relaxed alert. No specific threat situation. Your mindset is that “today could be the day I may have to defend myself”. You are simply aware that the world is a potentially unfriendly place and that you are prepared to defend yourself, if necessary. . . You should always be in Yellow whenever you are in unfamiliar surroundings or among people you don’t know. You can remain in Yellow for long periods, as long as you are able to “Watch your six.” . . . In Yellow, you are “taking in” surrounding information in a relaxed but alert manner, like a continuous 360 degree radar sweep. As Cooper put it, “I might have to shoot.”

Orange: Specific alert. Something is not quite right and has your attention. Your radar has picked up a specific alert. You shift your primary focus to determine if there is a threat (but you do not drop your six). Your mindset shifts. . . focusing on the specific target which has caused the escalation in alert status. In Condition Orange, you set a mental trigger: “If that person does “X”, I will need to stop them”. . . Staying in Orange can be a bit of a mental strain, but you can stay in it for as long as you need to. If the threat proves to be nothing, you shift back to Condition Yellow.

Red: Condition Red is fight. Your mental trigger (established back in Condition Orange) has been tripped. “If ‘X’ happens I will. . . [do X]” – ‘X’ has happened, the fight is on.

## COLOR CODE OF AWARENESS

Whenever you are outside of a “safe” place – your home, for example – you should be in the Yellow stage and ready to move to Orange, and Red, if the situation warrants it. Doing this will help prevent you from freezing up and being surprised should an attack come your way. The bottom line is this – always be alert, aware, and ready to take action if needed.

Designed by John Dean Cooper, a United States Marine Corps Officer and creator of the “modern technique” of handgun shooting.

The color code of awareness identifies different states of mind, awareness and willingness to take action. They are:

**White:** in this state, you are unprepared and unready to take action. You should only be in this state when you are asleep.

**Yellow:** in this state, you are “relaxed alert” and are simply aware that the world is a potentially unfriendly and dangerous place.

**Orange:** In this state, you realize that something is not quite right and has your attention. You have picked up a specific alert and are focused to determine if it truly is a threat. In this stage, you set a mental trigger: “If this person does X, I will do Y”. If the threat proves to be nothing, you can move back to Yellow.

**Red:** you are in defense/attack mode and the “X” above has happened, so you are moving to your “Y”. The fight is on.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN THE ATTACKER IS WITHIN RANGE

★ **Be mentally prepared.** If you've done everything you can to avoid an attack but the situation escalated faster than you expected, or you didn't see the attack coming, you need to prepare yourself mentally for what is about to happen. You must realize that this person likely wants to do you significant harm and if you don't fight back, you may never get the chance to again. Use whatever will help you prepare yourself – think about your family, or all the other people who may get hurt if you let this happen . . . and get ready to fight for your life.

*In Wilmington, an out of town visitor (female) on an early morning run on the riverfront was brutally attacked in 2018. She was able to 1. give an excellent description of her attacker and 2. her mindset was a survivor's mindset . . . she was visiting from New York. The attacker was identified and charged, and is still in jail pending trial (as of the creation of this guide)*

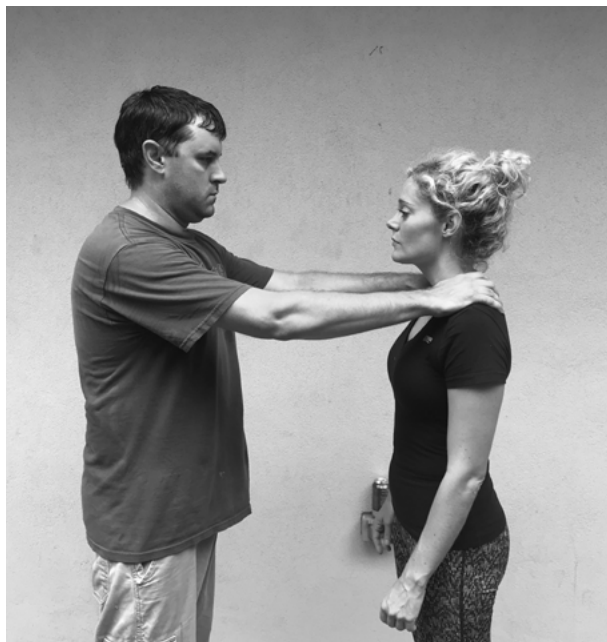
★ **Make the mental switch of turning from prey to predator.** Don't think that you are the victim in that situation any longer – change your mind and tell yourself that the attacker has messed with the wrong person today, and that you will not let them forget it. Regardless of your size or physical capability, there are things you can do to stun an attacker. Think about what would happen to a person trying to put a small cat into a bucket of water – the cat would scratch, claw, bite and scream before it went in there! You can do that too – here's how:

★ **Be a "wet cat":**

Attack soft spots. Eyeballs, groin and throat are all great targets. When attacking these spots, use your sharper points – finger nails (scratch eyes), finger tips (throat, eyes), elbows, knees etc

Make noise. Let it out! Use your voice to strike fear into your attacker while also alerting others to your presence. Attackers want easy targets and being a loud, wet cat is not making it easy for them!

## COMMON ATTACKS + DEFENSE TECHNIQUES



### FRONT CHOKE



**1.** Grab attacker's right hand and wrist with your left hand. Press two or three middle fingers into attacker's throat, directly above collarbone.



**2.** Grab attacker's right hand with your right hand and twist into the ground.





## MUGGER'S HOLD



**1.** Grab attacker's arm with both hands to reduce pressure on your throat.



**2.** Stomp attacker's foot with the heel of your foot



**3.** Sneak your stomping foot behind the attacker's leg and turn into your attacker while pulling your shoulder out of his grip



**4.** Bow and step while holding attacker's arm tightly to bring him down to the ground.



## WRIST GRAB



**1.** Extend elbow over attacker's arm as you step into him and grab his hand/wrist.



**2.** Apply downward pressure to attacker's arm.



**3.** Bring attacker to the ground and escape or continue to engage if necessary.

## WEAPONS AS DEFENSE

If you leave a gun, knife, or pepper spray in the bottom of your purse or tucked away in your car and think that it will magically keep you safe, but you never practice using it, think again. A weapon is only as good as your technique when using it under pressure!

Weapons can give you a major advantage in a self defense situation, but if you're going to use one, make sure you train with it consistently so using it will be second-nature. Don't just train with it in a safe environment, either – add stressors and time constraints to your training so you'll practice under pressure to mimic a real life situation as much as possible.

It's important to know that people typically think they can react faster to an attacker than they actually can, so keeping a very safe distance between yourself and the assailant is important, otherwise you may not be able to get to your weapon deployed in time.

There are times when you're not going to have your weapon on you – learning self-defense techniques so you can turn your body into a weapon instead of having to rely on one will increase your chances of success should an attack occur.

## 911 AND SAFE PLACES

Although you don't want your phone to distract you from being aware of your surroundings, using it to call 911 can be the right thing to do. Here are some tips on how and when to do so:

★ It's NEVER a bad time to call 911, and it's always better to call than not to call. 911 is a recorded line so you can leave the line open if you have to. The call taker has been trained to identify various situations.

★ Don't think that you're bothering 911 responders! The local police and emergency responders would rather you call and have it be nothing than not call and let an attack occur.

★ If you're working late, see potentially dangerous people around, or just have a bad feeling about your environment, call for an officer to stand by. They can be around to help walk you to your car or even when you have to close for your job.

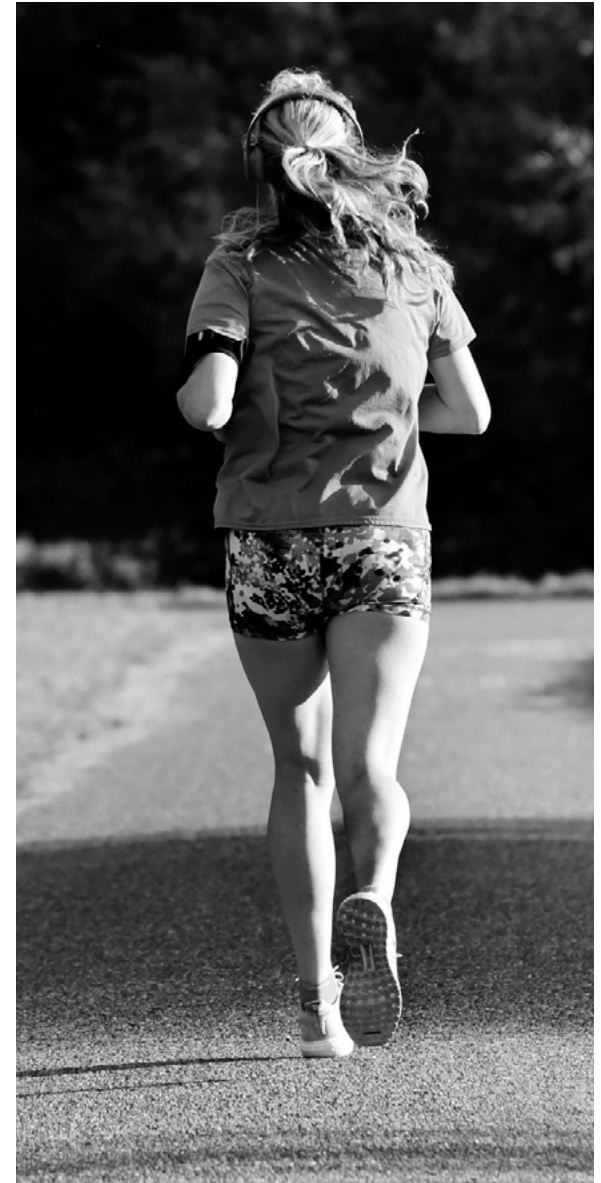
★ The police department is open 24/7, and there is a desk officer on duty 24/7 as well.

## PHYSICAL FITNESS AS SELF DEFENSE

Staying in shape and being fit is not just good for your health – it may save your life. Your fitness level is an important factor in whether you’ll be able to run away from an attacker, or have the energy to defend yourself from one.

If you’re more fit than your attacker and can outlast him or her in an altercation, you have a much better chance of getting out alive! Even the “perfect” technique that you’ve trained 10,000 times won’t work if you’re too tired to use it.

How far and how fast can you run? One of the best and most effective ways to avoid getting hurt is to leave a dangerous situation as quickly as possible by running . . . but only if you can, and if it’s “safe” to do so.



## CLOSING THOUGHTS

The world is a dangerous place, and you never know what can happen, but training to protect yourself in dangerous situations may save your life, or the life of someone you love.

We urge you to train your mind and body so you can keep yourself as safe as possible. Please contact us if you'd like to learn more.



## ABOUT SHOSHIN RYU

Shoshin Ryu is a system of martial arts that promotes self improvement through self defense.

We offer training locally for children and adults in a supportive, non-competitive environment and are located in downtown Wilmington in the Brooklyn Arts District.

Contact us today to schedule a free intro class for yourself or your child.