Don Draper Judo: Unarmed Self-Defense from the Mad Men Era

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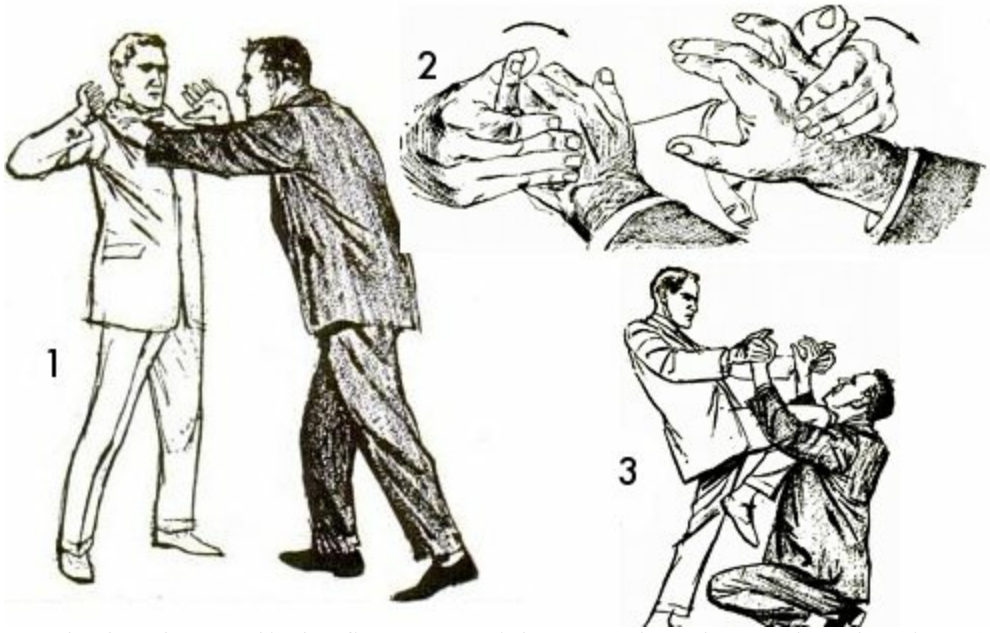
Don Draper Judo: Unarmed Self-Defense from the Mad Men Era

As I was browsing through some old magazines the other day, I came across a fantastic issue of *Popular Science* from 1962 that contained a feature on unarmed self-defense. The article was adapted from a book entitled *Modern Judo and Self-Defense* by Harry Ewen, a "police judo" expert. The best part of the multi-page article are the fantastic mid-century illustrations by Dana Rasmussen, featuring a well-dressed judo expert who looks like he might work with Don Draper when he isn't throwing ruffians over his shoulder. Even the "thug" in the article is pretty dapper, proving once again that everything was just swankier back in the day — even the bad guys.

Below you'll find step-by-step illustrated instructions on how to defend yourself from chokes, bear hugs, kicks, and knife attacks when you're unarmed, all while still looking incredibly handsome. Enjoy.

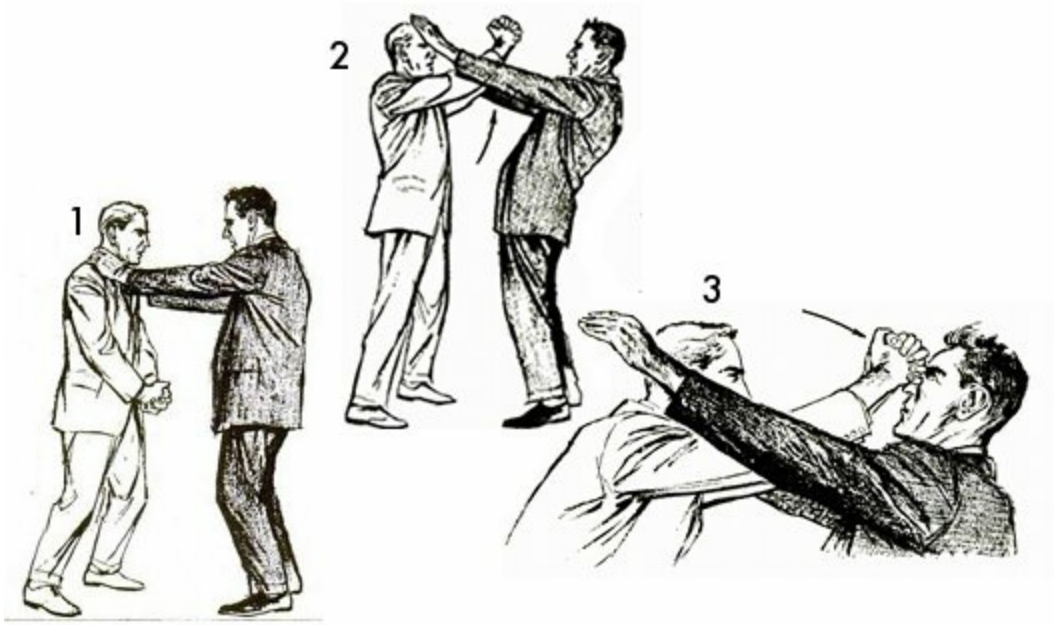
Three Ways to Defend Yourself from Chokes from the Front

Finger Lock



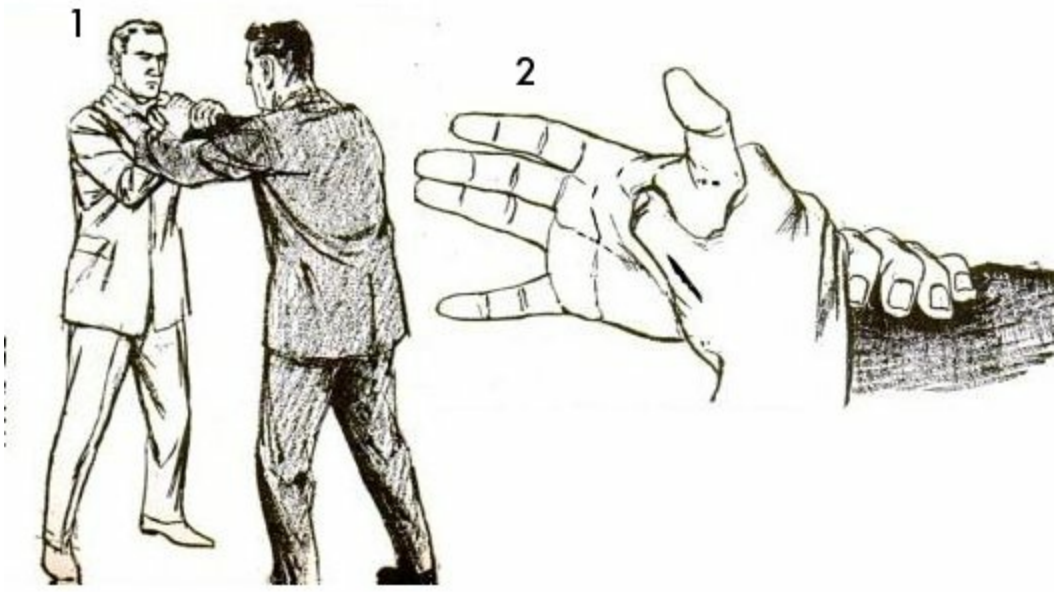
Grab the thug's little fingers, with your thumbs under the tips (fig. 1). The knuckles of your index fingers should be over the the second joints of his little fingers (fig. 2). Move your wrists in a circular motion down toward your hips. Applied pressure will force the thug to his knees to avoid broken fingers. As he goes down, strike him in the face or jaw with your knee (fig. 3).

Nose Break

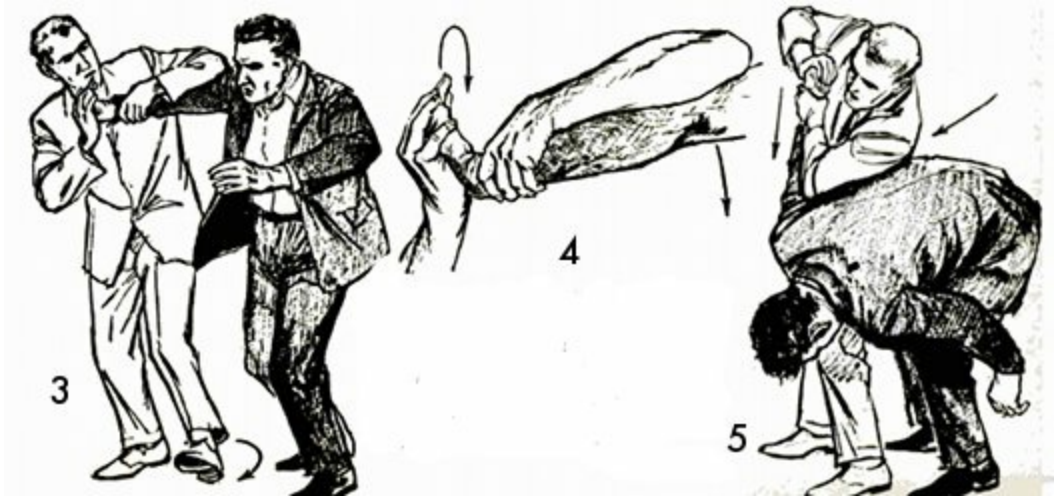


First, clasp your hands (fig. 1). Then, with fingers locked and elbows bent, swing hard from the waist and strike the thug's forearms with the bony parts of your arms. Follow through until your clenched hands are above your assailant's head and the choke is broken (fig 2). Finish by bringing down your still-clenched hands, with all the force you can muster, on the bridge of his nose (fig. 3). Stop short of this, naturally, while practicing this move.

Basic Arm Lock



Grasp the thug's right forearm with both your hands (fig. 1). Holding his right wrist firmly with your left hand, slip your right thumb under his right palm and pull his arm toward you to ensure that it is straight (fig. 2).

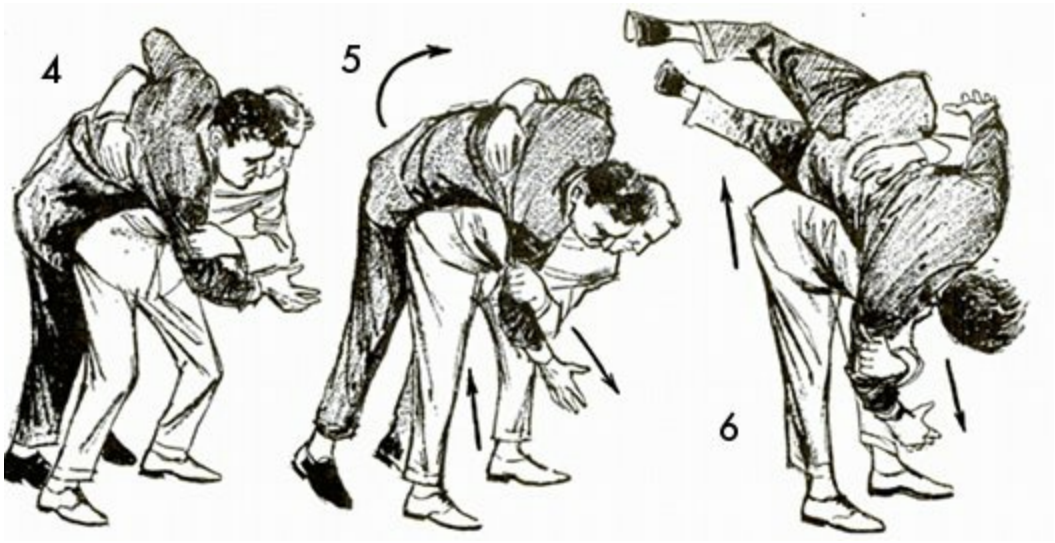


Keep on turning until you are almost at your assailant's side (fig. 3). Keep his hand elevated above the level of the rest of your arm (fig. 4). Now put all the weight of your body behind your left upper arm and elbow, pushing down on his right arm just above the elbow (fig. 5). Unless he submits, he will end up with a dislocated shoulder.

How to Break a Grip from the Front That Pins Your Arms



Force the thug to move back by giving him a couple of sharp jabs in the groin with your thumbs (fig. 1). As he draws his hips back, pivot on your left foot and move your right foot across in front of him (fig. 2). You should now be facing the same way he is. As you turn, slip your right arm behind his back and grasp his right sleeve with your left hand to keep his body close to yours (fig. 3)



Keep your knees bent slightly, maintain a steady pull on the attacker's sleeve, and keep your right hand in the small of his back (fig. 4). Straightening your legs will now raise his feet off the ground

(fig. 5). Your opponent is now balanced on your right hip, and you can toss him by turning him over as you continue to pull on his right sleeve (fig. 6).

How to Break a Bear Hug from the Rear



This defense works as well against an overarm grip as against an underarm one (fig. 1). With your feet apart, bend your knees, stoop down, and grab your assailant's right ankle with both hands (fig. 2). Pull his ankle forward and upward to throw him on his rump (fig. 3).

Defense Against Kick Aimed at Face or Stomach



Trap the thug's foot by bending your knees and crossing your hands in front of you (fig. 1). As the kicker's shin contacts your wrists, turn your left hand (fig. 2) so that you have a firm hold around his calf. Assuming that the kicker uses his right leg, spin around to your right, throwing him forward on his face (fig. 3). Once he's thrown, follow up by going down on the ground with him. In the final position (fig. 4), your left forearm is behind his calf, your left hand is on your own right bicep, and your right hand is on top of his foot. Use care when practicing this lock: doing it jerkily could

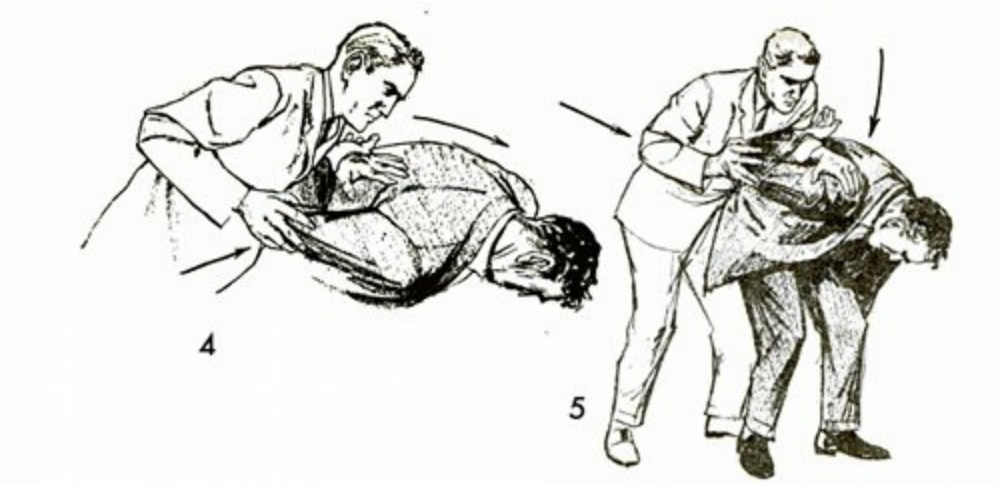
dislocate the leg.

Three Ways to Subdue a Thug Who Tries to Choke You From Behind

Arm Lock



Grab the choking forearm at the wrist with your left hand and place your right hand under the assailant's elbow (fig. 1). Pull down with your left hand and push up with your right, turning and bending your body as you do so. This should give you enough space to extricate your head from between your attacker's elbow and body. Bring your left foot back as you turn, so you are at his side (fig. 2). Twist his right arm behind his back (fig. 3).



When his right arm is twisted almost as far back as it will go, slip your left hand under his right wrist (fig. 4). Slide your left arm across his back (fig. 5) until your left hand is trapped in the crook of your left elbow. To apply the pressure part of the lock, raise your left elbow in a forward circular motion while holding your assailant's right elbow steady with your right hand.

Shoulder Throw



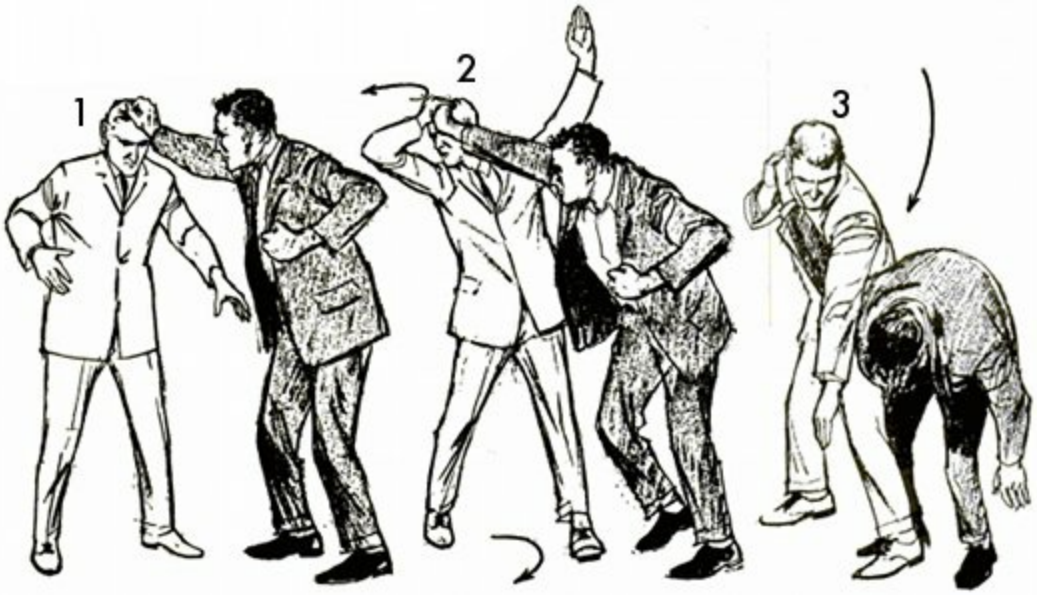
Grab the thug's sleeve at the elbow with your left hand while your right grips his shoulder (or as high up on his sleeve as you are able to reach) (fig. 1). Bend your knees, but keep your torso upright. Bend your body forward. Pull down and to the left with your left hand, forward and slightly to the left with your right (fig. 2). Push your hips back against your attacker's thighs as you pull, and he'll be thrown over your shoulder. (fig. 3)

Shoulder Drop



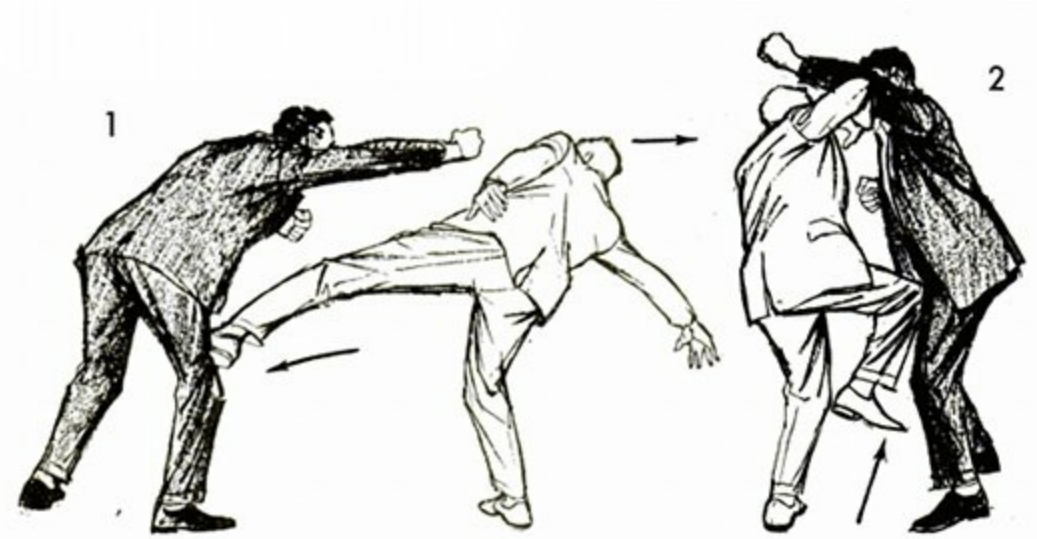
This throw starts the same way as the shoulder throw. You first grab your opponent's right sleeve at elbow and shoulder. All you have to do now is drop onto your left knee, stretching your right leg sideways as you do so (fig. 1). Pull down with your right hand and the thug is tossed over your shoulder (fig. 2). This and other throws that are shown on these pages should be practiced only on well-padded surfaces or on a soft lawn.

Dislodging a One-Hand Hair Grab



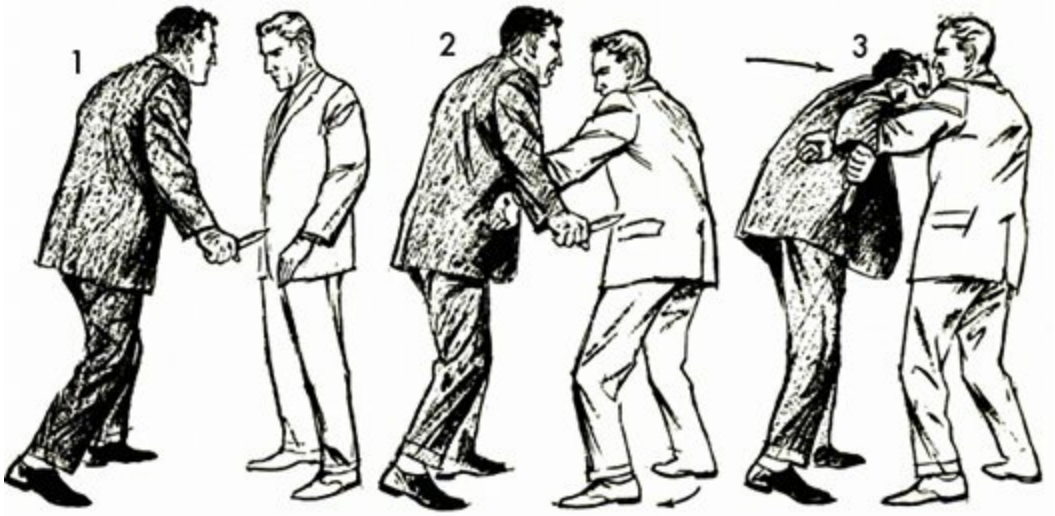
Grab the attacker's wrist with your right hand. Hold his hand on your head (or throat) as you turn right and raise your left arm high (fig. 2). Bring that arm down upon your foe's upper arm, placing your left foot in front of him (fig. 3). If you do this swiftly, you may well injure your assailant. Better go slow when you're practicing, though.

Two Defenses Against a Boxer

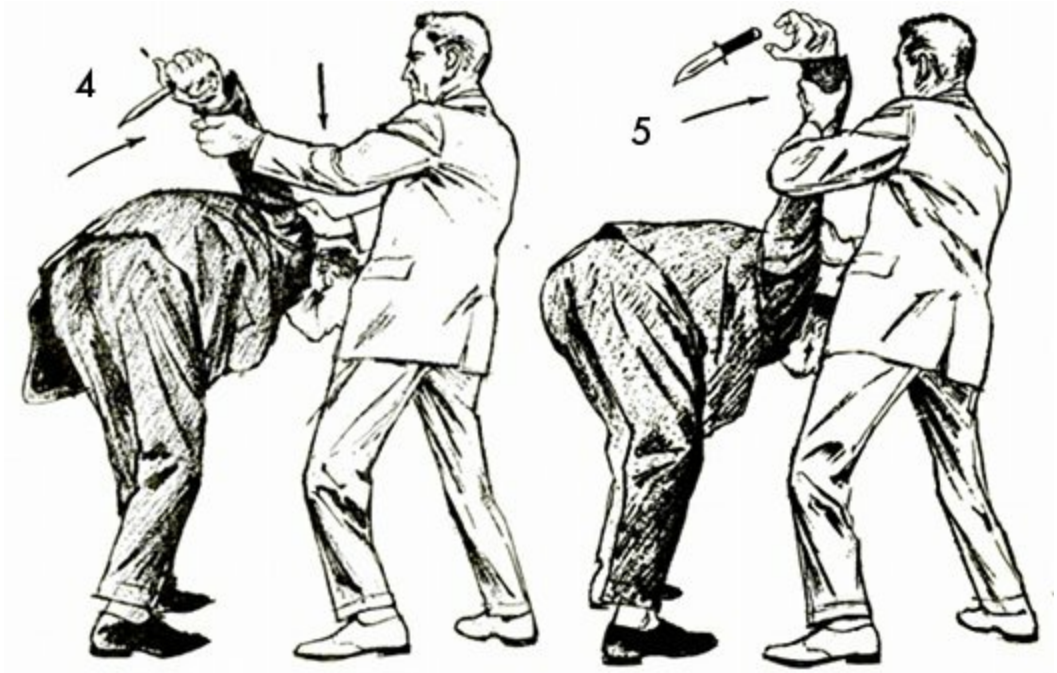


As your opponent aims a blow, spin to your right with your full weight on your right leg. Bend your left knee and then straighten that leg right out at the attacker, catching him just above his right knee with the sole of your left foot, backed by the full force of your body. As your left leg kicks out, jerk your head right. This counter-balances the weight being pushed left. It also gets your head nicely out of the way of the aimed fist of your opponent (fig. 1). An alternate method is to deflect the blow with your right forearm and counterattack with a knee to the groin (fig. 2). Skip the knee jab, however, during practice sessions.

How to Protect Yourself from a Knife Wielder



As the knifer raises his blade (fig. 1), parry the blow by striking his forearm with the edge of your own left forearm (fig. 2). Quickly seize his clothing near his right shoulder with your right hand. Then with a strong, but smooth movement, pull his right shoulder toward you while also pushing his right (knife) hand upward and away from your body (fig. 3).



Grab his right wrist with your left hand as you push his knife up, while still holding on to his shoulder with your right hand (fig. 4). Now move your right hand from the knife-wielder's shoulder to his right elbow. Pushing down on that elbow keeps his knife arm straight (fig. 5). Pulling his wrist toward you applies a very drastic shoulder lock. Unless your assailant drops his knife, you can easily dislocate his shoulder.