

cent chance of surviving. People around the world get shot every day and live to tell about it. The important thing is to keep a positive mental attitude and continue fighting or trying to escape. In police training, we call that having the will to survive.

If you ever face an armed criminal or a terrorist, you risk getting shot. Therefore, you should prepare by incorporating firearms training into your self-defense regimen. When I teach seminars to civilians, I use Airsoft guns that fire 6mm plastic projectiles. They shoot accurately up to about 20 feet, and the only protective gear needed is a pair of safety goggles for everyone in the training area. When a plastic pellet hits skin, it imparts a nice sting, so long pants and long sleeves are also a good idea.

If you really want to know how it feels to get shot, you must train with paint guns. They fire a .64-caliber gelatin-encased paintball at less than 300 feet per second. You'll need to don full

head and neck protection and wear thick clothing if you plan to be in CQB range. When you get hit, you'll experience instant shock and momentary nausea. Shots taken closer than 10 feet can even break the skin—hence the need for protective gear. Paintball guns will help you appreciate the true power of firearms, but they don't even come close to the real thing.

When I train police and military students, I always strive for maximum realism. Sometimes I approach two students while they're engaged in hand-to-hand combat and shoot the "good guy" in the leg with a paintball gun. Without a doubt he'll cringe at the intense pain, but as long as he continues to fight back, I don't say anything. Once in a while, he'll stop resisting and obsess on the pain, in which case I'll shout at him until he once again focuses on the task at hand: preserving his life. This methodology may sound cruel, but it teaches people who fight for a living to persevere regardless of

their injuries. (In your own training, you should never fire a paintball gun at a body part that's unprotected.)

The reality-based martial arts encompass techniques for addressing a much broader spectrum of situations than do the traditional and sport-based systems. That's partially because violence in modern society tends to incorporate new technology and tactics as soon as they become available. Even if your instructor doesn't devote much class time to such topics, you can still improve your self-defense capability by supplementing your *dojo* training with the knowledge base you acquire from reading *High Risk*. ✕

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*About the author: Jim Wagner is a police and military defensive-tactics instructor and a civilian reality-based personal-protection trainer. For more information, visit <http://www.jimwagnertraining.com>.*



**Simon Leila, a British Reality-Based instructor (left), simulates a bank robbery using an air gun for realism.**