

**WMATM: Section H3**  
**Advanced Empty Hand Self-Defenses**

Created: June 2010

Revised: January 2017

**General Information:**

1. Only an outline of the attack and counter will be given; see an upper belt for more details.
2. There are four directions to respond to an attack: move to either side, move front, or move back. See "Punch" below for examples.
3. There are four levels of response depending on the seriousness of the attacker:
  - a. Prevent the attack.
  - b. Counter by simply escaping the attack.
  - c. Escape and counter with a hold to subdue the attacker.
  - d. Counter with a disabling blow.
4. For each attack you need to have all three "counter" options available; YOU become the attacker if you over-react to the threat.
5. Be able to explain the "counter" step-by-step, how it works, and what to do if you counter-attack fails (therefore, you need more than one response to each grab or attack).
6. The "basic" attacks are provided with detailed instructions in that handout.
7. For all self-defenses both partners start in a neutral stance (feet shoulder width apart) and then counter with power, control, a workable technique, and a loud *kiyap* with the counter-attack. For safety (and respect for your partner), the *uke* (attacker) should flow with the attack and not resist.
8. Good technique, not strength, is the key to a successful self-defense.
9. Remember to pull the attacker off balance (when possible). For example, in a single hand grab, pull the attacker's hand toward you before performing the counter.
10. Watch the attacker's eyes.
11. Maintain balance.
12. Simple is better.
13. The best self-defense is NOT to get into a dangerous situation.
14. These are only suggestions. Any workable counter can be used. Experiment.
15. When presenting self-defenses for testing, Master Weseman states it is OK to present several counters to one attack and then move on to the next attack. Up until red belt you may bring a written list of self-defenses to your test.
16. Please share your good self-defenses with others by passing a description along to a black belt. We will add updates of this handout.
17. Grand Master Wiz recommends stepping away after a 'grab' or perceived threatening move to assess the nature of the threat before automatically striking back.
18. Grand Master Wiz recommends responding to a threatening approach by 1) moving into a fighting stance with the hands up but open with palms out (most people will stop an arms length away from your outstretched hand), 2) de-escalate any threatening encounter by talking (indicate 'you scared me', 'sorry to startle you', give the potential attacker 'a way out') then moving to the side and away (while still keeping an eye on the threat) then accepting any blame and apologizing and coughing (anything to distract and re-direct the conversation). Only if the threat moves without cause closer than an arms length due to consider fighting back.
19. Areas to pinch: "any area in the shade": inside of the arm, arm pit, below the buttocks, inner thigh, etc. Test areas on yourself.
20. Grand Master Wiz states you should never have a front choke unless you are against a wall. When someone reaches out to choke you, step to the side and slap both attackers arms away. Avoid the contact when possible.
21. Grand Master Wiz recommends breaking a grip by lifting the attackers thumb off your body with your palm, grab the attacker's thumb with your whole hand, and pull it back to dislocate. You can't grasp without the thumb.
22. Grand Master Wiz recommends striking the face with the open hand: palm to nose, middle fingers to eyes, and thumb/little finger to cheeks.

23. The Krav Mega master recommends repeated counter strikes for a serious attack. Make them flow and *kiyap* with each strike.

#### **Head Lock:**

1. Pinch the thigh. The most sensitive part of the thigh is the inner and back areas. For demonstration pinch the *dobok* rather than the skin.
2. Hand over shoulder to grab chin and lift leg.
3. Ken's block the punch and grab far arm then escape.
4. Strike from back to groin.
5. Turn head and bite the attacker.
6. Grab hair with near side hand and pull head back. Far side hand can do oxjaw to chin.

#### **Front Choke/Double Lapel Grab:** (Always tighten neck as soon as grabbed to prevent the choke.)

1. Spear the throat.
2. Cup the ears.
3. Snake the arms
4. Twist and palm strike upwards between arms to the chin.
5. Double strike up to elbows then double sudo to neck.
6. Grasp hands, thrust up between the arms to break, and strike down to nose with hammer fist.
7. Grab wrist, twist 180° to lock hands, and elbow strike.
8. Palm strike across to opposite wrist to break, palm strike to the other wrist, and then counter-strike.
9. With both hands grab back of head and pull down while kneeing.
10. Double outside palm block to the elbows then sudo, back fist, or hammer fist to head or neck.
11. Knuckle to sternum or lip.
12. Throw head forward, down and duck under arms to the side.
13. Kick or strike to the groin, reach down and grab legs and pull up to throw attacker.
14. Grab both hands with the thumb on the hand back. Rotate outward and then press forward on the back of the hands to force the attacker to their knees. Knee strike.
15. Step forward with one foot. Double hammer fist to the top of the attacker's elbows. Knee to groin or double uppercut.
16. Grab attacker's thumbs with your fingers while putting your thumbs on the back of the attacker's hands. Pull the attacker's thumbs outward to break the hold then counter-attack.
17. Double spear hand to the armpits.
18. Right hand straight up, turn to the left, right upper arm comes down on attacker's wrists to break choke, and counter with back fist.
19. Your right hand crosses over and grabs attacker's right wrist, your left foot crosses over and steps behind attacker's left leg while your left hand goes straight up performs an elbow strike across the attacker's elbows to break the hold, twist and trap the attacker's wrists then elbow or back fist counter. This can be mirrored by starting with the left hand grab.

#### **Choke from Behind or Half Nelson:** (Always tuck the chin down and into the elbow to prevent being choked.)

1. Grab top of wrist and bottom of elbow, twist into back arm lock. If the attacker's hands are locked, you may break the hands apart by knuckling the back of the hands, pulling the little finger toward the wrist, or pulling the thumb towards the back of the hand.
2. Turn 90° (towards your chin) to the side and elbow to the ribs then can step in and do hip throw.
3. Step to side and fist to groin.
4. Head butt then bend over, reach between your legs and grab a leg, pull up.
5. Use your arm on the same side as the attacker's arm to grab the attacker's shoulder. Your other arm grabs the attacker's elbow. Bend your knees slightly and put the attacking side hip into the attacker's hip, lift, and do hip throw.
6. With a chock, step to the side of the grab and bend over converting the hold into a side "head lock" and counter as above.

#### **Full Nelson:**

1. Head butt. Hit groin or ribs.
2. Pull arms straight down. Hit groin or ribs.
3. Step to side and elbow the face.

4. Twist to side. Move arm to opposite side of attacker's neck, pull head and throw attacker over your leg.

#### **Single Lapel Grab:**

1. Reach over with opposite hand, thumb in back of hand, twist inward and push elbow into an arm bar.
2. Same side arm grabs top of the wrist with thumb inside of arm. Other arm grabs under elbow. Duck under the arm and twist into an arm lock.
3. Outside middle block and counter.
4. Step in, palm strike to arm, and back fist.
5. Sandwich attacker's hand between your two hands. Twist the hand upward against the wrist; this causes the attacker to drop to their knees. Knee to face.
6. Palm strike outward to the attacker's wrist while your other hand moves up and across body to counter rotation and add power. Back or hammer fist.

#### **Shoulder Grab, Side:**

1. High block and side kick.
2. Grab hand with opposite hand. Same side hand grabs wrist. Twist wrist forward into an arm bar.

#### **Shoulder Grab, Back:**

1. Raise arm on same side as attack. Step back with same leg and try to position leg behind attacker's leg. As you turn you break the hold, arm comes down in front of attacker's face, under neck, and pull attacker back over your leg (or strike with reverse hand).
2. Raise arm on side of attack, turn 180° towards the attack and strike. You may either leave the arm up to block a counter punch or bring the arm down to trap the wrist of the attacking arm.

#### **Same Side, Single hand Grab:**

1. Grab hand and pull to opposite shoulder. Reverse strike.
2. Palm strike *down* to wrist (pressure point).
3. Step in 90° and palm strike forearm. Back fist.
4. Rotate hand 360° inward (over the top against the thumb) to break hold.
5. Move held arm into attacker's 'elbow to elbow' to release grip.
6. Step next to attacker (facing same way) on same side as hand grab, then extend hand forward to break grip. Elbow strike.
7. Rotate hand *under* attacker's, push the back of attacker's wrist and hand medially (pushes arm out of the way), step back with opposite foot, then reverse palm strike.
8. Step towards attacker and pull elbow straight up to strike the chin. This will also break the grip.
9. Palm strike outward to the attacker's wrist while the held hand moves up and across body. Back or hammer fist. (Variation of #3)

#### **Two Hand Grab to Two Hands:**

1. Rotate hands 360° outward and bring hands together hitting back of attacker's hands together.
2. Jump front kick.
3. If the attacker grabs from the top: bend at the elbow to pull hands back to your shoulder.
4. If the attacker grabs under your wrists (if your hands are up to defend yourself): pull your hands straight down to your sides.
5. Push both arms into attackers 'elbow to elbow' to release your hands.

#### **Two Hand Grab to One Hand:**

1. Reach over the attacker's hands, grab your hand, and step back with the same side foot as you pull your hand up and to your shoulder. Reverse oxjaw.
- 2.

#### **Cross Hand Grab:**

1. Take loose hand to hold attacker's hand in place. Rotate grabbed hand over back of wrist. Keep attacker's elbow bent at 90° and push down on wrist.
2. Grab hand and lift up to rotate under and into a back arm lock.
3. Pull attacker's arms toward you, step forward with the opposite foot, and elbow strike.
4. Turn 90° towards the attacking arm while rotating your hand up and over the attacker's wrist (pulling out against the thumb). Continue to step away from the attacker. May use back or sidekick if needed.

5. Rotate your hand inward and grab the back of the attacker's wrist (the attacker will try to hold on). Step forward with the opposite foot and place the free hand on the attacker's elbow. Rotate the arm into an arm bar.

**Hand Grab from the Side:**

1. Pull the hand toward you (this locks the attacker's knee) and do side kick to the knee.
2. Rotate your wrist 180° against the thumbs to release the hold and walk away (like cross hand grab).
3. Pull the hand toward you and do pivot roundhouse.

**Front Bear-Hug:**

1. Hold attacker's hips, step back and knee groin.
2. Spear hands into both arm pits to break hold then strike.

**Back Bear Hug:**

1. Knuckle to back of the hand and strike.
2. Stomp on foot or shin.
3. Grab little finger and pull down or the thumbs and pull back or out to break the hold and counter.
4. Head butt, bend over and grab leg between your legs. Lift leg up and sit down on the knee.
5. Butt thrust backwards while thrusting arms to the side. Back kick.
6. Victim raises and straightens the trapped arms forward (to loosen the attacker's grip) and then counters with alternating elbow strikes to the ribs.

**Slap:**

1. Turn 90° into the slap and block with both hands. Grab wrist and pull out while near elbow to face.
2. Step forward and to side opposite the slap. Block slap with outside sudo. Palm heel to face.

**Punch: (Directions of counter-attack: #1 and #3 are side techniques, #6 is a step forward technique, and #5 is a step back technique.)**

1. Block punch with outside sudo (same side as the punch) and step opposite the punch while doing eye flick or claw hand to face.
2. Thrust kick (legs are longer than arms) as attacker steps forward.
3. Step to side of the punch and block with outside middle block or sudo (sudo has longer reach with the opposite hand) and strike.
4. Double arm wristlock technique and counter.
5. Step back and do front leg sidekick.
6. Step forward, high block the punch, and counter.
7. Victim shuffles to the side of the punch and performs an open hand outside middle block to deflect the punch. The blocking hand then grabs the attacker's wrist to control (pulling the hand further forward causes the attacker to turn taking the non-punching hand away from the victim). Counter with a front leg roundhouse kick.
8. Grand Master Wiz: Step to the side, block and direct the fist with your left hand towards you outstretched elbow (forearm either horizontal or vertical) then counter either with a back fist (horizontal forearm) or strike with your knuckles to the back of the attacker's hand or pressure point distal to the elbow (vertical forearm). Practice by deflecting the punch into your open, right palm and then progress to deflecting the punch to the forearm

**Kick:**

1. Step to side and scoop up the kicking leg. Hold leg while do downward elbow strike with other hand.
2. Step to side and catch leg underneath. Lift up leg to throw attacker.

**Overhead Strike:**

1. (With bat) As soon as the attacker's hand starts to move BACKWARD to set up the strike, step forward with your same side (as the attacker's bat hand) foot and place it even with the side of the attacker's body while performing a high block to the attacker's wrist with same side hand before the bat starts coming forward. Step forward with your back foot, step behind the attacker, bring your free hand under the attacker's arm, reach up with your free hand to grab the bat, and pull from attacker's hand. You may strike the attacker with the bat.
2. (Empty hand) High block, step forward, and strike.

**Two Hand Push Against the Wall:**

1. Pull down on one elbow and up on the other to turn attacker to side and strike.

2. If holding the shoulders, the victim lifts one arm and turns the body (leveraging against the wall) 90° away from the lifted arm. This breaks the hold and makes the attacker fall forward. You can elbow strike the face as you turn.
3. If holding the hands against the wall above the head, pull the hands straight down the wall (like making snow angels) to release the grip and knee groin or other close counter.
4. Victim puts instep of foot on the back of the same side attacker's quad, push the leg straight down the back of the quads, and push the calf down bending the knee to the floor.
5. Swing both arms from the 6 o'clock position vertically (either clockwise or counter-clockwise) against the arms to break the hold. One hand holds attacker's arms away as the other hand strikes.

**One Hand Push Against the Wall:**

1. Opposite hand palm strikes the elbow outward while the same side hand palm strikes the wrist inward to release the grip. Back or hammer fist to the head.
- 2.

**Arm Around Shoulder:**

1. Grab hand, turn wrist up to lock elbow, and then pull down on hand while standing up for an arm bar.

**Back Hair Grab:**

1. Grab the hand with both of your hands on top. Turn around 180°, slip thumbs onto the palm and lift arm up to lock the wrist.

**Stand Off Threat: (To prevent the attack.)**

1. As the attacker moves toward you, you suddenly jump forward, make an aggressive face, and scream.
2. As the attacker moves forward, do a thrust kick to keep them away.
3. See above re: Grand Master Wiz's guidance for avoiding and de-escalating a potential confrontation.

**Pull Weapon from Back of Belt:**

1. Use hand opposite the attack to grab shoulder of attacker's reaching hand. Reach between the attacker's arm and ribs with the your same side hand, step forward with the same foot, and then put palm on the back of the attacker's shoulder. Using both hands pull forward into a bend. Knee to face.

**Back Arm Lock:** (To prevent a counter to a back arm lock always grab the opposite shoulder to prevent the person from twisting out and put your knee in the back of their knee to control their movements.)

1. Pull arm straight out to the side. Turn and elbow to the face.
2. Turn toward the held arm to untwist the arm lock. Elbow strike or oxjaw as you spin around.

**Leg Grab While Kicking:**

1. Jump up and kick with other leg, fall to ground and roll back up to standing.

**Push:**

1. Fake retreat then jump away back kick.

**Gun, Close In:**

1. Pretend to reach back for your wallet to turn your body and bring the other hand forward. With the leg on the same side as the forward hand, quickly step forward and to side. Using outside hand to block gun inward and grab attacker's wrist. Inside hand grabs gun from below and twists upward to disarm attacker. Use gun to hit the face.

**Single/Double Hand Grab from the Side:**

1. Step sidekick to one or both attackers.

**Handshake:**

1. Grab attacker's little finger and pull down.
- 2.

**Both Arms Grabbed from Behind:**

1. Bend forward to release stress on arms. Back kick.