Not a Knife Situation

If you find yourself in a knife fight consider these steps to survive.

This guide will serve as a rudimentary introduction to knife defense. A few points before we get started. Don’t find yourself in a knife fight. And if you do, know that you will most likely be stabbed or slashed in your attempt to disarm your opponent.

1) Even someone skilled at knife defense will tell you that you will need to take a cut or two in order to close with your opponent. A firearm can be deadly at range however its usefulness drops off the closer you get, a knife retains its efficacy at a much broader range and can be deadly in the hands of a skilled combatant or an amateur. The forearm can make a emergency defense as the ulna can act like a weak shield.

2) If you encounter someone trying to menace you with a knife extricate yourself as quickly as possible. Knives have a very limited effective range if you can put distance between your opponent and yourself do so and find a well-lit area with groups of people where you can call for help.

3) If you cannot extricate yourself then you need to deal with the situation yourself. The first thing to consider is the position of the knife.

   a. If the blade is pointed at you then the attacker is most likely an amateur and will not understand the nature of the weapon beyond its purely barbaric nature. If the blade is held with the tip pointing towards the attacker then consider giving into their demands, this grip is used by professionals or experienced knife fighters and can deal considerable amounts of damage in a very short period of time.
4) Amateurs are best dealt with quickly and efficiently, a show of force and confidence will put them on their heels. It will also allow you to remove yourself and get to safety.

   a. When they stab at you step aside and deflect the blade to your complimentary side. i.e. if they are holding the knife in their right hand deflect their strike to your left side. Now you need to wrap that hand around their wrist locking it to your hip. With your free arm hammer their exposed elbow, a solid strike will shatter the elbow removing the knife from the equation and most likely take them out of commission. Keep this in mind only do as much damage as is necessary for you to survive.

5) If you find yourself fighting a more skilled combatant keep in mind that in the time it takes you to close with them, to the point where you can disarm them you will be cut.

   a. Do your best to take the strikes on your forearms, hold them in front of your face as you move forward. Wait for your attacker to strike out so you can move between their torso and extended arm. This will limit the effective range of the knife and give you a moment to breathe. With your back to your opponent grab the knife wielding arm with both hands bring your knee up as you haul down on the arm, this will achieve a similar effect as point 3. Their arm will be broken and the knife will be removed.

6) At this point the flight and flight period will be winding down, it is imperative that you disengage and find a well-lit area with more people. You will need to contact emergency services to deal with your attacker and give you medical care.

7) Knife fighting is brutal and will often be over before you have a chance to react or even process what has transpired. To that end it becomes important to practice reaction times and muscle memory so if you are ever placed into a situation where you are attacked by a knife wielding person you can react and protect yourself.