



WEAPONS PRO

BATON PRO



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Use a Baton Like a Pro

With crime on the rise all over the country, being in control of your own personal safety is now a concern we all must consider. There are a number of different weapons available on the market that can help you stay safe against an attacker, one that I am particularly fond of is the baton. It's simple design makes it easy to use with just a little instruction, and it is generally very effective in close quarters combat. The key to using a baton effectively is to purchase a quality tool, and take a few classes or practice at home so you can deliver powerful strikes with some degree of accuracy.



Hitting your attacker with a baton is devastating. A landed strike will normally cause enough pain that your opponent is unable to continue attacking, and if you target bony areas the weighted steel tip has no problem fracturing or breaking bones. Normally you would target a meaty, fleshy area like the shoulder or thigh with a baton, but if you're facing an aggressive attacker you will need to escalate your defenses in order to stay safe, fight off your opponent, and escape to safety.

History of the baton

Batons evolved from the simplest of all weapons, the club, which was traditionally just a short wooden staff you wielded in your hand. Batons have been referred to with a variety of different names, such as bludgeons, cosh, nightstick and truncheons, and are normally small enough to swing effectively with just a single hand. There are of course larger, two-handed varieties, and the club was one of the influences for the military mace, a metal weapon with a spiked and weighted head that was attached to the shaft with a chain.

In modern use, law enforcement officers first began using the baton as a short, straight piece of heavy plastic or wood, which was later adapted to include a side handle for easier use. Today, these batons have been mostly replaced with the extendable baton, a heavy telescopic piece of steel, that is capable of being carried in most situations, and then being extended for use. When an opponent is struck with a baton, the wounds inflicted are typically blunt-force trauma injuries, in the act of using a baton known as bludgeoning.

Improvised batons

Improvised batons are a favorite of criminals in assaults and robberies, as fashioning your own club is a very simple process, you just need a heavy piece of wood or metal you can swing by hand. Steel pipe is cheap, heavy and easy to come by, or if you prefer wood the axe handles at any hardware store make for an excellent improvised club. The downside to these is that they're not so easily concealed, which is why knives are much more commonly used. It's quite rare that a legitimate



Source: <http://d3ap2gvi46z69k.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Club31.jpg>

extendable baton will be held by your attacker, and anyone you face is going to get quite a surprise when that small piece of metal you pulled from its holster transforms into a 2 foot long piece of steel you're planning to defend yourself with. This is normally more than enough to give any 'would-be' attackers reason to pause, as they weigh up the benefits of attacking you against potentially ending up in the hospital with a host of broken bones.

In most cases simply bringing a baton into a fight will cause your attacker to back down.

The side handle design



The original straight baton law enforcement uses was modified in 1974 to include a side handle, in an attempt to make it easier to use, especially when performing holds against an attacker. These all follow the same basic design, at about 2 foot long with a handle that sticks out perpendicular to the baton. Grasping the handle allows the length of the baton to run parallel along your arm, while twisting your wrist will swivel the baton so you can hit their body. The most common technique of this baton is to ram the end into the stomach of an

opponent, which knocks the wind out of them before you follow up with a second disabling attack. You can also grab the tip of the baton and use the handle like a hook, to trip or catch their body, especially the arms, legs or neck. Most side handle batons are made from heavy duty plastic, but in the past wood and metal were preferred.

Those who swear by this design believe the side handle:

- Allows them to generate more power in a strike and make the baton easier to control
- Helps you hold on to your baton, and less likely your opponent can take it from you
- Adds to the baton's versatility allowing it to be used in a wider variety of situations

Proponents of the straight baton believe:

- It creates more trauma because of the fluid shock waves generated from a strike
- In confined locations it is much more effective to use
- It's faster to recover and perform additional strikes
- It's easier to train a beginner to reach a satisfactory level of competency

- Lightweight models make it more effective for shorter people who have a smaller build

Both of these designs proved very effective for many years, however the traditional batons were too unwieldy for officers to carry and conceal. This led to the development of the expandable baton.

The extendable baton

To turn the traditional baton into a more effective weapon, the extendable baton was developed. With just a flick of your wrist (at a high enough velocity), a seemingly innocuous piece of metal will telescope out to a full-sized baton that can be used to take out an attacker. Extendable batons vary anywhere from 16 inches to 31 in length, allowing you to conceal the weapon until you have a need to use it. Their compact size makes them easy to carry in a holster in your belt, or tuck in next to you in your car or backpack. In the United States, nearly all police officers will carry an extendable baton.

As a weapon, the extendable baton is very capable of doing a large amount of damage, and if you have the proper training they are a very effective means of self defense. Every state has their own regulations in place for these weapons, so be sure you know the legalities before you buy and start carrying one. Of course, to effectively use this self defense product our team of weapons experts recommends you take a professional training course, but it doesn't take long for you to master techniques you can use in any situation. These weapons are great for both taking the fight to your attacker, or defending against any of their attacks in a real-world situation.



With the right training, the extendable baton is a devastating piece of equipment in your self-defense arsenal, but you need to choose the situation to use it correctly. Bringing a baton out in a fight with no other weapons may be construed as using excessive force, yet against someone with a ranged weapon like a firearm or a taser the limited reach of your baton will do little good. It's best used to intimidate and convince a potential attacker that whatever it is they want just isn't worth it, or if you find yourself fighting off someone holding a knife or a club of their own.

Why a baton is a great self defense weapon

The extendable baton has many advantages as a self defense weapon, but what makes it great as a concealed weapon is that you can take it into many places you are not able to carry a firearm. If you're travelling you can stow a baton in your checked luggage without having to declare it, although you should never try to carry one on board your flight on your person. In addition, there are normally fewer restrictions on expandable batons in the country or state you will travel to, allowing you to bring a versatile means of defending yourself (wherever you travel) without the hassle travelling with a firearm brings. Personally, I've also noticed that having a baton doesn't result in the same reaction in others that a firearm usually attracts. Many people choose to ignore it, as they

don't know what it actually is sitting in my holster, or they don't really recognize it for what it is. This allows you to be armed in plain sight without causing a fuss, an effect that is very difficult to achieve with a firearm.

The second reason our team recommends batons as a self defense weapon is that it's a step between having your hands empty, or choosing to defend yourself with a weapon that really delivers lethal force, like a firearm. It extends your reach in a fight, and can even end a confrontation before it begins, as your attacker will be very reluctant to get hit with the weighted steel tip. If you're carrying a baton with you on your person, you definitely need a holster, and while we've seen a few different versions in our time, my personal favorite remains the horizontal holster. You can pick one up for around \$10, and when mounted on your back it makes it look like you're reaching for your wallet when you lean back to draw your baton.

The advantages of using an extendable baton for self defense:

1. It's a relatively inexpensive weapon capable of very destructive force
2. It's lightweight, and can be carried on your person with ease
3. The general public is used to seeing security guards and police officers carry batons
4. It gives the user a greater reach than a non-extending baton or club
5. As an impact weapon it is flexible and can inflict damage wherever your opponent is struck
6. A strong blow can immobilize your opponent, disarming them if they also have a weapon
7. There are many training centers available to teach you how to effectively use a baton
8. It can be used purely for defense, keeping an attacker at bay and warding off each strike

The disadvantages of having a baton as a self defense weapon:

1. The larger sizes can be cumbersome, and are not always convenient to carry
2. Batons are not legal in every state for citizens to possess, only law enforcement
3. If you need to run, an extended baton can get in your way
4. In a combat situation, it's not always possible to avoid needing to perform a head strike
5. They can slip out of their holsters and be lost
6. You need training to remain proficient in the safe and effective use of a baton

Ultimately, the benefits of an extendable baton make it an awesome weapon, that's readily affordable and deadly in hands that have been trained in its use.

When a baton can be used

Batons are very effective at controlling a violent opponent, using pain compliance to get them to do what you want. In a self-defense situation, this is normally just to give you an opportunity to escape from whatever trouble you've found yourself in. Police officers typically carry batons, however they are legally allowed to use these to subdue an opponent, because they've been trained in using a baton to deliver a non-lethal strike.

If you're a civilian and you grab a baton to use in a fight, you need to ensure you follow the guidelines of "proportionate force" to keep yourself out of legal hot water.

Let's say an attacker is charging at you with a knife. You grab your baton, using it to strike their hand and knock the knife free and then stop. You find out later that you've broken a couple of their fingers in your attack, and they're now trying to sue you for assault. In this situation, you're probably going to be able to argue your use of the baton to defend yourself was justified, and that you used a proportionate level of force, because you stopped striking after the initial hit, when you eliminated the threat. If instead you used your baton to beat your opponent into unconsciousness, striking them over and over, you're probably going to be in lots more trouble. In this same notion, be careful about using your baton with too much aggression. Continuing to strike your attacker once you're in control of the situation is definitely not advised, in addition to the legal problems you're creating for yourself, it can trigger the "fight or die" instinct in your opponent, giving them a surge of adrenaline to fight back and defend their life. You need to find a balance, and learn when you should step back and leave a situation before someone is killed.



Source: http://www.weapons-universe.com/Personal_Defense/Baton-Defense.jpg

The general rule when using any weapon to defend yourself is that you can only retaliate with a level of force proportionate to what you're facing, and only do what a "reasonable" person would be expected to do in the same situation. Of course, striking an attacker who is trying to shoot you is probably going to be considered a reasonable action, but this is always up to the decision of the courts. The real key is to keep yourself out of trouble, even before you need to defend yourself.

That's what makes a baton such an awesome self defense weapon, as just bringing it out and extending it can strike fear into your attacker, and end a confrontation then and there.

Falling baton use for police officers

The limitation of a baton is that while it provides an extended range, the training required to use one effectively, and how easy it is to make a lethal mistake with a strike is seeing a drop in their use. Police officers still carry batons, but they are using them in fewer and fewer incidents. Here's why:

- Tasers and pepper spray offer a non-lethal alternative that allows for a greater range
- There is a fear of liability for the damage inflicted while subduing an opponent
- There's unclear legalities on the lethal capacity of baton strikes
- Negative media repercussions facing officers who use the baton justifiably
- Have easy and ready access to their baton
- Strike areas of the body to create muscle dysfunction
- Be able to generate enough force to knock down a subject

While police officers go through rigorous training to learn how to effectively deliver non-lethal strikes in a variety of situations, there is always scope for something to go wrong, especially if a bone or a joint is struck, and a direct hit to the head can often be lethal. To be able to use a baton effectively, our team of weapons experts highly recommend getting formal training. Improper use of a baton can very easily kill someone, or cause permanent injuries that leaves you vulnerable to arrest and civil suits.

Buying a baton

If it is legal for you to purchase and carry a baton in your area, our advice is to invest your money in one of a decent quality. This ensures you'll get a lifetime of use out of it. Cheap batons are able to be priced at \$10 to \$15 as they're made from inferior metals, and will not be able to stand up to repeated practice sessions, and can fail you in a real fight, when you need it most. Please invest in a quality baton like one of the three we later recommend, so you can trust you'll never have a problem using your baton to defend yourself. You can find batons in your local gun and knife shop, sport stores and if you're luck in a pawn shop, and there are also many options available online, on Amazon, eBay as well as direct from the manufacturers ecommerce store.

Types of baton

The wooden baton carried by police officers in the past is no longer in everyday use, as the expandable baton is much more convenient to carry, despite being a little more complicated in its design. What's good about the batons today is that you can find a variety of sizes and different weights in the modern expandable versions, so you really can find the right defensive weapon for you to use effectively.

Selecting an expandable baton for your self-defense depends on a variety of factors, but mostly the right weapon for you will come down to your strength and size, as well as your own personal preference.

Considerations when choosing your baton

When you're looking at the particular batons you can buy, consider your own abilities as well as the results you would like your baton to be able to deliver. Having a baton is pointless if you can't use it effectively in a fight. Weak strikes, or a baton that is too difficult to easily deploy makes your weapon more of a liability than a help. In addition, without the right attitude behind your strike, you're not going to get the outcome you really need. You need to put all of your force into delivering one massive stopping blow, otherwise your failure to defend yourself is almost guaranteed.

Ask yourself if you're looking for:

- The ability to deliver stopping power with one hit?
- The ability to perform multiple strikes quickly?

- A baton you feel comfortable and confident handling?

When you're choosing a weapon that may very well save your life, you need to do your research, and make the best possible selection based on the information you have available to you.

Baton Length

Your first consideration is whether or not you want to be able to conceal your baton. If you do, a shorter length can be ideal. The downside is you get less reach and a lighter weapon, but drawing a concealed baton has an element of surprise, and can give you an edge against an opponent as you transform from an everyday citizen to an armed and dangerous opponent capable of inflicting serious amounts of damage on anyone who crosses you. The longer a weapon is definitely gives you a greater reach, but these are also heavier, and can be difficult for anyone of a smaller stature and build to swing effectively. Unless you have some warning of an attack, a long baton can be a hindrance in a fight because you need space to draw it and use it properly. In close quarters, compact efficiency often wins out, and you really just need to pick a baton you're comfortable to use, in a size that enables you to carry it effectively.

Personally, I prefer the longer (at least 26 inch) and heavier versions, as I believe the length of your baton makes a key difference in a fight, giving you just a little bit more reach. Plus, the added weight lets you make a more powerful swing, so you can end the altercation in a single strike, and then get the hell out of the situation you're in. Other people in our team actually prefer the lighter versions of baton, because their smaller size makes them more portable, and easier to conceal at all times of the day. It's really up to you, you should choose the baton you're most comfortable using to defend yourself. Batons typically range from 16 to over 31 inches, and your size and strength will determine the right size for you.

Baton Price

Cheaper batons can actually prove to be more of a liability than an asset, because the inferior metal quality often leads to the shaft bending during practice sessions. This then requires the baton to be hammered back into shape, and often means they will no longer reliably lock open, or push closed. Of course, striking someone with any piece of metal will do damage, but there's no point risking your safety by relying on a weapon you cannot trust to function properly, just for the sake of a few dollars more. Good quality batons will last a lifetime with the proper maintenance, so invest in a tool that you know will be able to reliably protect you for many years to come.

Select models

As follows are three of our favorite batons, to give you an idea of what is available in the market, and what we would recommend to anyone from a beginner to an experienced professional to purchase.

ASP Baton

ASP designs one of the most widely used expandable batons, they're a U.S. based company who manufactures defensive compliance weapons, primarily for law enforcement and security personnel. They pioneered expandable batons, and general the models they stock have not significantly changed over the last two decades. You'll find ASP batons ranging from 16 to 31 inches, and they've got a wide range of cosmetic and after-market additions to personalize your weapon and boost its stopping power. Each ASP baton is manufactured from 4140 steel, and can handle over 9,000 pounds of stress, more than enough to keep you safe in a confrontation, and when maintained will last you a lifetime.



The ASP expandable baton uses friction to lock open once it's been expanded. Every expandable baton requires force to be opened, there are no spring loaded batons, and the ASP needs to be struck against a hard surface at a 45 degree angle to close back each segment. In the market ASP design one of the most lightweight batons, with the least amount of weight in the tip that makes it easier for people with smaller builds to use, in addition to being able to deliver multiple strikes very fast to rapidly overpower an attacker.

The side-break holsters which come with the ASP baton allow for quick deployment, so you can rapidly access your baton while its resting in its holster. These batons are known for their textured hand grip, which makes it easier to hold on to, but their foam-like federal grip should be avoided. The pull on the handle can slow your ability to successfully draw the baton, especially if you're stowing it in a nylon or leather holster.

Monadnock auto-lock baton (power safety tip)

Monadnock is another self-defense company which has been around for a long time, producing expandable batons which in our opinion are extremely well made. The 4 ounce weighted tips allow you to put more force behind every swing, giving a better strike with more penetration in every blow. Using this baton, a single hit to the thigh will drop your opponent to the ground. What we really like about this baton is the weighted tip doesn't run the entire length of the shaft, so the forward weight as you perform a strike doesn't change the centrifugal force. Essentially, the balance of the baton just feels right, it's not so misaligned that it will fly from your hand as you swing it. This balance allows you to convert the weight in the tip to a centripetal force, adding a massive amount of kinetic energy to your swings. The additional forward weight when compared to the ASP models allow for harder strikes, without too much of an impact on multiple strike ability.



The rotational baton holster was invented by Monadnock, and the plastic material it's made from allows for a very fast deployment. It also has two security features which help to prevent your baton coming loose or shaking free if you need to high-tail it and run from your attacker. The Monadnock batons are made from 4130 steel tubing, a seamless alloy which is also used in aircrafts. What makes this baton special in this field is the locking mechanism it uses to stay open, the auto-lock they use is not a typical friction-lock that most batons use. The auto-lock mechanism is comprised of a ball-bearing locking system inside a camshaft, which is really special because it guarantees your baton will stay open, regardless if you're striking with a slash, thrust or a jab. To close the auto-lock and get your baton back into its collapsed form, pressing a button on the handle sends the shaft back inside, unlike other batons which need to be struck against a hard surface to retract. The shafts also rotate, which helps you to keep a grip on it during a struggle, and overall you'll find these are one of the most efficient and safest batons on the market today.

The PeaceKeeper RCB

PeaceKeeper's Rapid Containment Baton (RCB) is made from 4130 steel, a seamless alloy that is machined (rather than being expanded or swaged) in order to lend as much strength as possible to the final piece of tubing. The striking tip measures a massive inch in diameter, giving this baton a larger striking surface than either the ASP or the Monadnock batons, and an ability to use it to deliver a stronger strike. The end cap is also larger than you will find on most other expandable batons, which reduces the chance you will puncture your attacker during jab and thrust strikes. If you've got larger hands, the grip tube of this baton is a little larger in diameter than most other models on the market, which makes it a much more comfortable fit in your hand, and the friction lock system it uses actually has a larger surface area than ASP's baton, which gives the RCB a better chance to not collapse during a jab strike. The rotational holster it uses requires you to perform a quarter turn before you can deploy the baton, but it also locks into place, preventing any unwanted holster rotation during a confrontation.



Source: <http://www.knifegallery.co.kr/shopimages/knife/074000017982.jpg>

The downside of this baton is its weight. It requires a great deal of strength to be able to wield the RCB effectively to deliver multiple strikes, but if you're looking for a weapon that truly has "one-hit" stopping power, this will be your baton of choice. The weight means that even those of a smaller stature can use it to generate real knockdown power, and one trick we found during training was that if you miss the initial hit, the weight of the RCB makes it very effective to perform a follow-up backhand strike, so long as you stay in balance and keep a firm grip on your baton.

When facing an attacker in a confrontation, the RCB looks much more menacing than the other batons on the market, and just seeing it deployed can end a confrontation before it begins. To open the RCB, you can manually open it by gripping the tip of the baton and pulling it open, or just use a relatively strong downward flick (towards your ankles) and let gravity assist the open. To close the baton, strike the tip on a hard surface to loosen the friction lock and the deadlock taper. You don't need to close this baton with the same 45 degree angle the ASP batons require, but a solid tap on a

hard surface will get it to close, much like a drumstick on a drum, and only a single strike is necessary to get the entire baton to collapse. You'll find these batons in 21", 26" and 29" versions, and they all come with a lifetime warranty.

One of the most versatile tools you can have with you for defense is the baton, and if you're considering to buy be sure to also check out the online reviews of a particular model, as well as the feedback from other customers to ensure you're making the right decision.

Using a baton for self defense

The extendable baton is a no-brainer when it comes to self-defense, because of its price, the fact it doesn't require a huge amount of skill to use, and because there's minimal maintenance to keep it in good working order, unlike a firearm which is quite complex and requires a good working knowledge of the mechanics to safely use it. Because of this, the baton is carried by the police force and many law enforcement officers as a relatively non-lethal form of self defense.

For anyone except the police, using a baton in a normal fight is illegal. If you own a police issued baton, depending on the laws in your state you may need to obtain a concealed weapons permit in order for you to be able to possess it. It should only ever be used as a defensive weapon when you have no other option, and you should never use it in an aggressive manner, or to start a fight. The trick here is to be careful of the force you use, and here you are targeting the weapon. If you kill someone, even in self defense, you can be charged with manslaughter, or murder if self defense is not justified. You can also be charged with assault and battery, unless you can prove the person you attacked was a true threat to your safety, and you use of the baton constitutes reasonable force.

Carrying a baton

Staying in control is fundamental to using your baton safely, and it needs to be easily accessible should you ever need it. Having an expandable baton in your glove compartment will serve you well if you're attacked in your car, but how about if you are jumped walking through the parking lot? Not having your baton accessible is just the same as not having one at all. If you do ever need to use it to fight off an attacker, remember to stay alert, and ensure that you keep your baton under your control at all times. If you face off against an attacker who is trying to fight back, it is likely they will try and grab hold of your baton, to take it from you and use it against you.

Making use of momentum

For the expandable baton to be effective in a confrontation, you need time and space in order to put some momentum behind each of your strikes. If you're in a situation where you're grappling with an opponent, it's going to be much less effective than if you're a couple of steps back and have the ability to perform a crushing swing. Use the distance to put more momentum behind your attacks, stepping forward to deliver each powerful strike, and step back when you need to defend against any counter moves from when your attacker goes to strike.

Making use of the range

The requirement of a little bit of space presents an interesting case for someone seeking to use a baton for self defense. The advantage a baton gives you in your fight is an extended reach, because it can allow you to stay outside of your attackers effective range, while giving you the ability to strike back at them and inflict serious harm. If you're in a situation where you're fending off an attacker, use the range of your baton to strike at their weapon, their hands, wrists or elbows before they can get close enough to injure you.

Depending on the situation, a good rule of thumb is to strike at whatever part of your attacker is closest to you. This gives you an advantage of reach because you're not going in close to try and strike at your attackers legs, which can make each of your strikes faster, and give you a split second advantage in reaction time. Once your attacker gets inside your optimum striking range or reaction distance, you're going to be at a serious disadvantage in the fight, and your baton is no longer going to be as effective. Later in the guide we'll cover the close-range strikes and blocks you can do, but these are a last resort. Keep your distance from your opponent as much as you can.



Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/US_Navy_030416-N-5862D-099_Members_of_the_Auxiliary_Security_Force_\(ASF\)_are_trained_how_to_properly_use_the_AS_P_collapsible_baton_The_baton_is_primarily_a_defensive_or_non-lethal_tool_that_is_used_when_the_situation_calls_for.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/US_Navy_030416-N-5862D-099_Members_of_the_Auxiliary_Security_Force_(ASF)_are_trained_how_to_properly_use_the_AS_P_collapsible_baton_The_baton_is_primarily_a_defensive_or_non-lethal_tool_that_is_used_when_the_situation_calls_for.jpg)

Where to strike

If you're using an extendable baton in a life or death situation, the concept is simple. Swing it hard and hit your attacker with as much force as you can muster. But in reality, the situation you find yourself needing to use your baton may not be as dangerous. In this instance, you can get in serious trouble if you kill your opponent with a strike to their head, so you need to know where it's safe to hit. The biggest advantage your extendable baton gives is that you can use it to strike at the weapon your attacker is holding. Knocking the knife or club from your attackers hand will tilt the fight in your favor, and is a major step towards keeping yourself safe.

No sane person will want to be struck with a length of heavy steel, but if you produce your baton and your attacker doesn't decide to run, you need to know what to do next. In general, an opponent who wants to fight back will crouch into a defensive position as they wait for an opportunity to disarm you, and take control back of the fight. With their weight balanced across their feet, and their arms elevated to grab at your baton and deflect any strikes you make.

So where else should you aim to strike?

Depending on how severe the situation you're in actually is, the area to target is up to you. Aiming for meaty muscle areas, like the shoulders and the thigh when you're striking with a baton, is considered a good safe practice, because there is little chance you will deliver a fatal blow. A direct

hit to the thigh is ideal, and a forceful strike to the peroneal nerve that runs down the outside of the thigh should always be your first choice. Many people don't know this is an effective striking point, and in a confrontation they will usually raise their hands to protect their face, leaving their legs wide open to your attack. If you target this area you can use a massive amount of force with only a little chance of causing permanent injury. Because it's such a big target there is very little risk that your strike will break their femur, but the pain and their inability to stand gives you a window of opportunity to take control of the situation, or to escape. The only risk that comes with striking the thigh first is that it may not cause your attacker to go down, especially if their adrenaline is high or they're under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If this is the case, immediately switch your tactics.

When a strike to the thigh isn't working and it looks like you're going to be overpowered, the bones in the leg, specifically the bone just below your attacker's calf is very vulnerable. If you can deliver a powerful strike to this area, you can potentially break their leg. Understandably, this is probably going to end the fight in your favor, as an attacker who is no longer able to stand is not going to be much of a continued threat. It's also very difficult for an attacker to block or deflect a strike to their leg, and even if you don't hit hard enough to break it, a strike to the shin is extremely painful. Remember when you last walked into the coffee table and the shooting pain that shot up your leg? Now multiply that feeling by a hundred. Inflicting this amount of pain on your opponent should give you the opening you need to escape.

If you can't quite reach their leg, you can target any of the bony areas of their body. The elbows and knees, wrists, ribs, and collarbone are all highly sensitive, and a strong strike to any of these should cause enough pain to end the encounter altogether. We particularly like the collarbone as an area to attack, as a powerful downward blow landing on the clavicle will render that particular arm useless to your attacker, and it doesn't take much to break the bone clean through. The only risk with this strike is you need to be very confident in the accuracy of your swing, striking the nearby neck or head can result in a more lethal injury.

In a fight actually hitting a bony area can be difficult, and if you only graze your attacker, or miss completely, you need to recover fast so your attacker cannot seize the moment to overpower you. Just try to get your baton to connect, with enough force so no matter where it lands it will give you a chance for either a second strike, or an opening to run. The only caveat is to steer clear of the neck, head and spine, unless you really are fighting for your life, because even a little bit of force on one of these areas can cause permanent damage, regularly leading to complications and even death. You must have justifiable cause to use a lethal strike against an opponent, and when there's even a shred of doubt, you're going to be much better off just taking out their knees.

If you can't get your baton open

If you opted for a cheap model and it's not opening when it should, or you simply didn't have enough warning to get your baton out and extend it, don't fret. Even when it's not extended you can still deliver a great deal of pain with this weapon, as the weight makes it an excellent device to use in a fight. Holding it like a hammer, swing and strike at your attacker's pressure points or any sensitive areas of the body. If you place your thumb over the tip you can stop all of your swings from

inadvertently opening the baton, and once you've got enough room to push your attacker back, by all means extend your baton and give yourself additional reach.

In addition to using it to fend off an attacker, a baton has a variety of different uses thanks to its weight. It's ideal for breaking the glass out of a window, clearing any shards in the event you need to escape from a room in your home and cannot get to the door.

Practicing with a baton

Before you can hope to use a baton effectively against an attacker, you need to get familiar with its use. Be comfortable expanding and collapsing the model you've selected, and start to perform strikes through the air to get your technique and motions right. Once you're comfortable with the motions, you can move onto striking a heavy bag, a striking shield or a striking dummy. Continued practice is what enables you to build accuracy and power in your strikes.

Once your accuracy improves, you can progress to drills where you strike at the target areas, using a training baton on an opponent who is wearing protective training gear. When you're learning to use a baton, these training batons will be covered in foam to lessen their impact, but they can still create intense pain, especially when your hands are struck. Getting comfortable striking at a moving target builds your confidence, and you'll find your striking accuracy will improve rapidly as you seek to connect with the right areas on a target that is not standing still. You'll also learn how to maintain an effective striking distance from your opponent, and deal with every additional factor that may come into play in your training environment first, so you're capable of managing whatever comes in the real world.

We also recommend taking formal classes to build your skills with the baton. If you ever do need to use it for self defense, demonstrating to the court that you sought out the right training and have been actively practicing your skills with the weapon beforehand can go a long way to proving you were justified in your use of force, and not just another miscreant who enjoys bashing their fellow citizens heads in.

Striking with a baton

If you do need to hit someone with your baton, hit them as hard as you can so you only have to hit them once, you may only get one shot. In addition, you're much less likely to prolong the fight, and you will not have to go back a second or a third time which can result in beating your attacker to a pulp. Using weapons for self defense is just that, defensive, and you should only use these techniques to regain control of a situation so you can ensure your own personal safety.



To get a powerful hit with your baton, the way you perform a strike is important. Grip the baton in a hammer grip position, with your thumb wrapped around the handle; not resting along it. Try to keep your grip firm, but not overly tight, because to strike fast you'll need your arm to be a little loose, with a relaxed wrist, elbow and shoulder.

You can then strike in one of four ways:

Slash

A slash connects with your target and continues to move across their body to the other side. You're essentially performing a horizontal or vertical strike with your baton, that starts on the left of their body, and ends on the right. Picture the motion of swinging a baseball bat. This is how a slashing strike should work.



Slashing your opponent with a baton in this motion is the most powerful way you can hit them, as the momentum following your first swing allows you to continue performing follow up strikes easier as you're just manipulating the flow of your weapon. By keeping your baton in motion with each swing, it already has energy and force behind it, you just need to direct it where you want to strike. This is a much more effective striking technique than stopping and starting with each and every swing. If you're being attacked and need to defend, a horizontal slash with a slight upward angle on the tip of your baton is another effective strike, and is a great way to protect against any downward attacks.

Downward circular strike

The second type of strike is a variation on the slash, and is known as the downward circular strike. Using your baton, swing it in a vertical circular motion and hit your attacker. This one is very quick and powerful, using gravity to add to the force you can deliver, and has the added benefit of returning your baton to its original position once you've completed the strike.

When you're standing in the normal defensive stance, holding your baton vertically in front of you, you're already in the position to quickly deliver this strike. Because this strike moves the baton outwards as you create the circular motion, you can add to its effectiveness by angling the tip backward over your shoulder prior to striking, giving you a 45 degree angle of impact. This enables you to swing the baton down on your attackers weapon (or the hand holding it), or in a life or death situation strike directly into their face. You can use this attack at any angle in front of you (so long as you keep the downward angle for the added momentum from gravity). In addition, this strike is very effective at blocking an incoming horizontal attack, like a thrust with a knife. Just remember to follow through with your strike to send their weapon away from you, and not just downward.

Jab

In the jab you whip the baton forward, hitting the target suddenly and sharply, before pulling it back to its original position, ready to strike again. This strike isn't as powerful as the slash, but it is very fast, accurate and you can use it in close quarters where you may not have enough space to perform a powerful slash. The motion is much like a jab in boxing, except you're using the weighted steel end of your baton to hit your attacker.

Thrust

The last type of strike you can perform with a baton is the thrust, which follows a similar trajectory as an uppercut or a hook (if performed from the side). Thrusting straight doesn't have a great deal of power behind it, but it's a technique you can use at close range, and if delivered to sensitive areas like the face, neck, or solar plexus of your attacker it can be a fantastic opening attack to allow you to step back and follow up with a more powerful slash.

You do need to be careful when performing a thrust, because most batons are collapsible, which means using it in a forward stabbing motion can actually cause your baton to collapse. This is just to be kept in mind, because if you've delivered a thrust that's powerful enough to collapse your baton, you're probably going to already have delivered enough stopping power that you have a second or two to reopen your baton and deliver a follow up strike.

Defensive maneuvers

Lastly, your baton does not just need to be used for striking. It's also a very effective weapon to block or parry any attacks from your opponent. Blocking is a relative simple concept, you just position the baton in between yourself and the incoming attack, using the weapon to shield yourself. Ensure you keep your bodyweight behind the baton to ensure you don't lose balance, and keep the baton relatively close to you, you don't need to extend your arm to meet the attack. If it's a powerful attack you're blocking, you can use your free hand to grip the baton and give you additional support for the block. We recommend keeping your free hand an inch or two behind the baton, perpendicular to the baton every time you're blocking, just in case you need it for support.

The key to absorbing the force of the blow when you're defending is good alignment in your body, so you can quickly recover from even the strongest strike, and very little movement is needed to get you back into a position to attack. Blocking effectively is a great technique when you're too close to strike, allowing you to stop any incoming blows. The downside is it's not going to do much more than disrupt your attacker, as blocking is a purely defensive maneuver that will not disable your opponent. You'll need to add in an offensive strike if you want to tip the fight back in your favor, and give you enough time to step back and perform a more powerful attack.

One thing to remember when you're on the defensive is that it requires more effort to transition from block to strike then back to block, instead of simply flowing from strike to strike to strike. Personally, blocking isn't one of my favorite techniques, as it requires you to be too close to your attacker, which puts you in potentially mortal danger. I always recommend keeping yourself at an

effective striking distance when you've got a baton in hand, so you can take full advantage of this impact weapon without risking yourself. That being said, there are times when a block is your only option, so ensure you incorporate learning how to block effectively into your practice sessions.

Striking with all your power

When you want to perform a strike that uses all the power you can generate, you need to put all of your weight and the momentum of your body behind the baton. This allows you to generate a far greater force than if you just used the muscles in your shoulder and arm to swing the baton. As you're striking the target, try to keep both of your feet firmly planted on the ground, as its from a stable foundation against the ground that you're able to generate the majority of the force. It's very similar to swinging a baseball bat, that requires your feet to be planted in order to get the most power in your swing.



In a combat situation the position of your feet is an important factor. Remember the defensive stance, and keep your feet at a 45 degree angle, shoulder width apart, with one for about a pace or two forwards. This helps you react better to the attacks your opponent makes. If they come forward with a horizontal slash aimed at your left, and you step forward angling to the right.

This results in you:

- Moving away from the attack without significantly changing the distance from your attacker
- Giving yourself more time to react, and a better angle to strike your attackers hand
- Positioning yourself inside their range, while keeping them at your effective strike distance

When you go to perform a strike, step outwards and aim for the outside of the hand they're holding the weapon with. This makes it more difficult for them to deliver a return strike, and you're in a better position to defend against any retaliation. If you need to move backwards, step backwards and out, and never in a straight line. If your attacker moves to rush you, the slight sideways movement can allow you a faster reaction time as you slip to the side, give you a little bit more space to potentially block any strike that is made, and be in a favorable position to attack.

Increasing Your Baton's Effectiveness

Training is the key to becoming very effective with your baton, as you incorporate your continued practice with advice and guidance from an instructor who has the knowledge in how to correctly wield a baton. If you don't know how to use your baton effectively, it doesn't make much sense to carry it with you because it won't be of any real help if you do ever need it.

With continued training you will be better able to control the amount of force you put behind each strike, and you'll learn how to effectively target any areas with a great deal of accuracy. This allows you to fight back using your baton, while minimizing the possibility you cause any long term injuries to your subject.

But like any confrontation, in a real world fight for your life it can be hard to target a specific area when you're dynamically applying the techniques you've learnt in training. Stress, the movement of your attacker, low light and the adrenaline pumping through your body will all have an effect on your ability to strike the correct areas. Unintentional strikes to risky areas can happen, and there may also be times when you're required to use lethal force to protect the life of others. If the circumstances demand it, and your life is at risk, targeting areas like the head or neck can quickly incapacitate a particularly violent attacker, just be prepared for any repercussions should the injuries you inflict result in a fatality. You'll then need to prove to the courts that you were justifiable in the level of force you used to defend yourself.

The real measure of your effectiveness with a baton is the amount of knockdown power you can inflict on your opponent with it. This will be influenced by the length and weight of the baton you're using, as well as the training you have had. Once you've got the strength and technique to wield your baton effectively, you can be confident in using it to defend yourself if you ever need to.

Safe use of a baton

Staying in control is key to safely using your baton against an opponent, and there are a number of things you need to be careful of if you're using this in a fight.

- **Don't do wild roundhouse swings.** Your attacker will see these coming, and counter or duck, and they do not give you any ability to moderate the level of force in your strike. If you hit a sensitive area, like your opponents temple, it is very likely it will be a killing blow.
- **Try to avoid using a baton on the head of face.** Depending on how hard you strike, blunt force trauma to the head can result in instant death, and you'll then be fighting for your freedom as you try to explain how you were defending yourself. Don't get yourself in this situation, simply aim for a less vulnerable part of the body. In addition, people will usually raise their arms to protect their head in a fight, making it more difficult to hit their head as they duck and weave to avoid your attacks. You may only cause a glancing blow, or even miss completely and give your attacker an opening to overpower you.
- **Display your baton proudly.** The presence of a weapon is often enough to deter a likely assailant, sending them off to find easier prey when they notice the holster that has your baton in clear view of any potential attackers. Most criminals tend to seek out vulnerable targets they can easily overpower, and by simply demonstrating you have a means to fight back can help you avoid an attack in the first place.

- **Keep your arm and wrist relaxed as you strike.** A secure grip on your baton is needed, but don't be too tense. You need a fluid motion in your arm to strike effectively, holding too tight will actually decrease the amount of force you can strike with.
- **Target your opponents weapon when you want to disarm them.** A swift strike to a weapon or your attackers hands is often enough to disarm an opponent, and if you can follow up with a powerful shot to the thigh to send them to the ground, writing in agony. If your life is in clear danger, it's OK to aim for the bony parts of their body, like the wrist, collarbone, knees, ribs, elbows and as a definite last result - the head. Your baton is much more effective against bone than muscle, but you also run the risk of delivering a lethal blow if you land a hard enough hit on a sensitive area like the head, so be sure you know what you're doing before delivering a fatal strike.
- **Lean into each strike, and put the momentum of your body behind it.** Just swinging with your arm is not nearly as effective if your aim is to deliver a knockdown blow. Plant your feet and put the full force of your body behind every swing. You may only get one chance.
- **Close your baton by striking the tip on the ground.** Depending on the model the angle required for this can be anywhere from 45 degrees to 90, and a sharp tap releases the friction lock, enabling you to start the retraction process. You may need to do this a number of times to close each individual section, again this depends on your particular baton.
- **Strike once and strike hard.** If you can disable your attacker with a single strike, if you do end up in court defending your case for self defense, hitting an attacker multiple times even if the strikes are soft looks a lot more like excessive force than a single powerful strike (so long as you didn't aim for their head).

Once you've effectively used a baton to stop the attack, this is also where you stop. The ultimate goal of using a baton for self defense is to disarm and disable your opponent, not to put them in the hospital. After you've created an opening, use it to escape and seek help, do not continue striking your attacker once they can no longer fight back.

Laws on Baton Use

Typically batons are used only by law enforcement officers, in an offensive move known as escalating force. When a potential criminal is unarmed, a baton can be lawfully used by a police officer to gain control of the criminal and make the arrest, using pain compliance to get obedience, while keeping a potentially violent offender at arm's length.

For citizens who choose to carry a baton, you need to be very careful bringing this weapon into a confrontation, because if you're facing an unarmed opponent the courts will deem that it was you who escalated the situation. In reality, you may also find your attacker does not wish to be struck with a weighted piece of steel pipe, and retaliates themselves by pulling out a previously concealed range weapon, like a Taser or a firearm. Be sure that your opponent does not have any ranged weapons before you reach for your baton.

If you wish to purchase a baton for self defense, check with your local laws to verify that owning one is indeed legal. Depending on your state you may need a concealed weapons permit, so always do your due diligence and ensure you're complying with the law before you purchase a baton. Because its destructive power makes it a lethal, many of the same principles that go with firearm use also apply to batons, many juries will view a baton the same way they view a gun, as a deadly weapon.



Source: <http://images.laws.com/criminal/criminal-news/alabama-police-officer-accused-of-excessive-force-33870.html.jpg>

To give you an example of the range of different laws, in California, you're not permitted to carry any form of club, and the penal code lists batons as "generally prohibited weapons." In order to carry a baton, you need to have an exception, which can be attained if you're a security guard, or require using and owning a baton in your line of work, for example if you're a dealer of historical artifacts. In Vermont and Arizona residents are allowed to carry batons so long as they are not exhibiting any unlawful behavior. In Alabama, possessing an expandable baton isn't a crime alone, but because the states penal code lists batons as a deadly weapon, if you intend to use it to inflict bodily harm it then becomes a crime. In Ohio, carrying a baton is not permitted, but if you can persuade the court you have a justifiable reason that you need to be carrying it, the courts have a tendency to be lenient. The only time you will get in real trouble is if you're using a baton while performing an illegal act.

What should also be noted is that many states do not specifically include provisions for expandable batons, however these are some locations that group these weapons under terms like "club," "billy" and "bludgeon," which makes them illegal to carry in states that consider these items illegal.

But hang on, what's the difference between having an extendable baton or a baseball bat?

The primary difference here is what the device has been designed for, and the baton has been designed to strike people, not play a friendly game of baseball. Deadly weapons are typically categorized based on their design and intended use, and regardless of how they are used, they are then classified accordingly. Because a baton has been designed to inflict pain it is a deadly weapon, whereas if you were to use a baseball bat in performing an assault, you would find the weapon would only be classified as a "dangerous instrument."

So are batons actually legal?

Again, this really depends on your local regulation. Check with the police station, as carrying a concealed baton is definitely illegal without a permit, but some states restrict your ability to carry one at all. Your best bet is to talk to your local police station in your area and check with the restrictions in place before you pick a baton for self defense, and risk getting prosecuted. Ignorance of the law is not a valid excuse to break it. If batons are legal in your area, and you decide to carry one for self defense, ensure you pick a high quality baton so you can confidently get a lifetime of use out of it.

Consequences of improper use

Because of the damage a baton inflicts, there are many cases where even police officers have been found to have used this weapon in an inappropriate manner. You need to be very careful bringing a baton into a self-defense situation, as there are serious consequences should you not show proper restraint or a reasonable use of force.

- In Illinois, a \$127,000 settlement was awarded to a victim suffering a skull fracture after an altercation with police officers who struck him with a baton
- In Michigan, \$35,000 in punitive damages was awarded to a victim who assumed a fighting stance, and the officers proceeded to repeatedly strike his groin and his back
- In California, \$43,000 was awarded to four victims after police broke up a loud party using batons, resulting in fractured vertebra and a broken wrist

Be very sure you're actually defending yourself with a proportionate level of force, **before** you pull out your baton, otherwise you may find that you win the altercation yet you end up in legal hot water very quickly, with the risk of ending up in prison.

Staying safe

Despite the challenges that come with determining the right situation to use a baton for self defense, we highly recommend these as a tool in your arsenal. You will not find a more versatile weapon that is relatively lightweight for the punch it can deliver. As an alternative to a firearm, especially in families with young children a baton can be a god-send, as there is much less risk of a fatal accident occurring, even if your children do get their hands on it. The same cannot always be said about a firearm.

Personally, I've only ever had to use my baton twice for self defense. On both occasions, after extending my baton and politely enquiring if my assailants would like to continue their attack, my would-be muggers decided they had made a decision in error, and each situation resolved without further incident. I truly believe that there is a good reason the baton has been part of the officers kit for decades, and my only advice is to get a quality baton, and make sure you use a proportionate level of force when defending yourself.

Hopefully you've now got a better idea of what makes the baton such an effective weapon for self-defense, but regardless of the weapons you choose to carry, whether it's a firearm, pepper spray or a baton, the best tool to keep you and your family safe is not the weapons you collect, but your brain and your attitude. Think before you act to keep yourself out of any potential dangerous situations, and if you do find yourself in one, make sure you've got the training, skills and mindset to make swift and effective decisions to resolve the conflict in your favor. Being prepared is key, especially when you can reach into your holster and draw out 26 inches of heavy steel to defend yourself, and demonstrate to your potential attackers both a confidence and willingness to use your baton to defend yourself.

