

## PreDefence

Self defense before SHTF

<http://predefence.com>

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# The 5 steps to analysing training videos to see if you're wasting your time (with a few examples)

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I have a confession to make: I'm *almost* a training video addict. I used to be one, but I'm recovering now. I used to love checking out the techniques those badass guys used, running them through my head with me in the starring role as Good Guy Kicking Ass. This was great stuff. Fed my Monkey brain all kinds of feel-good hormones. Made me feel real invincible. Then 2 things changed.

Firstly I started some knife dueling training. We called it "Knife fighting", but most of us knew it was dueling, plain and simple. Some of us would tweak things whenever possible to make it more fighting/combat orientated, but we had limited success.

Secondly, I started watching the Bad Guy instead of the Good Guy in all those videos.

### **I learned the secret to winning knife fights**

And an amazing thing happened. From the knife dueling training, I was learning to study the other guy. I learnt that all my super snazzy moves I'd carefully worked on in the mirror, using the angle

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combinations that flowed the best for me, never EVER got used. I could never use them on the other guy. The inconsiderate bastard(s) never gave me the opening that my moves needed to work. And it turned out that most of my moves used in sparring depended entirely on my opponent (excluding when I took the initiative). In fact very close to 100 % of my defensive actions (knife on knife) were either a snap cut, or a small circular slash. That's it. That's all I ever used. And my most important lesson (which I mostly knew beforehand thankfully) was to retract my hand as fast as possible. An embarrassingly large portion of "fights" (sparring matches) that I won, were because the other guy didn't pull his hand back fast enough. That's it. The secret to "winning knife fights" – retract your hand fast as possible and wait for dumb luck to make the other guy slow on the retraction.

All the fancy angle combination we worked on were never used in sparring. Ever. We had to invent contrived scenarios in order to get any kind of "move" to make "tactical" sense. So it was while doing one of our many line drills were I started noticing that for certain moves to work, I had to make my whole body move to a new position, but do so before his hand reached me. So my whole body movement had to be faster than his arm movement. And he got to initiate things. So it was from seeing this mismatch where I'd move kinda-fast to defend against his semi-slow attack that I started to pick up on defenses that weren't really usable. There's a reason we never did anything besides evasive footwork and "defanging the snake" when an opponent actually came at us full speed. None of our other cool shit could be pulled off unless we had mismatched offensive/defensive speeds.

### **Woe is me**

So it was with a woeful heart that I started watching the BG in all my beloved training videos. And then I saw it. The same co-operative attacker that I'd encountered in my own training. BG makes a devastating move at not quite full speed. GG moves at full speed to make the first hit. Then the second. Then the third part of the move. While the BG is just standing there with his arm outstretched. Not moving for 2 or 3 full seconds. The GG might have punched his throat, or jabbed his eye, but the BG isn't reeling back clutching his eye, using bad words to describe his current outlook on life. No, he's calmly standing still, holding his arm out (or whatever) while the GG unleashes merry hell on him. That's a very nice Bad Guy, to hold still like I=that.

And so my love affair with training videos was shattered. Maybe not the Kelly McCann or Lynn Thompson (of Cold Steel) or Lee Morrison ones. So when watching training videos there are a few easy steps I want you to go through:

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## How to judge the worth of training videos

Step 1: Watch the video, listening to the explanations. Be awed and amazed by the super-duper coolness of the GG's moves. Feel pumped up about life and your new abilities gleaned from merely watching this awesomeness.

Step 2: Re-watch the video. Mute the sound so you don't have to listen to the sales-pitch (if you have to listen to 20 of explaining why the move works, then the explanation is part of the move). When watching the awesomeness, watch the BG.

Step 3: Is the BG fighting back, or is he co-operating? I.e. is he holding body parts still for the GG to work his thing on? Is he making a move and then freezing (GG's can shock people into freezing with their badassness and tight t-shirts)? Or is he fighting back like a fucking banshee like an actual BG?

Step 4: Pass judgement on the video.

Step 5: Find one that's better.

Here are some examples:

Lovely and co-operative Bad Guy can be seen [here](#).

Not so co-operative BG can be seen [here](#). And [here](#).

You also might have noticed a pattern from your own viewing habits: The nice tidy, snazzy looking fights are usually bullshit. The messy, scrappy looking videos are usually more "realistic".