

# SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

## IRAN IS TARGETING OUR MILITARY AND YOU COULD BE NEXT

### How To Stay Safe From This Brazen Attack

By Jason Hanson

*Former CIA Officer*

There is no one more deserving of our appreciation than those who have served in the military. They are the heroes of our country. After leaving the military many people seek employment in the private sector and service members are even sought out by recruiters. Lately, these recruiters have been all over Facebook.

The recruiters use Facebook to send friendly messages offering a lucrative career in the defense field. The sad thing is, often the people sending these messages are spies. For example, recently, an Iranian



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hacking campaign was broken up on Facebook when the platform was being used to impersonate recruiters. The fake recruiters targeted victims with social engineering tactics.

The goal was to get the victim to open malware files or submit a resume with sensitive information. The recruiters posed as workers from aerospace, defense, medical, and hospitality companies. They engaged their targets for months to convince the victims of their authenticity.

The social engineering was carried out by a group known as Tortoise-shell, operating on behalf of the Iranian government and targeting U.S. military members. Facebook said they removed 200 fake profiles as a result of the Iranian operation and notified users who had been targeted.

The company said, *"Our investigation found that Facebook was a portion of a much broader espionage operation that targeted people with phishing, social engineering, spoofed websites, and malicious domains across multiple social media platforms, email, and collaboration sites."*

As one cyber security expert noted, "From some of the very earliest operations, they compensate for really simplistic technical approaches with really complex social media schemes, which is an area where Iran is adept."

The same hacker group operated a website called Hire Military Heroes. Their goal was to convince military veterans to download an app that contained malware. But veterans aren't the only targets. Anyone looking for a new job could fall victim to fake recruiters. So, here are a few tips to help you avoid these types of scams that could affect you or a loved one.

First, check the physical location. Today, many companies offer work-from-home opportunities. But even in those cases, the company has a small office or headquarters somewhere. So, if you are being recruited, ask the company if they have a local office. If so, ask where it's located and go visit it. This way you can ask questions in person about the job and verify the person you are talking to is legitimate.

If they don't have a local office, they should have a physical location somewhere. You can send a thank you card in the mail. Next, ask the recruiter if they received any correspondence from you. Again, this will prove that they are a legitimate employer.

Second, play "follow the recruiter." Follow what they do online. For example, do they have a strong social media presence across multiple platforms? Or does the recruiter only use Facebook? Most

companies will use more than one social media platform.

The goal is to monitor when and what they post. If they post at the same time for every correspondence this could be a sign it's a fake. Not everyone posts daily. But if you are a recruiter that uses social media, chances are you would be frequent in your activities and online at various times throughout the day.

Also, check to see how long ago their social media account was created. If it's brand new, then you should be very cautious. New accounts can definitely be a sign of fraud.

Third, ask the right questions. The best way to catch an imposter is to ask questions that only people in their field would know the answers to. For example, you could tell them that a former co-worker came to work there a few months back. Of course, you would get some sort of reaction from the recruiter. If they say they know your made-up friend, this is obviously a red flag. If the recruiter hesitates or refuses to answer basic questions, then you should take that as a sign of fraud.

The truth is, the methods used by online imposters are always changing. There are always new tactics and threats from fraudsters. But these tips can help you decide if you are talking to a recruiter or someone stealing your information. Don't be afraid to call them out and ask them all sorts of questions. Honest people won't hesitate in giving you an honest answer.

## Streamlight BearTrap

You can never have too many flashlights and here's a unique one you may want to add to your collection. It's the Streamlight BearTrap. It's a work light that produces up to 2,000 lumens and has both flood and spot beams. The light can rotate 270 degrees and can clamp to an object or stand on its own. It also has a magnetic base and hanging hook for hands-free use.

The BearTrap is powered by a rechargeable 7.26-volt, 5200 mAh lithium-ion battery. It takes 5.5 hours to recharge and has a battery life indicator that goes from green to yellow to red to alert you when the battery needs charging.

This light has six output modes, including three flood and three spot. When using the flood mode on high it will produce 2,000 lumens that can run for 2.5 hours, which is a solid amount of time for that level of brightness.

On low, it will produce 575 lumens and run for about nine hours. In spot mode, it can provide 1,000 lumens on high for 4.5 hours.

This light is IPX4-rated for water resistance and is impact resistant up to one meter. It's made from thermoplastic construction. The Streamlight BearTrap weighs 2 lbs. 3 ounces, so this certainly isn't a pocket flashlight and is more for your garage or bug out location. The light comes with a limited lifetime warranty.

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*Spy & Survival Briefing* is published monthly by Spy Briefing LLC, 124 S. Main Street #4090, Cedar City, UT 84720. [www.SpyBriefing.com](http://www.SpyBriefing.com).

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# IS YOUR GOLD AND SILVER COUNTERFEIT?

## How To Ensure You Are Buying Authentic Metals

By Forest Hamilton  
*Universal Coin & Bullion*

My dad recently bought a large collection of Morgan Silver Dollars off of eBay. He sent the coins to me to have them graded and evaluated. When he called me in his excited dad voice with dollar signs in his eyes, all I could do was shake my head and hope that he hadn't been ripped off too badly.

Even though I have been working in the gold and silver industry for nearly a quarter of a century, the allure of a treasure hunt or a lottery jackpot can be too much to resist, even when a person is warned multiple times. After my coin department examined his coins, we found that over 40 of the 50 coins he sent me were counterfeit. Fortunately, he only lost a few hundred dollars. Others have not been so lucky.

As demand for physical precious metals rises, the number of people unknowingly buying fake gold and silver is also rising. While the business of counterfeiting is at an all-time high, there are ways to ensure that you are buying authentic gold and silver.

First, only buy from reputable gold and silver dealers. They need to be accountable to major organizations such as the American Numismatic Association, the Professional Numismatic Guild, and the Professional Coin Grading Service and they should be accredited with the Better Business Bureau with an A+ rating.

What's more, my clients and I are fortunate to work with Mike Fuljenz, who taught counterfeit detection courses for the ANA and served on the National Anti-Counterfeiting Task Force. As Mike often reminds people, if it seems too good



to be true, it probably is. If you find gold and silver selling below the daily spot price, it is probably fake.

Over the past two years, my company has been ordering coins and bars from some of the companies selling "gold" below spot price. Out of many of our test orders, here are several examples:

We purchased a "Credit Suisse 1-ounce Gold Bar" costing \$2, plus \$3 shipping. It would have been worth \$1,500 when we ordered it and nearly \$1,900 today, but it's essentially worthless because it was fake.

We also ordered an 1899 "Queen Morgan Silver Dollar" that would have graded XF (Extra Fine) and been worth \$140, for just \$3.89 shipping. The counterfeit coin was listed at no charge.

Then we ordered a gold coin that would have been worth \$10 million if it were genuine, a 1933 St. Gaudens Double Eagle, but it sold for \$1.83, plus \$2 shipping.

They chose some extremely valuable coins and sold the knockoffs for a ridiculously low price. But none of these fake coins had the word "COPY" stamped on them, as is required by the updated 2014 U.S. Hobby Protection Law for counterfeits.

When possible, invest in graded and certified coins. When investing in gold and silver, purchasing coins that have been certified by either the Professional Coin Grading Service or the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation can give you peace of mind. PCGS and NGC are third-party authentication companies that are well respected worldwide and will guarantee that the coins are not counterfeit.

There is a cost involved for the grading fee, but it can be worth it when investing. However, this is usually not the best route if buying gold and silver in bulk as there are certification costs involved. Ask your reputable dealer what is best for your specific situation. If you have purchased gold and silver and have concerns about whether it is real, feel free to reach out to me directly for assistance.

**[Publisher's Note:** For questions about buying gold and silver coins you can contact Forest Hamilton directly at [foresthilton@universalcoin.com](mailto:foresthilton@universalcoin.com) or call 409-926-7001. Please know, if you purchase any coins from Forest, we don't receive any compensation from him. We simply know he's one of the good guys in the business that can be trusted.]

# HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT BUGOUT VEHICLE FOR YOU

## 5 Factors When Making Your Decision

By EJ Snyder

*Former Army Ranger and Extreme Survivalist*

Getting out of dodge when the SHTF could be a complicated task with many obstacles arising as you're trying to escape.

For example, I remember being in combat in the 1991 Gulf War and the newly adopted US Military Humvee's had their first true test on the battlefield in harsh desert conditions. We had a multitude of issues from sand in the air filters causing stalling, deep loose sand making vehicles get stuck and immobile, and on and on.

We had to adapt quickly to the lessons we were learning and adjust our vehicles to stay in the fight. But we made it happen in order to stay alive. The same can be said for your bugout vehicle. You want it capable, ready, and purposeful.

When it comes to bugout vehicle options, I'm not going to say that there's a perfect vehicle out there waiting for you. Instead, I'm going to give you the most important things to look at when considering one (or more) bug out vehicles and

let you figure out which one is right for you. You'll have to weigh the ones that are most important for you and your situation, and adjust your vehicle options accordingly.

First, the vehicle must have a long range. You may not need to go an exceedingly long way, but you absolutely want the option. The most important thing is to consider the distance between your current location and your potential bugout locations.

Keep in mind that you may need more fuel because you'll likely have to take detours and possibly get caught in traffic jams (which automatically means higher fuel consumption). So, look for a vehicle with an auxiliary gas tank (or consider adding one). The more fuel you have with you, the better. And get a diesel if it's possible. They're better for long drives.

Next, your bugout vehicle must be able to go off-road. Your vehicle should ideally be able to go through 2 feet of snow as well as mud and water. Plus, it should be able to handle landslides and debris, such as rocks in your path. You'll also want to have extraction equipment in your vehicle and be capable of

towing another car, RV, or a trailer in the event you need to rescue yourself or someone in your group.

You also want to have as much room as possible for comfort and to ensure your vehicle is large enough to carry all of your family members. Try to pick vehicles with a large trunk or bed area to store as many supplies as possible.

Try to get a vehicle that's a dark or natural color, as you don't want it to stand out in any way like a burnt orange would. And be careful about getting a camo vehicle, it'll make you look "tactical" and may draw unwanted attention to you.

Along with a dark or natural color, you want your vehicle to be able to stay hidden at your current location. Not many people think about this, but if they have a huge tactical vehicle in their backyard, everyone will see it.

Finally, you want a vehicle that's not too expensive to repair and that has replacement parts that are relatively easy to find. If you can get a vehicle that can withstand an EMP, that's a bonus. Even if you have a newer electric vehicle, consider carrying some extra electronic replacement parts in a small faraday cage/box.

So, now that you know some of the criteria to look for in a vehicle, here is just a small sample of the types of bugout vehicles for you to consider: 4x4 truck, big rig, moving truck/box truck, motorcycle with sidecar, dirt bike, ATV, dune buggy, etc. (Obviously, some of these would be backup options to have such as the dirt bike or motorcycle with sidecar.)

Whatever you choose, make sure you've thought through your needs and your bugout plans and choose the right vehicle for you.



# ONE CURRENCY THAT NEVER LOSES VALUE

## Lessons From The Cold War For Obtaining These Riches

By Michael D.

*Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,  
DIA, NSA*

Ric was riding shotgun and I was driving when he burst into a full-on laugh. One of those rumbling laughs that serve as a harbinger of some emerging fateful event.

He pointed to the rear bumper of the vehicle ahead of us, which had diplomatic plates on it. By that time, the US Department of State had changed the format for diplomatic plates. Prior to that, you could easily know the nationality of the occupants based on a license plate abbreviation. But that all started to change after the Cold War “broke out.”

If I remember correctly, the Soviet license plates started with SX (Soviet Excrement), but since that had all changed in an effort to reduce

harassment of Soviets in the US, we had to bribe some State Department folks to get a current list of the new two-letter identifications on the plates to know the nationality of the occupants.

While we were in the US, we were strictly forbidden from having any interactions with any diplomats from any foreign country.

But if that rule was hard and fast, the rule about never approaching, contacting, interacting with or even appearing to notice the existence of a Soviet, Chinese, North Korean, or Iranian diplomat, was concrete and light-speed. That's how we knew it was time to harass the Soviets in their pretty little State Car.

We used rented cars for our work in the states because we needed vehicles that allowed us to protect

our cover identities and shield our missions. We did not target nor “work” US Citizens. And we were not supposed to work unauthorized foreign targets unless there were exigent circumstances that could result in injury or death to a US citizen or someone who might be a US citizen.

But let's be candid. The CIA needs operatives who don't back down from challenges, those who can and will push the line when the line needs to be. And we felt it was time to push that line a little bit.

Now, here is some context for what I am about to tell you. While I was flying combat missions as an

active-duty USAF airman, we had some air-to-air unarmed skirmishes with Soviet Mig pilots. We flew recon aircraft and they were launched to intercept us. We always managed to get out of their air-space before they got to us, so they had no verifiable provocation for shooting us down, but they did do some bad things to us.

During one particularly unsettling encounter, the two reacting Mig fighters got directly in front of our aircraft and ignited their afterburners. The heat and blast pressure cracked our aircraft's windshield. If they had been just a few feet closer, their afterburner blast would have blown out our windshield and caused a catastrophic rapid decompression at 48,000 feet in altitude. We likely would not have recovered from that.

The truth is, during the Cold War, we were actually fighting and hostile to one another, and aggressions could be fierce. So, based on that, Ric put on his sunglasses, and I pulled alongside of them. Ric raised a notepad and began writing down descriptions of everyone in the vehicle. Then, he picked up one of the cameras and began taking photographs as we drove along. They accelerated, and so did I. They suddenly braked, and so did I.

I dropped back behind them and then moved back alongside of them. Ric took more pictures. In the other car, they were holding things over their faces and one guy in the back seat was waving his diplomatic passport. Ric sent him an unmistakable international gesture that was a clear dismissal

### DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT



of their expected rights of safe passage.

I pulled in front of them and brake checked them. (I knew their driver was a professional as well and that he would be anticipating a boxing or pit maneuver if they were going to be sieged or taken in a felony stop.)

They were frantic. We saw cell phones in their hands and knew they were calling their embassy, the US Department of State, their special FBI diplomatic contacts and the Department of State Diplomatic Security hotline. We only had a minute or two to play out our game.

I pulled up right next to them, doing about 70 MPH on the 495 Beltway. Ric rolled his window down and motioned for them to do the same. The driver actually rolled his window down, which was a very bad move. But I guess he figured, "why not?"

We both began to slow down while we kept our cars almost locked together. Ric was yelling out the window, but it was too loud to hear so we both slowed down to about 40 MPH. Ric yelled, "Hey, you guys are the KISS band, right??? Can we get your autographs? We are BIG fans. We will pay you for your autographs."

They talked amongst themselves for a few seconds and then the driver yelled "No! We are not rock and roll singers. We are diplomats. Leave us alone!"

Ric yelled back: "I've never heard of the "diplomats." Do you open for KISS? Do you have any current albums? Will you please sign autographs for us?"

They offered several gestures

**"I pulled up right next to them, doing about 70 MPH on the 495 Beltway."**

indicating that they wanted to abruptly conclude the dialogue, so Ric waved goodbye to them and blew them a kiss. They drove on and we exited the area with the greatest of haste. We wanted to be gone well before any US LEA (Law Enforcement Agency) arrived in the area.

Ric and I had not rehearsed any of the events of that day. We had never discussed them, made jokes about doing something like that or even heard of anyone doing anything like that. Neither of us had any idea what the other would do as the moments unfolded.

But we trusted each other and both of us knew that neither was going to do or say something that could not be undone, nor would we cross a line that could not be re-crossed or harm anyone in any way.

See, we had worked together for years and knew each other very well. We were true friends, the old-fashioned kind of friends. We bonded through joint experi-

ences in arduous training as well as real-life situations where our lives were in one another's hands and we knew we could rely on each other.

Ric and I trusted one another and shared an incredible admiration for each other's intellect, self-control, competencies and situational awareness. You could say that as a team we felt we could prevail in almost any situation if given enough room and time to operate.

If you have not already, I strongly urge you to build that kind of relationship with your spouse, best friend or someone close to you. We have a saying in the spy world, "Trust is the currency of the realm."

You need to be super wealthy with trust in at least one relationship in your life. The day will come when you will have to rely on your intuition and instincts and know that your teammate will do the same and that you will both be on the same page at the same time. When that day comes, the unspoken trust you develop could be a true lifesaver.



# THIS SUMMERTIME KILLER HAS ALREADY CLAIMED NUMEROUS VICTIMS

## How To Recognize And Prevent Heat Related Injuries

By Dr. Omar Hamada  
*Special Operations Physician*

We've entered the crucible of summer and although it's just started, we've already seen heat waves kill several people and thousands of heads of livestock.

This is important because summer is the time when more people get out and enjoy the sun and water, workout hard and play hard, so it's also the time we see the most heat and sun related injuries.

I work in the Emergency Department of a medium-sized urban hospital in the Nashville area. We see all types of things in the course of a day. But one thing that I've been seeing more and more of these past couple of weeks is heat-related injuries.

We hear about heat exhaustion and heat stroke, but many don't really know what they are, why they happen, and what the differences between the two are. So, let's talk about that.

When I was in the US Army, we used to hear about the Heat Index and the wet bulb temperature, but most didn't really know what that all meant. Let's just say that the wet bulb temperature is the lowest tempera-

ture a thermometer will read with a wet bulb being cooled by evaporation under normal conditions.

It basically approximates the human body's ability to self-cool in an ambient environment by evaporation of sweat. However, after a certain point, usually an external temperature of 90 degrees F, the body loses the ability to effectively self-cool and all strenuous activity should be closely monitored to avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Consequently, the Heat Index was developed by the US Marine Corps in the 1950s and is still a useful tool to help guide outdoor activity in the heat.

But let's get back to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. These are not two separate conditions, instead, they are a continuum. Let's say you are outside working. First, you begin to get hot and sweat. This is a good thing as the body uses the evaporation of sweat to dissipate heat and cool you down.

However, if you continue to exert yourself as the temperature rises or even if the temperature remains moderate but you engage in strenuous activity for long enough, at some

point, your body begins to lessen its ability to cool itself. As your core temperature increases, you'll eventually get to a point of exhaustion. If you continue elevating your core temperature past 104 degrees F, you'll experience heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion is fairly easily reversible as long as you cease your activity, hydrate, move to a cooler area and cool your core down. When someone is exhibiting symptoms of heat exhaustion, they will usually experience one or more of the following symptoms including fatigue, profuse sweating, shortness of breath, a headache, lightheadedness and a fast heart rate (tachycardia). Don't push past this. Stop immediately and cool down.

Heat stroke is a continuation and worsening of the conditions that caused heat exhaustion and occurs when the body loses its ability to regulate its own temperature. Someone suffering from heat stroke will experience symptoms such as muscle cramps, dry skin, confusion, vomiting, and seizures, and can result in permanent disability or death if not rapidly reversed.

If you are experiencing one of the above conditions or come upon someone who is, call 911, move them to a cooler area, wet them down, loosen clothing, and consider icing them under their arms, around their groin, and around their neck.

Summer is a fun time and there's plenty we can do outside in the heat, however, we must maintain awareness of our environment and pay attention to what our body is telling us. You can push it but know your limits and don't push past your body's ability to self-regulate. Have fun, but stay alert, stay alive.



# SELF DEFENSE PUNCHES THAT ACTUALLY WORK IN THE STREET

## This Will Crumple The Most Violent Thugs

By Matt Numrich

*Head Instructor Of Spy Black Belt*

There are only five main moves in boxing: jab, cross, hook, uppercut and overhand punch. Working them in a myriad of different combinations is one of the keys to successful fighting and self-defense. Using a well-practiced combination, you can confuse and disable your opponent with a flurry of punches they can't defend against.

As solid as those five moves are, and the combinations that come from them, I always like to give my students a number of additional moves that can surprise even experienced attackers, giving people the edge out in the street.

So, I want to go over a set of moves that can give you a series of techniques and are a great addition to your arsenal. The series I'm going to teach is using a screw jab to an overhand right then to a backfist. You can practice these up against air, on a heavy bag, or with a partner holding pads for you.

To start off with the screw jab, our goal is to get the opponent to cover their high line of attack by lobbing in two jabs right to their forehead.



I want to aim high because I want to draw their hands up as high as I can. Then, I go for a third punch where you drop your elbow and feed a small upper cut right to their chin.

Following this move, we conduct an overhand right. This move is a glorified downward hook to the side of their face. The special note on this move is to drop your weight with the punch, unleashing even more power with the help of gravity.



To finish up the sequence, we go back to a jab, cross, jab combination, but purposefully miss to the outside and to the far right with the last jab. When we do this, we step wide as well, over the center line, helping us to spin around. This



spin is followed by a backfist to the attackers' face.

This series is out of the norm and, as stated before, usually takes any attacker off guard. My suggestion is to practice each move individually and then start to add the pieces together focusing on the "snap" of each punch. Remember to keep your hands up as you have to protect yourself against any counter punching. But as you get better at this combo it is a great way to take the fight out of your opponent, put them back on their heels and I guarantee one or more of these punches will be devastating.



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