



When Must You Shoot?

Notice it did not ask, “When **can** you shoot?” The difference is significant. If you are looking for an opportunity to shoot, go someplace else. You have a right to defend yourself and others using reasonable force. **You should not look for a fight.** If a gun is your only defense, you have difficult choices to make.

If you are not in fear for your life, you have no reason to take a life. Just because someone approaches and startles you, does not give you the opportunity to use deadly force.

-  Are you in imminent danger?
-  Does the person have the opportunity to cause great bodily harm or death?
-  Does the intent seem clear?
-  Is the person armed?

You will only have seconds to make these important decisions. You will have the rest of your life to live with the consequences of your decisions. To act without thinking is a disaster. If you will not have much time to ponder your actions and the actions of others during a potentially violent situation, you must think about before it occurs.

-  Is it your fight? Jumping to another’s defense is often misunderstood. You may not know who the bad guy is. Maybe being a safe observer is the best role to play. Maybe getting away from the disgruntled employee and seeking help is the smart play. Interjecting yourself into a dispute is not always right.
-  Ever see two people arguing on the playground and they turn on you if you get between them? It happens to adults too.
-  Is there anything that you can do to resolve a conflict short of shooting someone? Sometimes there is no other choice. Then you must shoot. **Remember it is an “eye for an eye” not “an eye for a truck.”** You can use deadly force to protect yourself and others from a deadly attack. You cannot use deadly force to protect your property.

Remember: If you pull a weapon you must be willing to kill.

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