

## IN FOCUS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT

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### **What is personal force protection?**

Force protection is the military term for measures taken to keep the military community safe. Personal force protection is protecting yourself and those immediately around you, such as your family members and the members of your military community.

### **Why is personal force protection important?**

Personal force protection is important because our safety and security are important. The U.S. military's ongoing fight against terrorism makes it even more important to be aware of the threat of danger. By being aware and taking precautions we can continue to protect ourselves, our families and our communities against threats.

### **What is the real threat here?**

(From the Antiterrorism Level I training web site) The world is dangerous and we are fighting an enemy intent on destroying the American way of life. The international terrorist network may be active in the area where you live and serve. Terrorist plots against DoD facilities have been uncovered in such diverse places as Singapore and Fort Dix, N.J. Patience and persistence are the keys for defeating terrorists, because terrorists themselves tend to be patient and cunning, waiting for us to let down our guard or settle into predictable patterns of behavior.

### **What is the difference between force protection and antiterrorism?**

Antiterrorism is a sub-set of force protection. Force protection is a much broader term which encompasses the wide variety of hazards we face daily, not just terrorists.

For the sake of continuity we'll use force protection throughout this FAQ.

### **What are the basics of personal force protection?**

- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings
- Report unusual or suspicious activity
- Pay attention to the details of the antiterrorism briefings you receive on your locale or when preparing to travel to a new location
- Make security and security checks part of your everyday routine
- Use caution to increase personal security
- Be anonymous. Blend in. Don't be an easily identifiable target
- Plan ahead and choose the safest options
- Be unpredictable. Vary your routines, routes, times, and speeds
- Cooperate with unit and garrison security measures

### **Why is 'blending in' an important part of Personal Force Protection?**

'Blending in' keeps us from sticking out to terrorists looking for targets associated with the U.S. military. Always plan to be anonymous.

Here are some tips for blending in:

- Don't wear or carry anything that labels you as an American or a member of the U.S. Army. This includes wearing your uniform or parts of your uniform; putting name tapes or U.S. flags or rank on civilian bags; and carrying ACU backpacks or handbags.

- Dress like a local. For instance, name brand running shoes from the PX are probably not the best option when people in your area wear more generic shoes.
- Observe local customs and cultural practices, especially religious practices.
- Avoid drawing attention to yourself with loud, brash or rowdy behavior.

### **What should I know about personal force protection while travelling?**

- Again, blend in. Don't travel in uniform or with anything else that may identify you as an American or a servicemember.
- Travel with a buddy. There is safety in numbers. Avoid traveling alone whenever possible.
- When travelling by plane always choose a seat in the middle of the aircraft by the window. This makes you least accessible to hijackers in case of an incident.
- Always get a map of your destination, as well as a list of emergency contact phone numbers. When travelling to a foreign country, get the number to the U.S. embassy or consulate before you go.
- When renting a car choose one that blends and is unlikely to attract the attention of terrorists or thieves.
- Always inspect the vehicle before renting. Even if there is nothing wrong with it, an inspection will help you familiarize yourself with it and make it easier for you to recognize tampering later on.
- Check travelers' tips from U.S. consular offices, travel agencies and Web sites to avoid high-risk areas, times, and modes of travel. The U.S. State Department's travel site ([travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)) is a good place to start.

### **What should family members know about personal force protection?**

- The same precautions that apply to servicemember apply to family members.
- Family members can also report suspicious activity
- Beware of people with whom you interact, who seem more interested in your Soldier's information than yours.

### **What are some examples of 'suspicious behavior' that I should report?**

Be on the lookout for unusual behavior that may indicate intelligence gathering, surveillance, collecting information for an attack, dry runs, and rehearsals. For example:

- Taking photos or videos of potential targets. This includes people and security measures such as access gates and installation fence lines.
- Taking notes on, or sketching details of, potential target locations
- Displaying an abnormal or exaggerated interest in the details of routine activities and security measures
- Using false identification

- Paying cash for items normally bought on credit
- Purchasing large quantities of items that could be used as part of an attack, such as chemicals or cell phones)

### **How do I report suspicious behavior?**

There are 2 places to report suspicious behavior – your local military police desk or military intelligence detachment. Step-by-step reporting instructions and reporting links are available by clicking on the iWatch link found on every U.S. Army garrison home page.

### **Where can I find more resources about antiterrorism and force protection?**

Good basic information on AT can be found at <https://atlevel1.dtic.mil/at/>, the DoD Web site for the Antiterrorism Level I Awareness training program. (NOTE: This link is open to users on the .mil domain only)