



DEFEATING COMMON HUMAN RESTRAINTS

Duct Tape

Duct tape is a fabric-like material impregnated with adhesive designed to be very sticky but it tears easily.

Defeat Techniques – Hands Taped Together

- (1) When the tape is applied to your wrists hold your elbows as close as possible to each other in front of you. This requires that you extend your arms slightly. To escape raise your hands above your head then thrust them down forcefully as you “chicken wing” your elbows outward and slap your hips. The tape will tear. This tearing technique will work when your hands are taped behind your back but it is more difficult to accomplish. A better option is #2 below.
- (2) Locate a 90-degree corner or edge (wall, table, counter, wooden beam, etc) and rub the duct tape on the corner to start it to tear then tear it open.

Defeat Technique – Taped To a Chair

- (1) Lean forward quickly and forcefully as if placing your head between your knees to tear the tape loose.

Rope

When being tied up with rope, regardless of the type, there are several ways of positioning your hands as you present them to your captors to help facilitate escape.

Defeat Techniques

- (1) As you are being tied up spread your elbows away from your body and cross your wrists/hands and make a fist with your hands. All of these measures will ultimately create the space needed to facilitate escape. When the opportunity presents itself uncross your arms, relax your hands, extend your arms and shimmy out of the rope.
- (2) As you are being tied up make a fist with both hands and put your hands together so your thumbs touch and with the back of your hands facing up. When the opportunity

presents itself straighten your arms, rotate your hands so the palms are touching, and shimmy out of the rope.

- (3) Contrive a piece of “550-cord” (para cord, parachute cord) approximately 7-ft long with slip knot loops on each end. The “550-cord” can be hidden on your person (behind your belt) or placed in your boots/shoes in place of regular shoe laces. Slip the 550-cord between the hands and over the bottom piece of rope. You may have to use your mouth to accomplish this. Sit on the floor/ground, put the end loops on the 550-cord over the toe of each shoe, then begin “bicycling” to saw through the rope with the 550-cord.

550-cord is also available in the popular survival bracelets available on the retail market. There are instructional videos on YouTube which explain how to make your own and what materials are needed. Survival bracelets contain approximately 7-feet of 550-cord once it is unraveled.

Zip Ties

Zip ties, regardless of size or strength, are a mechanical mechanism that relies on a ratchet device to keep it locked. The ratchet is made of plastic. If the ratchet can be released the zip tie will unlock. The zip tie can also be broken.

Defeat Techniques

- (1) As the zip tie is being applied extend your elbows out away from your body and make fists with both hands while placing your thumbs together with the back of your hands facing up. When the opportunity presents itself relax your hands, extend your arms with the palms of your hands together, and slip out of the zip tie.
- (2) As you present your hands to be zip tied cross your arms at the wrist while making a fists with your hands. Your captor may not allow this. If you are told to put your hands together revert to technique #1. If your captor places the zip tie with the wrists crossed spread your elbows away from your body while making tight fists which creates space. When the opportunity presents itself uncross your hands, place the palms of your hands together, extend your arms, and begin try to work your hands free.
- (3) If you are with someone else and both of you are restrained with zip ties release the ratchet on the other persons zip tie with your thumb/finger nail or any other object you might have in your possession (e.g. safety pin). Once your associate is free they can undo your zip tie.
- (4) Zip ties can be broken at either the ratchet mechanism or along the length of the zip tie itself. In order to do that the zip tie has to be as tight as possible. You will have to use your teeth to tighten the zip tie. The ratchet mechanism must be centered

between your hands. Having done that raise your hands as high as you can reach then strike down forcefully and quickly while extending your elbows out (chicken wing) and moving your hands toward your hips. The zip tie will break.

- (5) Cut through the zip tie with a piece of 550-cord as above under the rope section.
- (6) In a situation where you're restrained with double zip ties (i.e. two zip ties looped together) the techniques above detailed in sections #3, #4, and #5 apply.

Handcuffs

Handcuffs are a mechanical device with a spring-type ratchet system that keeps the swing arm closed in the locked position. There is also a "double lock" mechanism that prevents the swing arm from getting tighter once the handcuffs are applied.

If the double lock mechanism (block) is engaged it can be released with a handcuff key, an improvised key, or by striking the hand cuffs on something solid. If the double lock is not engaged, or has been released, there are a variety of techniques for releasing the locking mechanism.

Defeat Techniques

- (1) The opening handles on a 3/4" binder clip make an excellent handcuff key when removed from the clip itself. Further, the binder clip can be clamped to a piece of clothing or belt so it can be retrieved when needed. If you have been restrained with handcuffs in an austere environment they will usually be placed in the front so you can be easily lead around. When the opportunity presents itself retrieve your binder clip, remove one of the opening handles by squeezing in one side. Use the bent end of the clip handle to unlock the handcuffs.
- (2) A large paper clip is easy to hide in or on clothing and can also be converted to a handcuff key. Open the paper clip and open it to a 90-degree angle. Insert the tip of the paper clip in the extension of the key hole in one of the cuffs then withdraw it approximately half the depth of the key hole. Bend the paper clip over against the body of the cuff as far as it will go (results in a 40-45 degree bend on the tip). Withdraw the bent paper clip, insert the bent tip into the key hole with the tip pointing in the same direction as the key hole extension, and turn it toward the ratchet mechanism as you would a key to unlock the cuff.
- (3) A safety pin can be modified as above but it may be more difficult to deploy as it is not as thick in diameter as a large paper clip allowing the tip of the pin to get stuck between internal lock parts. With the modified safety pin go slowly and take your time. Only minimal turning force is needed to release the lock.

- (4) A bobby pin can also be modified as above in #2. The plastic tip on the straight edge of the bobby pin must be removed first. As detailed in #3 the bobby pin is thinner than a large paper clip and potentially can become stuck between the internal lock parts. Take your time and don't force the tool. Only minimal turning force is needed to release the lock.
- (5) Parts of a hair barrette can be used to shim or slip the latch and release the swing arm on a handcuff. The barrette has to be prepared for use, ideally beforehand, then hidden on your person. Bend the center piece out, twist it back and forth until it breaks off. Grasp the large end (the convergence of the two pieces that form a "V") and bend it back and forth until it breaks off. The two pieces of the "V" are now both potential ratchet shims. The ends of the "V" may have small metal burrs on the tips. These can be eliminated by pounding on them with a hammer on a firm surface, by using a grinder or by rubbing them on a concrete surface.
- To shim the handcuff ratchet mechanism insert one of the legs from the modified beret into the ratchet mechanism on the same side as the key hole. The objective is to slip the shim in between the teeth on the swing arm and the ratchet mechanism to release the cuff. This is more difficult than it sounds and frequently you must tighten the cuff at least one or two clicks to get the shim in between the teeth and the ratchet mechanism to release the lock. It is beneficial to complain to your captors that the handcuffs are too tight and ask that they be loosened slightly so that there is space to close the cuffs a click or two to facilitate insertion of the shim.
- (6) The straight side of a regular bobby pin can also be used to shim a padlock. It must be prepared as described in #4 above. Make sure you've removed the plastic tip first. You will notice that a bobby pin is slightly thicker than a hair barrette requiring additional pressure on the bobby pin as it's inserted in the ratchet. .
- (7) Composite handcuff keys (also known as "universal cuff keys") are non-metallic and designed to be secreted on your person. They can be hidden behind a button of a shirt, in a pocket, or inside your waist band tied on a piece of a monofilament line. They have no metallic signature. They can be found at <http://www.larsonelectronics.com/p-144545-concealable-backup-non-metallic-universal-handcuff-key-10-pack.aspx>
- (8) Generic metal handcuff keys are designed to fit into the keyway of any handcuff with a conventional keyway (post in the middle). These are good to have on your person in an emergency. Steer clear of brand name cuff keys which may not fit all handcuff keyways.