

# PROTEST ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Staying Safe During Civil Unrest



IRON FRONT USA .ORG

This presentation is adapted from  
a field guide intended for photo  
journalists and news reporters

# Topics of Discussion

- Know your rights
- Police interaction
- Pre-planning and preparation
- Equipment and protective gear considerations
- First aid and medical emergencies
- Situational awareness and communication

WHAT ARE  
YOUR RIGHTS?

# CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS

RELEVANT LEGAL RIGHTS GUARANTEED UNDER THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

## FIRST AMENDMENT (1A)

- Freedom of assembly, petition, press, religion, speech
- Right to record
  - You have the right to record any government official performing duties in public space (reasonable time, place, manner restrictions apply)
- Right to peacefully assemble
  - Limited: Cannot trespass on private property, engage in unlawful conduct during protests, have no right to special access to information and can be excluded from crime and disaster scenes

## FOURTH AMENDMENT (4A)

- Seizure of both property and person
  - You cannot be arrested or frisked without an objective, reasonable belief of being "armed and dangerous"
- Search
  - At an event like a protest, search-incident-to-arrest exception applies
  - Cell phones protected under 4A
    - SCOTUS: Riley v. California (2014)
    - Privacy Protection Act of 1980
  - NOTE: Search & seizure protections under 4A **do not apply** to cell phones **with biometrics** (fingerprint scan, face recognition, etc.)
  - **MANY 4A ISSUES CAN BE SUBJECTIVELY ARGUED AGAINST BY THE POLICE**
    - (Location-based, conduct-based offenses)

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AS A PROTESTOR



## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTEST ON:

Public or government owned property

\*A permit may be required



A public sidewalk

\*So long as others can pass



Your property or private property

\*With the owner's permission

## DURING A PROTEST YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:



Video from a distance and photograph anything in a public space, so long as you are lawfully present.



Keep your images on your phone/camera; they are protected by the First Amendment



Deny officers access to your phone. Law enforcement cannot access your phone to delete data under any circumstances.

## IF LAW ENFORCEMENT STOPS YOU:

Ask if you are free to leave.

If you are, calmly walk away.

You have a right to refuse

consent to a search of yourself and your belongings.





## I was stopped by the police while protesting



### Your rights

- Stay calm. Make sure to keep your hands visible. Don't argue, resist, or obstruct the police, even if you believe they are violating your rights. Point out that you are not disrupting anyone else's activity and that the First Amendment protects your actions.
- Ask if you are free to leave. If the officer says yes, calmly walk away.
- If you are under arrest, you have a right to ask why. Otherwise, say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately. Don't say anything or sign anything without a lawyer.
- You have the right to make a local phone call, and if you're calling your lawyer, police are not allowed to listen.
- You never have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings. If you do explicitly consent, it can affect you later in court.
- Police may "pat down" your clothing if they suspect you have a weapon and may search you after an arrest.
- Police officers may not confiscate or demand to view your photographs or video without a warrant, nor may they delete data under any circumstances. However, they may order citizens to cease activities that are truly interfering with legitimate law enforcement operations.

### What to do if you believe your rights have been violated

- When you can, write down everything you remember, including the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.
- Get contact information for witnesses.
- Take photographs of any injuries.
- Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.

# PLANNING & PREPARING FOR CIVIL DEMONSTRATIONS

# Plans & Preparations

- Research the area
  - View a map of the area in which the protest is being held
  - **Print a copy** to carry with you or download offline maps, mark exits/entrances/landmarks
- Coordinate with members of other groups
  - Use end-to-end encrypted messaging apps:  
*Element[dot]io, Signal, and/or WhatsApp*
- Inform a trusted friend/relative/acquaintance **not in attendance** in case you are detained by law enforcement or otherwise remain longer than intended
- Pack and prep your gear
- Charge all necessary batteries, password protect your phone (no biometrics), pack spare batteries and SD cards for camera equipment

## 1 GO WITH A GROUP

While you can go to a protest alone, it's usually better to go in a group. Your group can help you if they notice something wrong or if you're met by law enforcement. Bringing friends also adds to the number of people at the event, making the protest even more effective.



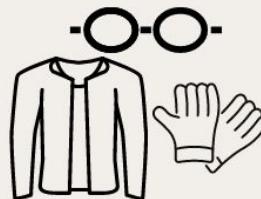
## 2 WEAR A MASK

Protesting safely in the age of COVID-19 requires that you wear a mask to protect yourself and your fellow protesters. Ideally, you should use a surgical mask or N-95 mask, if you can obtain them.



## 3 DRESS ACCORDINGLY

While protesting, you may be outside for hours. Make sure you bring layered clothing so you're prepared for both cold weather and tear-gas, which can irritate your skin. If you're worried there might be gas, bring goggles and heat-resistant gloves.



Wearing solid colors without logos or all black clothing, will make it more difficult for police to single you out in a crowd.

## 4 PACK A BAG

Once in a street protest, you may be unable to get necessities until the march ends. Make sure you have a day's supply of water and snacks, as well as a first aid kit.

You should also bring pocket change, cash, and your ID.



## 5 CONTACT A NON-PARTICIPANT

Before going to the protest, make sure you have a non-participant you can use as an emergency contact. Consider writing their phone number somewhere on your body so that it's easy to remember if your phone is confiscated.



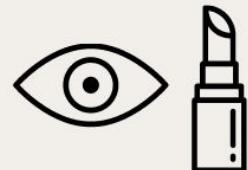
## 6 MARCH IN FORMATION

While marching, stay close to the group and encourage stragglers to close in. Law enforcement may try to detain or arrest those who are on their own.



## 7 AVOID CONTACT LENSES AND MAKEUP

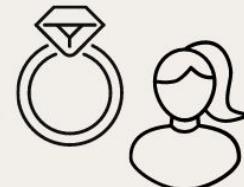
Never wear contact lenses when protesting. Contacts can absorb tear gas and cause direct irritation to your eye, even when the gas is gone.



Oil based makeup can also trap teargas and cause long-term irritation.

## 8 AVOID LOOSE ITEMS

Avoid wearing anything that can be grabbed or pulled. That includes jewelry, rings, and chains. If you have long hair, make sure it is tied back.



Questions? Visit:

[MeshkovBreslin.com](http://MeshkovBreslin.com)

MESHKOV & BRESLIN  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Call Us:

610-590-9410

# EQUIPMENT, PPE, & FIRST AID

# **Equipment for Documentation (Reporters/Journalists)**

- Notebook/notepad
- Camera/audio equipment
  - Bring enough batteries and SD cards to last 12-24 hours
  - bring "dummy" SD cards in case of seizure
- Cell phone
  - Password protect in case of seizure
  - Disable location services and biometrics
- Printed map
- Local lawyer information

# Protective Gear

**⚠ DO NOT CUT COSTS ON PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT ⚠**

- Filtered masks [🔗](#)
  - For illness protection: N95, KN95
  - For tear gas/chemical irritants: '3M' brand, available at most hardware retailers for as little as \$95  
**DO NOT BUY ONE FOR LESS**
- Ballistic Vest (Levels II-A-IV) [🔗](#)
  - Level II or IIIA soft armor should be more than sufficient for civil unrest, and are concealable
- Eye protection
  - Can be as simple as snowboarding goggles, racquetball goggles, but should be ballistically tested beforehand
- Helmets
  - Multi-hit is preferred, climbing helmets are sufficient and affordable





## SHOCK, IMPACT, & PENETRATION TESTING

Industrial hard hats are subjected to many types of testing to provide the best protection possible.  
Learn about shock and impact testing requirements for ANSI, CSA, and EN.



### TYPE I INDUSTRIAL

#### APPROVALS

ANSI Z89.1-2014 R2019  
CSA Z94.1-15

#### MSA HARD HATS

V-Gard® Hard Hat  
V-Gard 500 Hard Hat  
V-Gard H1 Safety Helmet  
Topgard® Hard Hat  
Skullgard® Hard Hat  
SmoothDome® Hard Hat  
Thermalgard® Hard Hat  
Comfo-Cap® Hard Hat



### TYPE II INDUSTRIAL

#### APPROVALS

ANSI Z89.1-2014 R2019  
CSA Z94.1-15

#### MSA HARD HATS

Super V Hard Hat



### EN397 INDUSTRIAL

#### APPROVALS

EN 397:2012

#### MSA HARD HATS

V-Gard H1 NoVent Safety Helmet  
V-Gard H1 BiVent Safety Helmet



### EN12492 MOUNTAINEERING

#### APPROVALS

EN 12492:2012

#### MSA HARD HATS

V-Gard H1 TriVent Safety Helmet



Full face



Modular



ADV DUAL SPORT



Open Face



Half Shell

# First Aid

**DO NOT CUT COSTS ON MEDICAL GEAR!**

- Buy a basic IFAK (Individual First Aid Kit)  with the following:
  - a. Combat Tourniquet
  - b. Pressure bandage
  - c. Gloves
  - d. Gauze
  - e. Nasopharyngeal Tube
  - f. Shears and medical tape
- Reputable seller:  
Guerrilla Tactical Trauma Kit 



a



b



e

## First Start IFAK Contents

### Bleeding Control

- 1 SWAT-T Tourniquet
- 1 Olaes Modular Bandage, 4"

### Airway

- 1 Nasopharyngeal Airway w/ Lube, 28Fr

### Hypothermia

- 1 Compact Survival Blanket

### Burn

- 1 Water-Jel Burn Dressing, 2" x 6"
- 2 Water-Jel Unit Dose Burn Jel Packets

### Minor Wounds

- 3 Wound Closure Strips, 0.25" x 3"
- 1 Cloth Tape, 1" x 10yds
- 1 Sterile Conforming Stretch Gauze, 3" x 4.1 yds
- 4 Sterile Gauze Sponges, 4" x 4"
- 5 Alcohol Prep Pads
- 10 Triple Antibiotic Unit Dose Packets

### Medications

- 3 Sting Wipes
- 1 Aspirin Tablets 2-Pack, 325mg
- 1 Ibuprofen Tablets 2-Pack, 200mg
- 1 Acetaminophen Tablets 2-Pack, 325mg
- 2 Diphenhydramine Tablet, 25mg

### Tools

- 1 EMT Shears, 7.5"
- 1 Medic Tape, 2" x 100"
- 2 Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) Card
- 1 Golf Pencil

### PPE

- 1 CPR Face Shield
- 1 Rolled Pair Nitrile Gloves



# HOW TO EYE FLUSH

first aid for pepper spray & tear gas



**FLUSH  
ONLY  
USE  
WATER**

- 1** Introduce yourself to the affected person and ask for consent to help.
- 2** Get them out of immediate danger.
- 3** Put on non-latex gloves and any other PPE you have.
- 4** If the person is wearing contacts, have them remove the lenses.  
If they are wearing glasses remove them and hand them back Ask them to knee to better access their face
- 5** Ask them to sit on their hands so they won't touch their face.
- 6** Tilt their head back and toward the side of the first eye. Roll up their eyelid or take their eyebrow and pull up to hold it **open**
- 7** Spray a quick, forceful stream from the center of the nose bridge outward, in a downward slope away from the tear duct
- 8** Repeat with both eyes until they can see (they may still be in pain). If their eyes are open, it worked.
- 9** Wash hands, face, and other bare skin with soap and water. Discard gloves; use a new pair if treating a new person.

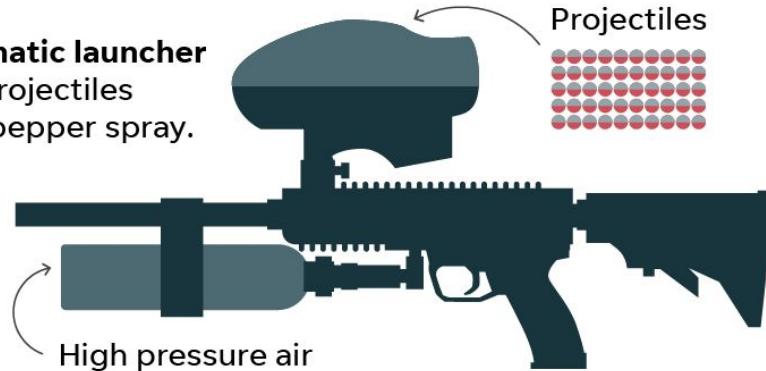


## ONCE YOU GET HOME AFTER BEING SPRAYED

- Remove clothing and place it in a garbage bag **before** showering
- Shower with cold water and plain soap
  - Start running a shower, turn on a fan
  - Stand outside and stick your head in
  - Wash your hair and face
  - Then get into the shower
- Take care of yourself emotionally and physically

## How pepper spray is dispersed

**Semi-automatic launcher**  
filled with projectiles  
containing pepper spray.



**Range:**  
150 feet



**Aerosol canister** containing the natural chemical capsaicin, found in chili peppers.



**Spray range:** Up to 12 feet

# Clothing & Additional Items

- Wear breathable clothing, cover arms and legs
- Food and water for 24 hours
- Batteries and portable chargers
- Write down names of your lawyer and/or close contact on arm
- DO NOT WEAR CONTACT LENSES - Chemical irritants can become trapped under contacts and prevent effective eye-washing

# PROTEST SAFETY 101

AMERICAN  
IRON FRONT

## GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- DRINK WATER, AVOID OVERHEATING
- DO NOT WEAR CONTACT LENSES
  - (CAN TRAP MACE/TEAR GAS)
- DON'T ATTEND ALONE
- NO LOOSE JEWELRY/HAIR
- BRING SNACKS/FOOD
- HAVE A # TO CALL IF ARRESTED
- WEAR A FACE MASK (COVID-19)
- DISABLE BIOMETRICS ON PHONE;  
POLICE CAN FORCE YOU TO UNLOCK IT



STREET MEDICS ARE MARKED  
WITH RED OR GREEN CROSSES

MEDICS CAN PROVIDE FIRST AID, HELP EYE WASH  
IN CASE OF TEAR GAS OR MACE, AND CARRY EXTRA  
SUPPLIES LIKE WATER AND FEMININE PRODUCTS.

LEGAL OBSERVERS WEAR NEON  
GREEN BASEBALL CAPS

NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD LEGAL OBSERVERS  
RECORD AND REPORT MISCONDUCT BY LAW  
ENFORCEMENT, AND ANY VIOLATIONS OF  
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS THEY WITNESS.



## ESSENTIAL ITEMS



WATER BOTTLE

EYE PROTECTION



MEDICAL ITEMS



EXTRA CASH \$  
EXTRA CLOTHES

## IF YOU ARE PEPPER SPRAYED/TEAR GASSED:

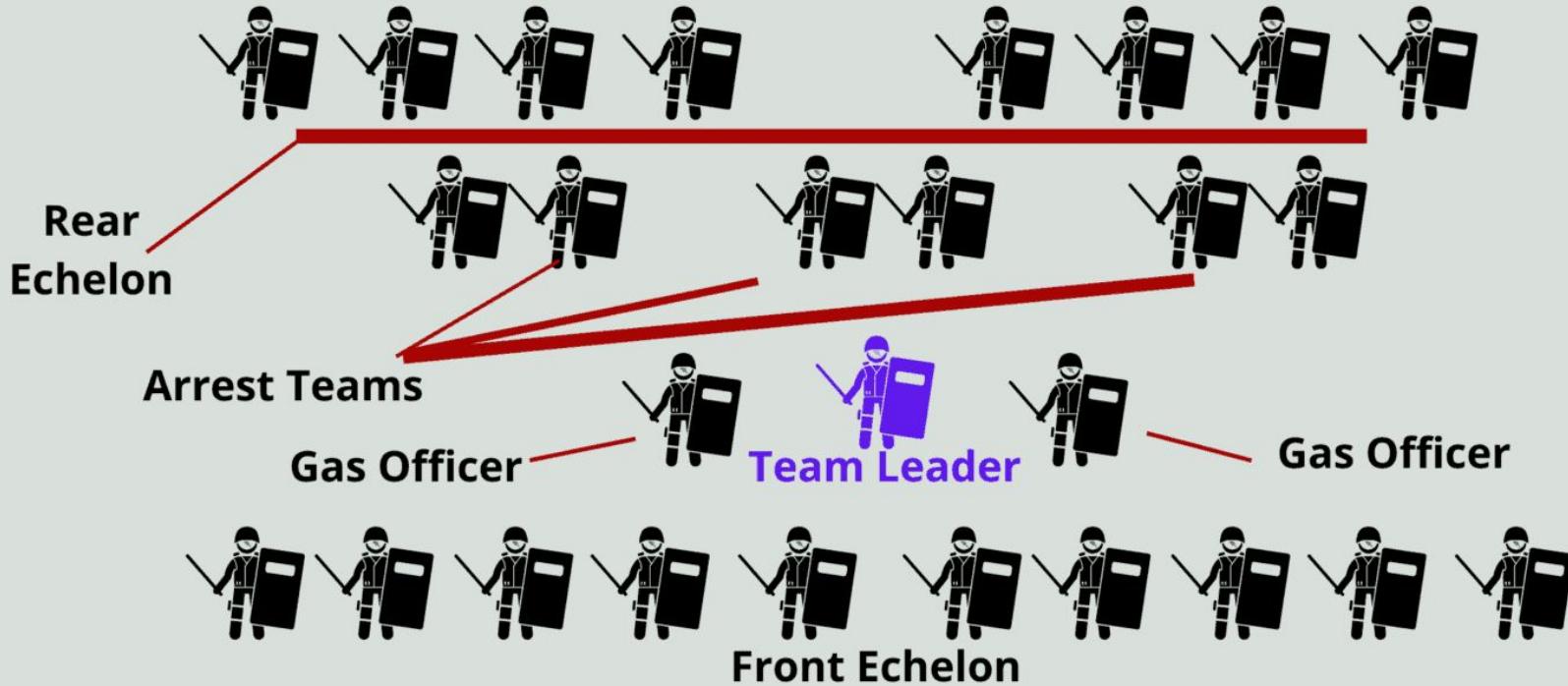
- DON'T RUB IT IN, DON'T PANIC
  - CALL FOR A MEDIC
- TRY NOT TO SWALLOW
- GET TO A SAFE AREA
- REMOVE ANY CONTAMINATED  
ARTICLES ON YOUR FACE
- FLUSH EYES WITH CLEAN WATER

# AT THE PROTEST: SITUATIONAL AWARENESS, TACTICS, & COMMUNICATION

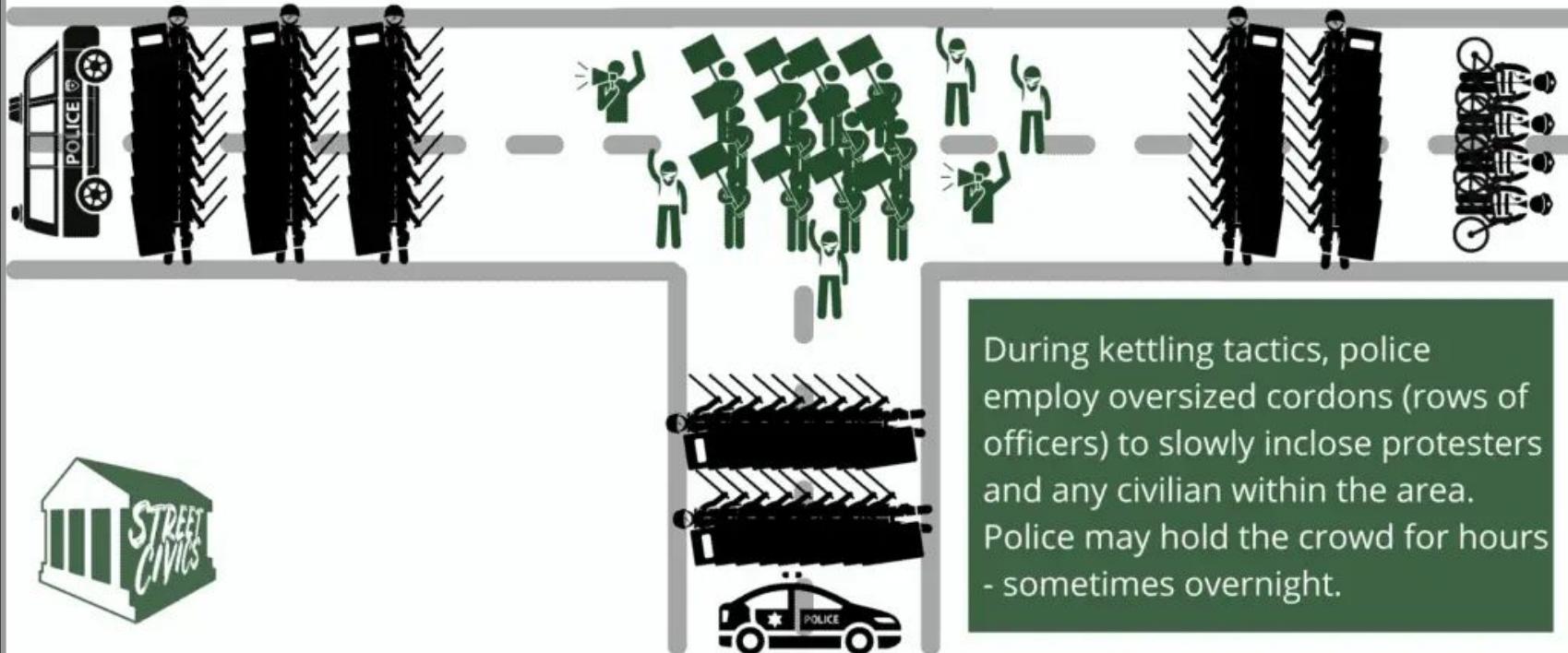
# Vigilance

- Location
  - The edges of the crowd are the safest, allows for quick exit
- Maintain situational awareness - What is happening and where?
- Actively observe event participants
  - Police: Watch for kettling (enclosing with riot shields/mobile barricades), preparation of RCAs (riot control agents) like pepper spray and tear gas
  - Protesters: Watch for large crowd movements/surges, for smaller groups of heavily equipped and/or armed civilians, be aware of counter-demonstrators/agitators, Be wary of infiltrators (police or otherwise)
- Look
  - Side streets, landmarks, safe places, escape paths, vantage points, shelter
- Listen
  - To the crowd, to police commands/announcements, to background noise, etc.

# Riot Control Formation



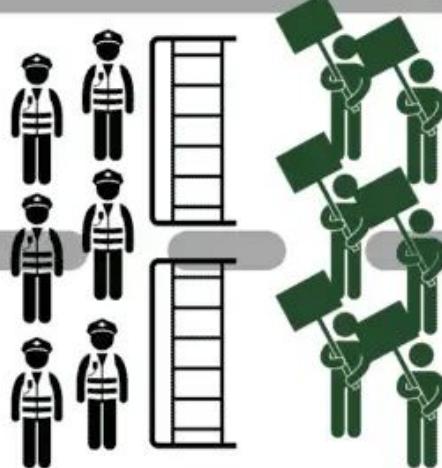
# Police Tactics: Kettling or Corralling



# Front Line Formation



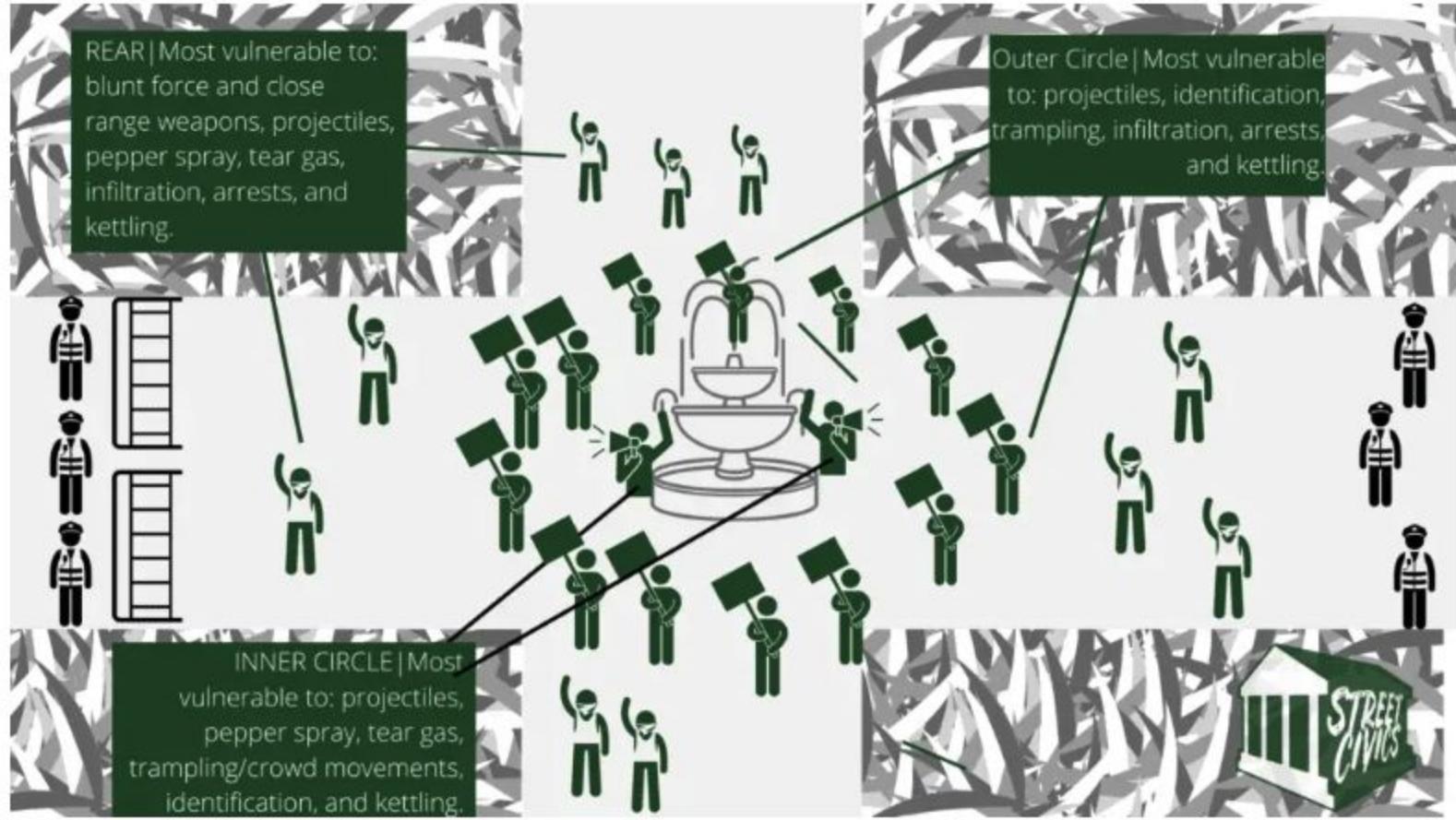
FRONT LINE | Most vulnerable to:  
blunt force and close range  
weapons, identification,  
trampling, arrests, and kettling.



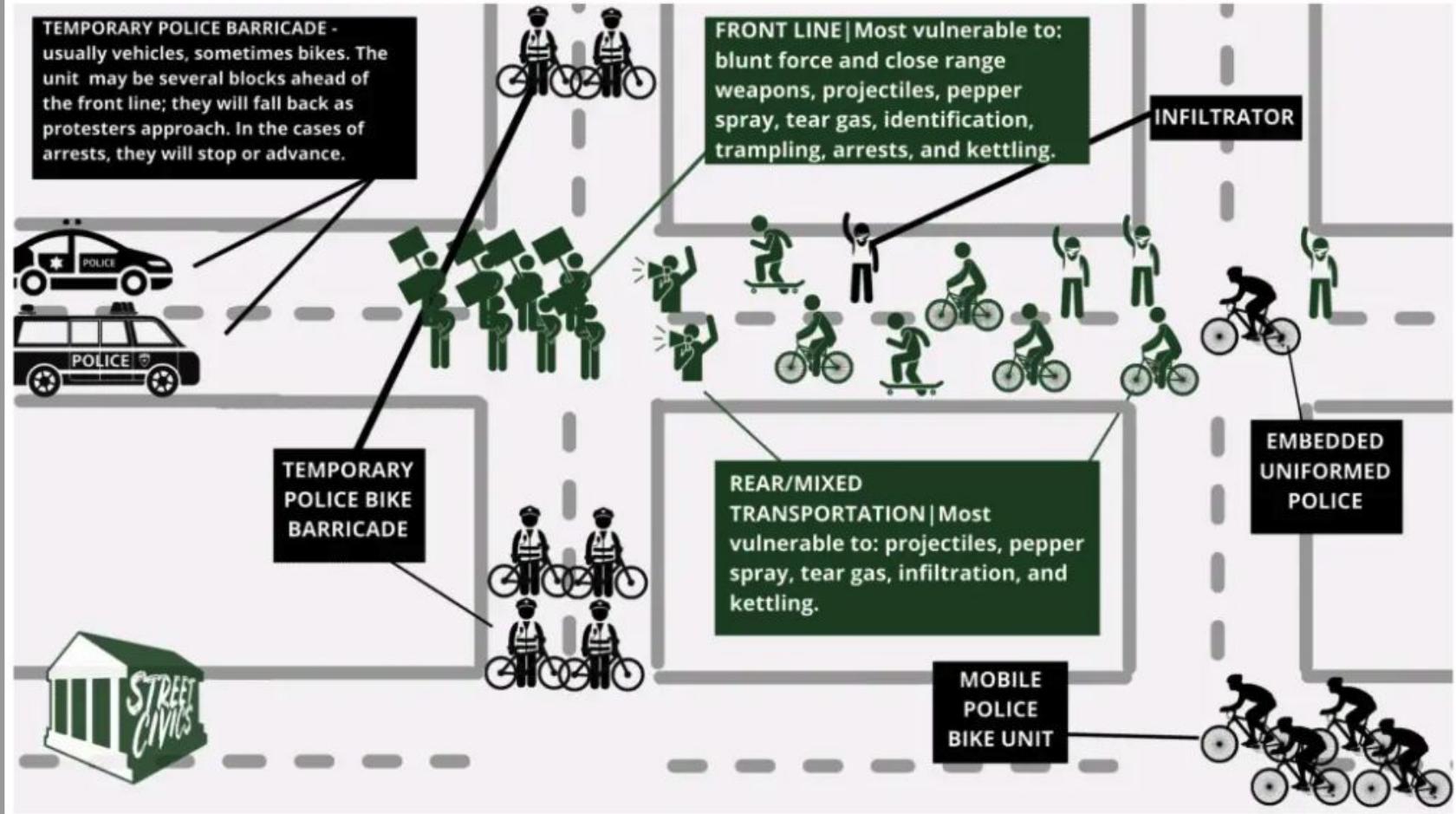
SUPPORT & ORGANIZER  
Teams | Most vulnerable to:  
projectiles, pepper spray, tear  
gas, infiltration, and kettling.

REAR | Most  
vulnerable to:  
projectiles,  
pepper spray,  
tear gas,  
infiltration, and  
kettling.

## Speaker's Circle



## Marching Protests



## What to do:

**Take Action:** Contact (or designate) a movement security person to receive reports, assess threats, and dispel rumors that can lead to fear/panic. Be brave but don't be a martyr. Use mobile phones to take video or photos of far right groups when safe to do so. Record vehicle details (including stickers); uniforms/dress, patches, buttons, and insignia; weapons; group size; and actions. Forward your incident reports to the designated local security person who in turn can forward them to and seek clarification from PRA and other movement support organizations.

**De-Escalate:**  Vehicular assaults continue to be a significant threat to racial justice and pro-democracy protestors. There have been over a hundred documented attacks, and likely many more. In many cases, the car or truck does not try to drive straight through a protest. Rather, the driver makes an obnoxious or aggressive gesture near a protest group and then slows down or stops. At that point protestors, understandably upset by the threat of a vehicle assault, surround the vehicle. This is both extremely dangerous, and a set-up for the driver to injure or even kill a protestor and have it ruled self-defense, where the driver is "afraid for their life." A surrounded driver may brandish or use a firearm or attempt to accelerate through the surrounding protestors.

**Keep Perspective:** While paramilitaries can be lethal, most violence against racial justice protesters comes from law enforcement, and the FBI is currently ramping up political policing by claiming that anti-racist groups (rather than the paramilitaries) are "terrorists."

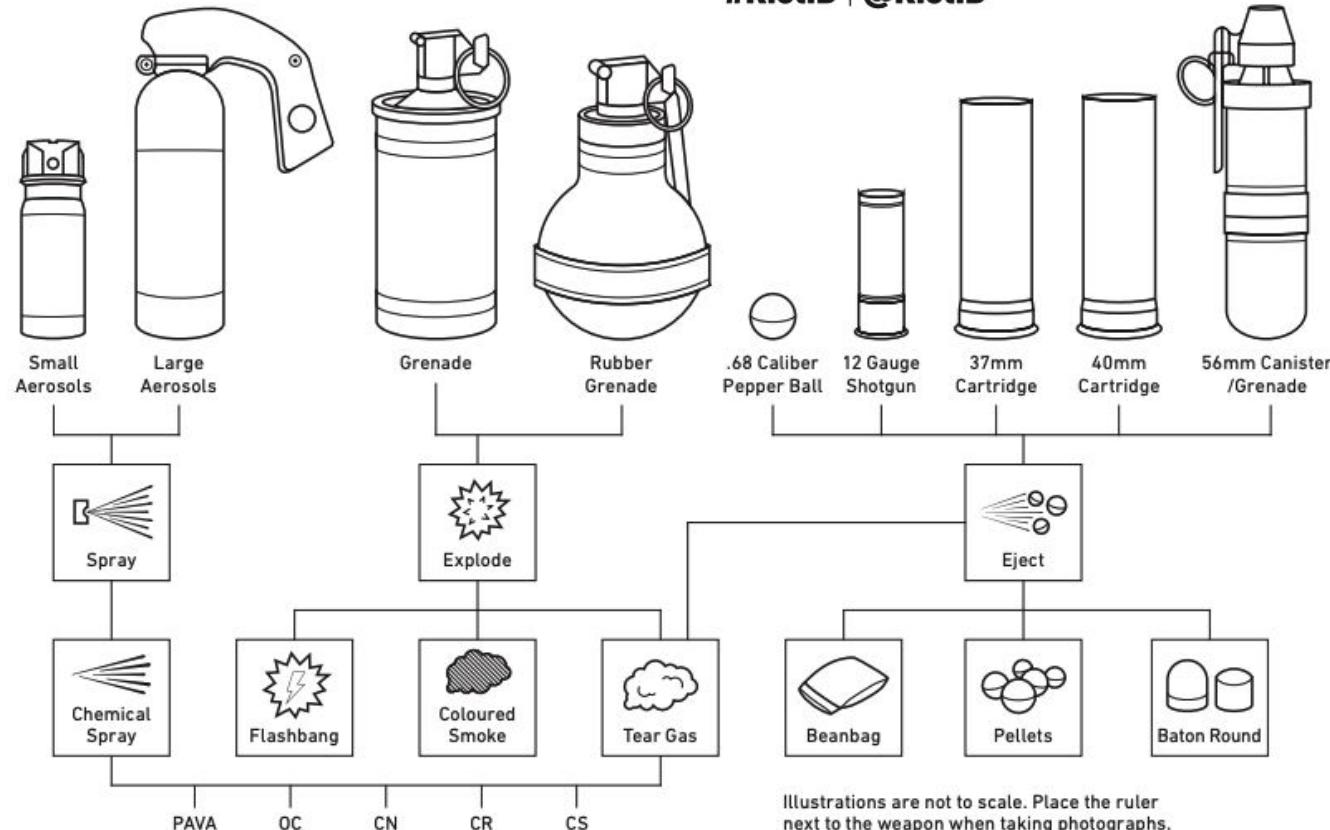
# Communication

- Stay in line of sight with buddies
- Frequent check-ins
- End-to-end encryption
  - Element.io, Signal, etc.
- If you have reason to believe you are about to be detained, **CALL YOUR ATTORNEY AND/OR BUDDY IMMEDIATELY** and put them on speaker.
- PSI - Position, Situation, Intent
  - Where am I? What's going on? What do I intend to do?

# RCA<sub>S</sub> (RIOT CONTROL AGENTS) & MUNITIONS

# IDENTIFY THE WEAPON

WWW.RIOTID.COM  
#RiotID | @RiotID



Illustrations are not to scale. Place the ruler next to the weapon when taking photographs.



## TEAR GAS

The scientific term for tear gas is 'lachrymatory agent' because the chemicals it contains result in tears. However, the name 'tear gas' is misleading. The harm it causes can be more extensive:



Eyes respond to the chemicals by producing tears to wash them out.



Tear gas is not a gas. The chemicals are solids dispersed in a thick fog.



Collectively tear gas and pepper spray are called Riot Control Agents (RCAs).

## PEPPER SPRAY

Pepper spray contains the organic chemical capsaicin; a natural ingredient taken from Chili peppers. Some contain synthetic alternatives. These chemicals:



Cause inflammation and severe pain in the eyes, nose, and mouth.



Rank higher on the Scoville scale than the hottest chili pepper.



Are often mixed with alcohol and anti-freeze.

## EFFECTS ON THE BODY

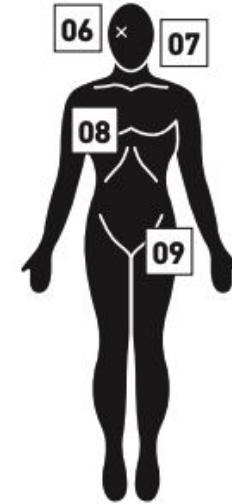
### Left:

01. Panic
02. Vomit
03. Sore throat
04. Heart attack
05. Stomach ache



### Right:

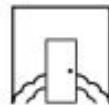
06. Burning eyes
07. Painful nose
08. Short breath
09. Diarrhoea



**WWW.RIOTID.COM**  
**#RiotID | @RiotID**

# VARIABLES

RCAs should not be used:



In closed rooms



Inside vehicles



On people who have been locked-up



On people who can't get to fresh air



On people who have been restrained



Once the use-by date has passed

RCAs spread quickly. Their effects depend on:



Amount of chemicals released into the air



Weather conditions



Proximity of people to the chemicals



Level of access to open spaces

After the use-by date has expired, tear gas and pepper spray become hazardous waste and must be safely destroyed.

# DANGERS AND ENVIRONMENT

RCAs can be fatal. This risk increases when:



Too much is used in a confined space



It's used against babies or the elderly



Panic results in accidental harm



Canisters/grenades explode in the hand



A canister/grenade is fired at a person



Exploding canisters/grenades start a fire

Low doses of toxic RCAs can cause harm to/kill:



Birds



Cats



Dogs

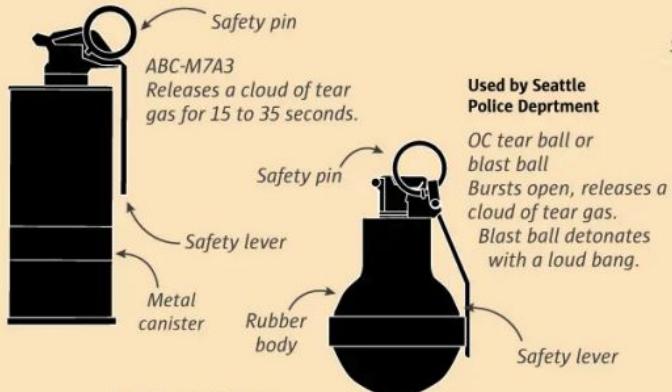


Crops and soil

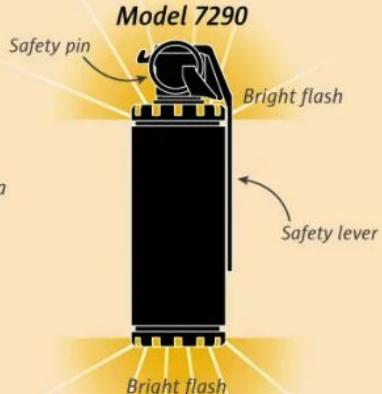
Read more: [www.inclo.net/issues/lethal-in-disguise](http://www.inclo.net/issues/lethal-in-disguise)

## Less-lethal devices

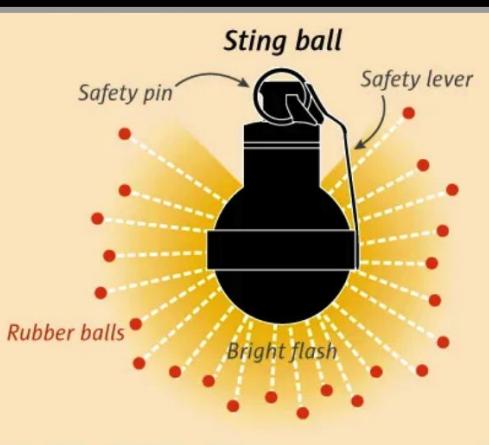
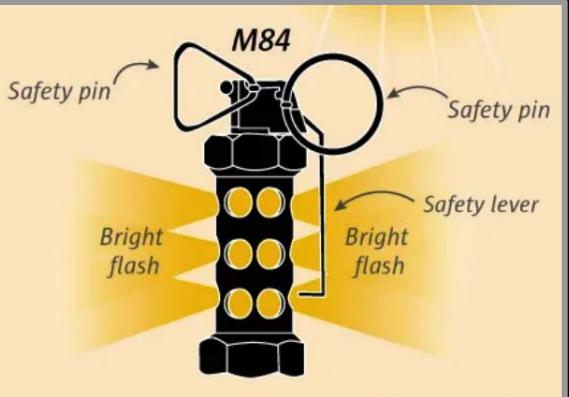
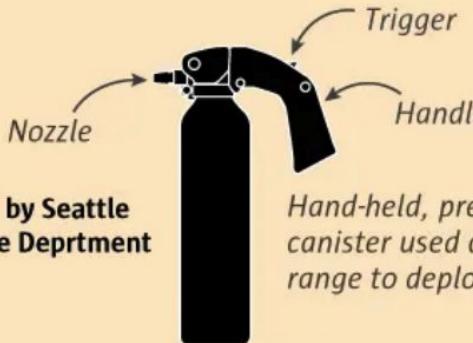
### TEAR-GAS GRENADES



### FLASH-BANG GRENADES



## PEPPER SPRAY

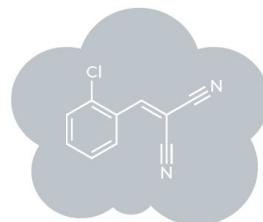


### Air guns with pepper-spray balls



# TEAR GAS: CHEMISTRY, DISPERSAL METHODS & EFFECTS

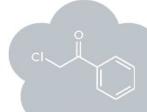
## WHAT IS TEAR GAS?



The active agent in CS gas (the most commonly used tear gas) is 2-chlorobenzalmalonitrile. This is a white solid which is dispersed as microscopic particles or dissolved in a solution.



CHLORACETOPHENONE



CAPSAICIN, A CAPSAICINOID

Chloracetophenone (designated CN and also known as mace) was also used historically but has been largely replaced by CS. Pepper spray differs from tear gas: it contains capsaicinoids, chemicals extracted from chillies.

## TEAR GAS DISPERSAL METHODS

CS is often dispersed by burning canisters. The smoke these canisters produce disperses the tear gas as a cloud of microscopic particles into the surrounding area.



### STARTER MIXTURE

The starter mixture starts burning when the canister is ignited. It contains charcoal as a fuel and potassium nitrate as an oxidiser which helps it burn faster.

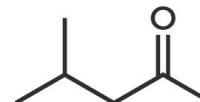
### SMOKE MIXTURE

The smoke mixture includes the active agent, CS. It includes sucrose as a fuel and another oxidiser, potassium chloride, to keep the reaction going. Magnesium carbonate keeps acidity levels in check. Nitrocellulose binds everything together.

CS can also be dissolved in a solvent and used as a spray. A common solvent is methyl isobutyl ketone. A 1% CS spray is used in the US, while a 5% CS spray is used in the UK.



METHYL ISOBUTYL KETONE



## THE EFFECTS OF TEAR GAS

Exposure to tear gas irritates the eyes, nose, mouth, skin and respiratory tract. This can in turn lead to inflammation, coughing, and difficulty breathing. The effects typically last for 15–30 minutes after exposure.



People with pre-existing conditions that affect the respiratory system, such as asthma, are more vulnerable to CS exposure. There is also some evidence that CS exposure could increase susceptibility to respiratory illness.

## TREATING TEAR GAS EXPOSURE

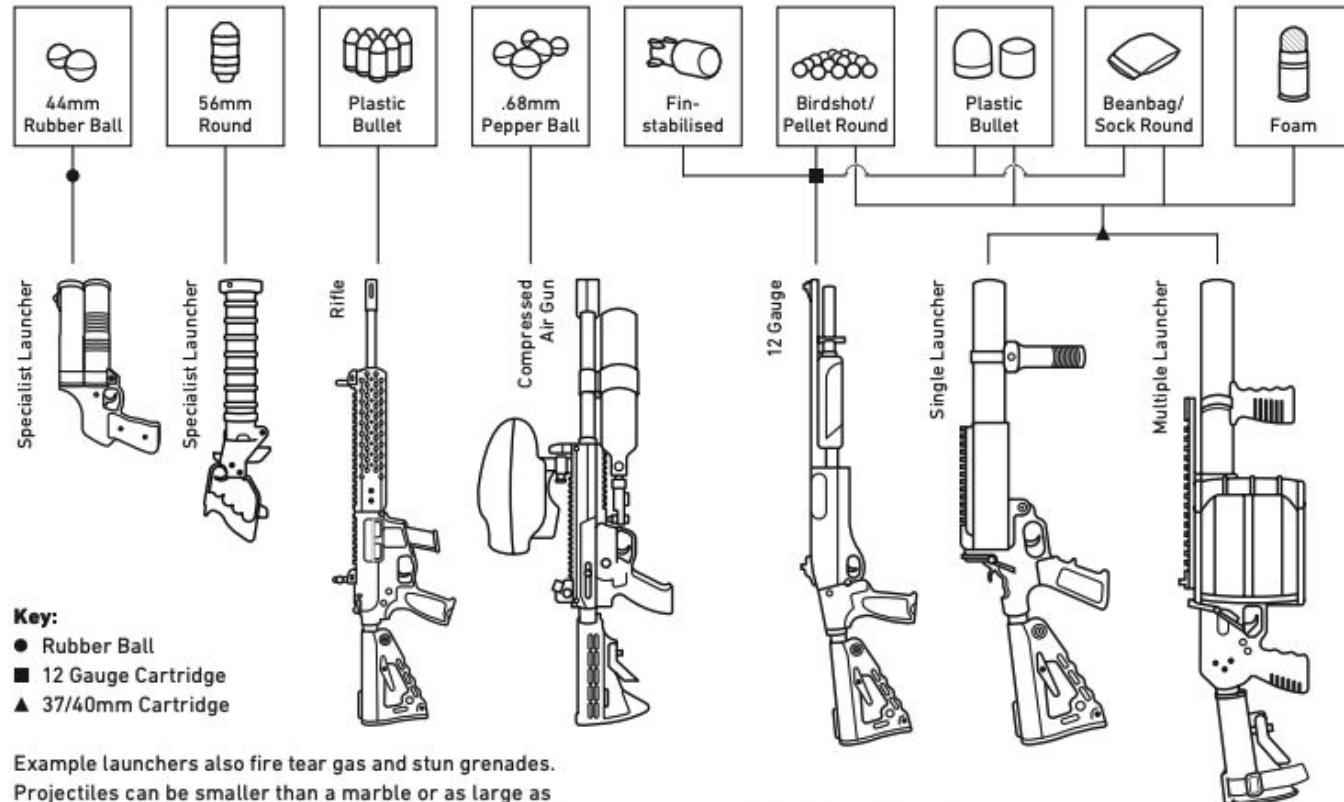
There is no antidote for tear gas. Though some sources suggest using milk or baking soda solution to wash it off, there is little evidence for these being more effective than water.



- 1 Escape from the contaminated area and into fresh air as soon as possible.
- 2 Remove contaminated clothing if possible and wipe your face to remove particles.
- 3 Use flowing water and soap to remove contamination from the skin. Flush your eyes with saline or water for 10–20 minutes.



# PROJECTILE TYPES



# EFFECTS ON THE BODY

Impact munitions are designed to hit you and cause compliance through pain.

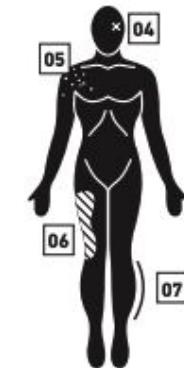
People at greater risk of severe injury or death include the young, the elderly, and anyone with a small frame or fragile bones.

## Internal:

01. Brain injury
02. Damage to organs
03. Broken bones

## External:

04. Eye injury and blindness
05. Skin penetration wounds
06. Bruising
07. Swelling



# KEY DANGERS



Multiple rounds are fired rapidly



Projectiles hit too hard when fired at short range



Projectiles are aimed at the head, neck or chest



Projectiles are inaccurate when fired at long range



A person is hit in the groin or above the waist



Projectiles bounce off the ground and walls

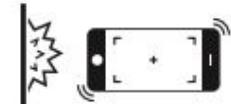
## STAY SAFE



WEAPONS CAN EXPLODE OR BE HOT! DANGER!



CARRYING WEAPONS CAN BE DANGEROUS & MAY BE ILLEGAL



DOCUMENT ONLY WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO



SHARE YOUR PHOTOS SAFELY AND SECURELY

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