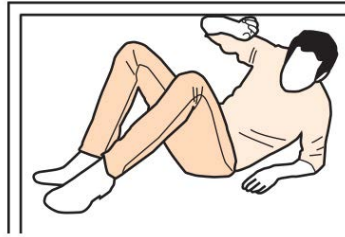




RUN



HIDE



FIGHT

A gunman opens fire in your building. What do you do?

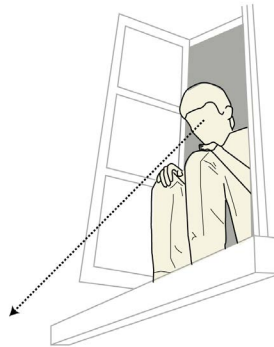
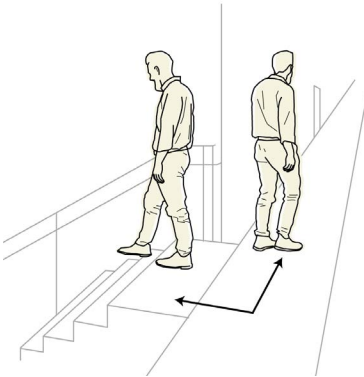
What would you do if someone walked into the building you are in right now and started shooting? Through training programs and public awareness campaigns, law enforcement experts are asking people to consider this question so that they will be prepared to act rather than freeze if the unthinkable happens. Here are the basics of the “Run, Hide, Fight” program created by the Department of Homeland Security, with additional details from active-shooter survival trainers, law enforcement officers and a Special Forces veteran.

By Bonnie Berkowitz and Weiyi Cai, The Washington Post



RUN

The first — and best — option is to get out if you possibly can. People have been shot while they froze in place a few steps from an exit door, said Scott Zimmerman of K17 Security. Encourage others to leave with you, but don't let their indecision keep you from going.



Choose a route carefully

Don't run willy-nilly or blindly follow a crowd. **Pause to look** before you enter choke points such as stairwells, lobbies and exits to make sure you can move through them quickly and not get stuck out in the open.

Think unconventionally

Doors are not the only exits. Open a window; if you have to break it, aim for a corner. See if the drop ceiling conceals a stable hiding place or a way to enter another room. You may even be able to punch through thin drywall between rooms.

Look down

If you're trapped on the second floor, consider dropping from a window, feet first, ideally onto a soft landing area. (But if you're higher than the second floor, the drop itself could be fatal.)

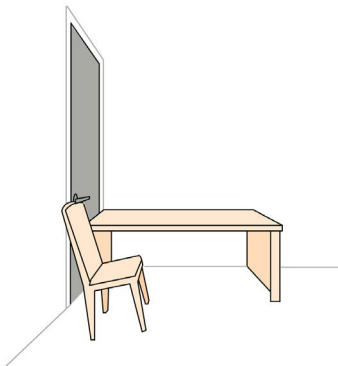
Be quiet and stealthy

Try not to attract a shooter's attention. Remember that edges of stairs are less likely to creak than the centers. Stay low and duck when you pass windows both inside and outside the building.



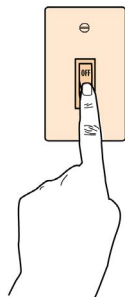
HIDE

If you can't immediately leave a building or room, you want to buy time — time to plan another way out, time to prepare in case the shooter forces his way in, time for the police to arrive.



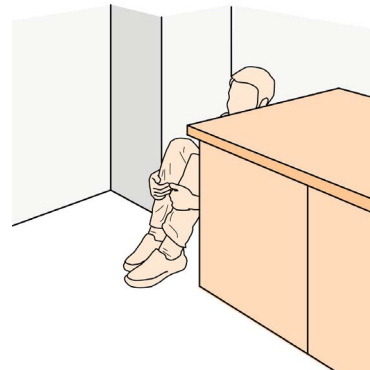
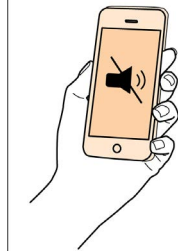
Block doors

Don't just lock them, barricade them with desks, chairs, bookcases — **anything big and heavy.** Wedge objects under them at the farthest points from the hinges. Prop or wedge something under door handles to keep them from turning all the way. Tie hinges and knobs with belts or purse straps. **A shooter doesn't want to work hard to enter a room.**



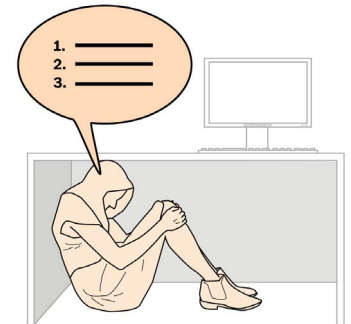
Turn off lights, silence phones

Make sure someone has alerted 911 with as many details as you can about your location and anything you know about the shooter's whereabouts. Cover windows if you have time; if not, make sure you can't be seen through the glass.



Choose a hiding place

If you know you will hide and stay hidden, don't count on particle-board furniture to stop bullets. **Get behind something made of thick wood or thick metal** if you can, or stack several layers of thinner material. **Make yourself as small a target as possible**, either curling into a ball or lying flat on the ground.

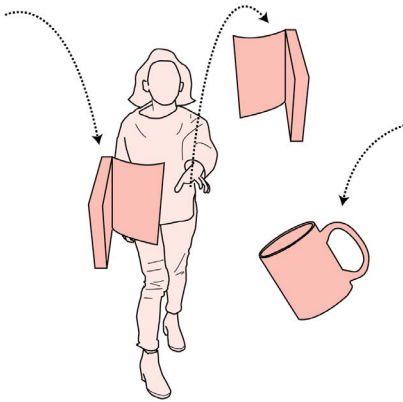


Make a plan

Don't just get under a desk and wait. **Plan how you will get out** or what you and the other people who are with you will do if the shooter gets into the room.

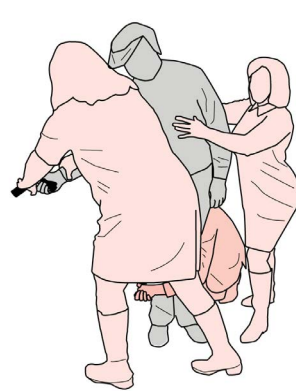
FIGHT

This is the last resort, a dangerous option to be used only if your life is at risk and you are trapped with a gunman. Different situations call for different strategies, but all of these turn the element of surprise against the shooter.



Create chaos

Throw books, coffee mugs — anything you can grab. Make noise. Keep moving. **A moving target is much harder to hit** than a stationary one. Greg Crane, founder of the ALICE Training Institute, which has worked with nearly 3,000 schools, said that even children can be taught to move, make noise and distract so they can buy time to get away.



Swarm

Some experts teach a Secret Service-style technique in which people wait beside the door and grab the shooter as he enters. At least one person goes for the arm that holds the gun, one wraps his legs and others push him down. **Using their body weight, a group of smaller people can bring a large man to the ground and hold him there.**



Move the weapon away

Once the gun is separated from the shooter, cover it with something such as a coat or a trash can. **Don't hold the weapon**, because if police storm in, they may think you are the shooter.



Attack

This is last even among last-resort options. The ALICE program doesn't even suggest this for adults, and none recommend it for children. But if you try to fight, choose a weapon and aim for vital areas such as the head, eyes, throat and midsection. Don't quit.

Things you should know to prepare for any emergency

- Have an exit plan before you need it. Know where all the exits are in buildings you visit frequently, not just the exits you use.
- Keep “real” shoes at your desk so don’t have to sprint in uncomfortable shoes.
- Know how to call 911 from your building — do you need to dial out first? Should a crisis arise, make sure someone actually calls.
- Don’t use code words on PA announcements, and be informative with as many details as possible, such as “A man with a gun is in the library” or “There is a fire in the third-floor utility closet.”
- Let someone know once you’re safe outside.
- Try to keep others from inadvertently walking into danger once you are safe.

The Washington Post

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Sources: Scott Zimmerman, chief executive of K17 Security; Patrick Twomey, formerly of Canadian Special Operations Forces; founder Greg Crane and spokesperson Victoria Shaw of the ALICE Training Institute; U.S. Department of Homeland Security; FBI.