



4 Star Self-defence

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The 3 circles of self-defence

- **Threat circle:** In a confrontational situation, a threat exists whenever a potential attacker enters a perimeter which extends around you in all directions at a distance consisting of approximately three of the attacker's strides or $1\frac{1}{2}$ the distance of the attacker's extended leg. This is roughly the distance necessary to give the average person time to turn and initiate escape. Your primary objective in avoidance or escape is to get and keep potential attackers outside the threat circle.
- **Outer circle:** The outer circle is the distance of your extended arms. At this distance – which is sometimes referred to as engagement or combat distance – the opportunity for defence and attack are roughly equal. The advantage tends to go to the attacker, or, in some cases to the individual who is bigger, stronger, more skilled or more prepared to inflict injury. However, at this distance, a real life physical confrontation almost always means the likelihood of being injured, whatever your level of training. It is desirable to minimize the amount of time spent at this distance.
- **Inner or Control circle:** The control circle is very close – starting at approximately the length of your upper arm. In this area striking (punching, slapping and kicking) attacks or counter attacks are difficult to execute with force. Control, leverage and release techniques, which depend more on technique than strength, are most effective. In most circumstances a trained defender should have or should be able to gain the advantage over an untrained attacker at this distance. If avoidance is not possible and a potential attacker penetrates your outer circle, your objective should be to move through his or her inner circle, neutralizing any attack or hold and create the opportunity for escape. The vast majority of the release, escape, throw, control and even ground techniques taught in the 4 Star Self-defence System involve working through the inner circle.