

# Five Things You Should Never Do During a Home Invasion

*by Thomas Xavier*

Home security is serious business. Every day we see new articles circulated, tips, tricks, and the latest security hardware that can give you an edge against would-be home invaders. Seldom, however, do I see the mindset – ways you should be thinking about home invasion and how you should behave if it happens to you – being discussed pragmatically.

The important aspect of mindset is that once its ingrained, it's always with you. Unlike a security system that can fail or a piece of gear that you may not have on hand, mindset is about understanding that bad stuff happens to good people all the time, and it's perfectly okay – beneficial even – to sit down and think about bad situations like home invasion every once while with an attitude of, “What would I do/not do if this happened to me?”

Before we dig into the meat of this article, I want to reiterate that these are not strategies. They are just ways of thinking that I hold to be common truths and applicable in pretty much every home invasion scenario.



## What You Should Never Do During a Home Invasion

---

### 1. Don't Be Passive

This is the biggie. Often you hear of people who get absolutely wrecked during a home invasion and it turns out that they froze and just let the events unfold. Home invasions are chaotic scenes, but the important thing is to react – however that may be. An attacker will always go for an easy target and if the chosen victim doesn't act like a victim, then it will give the attacker pause for concern. This is especially important towards the beginning of the conflict, as it can dictate how the would-be aggressor will proceed.

A common example is racking your shotgun behind the door – the idea being that you are letting the perpetrator know that consequences may occur if he proceeds to try to break in. The facts about whether or not you will actually escalate to deadly force is irrelevant: the perpetrator only has to hear the sound of a shotgun slide being racked to be threatened enough

to go on by. He or she doesn't know who is behind that door, and as we all know, the fear of the unknown is a significant human motivator.

Obviously, this is just an example, but the idea here is for the mindset to develop that you are not and should never act like a passive victim. Resisting will always give the perpetrator pause because ultimately everyone has something to lose – including them.

As a side note: if you read my home invasion experience you will know that my reaction did cause an escalation, but I firmly stand by it (despite the many mistakes I made). Why? If the perp had gotten inside, he would have had the luxury of time and privacy on his side – and who knows how that would have turned out.

## 2. Don't Be Naive

Going through life with the mindset that things will never happen to you is frankly a quick way to test Darwin's Theory of Natural Selection. Accepting that bad stuff can and will happen may make you a miserable git amongst your peers and possibly get you labelled as paranoid, but ultimately, the first step to moving forwards is acceptance and in this case, accepting that at some point it's likely you will be involved in a confrontation that you did not seek out. This acknowledgement will allow you to move from the "frozen in fear" state to doing something pro-active.

As most men know from childhood, the fear of physical conflict is far more intimidating than the end result. I only got over my fear of being put in a position where I may get injured by being in a fight and realizing – you know what? I can heal from this. Human beings, whilst being soft, squishy meat bags, are surprisingly resilient. Avoiding conflict will just lead to more conflict, but with the downside of the situation being wholly out of your control. Don't be naive and think you can walk away from all problems.

## 3. Don't Be Cocky

Story time. When I was 16, I went to East Berlin with some friends. I got a touch too drunk and ran into some Turkish guys in a bar. Both sides got

mouthy and being 16, I thought I was bulletproof. We stepped outside and I realised for a split second how precarious my position was. I was outnumbered facing a bunch of men who out weighed me by 100 pounds. This sudden realisation sent a chill through my bones – probably the quickest method of sobering up!

Anyway, nothing came of it because a cop car drove past, stopped, and this group of Turks walked away, but the experience stuck with me to this day. Being cocky is a recipe for disaster. This is a common psychological flaw with young men, in my experience, especially when they have had a few pints too many.



#### 4. Don't Overreach

This is something I see quite often and it presents itself as quite a conundrum. People who react aggressively to threats commonly tend to become over-invested in the result, and consequently, they pursue the

threat without thinking about their primary role. My job is to protect my home and my family. If I run down the street to chase someone down, how can I guarantee that my home is safe? Maybe an accomplice is lurking around my property and I didn't see him. Or maybe the conflict suddenly takes a turn against me, and unlike prior, I won't have the advantage of it taking place on my turf.

What people have to understand is that 99% of criminals are not suicidal – if they perceive their target as uncooperative and frankly not worth the effort, then they will walk/run away. However, there is a big difference between a criminal missing out on a score and a criminal who thinks his freedom is at stake – because trust me, that's what he is thinking about as you are chasing him down the street. The motivation and thus the reaction will be vastly different.

You also should think about the legislative issues at hand. Here in the UK there have been a bunch of instances where farmers shot a retreating home invader and got sent to the slammer for it. Self-defense laws protect you when your life is in danger – everything else is vigilantism and whilst we can have a debate on the right to make criminals pay, the reality is that the police won't take kindly to it in most jurisdictions.

Prioritize your safety and your family's safety and don't over-reach just to make a point or seek "justice." Document everything, do everything you can within the law, and let the police actually take care of the enforcement.

## 5. Don't Underestimate

Criminals are not dumb; they are just driven by motivations that broader society considers immoral. We have to accept that and work our mindsets within those parameters. Yes, stupid criminals do exist but underestimating them could result in a painful lesson. I always react to perceived threats wearily, knowing how quickly things can go south in this crazy world we live in.

When we lived in Canada, there was a liquor store about 5 minutes from us. Elise, who is not as sensitive to threats as I, wouldn't even notice a drunken lout walking and gesturing aggressively, but I tend to ere on the

side of caution and thus would always slow down to allow some distance between me and what I perceived as a potential threat.

It doesn't cost me anything except confused glances from my wife and allows me to mentally access the situation as it happens instead of being thrust into it.

Time to process what is happening is the single most valuable thing you have. Robberies and attacks tend to happen at blitz speed because criminals know that if you got your bearings together, you may be more comfortable reacting offensively. No criminal is going to give you a heads up that he is about to commit a crime because it would take away his (or her) major advantage. My single biggest piece of advice would be to never underestimate human stupidity and capacity for maliciousness. I don't go through life thinking the end of the world is behind every corner, but I accept that bad stuff can and will happen and prepare accordingly.

Underestimating is dangerous because it implies that people are predictable, that you can quantify what can and will happen, and that's a certain recipe for disaster.



Muela Mouflon 18 Fixed Blade Knife

## Developing the Right Mindset About Home Invasions

---

I wanted to scribble this article because I have read so many blog posts with advice like, “Keep the TV running on a timer so that criminals think you are awake,” and other advice that is more practical in nature than what I’ve listed here. the problem with said advice is that it’s a bundled solution that hinges on factors outside of your control. I want you to read this and think – “Okay. I get it. This is the mental framework I should have about home invasion.”

*Retrieved from <https://morethanjustsurviving.com/home-invasion-what-not-to-do/>*