

# FACING A STREET ATTACK!

**T**here are enough people out there who get a "kick" (pardon the pun) out of fighting just to "try someone out"! For example one of my students who had some work done on his house overheard a couple of workers saying they wanted to go out on the weekend and have a "good fight". Since some people don't care about the consequences - long term results/fatalities or prison sentences - you need to be ready. And these days you got to be ready for anything. Here's a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

**Rule number 1:** Sense what's coming. Be aware of your surroundings. If you get one or more people following you down the street do a "test" and cross the road - if they're still following you it's probably going to turn nasty; don't take any chances.

**Rule number 2:** Tell them to "back off" in such a way that there is no misunderstanding that if they don't heed the warning you're not going to be very friendly to them. When I walked down the streets of Paris one guy approached me in a side street: I pointed my finger towards him

and shouted "NO" before he had a chance to get closer. He backed off and that was the end of it.

**Rule number 3:** Keep your distance; if they get too close for comfort and are not interested in you telling them to back off - there will be no stopping them ... unless YOU stop them. Also, don't get "caught in the middle". If you feel someone creeping up behind you whilst dealing with his mate step to the side so you can see what is going on. Or - if the attack is about to start - step to the side with a kick to the 1st attacker. Stop the 2nd one who crept up from behind with - what we call in Choi Kwang Do (CKD) - a Heel Kick for example (kicking with the whole of the foot with power from the heel in a pushing motion). In a self-defence situation kicks are good because they are quite powerful and have a longer range than hand techniques.

**What is better: Power or Speed?**  
Speed is even effective if the punches and kicks are not as strong as they should be. It buys you a little time (emphasis on little)

to come up with something more powerful to defend yourself. On the other hand: All your bodybuilding will be of no or little effect if your reaction and counters are too slow. Speed of reaction and technical speed will only come with years of training so if someone comes to me and says "I'd like a few self defence lessons" then I'll have to tell them it doesn't work that way.

A tip for those who haven't done any martial arts (or not for very long): Look confident! If you look like a victim you're most likely going to be one. The "Rules of the Street" are the same as in the jungle: An attacker will in most cases only pounce on those who look like they're an "easy target." If the attack has not started and it's still in the confrontation stage where the other guy wants to suss you out: Don't get into long conversations; say you're busy, not interested or whatever.

Just make sure you look over your shoulder...because you'll need to know what's coming!

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By Ralph Allison