

Defensive Strategies



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See Them, Stay Invisible

Here's the problem. Someone might be in your house without your permission. Day or night, doesn't matter. Of course, the smartest thing to do would be to phone 911, and sit tight until the police can get there and do a search. But we don't always do the smartest thing, do we? Some of us will be determined to do the dangerous thing, and go searching our home, gun in hand, alone.

I strongly advise that you do the smart thing, and call 911, but I realize that not everyone will follow that advice. So, if you are going to do something dangerous, do it in the safest possible way. Wouldn't you feel safer if you could search for that possible (or possibly not there at all) intruder without exposing yourself to attack?

Is it possible to search a room to find out whether there is any threat there, while not being seen yourself?

Wouldn't it be neat to don Harry Potter's magic Invisibility

Cloak, and search your home for that possible intruder? Well, Harry's cloak, even if it were real, would not work for us Muggles.

US computer scientists, physicists and other scientists have already demonstrated "active camouflage," in which a real-time image is displayed on a very special wearable display. This creates a see-through effect, not complete invisibility. In another approach that would not require wearing special clothing, specially engineered metamaterials may make real-life "cloaking devices" practical, far, far in the future. Wikipedia says, "The theory that light waves can be acted upon the same way as radio waves is now a popular idea among scientists and can be compared to a stone in a river, in which the water passes around it, but leaves no trace of a stone being in the water slightly down-stream. Comparing light waves to the water and whatever object that is being "cloaked" to the stone, the desire is to have light waves pass around that object, leaving no visible aspects of it, possibly not even a shadow."

OK, so we are still a long, long way from a product you could buy off the shelf which would let you move around, searching, with a gun ready in your hand, but not be seen by the Bad Guy (BG)

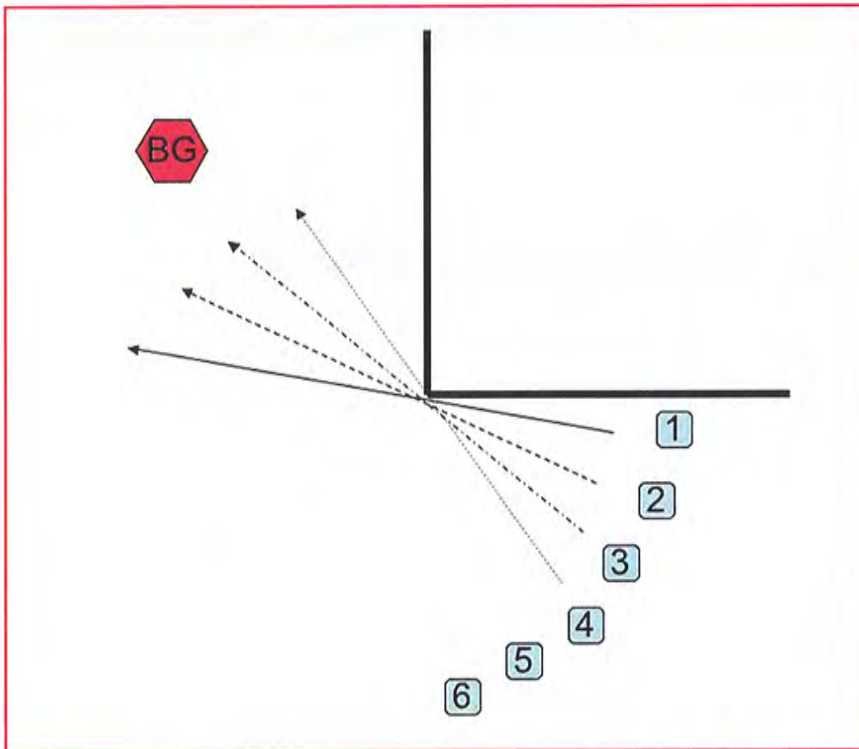
you are trying to find. There is a method, however, for searching a room that, properly done, should keep you almost totally out of the visual range of anyone in that room, while allowing you to find out where they are.

It is called "pieing" a room, because you check that space one small slice at a time. It can be used to clear hallways as well as rooms. Essentially any structure that has a corner you want to go around, but can't because the BG might be there.

Even if you think you are going around the corner carefully, you will give yourself away if you do any of the following: make noise, lead with your gun (your gun barrel might be grabbed by a BG just around the corner; if not, it certainly might be seen and give your position away), lean sideways to look around the corner (that exposes your head, the most vulnerable part of you, to the BG, who might shoot at it), do a fast, dynamic entry like they do on TV (that will show your whole body to the BG, giving him a chance to attack you before you have a definite fix on his position).

To pie a corner properly you must be noiseless, cautious, slow, and precise. The basic idea of pieing is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Pieing the Corner of a Hallway or a Room:



Start at Position 1, close to the wall but NOT close to the corner. Stay a good three or four feet from the corner. Examine as much as you can in the slice of the room that you can see ahead of you. When you are sure it is clear, take a mini step to your left, to Position 2, starting to move in an arc away from the wall. This will give you another small slice of the room to examine. If that is clear, move to Position 3. In Figure 1, that would let you see at least part of the BG. All you have to see is a foot, a hand, an elbow, maybe even just a shadow to let you know that the BG is there. (If there is no BG, by the time you get to the last position you will be able to see that the room is completely clear. At the last positions, you should even be able to see someone hiding just around the corner.) To clear the other half of the room (or the other end of the hallway), start again on the other side of the

doorway, and pie in an arc in the opposite direction.

That's the basic idea, but not the whole story. You can still make the mistakes of being noisy, leading with your gun, exposing yourself to incoming fire, or going too fast. Here are some things to do to avoid those problems.

Hold your gun elbows bent, 2-handed grip, very close to your body. Make sure the muzzle never drifts toward your feet, nor high enough to encounter a target until you are absolutely sure of that target. Use a handgun; a long gun is much harder to manage around corners.

If you are standing on the right side of a doorway, as in Figure 1, put your right foot forward; this

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The advertisement features a woman in blue jeans holding a brown leather hobo bag. The word "Wisteria" is written in a large, white, cursive font across the top. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner. The Galco Gunleather logo, consisting of a red square with a white gun icon and the text "GALCO GUNLEATHER", is in the bottom right. Below the logo, the text reads "800.874.2526 • GalcoGunleather.com" and "Proudly made in the USA since 1969."

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will help keep your left foot, leg and hip back behind cover. If you are standing on the left side, put your left foot forward.

Lean forward (NOT sideways) slightly from your waist. Again, this helps you stay behind cover.

To keep your head and major body organs behind as much cover as possible, keep your head upright, NOT tilted. You can actually learn to use just one eye to do the peaking around the corner, so most of you will stay behind the cover of the corner.

To keep quiet, don't shuffle your feet. When you move, pick up your feet, move them in the air, and put them down slowly.

The steps you take in the arc might have to be very small, just a couple of inches, more than just the 6 shown in the figure. Yes, it will take a lot of time to clear a room this way, probably 10 to 15 minutes, but big movements might show you to the BG before you can see him.

This position isn't comfortable for long periods. When you need to rest, straighten up slightly (keeping well behind cover), take a few quiet breaths, and then carefully resume your position and your arc of movement.

Every so often, listen for any sounds the BG might be making.

After you have cleared both sides of the room or hall, are you going to go in there, to continue your search of other parts of your home? If so, you might want to do a quick peek on the side you searched first, just to be sure

nobody has gotten there while you were pieing the other side. To do a quick peek, kneel or crouch, and as quickly as you can, peek around the corner and get yourself back again. The low position will be a surprise to anyone who might be expecting you to walk around the corner at normal height, so they won't have time to see you, react to your new position, and attack you there. A quick peek doesn't replace pieing for reliably clearing a room, but augments it.

Because the place you are most likely to be doing this process is your own home, you have plenty of opportunity to practice. Learn where you have to stand, how many steps it takes to clear your living spaces, and how long it takes. If you can get a family member to play the part of a BG, even better. Have them look for you, and tell you when they can see enough of you to aim at; if you haven't already seen them, adjust your position, and try again. You should be able to see at least a little part of them before they see you. You don't need to use a gun for this rehearsal, just your finger gun will do.

What do you do if you actually seen a BG, someone who doesn't belong in your home? You don't have to go forward with your gun. A quiet step back will bring you safely to cover, probably without alerting the BG to your presence. Then you can call 911 and wait for them to take care of the problem (just like you should have done at the beginning, but now you know for SURE that you have an intruder).

Sig P290 Continued from Page 15

encourage flinch development, something even experienced shooters need to train around on a regular basis. Small guns are designed to be carried as life saving tools and often in situations where the choice is a tiny gun or no gun at all. Most of us would choose the gun. If this is your option, take the time to



The laser module mounts just forward of the trigger guard and is adjustable for windage and elevation. The battery compartment is accessible without taking the unit off the gun.

train yourself to use your pocket defender to get safe, reliable hits on target each and every time.

The P290 is a solid offering in the array of micro-sized 9mm guns on the market. It took very little break-in to run reliably and accuracy was good. The simple laser module on this model was easy to operate and, in my opinion, a good enhancement for its role as a deep-cover back-up protector. And anytime it's possible to add a little style to one's tools I consider that a bonus.

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