

Improvised Weapons for Self Defense



When you are in a physical struggle to protect yourself or the innocent, you must use any advantage at your disposal. Your attacker will not show you the courtesy of fighting fairly, so you must be able to identify and use anything in your environment as a weapon. There are generally four types of improvised weapons, although some objects can fit into multiple categories depending on how they are used. The four types of weapons are: Striking Weapons, Pointed/Cutting Weapons, Distraction Weapons, and Shields. As you may have guessed, not all weapons are intended to inflict injury on your attacker. Objects can be used as distractions or to shield yourself from the attack.

Striking Weapons

Objects used as striking weapons are intended to injure the attacker with a sharp blow. This type of weapon can either be held in the hands or used as a projectile. Almost any hard, heavy object can be used as a striking weapon (including walls and the ground). Some common striking weapons include:

- Baseball bat
- Chair
- Flashlight
- Heavy ashtray
- Rock/brick
- Shoe
- Telephone/cell phone
- Umbrella

Pointed/Cutting Weapons

Objects used as pointed or cutting weapons are intended to injure the attacker by stabbing or slashing/cutting them. Any sharp or pointed hard object can be used in this manner. Some common pointed/cutting weapons include:

- Broken glass bottle
- Keys
- Knife
- Pen
- Scissors
- Screwdriver

Distraction Weapons

Objects used as distractions are intended to distract or blind your attacker to create an opening for escape or to set them up for an attack. Objects may be thrown in the face of the attacker to blind them or thrown in another direction to distract them from your movements. Some common distraction weapons include:

- Ashes from an ashtray
- Books
- Coins
- Dirt/sand
- Hot/cold beverages
- Spit
- Towel
- Wallet/purse

Shields

Objects used as shields are intended to protect you from the attacker's strikes and possibly certain weapons. Almost any sturdy object that can be put between you and the attacker can be used as a shield. Some common improvised shields include:

- Backpack
- Book
- Briefcase
- Chair
- Garbage can lid
- Lid to a pot

Always be aware of how the objects that you carry with you and that are in your environment can be used as weapons. Your briefcase can serve as both a striking weapon and a shield. Your belt can be used as a whip or to temporarily blind the attacker. Your pen can be used to inflict serious damage if you use it to stab your attacker. If you keep these points in mind and remain aware of your environment, you can gain an advantage that can help you survive an attack.

Remember that your goal is to create an opening and escape. Just because you have a weapon does not mean that you should engage in a conflict any longer than necessary. Doing so will only increase your risk.