

Demonstrations guide

Information on and guides to organising and participating in demonstrations, marches, pickets and other similar activities safely and effectively.

Guide to public order situations



A brief survival guide for when a demonstration turns into a riot or public order situation, and preventing the police from gaining the upper hand once a situation has occurred.

This article is focussed on the UK, but some points are universal.

Bear in mind that the police are probably much better equipped and trained for close combat than you or I. They have been psyching themselves up for hours, are likely to have plenty of reserves standing by and usually feel confident with the law behind them. Beating the police is about outwitting them, not necessarily hitting them over the head.

The aims and methods of the state

British Law has traditionally been concerned with keeping the peace and not necessarily preventing or solving crime.

The roots of such public order policing can be traced back to the common law offences introduced to control the havoc caused by mercenaries returning from the Hundred Years War. These laws evolved into the 1967 Riot Act, which established in law the concept of arresting anyone present at a riot, regardless of whether they are guilty of violent acts. The Riot Act no longer exists, replaced by the Public Order Act in 1986. The reality of the situation is that the police act as if it did.

The Public Order Manual of Tactical Operations and Related Matters provides the police with clear instructions for dealing with situations where public order is threatened. This manual has never been made public, has no legal standing and was never discussed by Parliament. It basically gives the police guidance in the use of pre-emptive acts of violence, to achieve the following:

1. To break the crowd up into manageable portions, keep them moving then eventually disperse them.

2. To provoke violence as a way of justifying their actions and flushing out any ringleaders.
3. To contain the crowd and stop the trouble spreading.
4. To intimidate and break the spirit of the crowd.
5. To gather evidence for later.

The manual contains details of tactics which include the use of snatch squads, baton charges and the use of horses to disperse and intimidate large crowds. Make no mistake - the cops will be prepared to do whatever it takes to ensure that our actions and protests are ineffective.

So how do we make sure our actions are effective?

- Don't be tempted to stand around and fight – get to where you can cause disruption without the police around.
- Keep moving, as a group and individually. Fill gaps. Never stand still – chaos puts the police off.
- Nip police attempts to form lines or divide the crowd in the bud.
- Don't be intimidated.
- Do everything in small teams, prepare in advance.
- Think defensively. Protect each other and escape routes.
- Always face outwards, ie. away from us and towards them.
- Link arms as often as possible, form barriers, use your body.
- Move quickly and calmly, never giving the police time to react.

Preparations

Staying out of jail and hospital need not be hard work. Most people caught up in riots manage it. But with a bit of forethought you can turn surviving a public order situation into a living order situation!

The aims of the protestors

No one really 'wins' at the end of the day, but that doesn't matter. What matters is that you are unhurt, still free and some egg is still stuck to the face of your original target after the police have been and gone.

With all that in mind, we suggest you stick to these three basic aims when you find yourself in a riot:

1. Get you and your mates away safely, rather than fighting.
2. Find a place to cause embarrassment and economic damage to your real target, rather than fighting.
3. Help others in trouble by administering first aid and de-arresting, rather than fighting.

Sticking together

Always try to form an affinity group before setting out and at least have a buddy system whereby everybody has one person to look out for, and to act with, when a situation arises.

Affinity groups are just a handful of people who work together as a unit, as and when circumstances arise. They can meet beforehand to discuss ideas and possible reactions, practice or role play scenarios. The more your group meets, the quicker your reaction times will get and your effectiveness will improve. Affinity groups can often act without the need for internal discussion, they naturally develop their own shorthand communications and can divide up skills and equipment amongst each oth-

er. Water, D-locks, paint, first aid, food, banners and spare clothes is a lot for one person to carry, but divided up between five people it's nothing.

Do pay attention to what you're going to wear in advance. Consider precautions that are discrete, adaptable, easy to apply and discard. Thinking about these threats in advance will help:

1) Surveillance

Masking makes it difficult to identify individuals in a crowd and if everyone masks up no one will stand out. The cut off sleeve of a long sleeved t-shirt makes a good mask. Wear it casually around your neck. If you wear glasses use a cut off section of a stocking (hold-ups work best as they have thick elastic) instead of a t-shirt, this prevents glasses steaming up. You can use it as a hair-tie, if you're a hippy type, until you need it.

A hooded top will cover most of your face and a baseball cap on its own provides good protection from most static cameras, which are usually mounted high up. Sunglasses give good protection against harmful rays including UV and CCTV. Worth bearing in mind is that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 made an Amendment to Section 60 of The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. It gives any uniformed police officer the power to insist on the removal of any item of clothing a person is wearing or may wear for the purpose of concealment of identity. The item can be seized and retained.

2) Truncheon blows

A placard makes a good temporary shield and light strips of plastic under your clothing or on the forearm could offer some protection. Unless you are intending to try and break police lines, the best protective clothing is probably a good pair of running shoes. More recently, the WOMBLES - inspired by Italy's Ya Basta group - have taken a more positive stance to protection by wearing thick layers of padding under their clothes, together with helmets. This enables them to keep police lines at bay, protecting themselves and the crowd behind them from truncheon blows. They are able to push through police lines and free demonstrators trapped by the use of a Section 60 (see later).

3) CS Spray

The best authorities suggest a solution of camden tablets (used to clean home brewing equipment), some say use lots of water, but its effectiveness is unclear. Whatever you do don't rub it in or take a hot shower. If in doubt get clear and let the wind blow it away from your skin. This will take 20 minutes.

4) Baton charges

If you want to take a banner, use long strips of plastic haulage tarps rather than a sheet. This can be used as a moveable barrier to stop charging police or for you to advance behind. Wrap the ends in on themselves so the police can't easily grab it. Hide behind and hold on tight.

Defending

If you aren't doing anything else you should always be defending.

Whether that means securing a building, strengthening your position on the street, barricading (see later) or protecting others. Here are some ideas:

1. Keep looking outwards. For example, if someone is being given first aid, stand and face away from them.

2. Form cordons as much as possible. Anything the police want, including buildings and especially sound systems needs a strong outwardly facing cordon. Things may be quiet and you feel like a prick linking arms or holding hands with complete strangers, but do it. Repeat the mantra 'It's not a hippy peacenik thang, it's a rock hard revolutionary thang.' Take a leaf out of the police manual: stand like you're about to do 'the conga' and stick your right hand down the back of the trousers of the person in front, repeat along the line, asking permission first. It's virtually unbreakable.

3. Get into the habit of dancing with your back towards the sound system.

4. Someone needs to watch the police from a good vantage point, so that their next move can be pre-empted. On top of the sounds van is not a good place; no one can hear when you shout "Here come the dog handlers! Fucking run!" and any gestures you do will be interpreted as dancing...

5. Sitting down is good for dissuading the police from charging, but you should only do it in large numbers and the crowd needs to feel confident. We advise you to sit down as soon as the shout goes up, hesitating is not good, you can assess the situation once you're down there. Hopefully others will do the same. If it still looks viable five seconds later, link arms with your neighbours. There are times when sitting down is not really recommended – horses are maybe too unpredictable but the authors have never seen horses charge into a seated crowd, the way they do into a standing crowd. It's a good way to avoid the crowd getting split up. Some particularly violent gangs of police just aren't worth it either. Only experience will teach you when to sit down.

6. Barricades can be more hassle than they are worth. A solid impassable barricade can reduce your own options when you need to run. Bear in mind that anything you build now you are likely to get dragged over later - leave out the barbed wire. The best barricades are random matter strewn all over the place – horses can't easily charge over them, police find it hard to hold a line in among them, but individuals can easily pick their way through. If you know police are advancing from only one direction and you have clear escape routes behind, barricades can be sensible. The tactics the cops developed during the 1980's riots was to drive the van into crowds with TSG [Tactical Support Group] in the back, jump out and arrest everyone they caught. Barricades are an effective way of stopping this.

7. The best form of defence of all is CHAOS! A complicated hierarchy needs orders to act on and those orders come from individuals making informed decisions. If the situation changes constantly they simply cannot keep up. Keep moving all the time, weave in and out of the crowd. Change your appearance. Open up new directions and possibilities, be unpredictable. If you find yourself stood still and passive for more than a minute then you've stopped acting defensively.

Basic police choreography

With any crowd the police will be looking to break it up as soon as possible. Crowd dispersal is achieved with baton charges, horse charges and sometimes CS gas and vehicles. Some particularly nasty or out of control units may pile straight into the crowd, but there is usually a gap between the time they arrive and the start of the dispersal. This stalling time is often just dithering by the commanding officer, or psyching-tooling up time for the troops (the latter is easy to spot). This aside,

there are three more reasons why they aren't wading straight in, see if you can spot them next time you're waiting for 'kick-off':

1. They haven't worked out where they're going to disperse you to.
2. They want to gather more evidence/flush out more ring leaders. This involves keeping you right where they can see you and provoking you like hell. They will film you and photograph you and send out snatch squads to pick off individuals.
3. They are waiting for back up because you out number them or are in danger of gaining the upper hand.

However, since Euston Station, November 30th 1999, the police have been using the tactic of coralling people and preventing them from leaving. Section 60 of the Criminal Justice Act 1994 gives police blanket powers to stop and search anyone in a certain area where they 'reasonably suspect' there will be incidents of serious violence. Often this tactic is used to gather information, but you're not obliged to help. They can't read anything of yours (address book, bank cards etc) and you don't have to give a name or address, but they can search you for weapons only. Being held for hours is dispiriting, you can't do much, and the police may push you about and provoke an opportunity to crack a few skulls. This is where the WOMBLES come into their own, you can take a more positive approach and not just wait around until the cops allow to let you leave. The old bill may also detain people to prevent a breach of the peace where they fear one is imminent. The legality of this is questionable, there will most likely be legal challenges in the near future.

The dance steps

OK, so they've stopped fucking around and now it's time to send you home, with a great story to tell your friends (let's face it, they won't see the truth on the news). The bulk of the action is shocking in its predictability. The following will be repeated over and over, in different combinations, until they win or get bored:

1. Officers in lines will pen you in (preferably on the pavement).
2. Officers in lines will push into a crowd to divide it in half.
3. Batons/horses/CS spray attack penned in crowds to lower morale.
4. Charges that slowly push you down a street (rush of cops >> strengthen line > repeat).
5. Crowds throwing missiles will be 'put to flight', as it's harder to throw stuff if you are running.
6. Shift changes. (Often look for the arrival of reinforcements. It is important to try and spot the difference for reasons of morale, and that they are vulnerable during shift changes).

Most of the above require the individual officers to be in tight lines, so it's important to stop those lines forming. Unfortunately we are quite bad at this. The first line drawn is the most crucial and most people don't see it coming. The police will try and form lines right in amongst you if they can, thus weakening your position at the same time as strengthening theirs.

Line dancing or stopping lines forming

If the crowd seems volatile, the police will hold right back and the first line drawn will be some distance away. But if you are all hanging around looking confused and passive they will sneak right in amongst you and the first lines will be dividing lines. This is how it works:

The first divide the crowd up into 'actors' and 'viewers'. Small groups of officers will move into the crowd and start politely encouraging the timid ones onto the pavement. Once the crowd starts moving the way they want, those little groups of cops will get bigger and start joining up. Before you know it, there's two crowds on two pavements with two lines of cops penning them in. Let the head cracking commence. Or...

- Don't stand and watch them.
- Don't look like you'll let them get anywhere near you.
- Spot gaps in the crowd and fill them.
- Work out which space they want to take and get there with your mates first.
- Get long tarp banners to the front to stop them advancing and filming.
- Protect your escape routes by standing in them.
- Get those who have turned into spectators off the pavements, back in the crowd and moving around.

Of course, now having resisted being split up and penned in, they may just let fly with the baton charge. But at least you're now in a stronger position to deal with it and escape. Whatever happens next, don't just stand there waiting for it. If you've managed to get their line drawn far away, you've bought valuable time and space – so use it! Even if their line is right up against you, they still haven't broken down your numbers.

However, it's only a matter of time before the police try and get closer/break you up again. Use the time to get out of there slowly and in one block, this is the last thing they want – a large mob moving around freely. Whatever you do, don't stand there waiting for them to try again. You are now in control to go and do whatever you want, so do it. If they have blocked your only exit, try...

Counter advancing

This involves moving your lines forward into theirs, thus gaining more space and opening up more exits. Use the front line as a solid wall, linking arms and moving slowly forward. Use the long banner like a snowplough (this stops them grabbing you or breaking the line, they can still hit you with truncheons though). If there's enough of you WOMBLED up, your protective clothing will make that get-away that much safer and easier.

Snow plows

A line of crowd control barriers can also be carried by the front line like a snowplough to break into the police ranks. The front of the 'plough' can then be opened once their line is breached and the barriers pushed to the side to contain the cops. This all needs a lot of co-ordination and balls, the advantage gained will not last long, so push all your ranks forward through the gap straight away.

Using your body

Your body is your best and most adaptable tool. It is best used in concert with others. For instance it could take a long time for twenty to scale a wall, but stand two people against the wall, bowed together with their arms locked and you've got a set of human steps! (Those waiting to climb can link arms around the steps to protect them). Always look for ways to use your body to escape.

Re-forming

Keep looking for ways of increasing your numbers, by joining up with other groups and absorbing

stragglers. Everyone has to get out and you'll stand a better chance of getting out unharmed, with all your belongings and equipment if you leave together at the same time.

Snatch squads

When the police want to isolate and arrest an individual in a crowd they will usually employ a snatch squad.

Watch for groups of ten or so fully dressed cops, rallying behind the police lines. They will be instructed by evidence gatherers and a superior (you can often spot them pointing out the person to be snatched). The lines will open temporarily to let the squad through. Half the officers will perform the snatch, the other half will surround them with batons, hitting anyone who gets in the way. Once they have their target he/she is bundled away, back behind police lines.

Try and beat the snatch squad by:

1. Keeping the crowd moving around.
2. Spot the squad preparing.
3. If possible warn the target to get the hell out of the area.
4. Linking arms in an impenetrable wall in the squad's path.
5. Surround the squad once they are in the crowd and intimidate them so much that they panic and give up.
6. If you are being grabbed or pressure pointed, keep your head and arms moving. Don't lash out if you can help it, or you will end up with an assault charge too.

De-arresting

The best time is to do this is as soon as the snatch has happened. You need a group who know how to break grips and some people to act as blockers. Once you've got your person back all link arms and move off into the crowd. The police may try and snatch back or arrest one of the de-arresters.

This guide is an ongoing project. Please send your comments and additions to us for the next version, to 'Public Order Guide' c/o Manchester Earth First! Dept. 29, 255 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 5LW

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Section 60 advice guide



Some information and tips on the law, your rights, and how to react when police have enforced a "Section 60" order on a demonstration or picket.

At some recent demonstrations, police have cordoned off the demonstration, corralling large numbers of people into an increasingly confined area before taking their names, addresses and photographs, eventually releasing them one by one. This was done under the obscure Section 60 of the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994 (originally designed to prevent minor football disturbances).

The S60 order is a new police tactic at major demonstrations used effectively to control, subdue and gain personal information about protesters despite having the extraordinarily limited power simply to "Stop and search in anticipation of violence".

Its effectiveness in the past was due to the fact that no-one knew just exactly what powers the police had under S60. As it turns out, they have very few powers.

In the event of an S60 order being issued these are the important things to remember: The police have the power to search you for weapons (and dangerous instruments). They have no other powers under S60. They can only detain you "for as long as necessary to carry out a search".

They have no legal power to force you to give them your name and address. *Under no circumstances give it to them*: it will be kept on file for *seven years*. When asked, say "no comment".

They have no legal power to force you to have your photograph taken. Do not allow them to do this. This too will be kept on file for seven years. Keep your head turned away, or put your hand in front of your face.

They have no legal power to ask you to remove any item of clothing in public view, other than that which is concealing your identity. Any facial masking can be confiscated.

If you are asked to remove coats/jumpers etc, *refuse outright*. They have no legal power to search wallets, purses, inside small pockets etc. This is an S60 search, for weapons only. If they ask to search wallets, purses, inside small pockets etc, *refuse outright*.

If you have a bag they will search that, but again for weapons only. Any other items, documents, potentially incriminating articles are *off limits*.

Do not allow them to examine any of your personal possessions (cash cards, student cards, diaries, organisers etc). This is not part of S60. Under Article 8 of the UK Human Rights Act 1998 your privacy is assured. Make sure they know this. They can only confiscate weapons and facial masking.

They have the power to use "reasonable force" but ONLY if you do not submit to a search. No other force can be used for any other purpose.

They must tell you their name, number, station they're based at the reason for the search. Ask them for this. Not only will it piss them, off but if they don't provide this information the search will be illegal. Remember: in an S60 situation, you are accused of nothing and you have done nothing wrong. *Do not answer any questions*, however insignificant or polite. Say "*no comment*" to everything.

Most of all, *don't be scared by them!* They know the law, and now so do you. Use it!

Legal advice: Section 60

Contrary to information being circulated, the legal basis of the tactic of police cordoning off demonstrations and forbidding large numbers of people to leave from inside the cordon - as used at J18, N30 and Mayday2K - is NOT s60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

Police, indeed anyone, can use reasonable force to detain people to prevent a breach of the peace where they fear one is imminent. This was the basis of the effective mass imprisonment at previous demonstrations. It is not an arrest.

The powers in s60 have been used to search people individually as they are being released from the cordon and this is where the confusion stems from.

S60 can be used where a senior cop reasonably suspects there will be incidents of serious violence or that people are carrying dangerous weapons or offensive weapons in a locality (inserted by s8 Knives Act 1997).

1. Once police have released you from the cordoned area, they can then only detain you "for as long as necessary to carry out a search". While in the cordoned area they can detain you as long as they have reasonable (i.e. objectively justifiable) grounds that this is necessary to prevent a breach of the peace.
2. While performing a search they *can* ask you to remove outer clothing, such as coats and jumpers in public. In addition, s60(4A) - inserted by s25 CDA 1998 - allows the police to force you to remove anything they reasonably suspect you are wearing wholly or mainly to conceal your identity. There is nothing to stop you putting something else on after you have taken off a mask or had it confiscated.
3. The s60 search is for "offensive weapons or dangerous instruments". This is not limited to large things such as samurai swords and stun guns (taking examples from certain Sunday papers) but can include razor blades. They *can* search inside wallets, purses, small pockets for these.
4. They *can* search personal possessions for dangerous instruments that might be hidden inside and they can also seize prohibited articles such as drugs. While it is true that Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) contains a qualified right of respect for your private life, and that under s6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 public authorities such as the police will be acting un-

lawfully if they breach any right in the ECHR, it is wrong to see this as doing something as absolute as assuring your privacy.

Before police start searching through personal possessions, e.g. address books, cards in wallet, warn them politely that if they do start trying to read what's in your address book or on the cards in your wallet rather than performing a cursory search, i.e. seeing if razor blades fall out onto the ground from your address book, they will be acting outside their powers and you will stop them.

8. Before conducting the search, an officer must take reasonable steps to communicate their name, number, station, etc. They also have to provide you with a written record of the search, which you should ask for. If they can't provide one straight away they must tell you which police station you can get it from. Police dislike form filling and paperwork particularly when it leaves less time to bash anti-capitalists and then fit them up.

9. Under the Data Protection Act, anyone holding personal data relating to other people (this includes video and photographic footage) has to provide copies to those people for £10, as demonstrated by Mark Thomas on C4. If substantial numbers of people on the Mayday demonstration exercise this right, the police will have to spend their resources on finding footage with those individuals on, in order to collate it and send it to them, rather than gathering intelligence and preparing for arrests.

Taken from the [UHC Collective website](#)

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Terrorism Act 2000 guide



A quick guide and brief summary of the parts of the British Terrorism Act 2000 of relevance to radical workers.

"Terrorism" is defined very widely and could include what people would normally think of as direct action. It gives the Police very wide powers to stop search and arrest, and limits people's rights - including on arrest. The Act has been (mis-)used extensively against workers - most famously against 82-year-old Walter Wolfgang who heckled Tony Blair and the Labour Party conference in 2005.[1](#)

Terrorism as defined by S1 of the TA 2000

It includes:

The THREAT of action (threat is enough - no actual action needed)-which is designed to influence the government , with the purpose of advancing a political or ideological cause, involving :

- serious damage to property
- interference with or seriously disrupting an electronic system.

This is only part of the definition, and does not include actions which we would normally think of as being defined as terrorism.

All 3 parts must be satisfied to come within the definition - there must be an act or threat (of eg serious damage to property), it must be done to influence the government, and it must be to advance a political or ideological cause.

S33 Cordoned areas

Where the Police are undertaking a "terrorist investigation (preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism- see definition above) they can cordon off an area. Lasts for 14 days, can be extended to max of 28 days.

While an area is cordoned, Police can order people to leave and prohibit access to that area.

S41

Police can arrest at any time anyone they reasonably suspect to be a terrorist (see definition above).

Detention can be for up to 48 hours (extension can then be applied for to court) access to a lawyer can be denied and normal PACE rules do not apply.

S43

Police can stop and search to see if a person has anything on them to prove they are a terrorist - must be same sex search.

S44 Stop and search powers

Authorization is given by Assistant Chief Constable and can only be given to prevent acts of terrorism.

It relates to a specified area and can last for up to 28 days.

It can only be used to search for things that could be used for terrorism, BUT Police can search even if they don't have grounds to suspect that people have anything on them of this kind.

They can search pedestrians and anything carried by them, cars, drivers passengers and anything they have with them

Police *can't* ask for removal of any clothing in public except hats shoes jacket/coat and gloves.

Police *can* detain people for as long as is reasonable to search

Police *can* use "reasonable force"

If you are searched under this section you can ask for a written statement from the police to confirm you were stopped, and they must give you one - so that makes it all OK then!

Where an authorisation is given it must be confirmed (or cancelled) by the Secretary of State within 48 hours.

Failing to stop is an offence max sentence 6 months or a fine.

S57 Possession for Terrorist Purposes

It's an offence to possess an "article " ("substance or any other thing") in circumstances which give rise to a reasonable suspicion that it's connected with the preparation of instigation of acts of terrorism. It's enough if it's found in the house you live in - unless you can prove that you didn't know it was there

S58 Collection of information

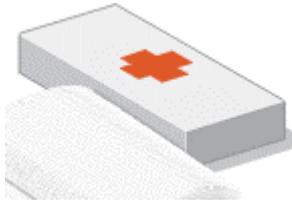
It's an offence to collect or have information likely to be useful to someone preparing an act of terrorism (see S1 definition above). This can include photos or e-mails, unless you can prove that you had a "reasonable excuse "to have it.

Taken from the [UHC Collective website](#)

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- [1. See BBC News: Hero's return for Labour heckler - http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4292342.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4292342.stm)

An activist's guide to basic first aid



A short guide to health care and first aid to be used on demonstrations or during direct action when injuries are possible, such as large pickets, blockades or demonstrations.

Preparation

What to wear

- Comfortable, protective shoes that you can run in.
- Clothing covering all your skin to protect from sun and pepper spray exposure.
- Shatter-resistant eye protection (ie. Sunglasses, swim goggles, or gas mask)
- Bandana to cover nose and mouth soaked in water or vinegar, it can aid breathing during chemical exposure.
- Weather-related gear (ie. Rain gear or sun hat)
- Heavy duty gloves if you plan to handle hot tear gas canisters.
- Fresh clothes in plastic bag (in case yours get contaminated by chemical weapons)
- A cap or a hat to protect from the sun and from chemical weapons.

What to bring

- Lots of water in a plastic bottle with squirt or spray top, to drink and to wash your skin and eyes in need be.
- Energy snacks
- A small medi-kit with bandages, plasters, tape etc.
- Identification and/or emergency contact information **ONLY** if you want to be cited out of jail in the event of an arrest.
- Just enough money for pay-phone, food, transportation.
- Watch, paper, pen for accurate documentation of events, police brutality, injuries.
- Water or alcohol based sunscreen.
- Inhaler, epipen, insulin or other meds if applicable.
- Several days of prescription medication and doctor's note in case of arrest.
- Menstrual pads, if needed. Avoid using tampons; if you're arrested you may not have a chance to change it (tampons left in for more than six hours increase your risk of developing toxic shock syndrome)

What not to do

- Don't put Vaseline, mineral oil, oil-based sunscreen or moisturisers on skin as they can trap chemicals.
- Don't wear contact lenses, which can trap irritating chemicals underneath.
- Don't wear things that can easily be grabbed (ie. Dangly earrings or other jewellery, ties, loose hair)
- Don't go to the demo alone, if you can help it. It is best to go with an affinity group or some friends

who know you well.

- Don't forget to eat food and DRINK LOTS OF WATER.

Medication in jail

If you are risking arrest and take medication for any health condition that might pose serious problems were your medication to be interrupted (such as: behavioural disorders, HIV, diabetes, hypertension) you should be aware that you may not have access to proper medication while you are in jail. A letter from a doctor will help. Three copies are needed, one for the legal team, one for the medical team, and one for you. It should include your name, diagnosis, that you must have access to medication at all times, a list of all meds required and a statement that you can must be allowed to keep meds on person to administer properly, and that no substitutions are acceptable.

Since your name will be on the document, you may want to hide it on your body as a sort of insurance policy - perhaps you won't need it and then could eat it and participate in jail solidarity tactics, but perhaps you'll be worn out already at the time of arrest and will want to cite out in order to take care of yourself. Better to cite than pass out.

Make sure that your affinity group and the legal team is aware of your needs so they can help care and advocate for you.

Blood, bruises and broken bones

The most common injuries on demonstrations are cuts or bruises sustained either by falling over whilst running or following a kicking from the cops. They are usually minor and treatable 'on site' though some will require hospital treatment.

Bruises require little treatment and it may be the case that you or an injured comrade need simply to rest for a while, whereas cuts should be treated with a plaster or bandage. If bleeding is heavy this can be stopped by firm direct pressure on the source for 5/10 minutes. If an artery has been cut and bleeding is severe, a tourniquet will be needed for short-term management but proper medical attention must be sought if blood loss continues.

Use a scarf, bandana, belt or torn shirt sleeve and tie around the arm or leg directly over the bleeding area and tighten until the bleeding slows. Wrap the injury to protect it and get the hero to a hospital - fast. If someone has glass or metal lodged in their body DO NOT ATTEMPT to remove it: this could cause further injury and increase the risk of infection.

If a limb appears to be broken or fractured, improvise a splint before moving the victim. Place a stiff backing behind the limb and wrap both with a bandage. Try to avoid moving the injured limb. This person needs to go to hospital for an x-ray and treatment.

Head injuries have to be approached with more caution than other body parts. Following a head injury it is essential that the person has an x-ray within 24 hours. Again, bleeding can be stopped by applying direct pressure. If the person is unconscious, do not attempt to move them: this could exacerbate the injuries already sustained: seek professional medical attention.

Internal injuries can occur from blows to the kidneys. These are usually accompanied by nausea, vomiting, shock and persistent abdominal pain. Get prompt professional care.

And finally...

Remember the best protection against injury is our awareness. We must be alert and on guard for possible situations where injury may occur and keep an eye out for our comrades. We have to look after ourselves on actions and we hope that this information has been of help to fellow activists. We welcome feedback and further advice in order to provide ourselves with the best protection whilst out on the front-line of the revolutionary struggle.

Taken from the [UHC Collective website](#)

Edited by libcom.org, last reviewed 2006

Dealing with the police

No comment: The defendant's guide to arrest

A detailed guide on your rights if you are arrested, with advice on what police are likely to do and say, and what you can do to protect yourself.

If you think you might one day run the risk of being arrested, you must find out what to do in that situation. If prison, fines, community service etc. don't appeal to you by following what's written in this article you can massively reduce the risk of all three. In the police station, the cops rely on people's naivety.

Getting arrested is no joke. It's a serious business. All convictions add up: e.g. if you're done three times for shoplifting, you stand a good chance of getting sent down. If there's a chance of you getting nicked, get your act together: know what to do in case you're arrested. Unless you enjoy cells, courtrooms, prisons, you owe it to yourself to wise up.

When you have been arrested

You have to give the police your name and address. You will also be asked for your date of birth - you don't have to give it, but it may delay your release as it is used to run a check on the police national computer. They also have the right to take your fingerprints, photo and non-intimate body samples (a saliva swab, to record your DNA).

These will be kept on file, even if you are not charged.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, removed the traditional 'Right to Silence'. However, all this means is that the police/prosecution can point to your refusal to speak to them, when the case comes to court, and the court may take this as evidence of your guilt. The police cannot force you to speak or make a statement, whatever they may say to you in the station. Refusing to speak cannot be used to convict you by itself. We reckon the best policy if you want to get off is to remain silent. The best place to work out a good defence is afterwards, with your solicitor or witnesses, not under pressure in the hands of the cops. If your refusal to speak comes up in court, we think the best defence is to refuse to speak until your solicitor gets there then get them to agree to your position. You can then say you acted on legal advice.

If you are arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000, the police can keep you in custody for longer. They have already used this against protestors and others to intimidate them. Remember being arrested is not the same as being charged. Keeping silent is still the best thing to do in police custody.

Remember - All charges add up

Q: What happens when I get arrested?

When you are arrested, you will usually be handcuffed, put in a van and taken to a police station. You will be asked your name, address and date of birth. You should be told the reason for your arrest - remember what is said, it may be useful later. Your personal belongings will be taken from you. These are listed on the custody record and usually you will be asked to sign to say that the list is correct. You do not have to sign, but if you do you should sign immediately below the last line, so that the cops can't add something incriminating to the list. You should also refuse to sign for something which isn't yours, or which could be incriminating. You will also be asked if you want a copy of PACE (the Police and Criminal Evidence Act codes of practice) and to sign to say you have refused. We suggest you take a copy – it's the only thing you'll get to read and you might as well get up on the rules the cops are supposed to follow. Your fingerprints, photo and saliva swab will be taken, then you will be placed in a cell until the police are ready to deal with you.

Do not panic!

Q. What if I am under 18?

There has to be an 'appropriate adult' present for the interview. The cops will always want this to be your mum or dad, but you might want to give the name of an older brother or sister or other relative or adult friend (though the cops may not accept a friend). If you don't have anyone, they will get a social worker - this might cause you more problems afterwards.

Q: When can I contact a solicitor?

You should be able to ring a solicitor as soon as you're arrested, once at the police station it is one of the first things you should do, for two reasons:

1. To have someone know where you are.
2. To show the cops you are not going to be a soft target - they may back off a bit.

It is advisable to avoid using the duty solicitor as they may be crap or hand in glove with the cops. It's worth finding the number of a good solicitor in your area and memorising it. The police are wary of decent solicitors. Any good solicitor will provide free advice at the police station. Also, avoid telling your solicitor much about what happened. This can be sorted out later. For the time being, tell them you are refusing to speak. Your solicitor can come into the police station while the police interview you: you should refuse to be interviewed unless your solicitor is present.

: What is an interview?Q

An interview is the police questioning you about the offences they want to charge you with. The interview will take place in an interview room in the police station and should be taped.

An interview is only of benefit to the Police

Remember they want to prosecute you for whatever charge they can stick on you. An interview is a no-win situation. For your benefit, the only thing to be said in an interview is "No comment".

Remember: They can't legally force you to speak.

Beware of attempts to interview you in the cop van or cell etc. as all interviews are nowadays recorded. The cops may try to pretend you confessed before the taped interview. Again say "No comment".

Q: Why do the police want me to answer questions?

If the police think they have enough evidence against you they will not need to interview you. For example, in most public order arrests they rely on witness statements from 1 or 2 cops or bystanders, you won't even be interviewed. Also if they have arrested you and other people, they will try to get you to implicate the others. The police want to convict as many people as possible because:

1. It makes it look like they're doing a good job at solving crime. The clear-up rate is very important to the cops; they have to be seen to be doing their job. The more crimes they get convictions for, the better it looks for them.
2. Police officers want promotion, to climb up the ladder of hierarchy. Coppers get promotion through the number of crimes they 'solve'. No copper wants to be a bobby all their life.

A 'solved crime' is a conviction against somebody. You only have to look at such cases as the Birmingham 6 to understand how far the Police will go to get a conviction. Fitting people up to boost the 'clear-up rate', and at the same time removing people cops don't like, is wide spread in all Police forces.

Q: So if the police want to interview me, it shows I could be in a good position?

Yes - they may not have enough evidence, and hope you'll implicate yourself or other people.

Q: And the way to stay in that position is to refuse to be drawn into a conversation and answer "No comment" to any questions?

Exactly.

Q: But what if the evidence looks like they have got something on me? Wouldn't it be best to explain away the circumstances I was arrested in, so they'll let me go?

The only evidence that matters is the evidence presented in court to the Magistrate or jury. The only place to explain everything is in court; if they've decided to keep you in, no amount of explaining will get you out. If the police have enough evidence, anything you say can only add to this evidence against you. When the cops interview someone, they do all they can to confuse and intimidate you. The questions may not be related to the crime. Their aim is to soften you up, get you chatting. Don't answer a few small talk questions and then clam up when they ask you a question about the crime. It looks worse in court.

To prosecute you, the police must present their evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service. A copy of the evidence is sent to your solicitor. The evidence usually rests on very small points: this is why it's important not to give anything away in custody. They may say your refusal to speak will be used against you in court, but the best place to work out what you want to say is later with your solicitor. If they don't have enough evidence the case will be thrown out or never even get to court. This is why they want you to speak. They need all the evidence they can get. One word could cause you a lot of trouble.

Q: So I've got to keep my mouth shut. What tricks can I expect the police to pull in order to make me talk?

The police try to get people to talk in many devious ways. The following shows some pretty common examples, but remember they may try some other line on you.

These are the things that often catch people out. Don't get caught out.

1. *"Come on now, we know it's you, your mate's in the next cell and he's told us the whole story."*

If they've got the story, why do they need your confession? Playing co-accused off against each other is a common trick, as you've no way of checking what other people are saying. If you are up to something dodgy with other people, work out a story and stick to it. Don't believe it if they say your co-accused has confessed.

2. *"We know it's not you, but we know you know who's done it. Come on Jane, don't be silly, tell us who did it"*

The cops will use your first name to try and seem as though they're your friends. If you are young they will act in a fatherly/motherly way, etc.

3. *"As soon as we find out what happened you can go"*

Fat chance!

4. *"Look you little bastard, don't fuck us about. We've dealt with some characters; a little runt like you is nothing to us. We know you did it you little shit and you're going to tell us."*

They're trying to get at you.

5. *"What's a nice kid like you doing messed up in a thing like this?"*

They're still trying to get at you.

6. *We'll keep you in 'til you tell us"*

They have to put you before the magistrate or release you within 36 hours (or 7 days if arrested under the Terrorism Act). Only a magistrate can order you to be held without charge for any longer.

7. *"There is no right to silence anymore. If you don't answer questions the judge will know you're guilty."*

Refusing to speak cannot be used to convict you by itself. If they had enough evidence they wouldn't be interviewing you.

8. *"You'll be charged with something far more serious if you don't start answering our questions, sonny. You're for the high jump. You're not going to see the light of day for a long time. Start answering our questions 'cos we're getting sick of you."*

Mental intimidation. They're unlikely to charge you with something serious that won't stick in court. Don't panic.

9. *"You've been nicked under the Terrorism Act, so you've got no rights."*

More mental intimidation and all the more reason to say "No comment".

10. *"My niece is a bit of a rebel."*

Yeah right.

11. *"If someone's granny gets mugged tonight it'll be your fault. Stop wasting our time by not talking."*

They're trying to make you feel guilty. Don't fall for it, you didn't ask to be arrested.

12. Mr Nice: *"Hiya, what's it all about then? Sergeant Smith says you're in a bit of trouble. He's a bit wound up with you. You tell me what happened and Smith won't bother you. He's not the best of our officers, he loses his rag every now and again. So what happened?"*

Mr Nice is as devious as Mr Nasty is. He or she will offer you a cuppa, cigarettes, a blanket. It's the softly-softly approach. It's bollocks. *"No comment"*.

13. *"We've been here for half an hour now and you've not said a fucking word.... Look you little cunt some of the CID boys will be down in a minute. They'll have you talking in no time. Talk now or I'll bring them down."*

Keep at it, they're getting desperate. They're about to give up. You've a lot to lose by speaking.

14. *"Your girlfriend's outside. Do you want us to arrest her? We'll soon have her gear off for a strip search. I bet she'll tell us. You're making all this happen by being such a prick. Now talk."*

They pick on your weak spots, family, friends, etc. Cops do sometimes victimise prisoners' families, but mostly they are bluffing.

15. *"You're a fuckin' loony, you! Who'd want you for a mother, you daft bitch? Start talking or your kids are going into care."*

Give your solicitor details of a friend or relative who can look after your kids. The cops don't have the power to take them into care.

16. *"Look, we've tried to contact your solicitor, but we can't get hold of them. It's going to drag on for ages this way. Why don't we get this over with so you can go home."*

Never accept an interview without your solicitor present, a bit more time now may save years later! Don't make a statement even if your solicitor advises you to - a good one won't.

17. *"You're obviously no dummy. I'll tell you what we'll do a deal. You admit to one of the charges, and we'll drop the other two. We'll recommend to the judge that you get a non-custodial sentence, because you've co-operated. How does that sound?"*

They're trying to get you to do a deal. There are no deals to be made with the police. Much as they'd like to, the police don't control the sentence you get.

18. *"We've been round to the address you gave us and the people there say they don't know you. We've checked on the Benefits Agency computer and there's no sign of you. Now come on, tell us who you are. Tell us who you are or you've had it."*

If you're planning to give an address make sure everyone there knows the name you are using and that they are reliable. The cops usually check that you live somewhere by going round.

19. *"Wasting police time is a serious offence."*

You can't be charged for wasting police time for not answering questions.

The cops may rough you up, or use violence to get a confession (true or false) out of you. There are many examples of people being fitted up and physically assaulted until they admitted to things they hadn't done. It's your decision to speak rather than face serious injury. Just remember, what you say

could get you and others sent down for a very long time. However, don't rely on retracting a confession in court - it's hard to back down once you've said something.

In the police station the cops rely on people's naivety. If you are aware of the tricks they play, the chances are they'll give up on you. In these examples we have tried to show how they'll needle you to into speaking. That's why you have to know what to do when you're arrested. The hassle in the cop shop can be bad, but if you are on the ball, you can get off. You have to be prepared.

We've had a lot of experience of the Police and we simply say:

Having said nothing in the police station, you can then look at the evidence and work out your side of the story.

This is how you will get off

1. Keep calm and cool when arrested (remember you are playing with the experts now, on their home ground).
2. Don't get drawn into conversations with the police at any time.
3. Get a solicitor.
4. Never make a statement.
5. If they rough you up, see a doctor immediately after being released. Get a written report of all bruising and marking. Take photos of all injuries. Remember the cops' names and numbers if possible.

Remember: An interview is a no win situation. You are not obliged to speak. If the police want to interview you, it shows you're in a good position... And the only way to stay in that position is to refuse to be drawn into any conversation and answer "No comment" to any questions.

Q: What can I do if one of my friends or family has been arrested?

If someone you know is arrested, there's a lot you can do to help him or her from outside.

1. If you know what name they are using ring the police station (however if you're not sure don't give their real name away). Ask whether they are being held there and on what charges. However, remember that the cops may not tell you the truth.
2. Remove anything from the arrested person's house that the police may find interesting: letters, address books, false ID etc. in case the police raid the place.
3. Take food, cigarettes etc. into the police station for your arrested friend. But don't go in to enquire at the police station to ask about a prisoner if you run the risk of arrest yourself. You'll only get arrested. Don't go alone. The police have been known to lay off a prisoner if they have visible support from outside. It's solidarity that keeps prisoners in good spirits.

Notes on this text

This is the third edition of No Comment. It has been updated and reprinted by former members of the Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) in conjunction with the Legal Defence & Monitoring Group (LDMG).

The printed version was funded by the proceeds of a damages award from the Metropolitan Police, who were sued for false arrest and imprisonment and breach of human rights. We are sure that they

will be pleased to know that their funds are being invested in a public information campaign as vital and deserving as this.

Copies can be obtained free by sending a 2nd class stamped SAE to No Comment c/o BM Automatic, London WC1N 3XX or you can download copies from www.ldmg.org.uk

Stop and search guide to your rights



A page of information about police stop and search powers in the UK and your rights when you are stopped and searched.

What is a 'Stop and Search'?

Police officers can stop and talk to you at any time. But they should only search you if they suspect you are carrying:

- Drugs
- Weapons
- Stolen property
- Tools which could be used to commit a crime

Why me?

If you are stopped or searched it doesn't mean you have done something wrong. But a police officer must have a good reason for stopping you and should tell you what this is. You should not be stopped or searched just because of your age, race or the way you dress.

Where can I be stopped and searched?

- In a public place
- Anywhere – if the police believe you have committed a serious crime

If the police think there may be serious violence then they can search everyone in an area for weapons – e.g. near a football ground – without a good reason to search each person.

A police officer can stop a vehicle at any time and ask to see the driver's licence and other documents. If they have good reason to think your car contains stolen goods, drugs or weapons, they could search it – even if you are not there. But the police must leave a notice saying what they have

done. If the search causes damage, you can ask for compensation but only if they didn't find anything to connect you to a crime.

How will they search me?

Before searching you, the police officer must normally tell you:

- Their name
- The station they work at
- Why they are searching you
- What they are looking for

If the officer is not in uniform, they must show you their identity card.

If you are in a public place, you only have to take off:

- Your coat or jacket
- Your gloves

The police can only ask you to take off more than this or anything you wear for religious reasons, such as a face scarf, if they take you somewhere private e.g. a police station or the back of a police van. This does not mean you are being arrested. In this case, the officer who searches you must be of the same sex as you.

What happens next?

The police officer must write down:

- Your name or a description of you
- Why they searched you
- When and where they searched you
- What they were looking for and anything they found
- The name and number of the officer who searched you
- Your ethnic background

The police do not have to write this down if they just stop you and don't search you. The police will ask for your name, address and date of birth. You do not have to give any of this information if you don't want to, unless the police tell you they are reporting you for an offence. If this is the case you could be arrested if you don't tell them.

The police will write down your ethnic group. They may ask you to say what this is. This is just to check they are not stopping and searching people just because of their race or ethnic background.

If you don't get a copy of what they wrote down then and there, you can get a copy from the police station within 12 months.

How can I complain?

The police should treat you fairly and with respect. If you are unhappy with how you were treated, you can complain. It will help if you keep a copy of the details that the police wrote down when they searched you. You can get advice from, or complain to:

- A [Citizen's Advice Bureau](#)
- The Commission for Racial Equality
- A solicitor