



Editorial

Basic Self-Defense Strategies For The Hobbyist

There are times when even the most inoffensive, mild-mannered collectors will find themselves in precariously dangerous situations simply due to the exigencies of the hobby. For example, you're on vacation in a never-before-visited city. After dinner, you decide to walk around and see if you can find any new covers and burn off a few calories at the same time. You notice the "Leather & Lace" bar, a rather seedy and somewhat noisy establishment, but the lure of possibly new finds overrides everything your senses are screaming at you, and you enter anyway (you *are* a collector, after all). Almost at once, a new friend makes his way over to you and suddenly demands, "Your money or a date!"...You realize you're in the wrong bar.

It's a times such as these that the collector needs his or her basic self-defense strategies...usually in a hurry. Now, while most people don't carry weapons around with them, the collector has a distinct advantage--he or she always has a matchcover or matchbook. Thus, when needed, you can do the following:

1. **Torch defense:** This option calls for quick reflexes and fast thinking. Immediately ignite matchbook and toss at assailant. Recommendation--This may well save your life, but since you'll be ruining a matchcover, don't do it.
2. **Piercing Look attack:** You'll need fine eye-hand coordination for this one, but it can be quite effective. Quickly roll a cover into a tight cylinder and jam it in assailant's eye. Recommendation--Since cover will be unusable after this, make certain it's a national.
3. **Sonic Attack campaign:** This requires *two* covers. If you lightly sandwich two covers together, bring them to your lips, and blow hard, you can produce a very high-pitched whistle which will disable the assailant, at least momentarily Recommendation--plug your ears beforehand!
4. **Rub-a-dub technique:** Rub abrasive portion of cover on assailant's hand, thus making him drop any weapon being held. Recommendation--Check first to make sure outside of cover is in correct position; otherwise, you'll simply be petting the assailant, which can be embarrassing.
5. **Two Fang assault:** You will need a full-book for this one. Upon entering confrontation, rapidly open staple with fingernail and puncture nearest assailant appendage. Recommendation--If assailant is particularly offensive, use rusty staple.
6. **Burning Palm approach:** Requires full-book or several loose matchsticks. Ask assailant to put out his hand, palm up. Open matchbook, tear out several matchsticks, and deposit such in assailant's hand. Strike match and ignite small pile of matches in opponent's hand. Recommendation--Leave premises quickly. (Note: Only attempt on very patient assailants)
6. **Effort of Last Resort:** If all else fails, whip out a cover, hold it as you would a razor blade, and threaten your assailant with a severe paper cut. Caution: This one may not always work.