

Five Rules for Concealed Handgun Carry

By: Tom Perroni



1. Your concealed handgun is for the protection of life only. Draw it solely in preparation to protect yourself or an innocent third party from wrongful and life threatening criminal actions of another.
2. You must know exactly when you can use your handgun. A criminal adversary must have, or reasonably appear to have, the four elements in order for you to claim that you were in fear of your life (or the lives of others you had the right to protect i.e.; family). These elements are:
 - a. The **ABILITY** to inflict serious bodily injury or death. The attacker or attackers must have the ability to inflict death or grave bodily injury or harm (he / she is armed or reasonably appears to be armed with a weapon that could cause death or serious bodily injury, or there is a disparity of force, such as a male versus a female or a 300lb person versus a 110lb person or if you are an average citizen and your attacker is a skilled or professional fighter or a group attack three or more people versus one person).
 - b. The **OPPORTUNITY** to inflict bodily injury or death. The attacker or attackers must have the opportunity to employ the ability just defined. While the attacker may have the ability to cause death or bodily injury, they must have the opportunity to do so at this moment - right here right now. "Right here right now" means that moment they are in a position to cause you bodily injury or death. They can not be threatening you from a block away with a knife claiming they will stab you right now. They must be in close enough proximity to employ the knife. How close is too close? Is someone say 21 feet away with a knife to close? The answer would be yes the average person can cover that distance in about 1.5 seconds. So if someone was say eight yards away with a knife and no obstacles between you would they be to close? The answer is yes. However we will discuss the 21 foot rule in a future article.
 - c. You must be in **JEOPARDY** the attacker must be behaving in such a manner that you as a reasonable and prudent person taking into account the totality of the circumstance at that moment, conclude that the attacker is placing you in jeopardy. You must at this point be in fear of your life or serious bodily injury. You need not know that attackers intent (we aren't mind readers). However if the actions noted put you in fear of your life or serious bodily injury then this represents jeopardy.

d. PRECLUSION is not so much an individual consideration as it is an all encompassing lens through which to view your actions. It is more complex than the other three, but just as important. It is the concept that, in any situation, you are to use force only as a last resort, or only when circumstances preclude all other options. Then you must use only the force necessary to control the situation. Your use of force must stop when the threat ceases. The point is you must exercise self-restraint to the greatest extent possible. You must remember you bear the burden of proof. Until your lawyer proves otherwise, the law merely sees you as two citizens in a dispute. There must have been no other course of action you could have taken to maintain your safety or the safety of the innocent third party except the use of force (such as escape).

3. Fight or Flight. As a CHP holder I will assume that you will be armed a great majority of the time. However, if you are a Sheepdog, does this mean that you will always stand and fight when confronted? Just because you are armed does not mean you must confront the BG (Bad Guy) at gunpoint. You must develop your "situational awareness" skills. I would recommend my article on the "Combat Mindset" which can be found on the USCCA website. You must be in condition Yellow at all times. However, your goal is to avoid conflict and only use force as a last resort. You can "Tactically Relocate" that's a cool way to say RUN... or move to a position of cover and observe the situation. I teach that the BRAIN is our greatest weapon... we all need to use it. "Conflict is inevitable; Combat is an option".



4. Do not let your emotions get the best of you. If, despite your best efforts to the contrary, you do get in some kind of heated dispute or altercation with another person while you are armed, never mention, imply or brandish your handgun for the purpose of intimidation or one-upmanship. This will simply make a bad situation worse for you.

5. You must get Training. I can't say this enough: take as much training as you can from as many different instructors that you can. Your tactical toolbox needs to be full, but not just with handgun training; also include training on other tools such as knife, empty handed, martial arts, and shotgun, AR-15 / M4. Learn as much as you can from everyone you can. However, you need to progress in your training to get a solid foundation. At Perroni's Tactical Training Academy we use the crawl, walk, run method of training.

Tom Perroni is the owner, President and Chief Instructor of Perroni's Tactical Training Academy. Pulling on a five-year law enforcement operational background, Tom has spent the last fifteen years delivering training to government, military, law enforcement and private security companies. Tom is also the lead contract instructor trainer for the Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, responsible for vetting private security trainers approved by DCJS. Tom is also a Contract Instructor for Blackwater Training Center. Tom appreciates feedback and can be reached through the Contact page on his company website at <http://www.perronitactical.com>.