

The Circuit

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For Security And Protection Specialists

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By: Orlando Wilson

TACTICAL FIREARMS CROSS DRAW

The most favored method is to carry the handgun on the same side as the dominant/strong hand (strong side).

It is believed that this is the safest method of carry because when the handgun is drawn from the holster, it points in a straight line directly at the target. The cross-draw is where the gun is on the opposite side of the body to the dominant hand, so you have to reach across the body to draw the handgun. Personally, I see no problem with cross-draw. Many people claim that

it is dangerous since the handgun sweeps through a 180-degree arc to get from the holster to pointing at the target, which could mean the handgun could be pointing at bystanders. It must be remembered, however, that whatever method of carry you use, before you go on the street, you should do as much practice as possible. As I've said before; If you don't think you can draw



your handgun without it going off by accident, you should not be carrying it.

It is easier to take a handgun from someone carrying on the strong side than cross-draw. You can come up behind someone carrying strong-side and

take it, thumb break or not. However, to take a handgun from someone carrying cross-draw, you will need to come at him from the front or possibly the side. This means he will see you going for his handgun and can take evasive measures or use ►

unarmed techniques, assuming he lets you get that close in the first place. If your gun is carried cross-draw, you have easy access to it with both your left and right hand, and you have better access to the handgun when seated, especially in high-sided chairs, such

as when in vehicles. The photos below and on the previous page are of cross-draw holsters and how to draw left and right-handed.

The Advantage of Cross-Draw

My preference for cross-draw was reinforced



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when I was working as a security operative in South Africa in 1994. My day usually started in the evening when the first task was to provide cover for the staff of a liquor store when they closed up and left with the day's takings. The store was in 'a colorful' area just outside of a large township, and I would say that mine was the only white face for a good mile or so. I took it for granted that everyone knew I was armed — I wouldn't be there otherwise. The store closed at the same time every day, so, it was hard to avoid setting a pattern of the time I'd be dropped off each day. To get behind the grilled counter of the store, I usually had to push through a crowd of semi-intoxicated people spending their day's pay.

It was my driver's job to cover me until I got behind the grill, which depending on the driver, did not always happen. And in any case, once I merged with the crowd, there was very little support the driver could offer me. Initially, I carried my 4-inch .357 strong side but soon changed to cross-draw ▶

when I realized that, when in the crowd, it was easy for someone to bump into me, feel where I was carrying my gun and potentially grab it from behind. If I got into a physical confrontation with someone that would require my gun hand to deal with it, I would then not be able to reach the .357 with my weak hand. At least with cross-draw, I stood a better chance of getting to the gun - if I were not dropped in the initial attack. Realistically, in retrospect, I would have stood little chance if I had been attacked in the crowd by two or three assailants with blunt or edged weapons. I would have been lucky to get the .357 out.

What many people seem to forget is that carrying a handgun can actually make you a target. In places like Africa, Latin America, and in some Caribbean

Islands where people live in extreme poverty, a handgun is a very valuable commodity; criminals routinely target and attack people solely for their firearms.

Even in developed countries, a criminal can make money from a handgun: They can commit robberies or settle scores and then sell the weapon, etc. The tell-tale lump under your shirt could be there to show your friends that you bought the new Glock or to warn others that you are armed and dangerous, but to a professional, it just means you have a gun, and he can take it off you. If you carry a weapon, no one else should know. Don't think all criminals or terrorists will be intimidated because you flash a gun at them. If you're not drawing it with the intention to shoot to kill, keep it concealed!

Orlando Wilson has worked in the security industry internationally for over 25 years. He has become accustomed to the types of complications that can occur, when dealing with international law enforcement agencies, organized criminal and Mafia groups. He is the chief consultant for Risks Inc. and based in Miami but spends much of his time traveling and providing a wide range of kidnapping prevention and tactical training services to private and government clients.

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