



# Knife Tips #4

by Keith Pascal

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This book is designed to provide information about knife self defense. It is sold with the understanding that neither the author, the publisher, nor anyone involved with the book is engaged in the rendering of legal advice, or advice and expertise for your specific situation, environment, or set of circumstances.

Picking up a knife in a fight is serious business. Such an action could result in legal consequences. You'd also have to live knowing you may have maimed or killed another individual.

Services of competent professionals should be sought, to help you gain more expertise in judging self-defense situations and appropriate reactions.

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# **Tell Me How ‘You’ Hold Your Knife: Do You Threaten or Conceal?**

It’s a cold evening. You are in the “establishment,” enjoying food and conversation with friends. It’s getting later — your friends start drifting out the door, one by one.



Then, it’s your turn to leave. As you leave, you shut the door behind you.

You head off, on foot, down the street.

Behind you, you hear a noise. You turn. Two men who had been inside before, are now walking behind you .... at a quick pace.

You walk faster.

So do they.

They are catching up....

Having read numerous issues of [‘Martial Arts Mastery,’](#) you know not to fight with your back against a wall, or worse, backed into a corner. So, you pick an open spot, to confront them.

What these guys don’t know is that you have a nice, new (and very sharp) knife on you.

And now, with all of that set up, here are the two-hundred dollar questions:

Should you hide your knife, and when the men move in for an attack, suddenly surprise them with slashes, thrusts and cuts of your weapon?

Or should you brandish the blade in the air, and scare the snot out of them — make them decide early that you are definitely NOT some helpless victim? (Seeing your ‘scary’ techniques, they turn, and decide it’s not worth trying to mug you.)

**So, do you show the blade or keep the blade hidden?**

**And that's really all I wanted to ask you. You notice, we didn't talk about:**

- \* legal length of blades, and whether hiding it makes it a 'concealed' weapon in the eyes of the law.
- \* the legal ramifications of being the first to stab with a blade.
- \* whether or not you could find another establishment, somewhere safe, to duck into and avoid the fight.
- \* whether or not your attackers have knives of their own.
- \* how you know they are about to attack.

I just want you to think about whether you keep your weapon secret for maximum surprise or if you scare the living ca-ca out of them by sticking a sharp knife in their faces.

By the way, my business partner always "keeps his cards close to his chest." He is not likely to reveal secrets early. And without asking him, I am sure he feels that most of our population doesn't possess this skill.

After all, it requires patience.

# Your Pre-Fight Style

As I said in the last article, I am not trying to advise you to scare early 'or' keep the blade hidden.

That's your choice.

Let's bring the discussion to empty hand fighting, Okay?

You are being hassled. Hassled to the point that you can't turn away.

Unfortunately, you are going to have to deal with the jerk in front of you. For whatever reason, it's unavoidable.

So, what's your pre-fight style?

Do you feign fear? Make the guy overly confident, so when he attacks, he will be utterly and completely taken off guard.

Or do you get mean early? Lift your shoulders, jut out your chest ... get in his face and tell him that what he is about to do will be a BIG MISTAKE!

(With enough menace in your attitude, you feel that you can get him to back down, or at least make him unsure of himself when he attacks.)

Which is your style?

## Do you hide the fact from everyone that you have martial training?

Personally, I don't hide that I am a martial artist in casual conversation. I know that many of you don't tell anyone of your skill. Your martial knowledge is "your" secret weapon.

While I may discuss martial arts with anyone willing, I don't share my skill 'level' often. As far as the casual conversationalist knows, I am just a big, overweight guy, with gray around the temples, who 'writes' about martial arts.

Let them think my skills are nominal.

## Now, let's talk about you:

I was going to make this an 'open' chapter, where I asked your opinion, without giving mine. Somehow, I think that many of you would rather have some solid advice in this area.

OK, here it goes ...

Showing "the knife" or showing off your martial skill, is like a "*Beware of Dog*" sign on the gate in front of someone's house.





To the casual passerby, it's a good warning, and a minor deterrent. It may keep some "minor miscreants" from trespassing.

But to a professional thief, you have provided some valuable information. There may or may not be a dog, but now the robber knows to be careful and to treat the situation as if there were a menacing dog.

**It doesn't stop the pro at all.**

In fact, it makes the job a little easier. He (or she) can now plan on how to deal with a dog. Hollywood moviemakers would suggest we bring along some big steaks, a tranquilizer dart, or a female dog. (Why do we always assume that the guard dog is a heterosexual male?)

**Look. You have all seen "Enter the Dragon."**

Do you think for one second that Ohara's board—breaking demonstration impressed Bruce Lee?

No, me neither.

In fact, most of the time, when a martial artist tries to 'wow' me with a kick, a punch, a piece of a kata or what-not, I am less than impressed.

It's like "beware of dog" sign (maybe a fluorescent one) — fine for the beginner, but gives away too much information to a seasoned practitioner.

And that folks is my stance on showing off 'your skill' ... or 'your knife.'

**End note:**

Keep in mind, this was for ‘real confrontations.’

If I meet you, I’d be more than happy to share my martial arts with you. If we are friends, then it’s my duty to help you get as good as I am able.

And in person, I am much more likely to help people perfect techniques — those moves or principles that I am unwilling to spread over the Internet or put in print. That makes sense.

The teacher in me advises ... don’t always draw attention to yourself and your martial skill in public, but always try to share ‘the good stuff’ with your good friends.

# Do You Have Two Super Skills?

Face it. Some of us are showmen. (The e-mail dictionary didn't accept "showpeople.")

Are you a show-off with a knife? Do you have special flourishes with a Balisong (Butterfly Knife)? Can you throw a knife and have it stick with any facility?

Or maybe your skill is in empty-hand martial demonstrations....

Do you love snapping a speedy back fist, on request? Can you make a real popping sound, even without wearing a starched gi? Does the punch just whiz by a spectator's face?

And what about you [Coin Snatchers](http://CoinSnatching.com) out there? Don't you just love the surprise on their faces when the spectator's hand opens to reveal that you not only speed grabbed the coin, but you were so fast that you left another, different coin, in its place? (<http://CoinSnatching.com>)

My advice is that if you are someone who likes to talk, have TWO super martial-arts skills.

A few of the best martial artists that I know are also expert marksmen. They'll talk martial arts with anyone, yet very few know of their abilities with handguns. (The public assumes that it's all over if a martial artist encounters someone with a gun.)

Another example *was* my lack of ability with a knife. After a few years of studying with Steve Golden, he announced that we'd be training with "live" (sharp) knives.

Gulp. I looked at all of the black belts in the room. Another gulp.

I was "afraid of the blade," and I let everyone know it.

### **And now?**

Over the years, I kept up the pretense that knives scared me.

Unfortunately, my hidden ability was made public when I published **10 Days to Better Knife Fighting** and **Blur Smith: The Greatest Knife Fighter in the World**.

(I guess I got over my fear ;-)

Do you have a super martial-arts skill? Something you are proud of?

**Now, the real question is ... "Do you have TWO some-things?"**

If so, you could make one skill public, and keep the second skill hidden. It's even better if everyone assumes that you are an utter klutz with the second skill.

There are lots of movie examples. I can't think of the specific movie where the protagonist says that he doesn't like guns ... then at the end, he uses one and is an expert, after all. They made him nervous, but that didn't mean he didn't know how to use one.

Of course, there is the example with Tom Selleck in "Quigley Down Under." He let's everyone know throughout the movie that he is an expert with a rifle. He avoids pistols like the plague. (Until the end, hint, hint.)

Even if you have a skill to show the world, you still keep something in reserve.

It's nice to know that you have your secret weapon, if need be.

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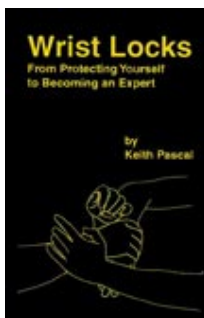
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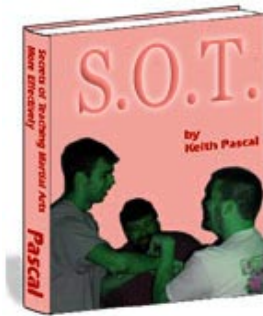
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