

What to Do If Caught in a Protest, Riot, or Crossfire

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Being caught in a protest, riot, or crossfire can be overwhelming and dangerous. Whether you intended to be there or found yourself caught in the chaos unexpectedly, staying calm and taking the right steps can help keep you safe. Here's how to navigate the situation with caution and awareness.

1. Assess Your Surroundings

- Stay aware of exits, side streets, and open areas where you can move to safety.
- Observe the movement of the crowd. Avoid getting trapped in areas with no escape routes.
- Look for law enforcement presence and note their actions and positioning.

2. Remain as Invisible as Possible

- If you are not participating, avoid standing out. Dress neutrally and avoid carrying items that could associate you with any side.
- Keep your head down and move with the flow of the crowd rather than against it to avoid drawing attention.
- Avoid making eye contact with aggressive individuals who may perceive you as a threat.

3. Move to Safety

- If possible, exit the area calmly and quickly.
- Walk along the edges of the crowd rather than through the center.
- Use cover (walls, vehicles, buildings) to shield yourself from projectiles or gunfire.

4. Protect Yourself Physically

- If tear gas is used, cover your nose and mouth with a damp cloth and blink frequently to flush out irritants.
- If shots are fired, drop to the ground and find the nearest cover. Move only when it is safe.
- If trampled, curl into a ball and protect your head and neck until you can safely get back on your feet.

5. Avoid Confrontation

- Do not engage with rioters, protestors, or law enforcement. Stay neutral and non-threatening.

- Keep your hands visible and make slow movements to avoid being perceived as a threat.
- If approached, remain calm and comply with basic instructions to de-escalate tension.

6. Know Your Rights

- If detained, do not resist. Ask if you are being arrested and for what reason.
- Remain silent and request legal representation if questioned.
- Memorize emergency contacts in case your phone is confiscated or unusable.

7. Help Others Safely

- If you see someone injured and it is safe to do so, provide assistance or direct them to medical help.
- Avoid moving the wounded unless necessary, and apply pressure to stop bleeding.
- If someone is in distress from tear gas, help them to fresh air and rinse their eyes with clean water.

Final Thoughts

Navigating a protest, riot, or crossfire requires quick thinking and a level head. By staying aware of your surroundings, avoiding confrontation, and prioritizing safety, you can improve your chances of emerging unharmed. Preparation and knowledge are key to ensuring you and those around you remain as safe as possible in these unpredictable situations. [AntifaUSA.org](https://antifausa.org)