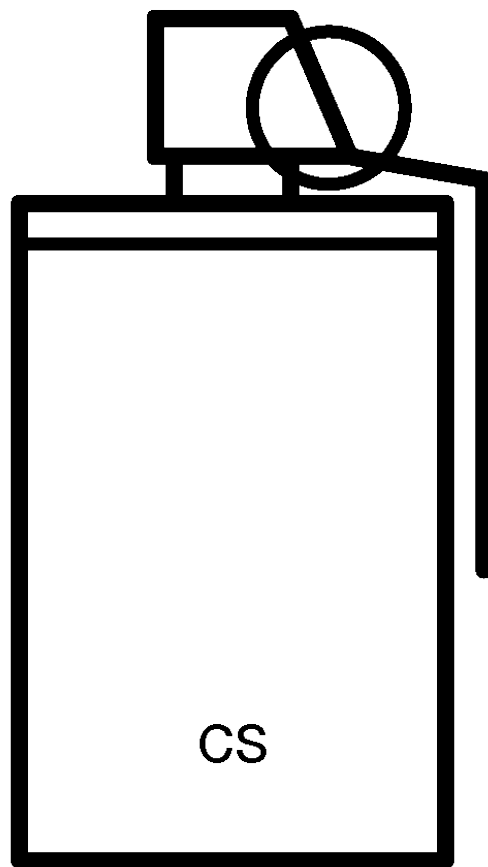


# DEFENSE AGAINST TEAR GAS



**A NON-EXHAUSTIVE GUIDE FOR PROTESTERS**

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# 1. What is Tear Gas?

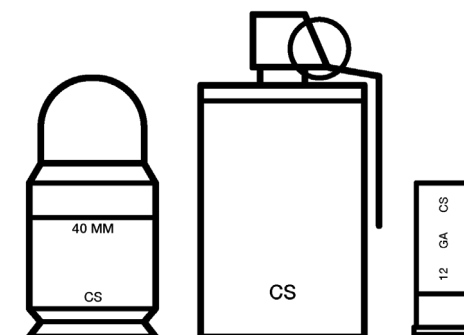
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**Tear gas is a collection of chemicals that cause skin, respiratory, and eye irritation.** Despite the name, tear gas isn't a gas. When a tear gas canister explodes, **CS powder sprays into the air and adheres to any moisture it can find**—that means the tears in your eyes, the sweat on your skin, the grease in your hair, and the saliva and mucus that covers your mouth and airways.

It has to be heated in order to cause these effects. That happens through a pyrotechnic charge in the tear gas cartridge that causes particles to be dispersed into the environment. Without the fiery charge, nothing would happen. **That's the main reason why water hinders the reaction—by killing the charge so that no vaporized particles can be released.**

**When you're exposed to tear gas, your eyes sting, your vision blurs, and you cry and blink uncontrollably.** It gets worse the longer you're in the gas: After a few seconds, you won't be able to see, which will disorient and confuse you. The powder also irritates your airways, making it hard to breathe, and causes your chest to tighten. You'll start coughing automatically and your nose and mouth will secrete copious amounts of mucus and saliva. Most people recover from tear gas without complications. However, people exposed to large doses, people who are pregnant, or people who have preexisting medical conditions may develop severe symptoms such as respiratory failure, blindness, and even death.

The most commonly used form of tear gas is 2-chlorobenzalmalonitrile (**CS gas**). Other common types of tear gases include oleoresin capsicum (pepper spray), dibenzoxazepine (CR gas), and chloroacetophenone (CN gas). It's usually deployed from canisters, grenades, or pressurized sprays. Riot control agents, including tear gas and pepper spray, are banned in international warfare under both the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the Chemical Weapons Convention. **While tear gas and pepper spray, under international law, are banned as a "method of warfare", there are no restrictions to their domestic use as a "riot control agent" in the United States of America.**

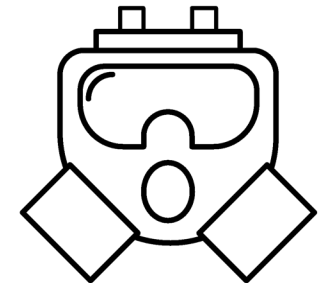


## 2. Protecting Yourself From Tear Gas

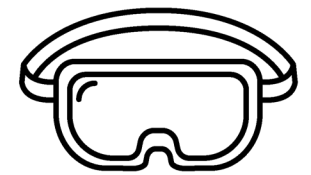
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### WHAT YOU NEED:

**MASKS:** The only completely effective way to protect yourself against tear gas is to wear a gas mask. You could also use an escape hood or a half face respirator. Bandanas soaked in water/vinegar should only be used as a last resort when trying to escape the area and should be disposed of afterward.



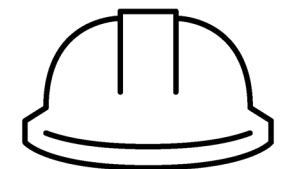
**GOGGLES:** If you don't have a gas mask it is crucial that you **cover your eyes**. Ideally you want something shatter proof like safety goggles, but swimming or skiing goggles would also do the trick.



**CLOTHING:** The more skin you have covered the **better**. Wear long sleeves, pants, running shoes, and gloves. Tear gas will cling to your clothes so it is important to change as soon as possible if you are exposed.



**HEADGEAR:** Tear gas clings to the oils in your hair, so it is important to cover as much of it up as you can. Tie it in a bun, wear a scarf, or put on a hat. Hard hats or helmets are also a good idea to protect your head from flying canisters, rubber bullets, batons, or anything else.



**DO NOT:** Do NOT wear lotion, makeup, or contacts. Tear gas will cling to all of these. You should remove your contacts immediately with clean hands if you're exposed.



### 3. If You Are Exposed to Tear Gas

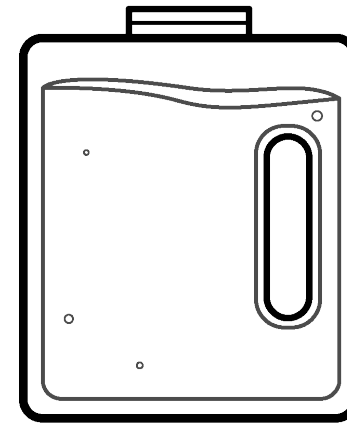
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- 1 Stay calm and do NOT panic.**
- 2 Leave the area immediately** and get to a well ventilated place. **Move toward the wind** so the tear gas is blowing away from you.
- 3 Do NOT touch your face or skin.**
- 4 Flush out your eyes with clean water.** Some have suggested a 50/50 mix of water and liquid antacid such as Maalox for the best results.
- 5 When flushing your eyes,** squirt water from the inside of the eye to the outside being careful not to let the water run down your face or body.
- 6 Do NOT wash your skin off with water.** You will spread the powder around and make it worse.
- 7 Allow your body to flush it out.** Blink as much as possible. You will cough, your nose will run, and your eyes will water. **Do NOT swallow.**
- 8 Tie a clean and dry bandana around your forehead** to keep any sweat out of your eyes. **Do NOT wipe sweat away with your hands.**
- 9 Flap your arms** to try and get as much powder off of you as possible.
- 10 Carefully remove your clothing** and put them in a plastic bag. The powder will stick to your clothes, hair, and skin until you can wash them.
- 11 Before showering:** thoroughly wash your hands and scrub under your finger nails.
- 12 When showering:** bend over and wash your hair first so that the water does not run down your body.

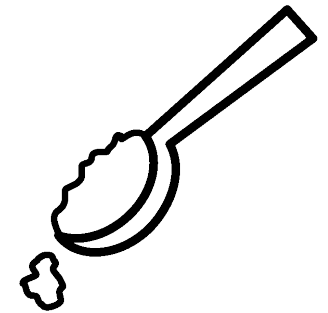
## 4. Extinguishing a Tear Gas Canister

Tear gas has to be heated in order to cause its effects. That happens through a charge in the tear gas cartridge that causes particles to be dispersed into the environment. Without the fiery charge, nothing would happen. **Water hinders that reaction.**

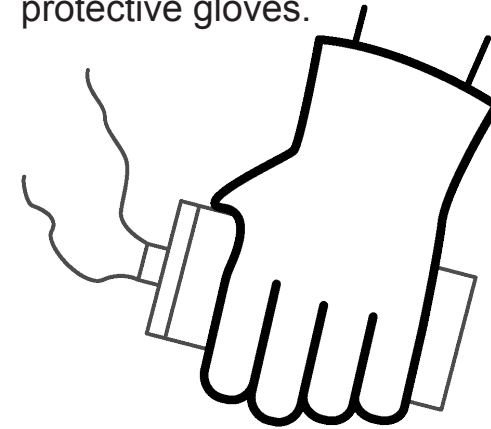
- 1** Fill a wide mouth container with water.



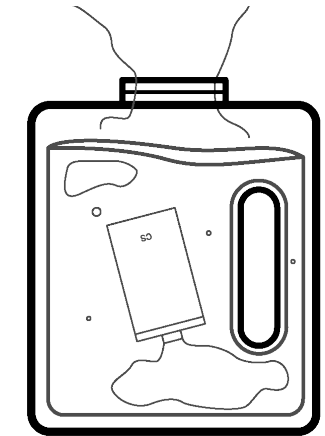
- 2** Add 3 tablespoons of baking soda, dish soap, and vegetable oil for every one liter of water.



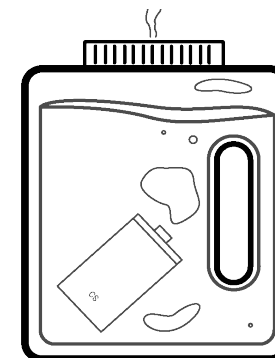
- 3** Pick up the tear gas canister with protective gloves.



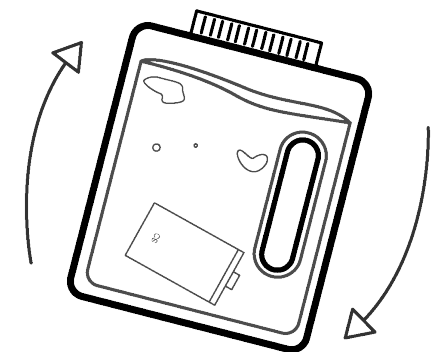
- 4** Drop the canister into the container.



- 5** Partially cover the container with your hand or a cap with a hole in it to relieve the pressure from the bottle.



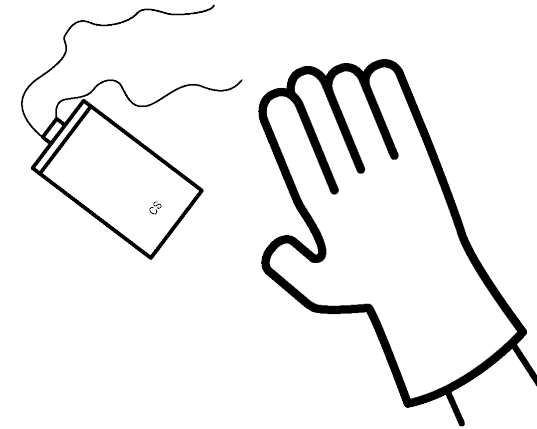
- 6** Shake the container until the canister has been put out and remove it.



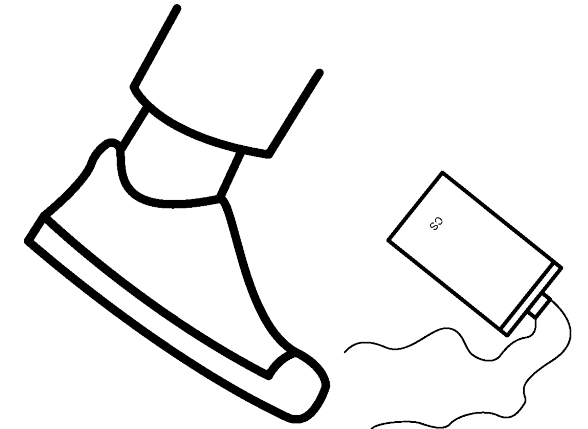
## 5. Other Methods for Combating Tear Gas

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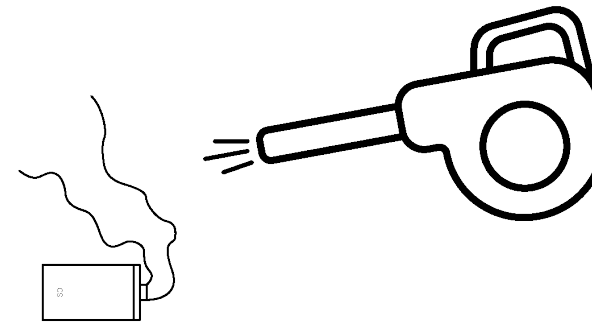
**1** Throw it back.



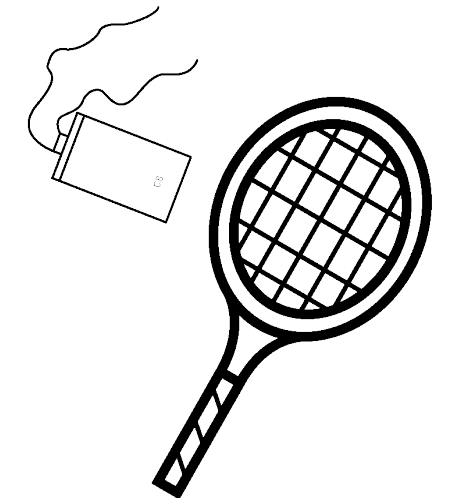
**2** Kick it back.



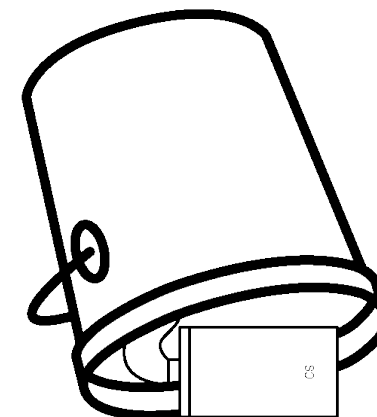
**3** Blow it back.



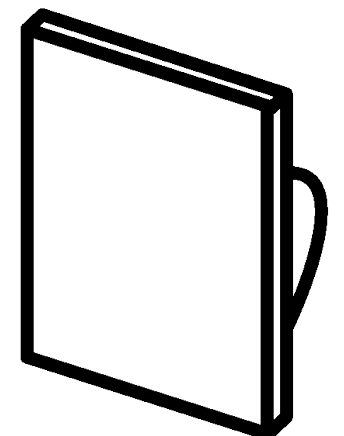
**5** Swat it back.



**4** Cover it up.



**5** Make a shield.



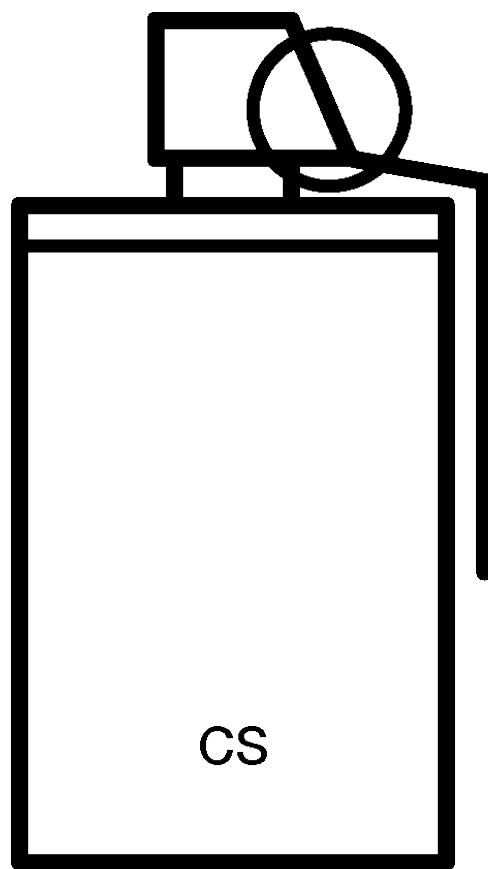
## 6. A Final Word

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This guide serves to help protesters better protect themselves against the violence of the police. All methods and suggestions in this guide should be used with extreme caution and at your own risk. The information in this guide was compiled from articles, online posts, other guides, and firsthand accounts of protesters from Hong Kong, Chile, Greece, Palestine, Turkey, and other places.

*Black Lives Matter. No justice no peace.*  
*Abolish the police. Abolition not reform.*  
*Defund the police. Disarm the police.*  
*America is stolen land. Built by people stolen from their land.*  
*Protest with a group. Be water.*  
*Record the police. Don't post protesters faces.*  
*Never talk to the police. Don't speak without an attorney.*  
*Put your phone on airplane mode. Disable your biometric passwords.*  
*Never consent to a retinal scan. Encrypt your messages.*  
*Do not resist arrest. Write the local NLG # on your arm.*





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