

Protest Safety Toolkit

Street Survival, Police Evasion, and Trauma-Aware Preparation for Trans Protesters





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Being trans and visible at a protest means carrying double risk, and needing triple readiness.

This toolkit is your pre-action and post-action survival manual. It's built for trans folks, especially BIPOC, disabled, undocumented, and visibly queer people who know that **the cops aren't neutral**, the media isn't your shield, and a lack of planning can be deadly.

We designed this to help you move through protest environments with protection, awareness, and resilience. You'll find strategies to avoid arrest, defend against chemical weapons, maintain anonymity, and decompress after the chaos.

Inside, you'll learn:

- What to wear (and what not to)
- How to build a buddy system that actually protects you
- De-escalation, exit, and arrest prep for trans bodies under hostile regimes
- Chemical weapon protection: tear gas, pepper spray, and aftercare
- What to pack in your protest bag and how to document abuse
- Decompression and healing practices for after-action survival

This isn't theory. It's field-tested.

Because safety is collective. Safety is tactical. And safety is the soil of future revolutions.



1. Pre-Protest Preparation

Form a Safety Plan

Create a Buddy System:

- Never go to a protest alone. Stick with at least one other person who knows your emergency contacts and medical needs.
- Share locations using encrypted apps like **Signal** or **Briar**.

Establish Emergency Contacts:

- Designate a trusted person who knows where you are and when to expect you back.
- Share the number of a legal aid group, such as the **National Lawyers Guild (NLG)**.

Know Your Escape Routes:

- Familiarize yourself with nearby streets, public transit routes, and safe spaces.
- Identify multiple exit points from the protest site.

Memorize Key Numbers:

- Write emergency contacts and legal aid numbers on your arm or in a notebook.
- Avoid relying solely on your phone, as it may be confiscated or disabled.

2. Dress Strategically for Safety

Clothing Tips

Neutral and Unidentifiable Clothing:

- Avoid bright colors, visible logos, or distinctive patterns that could make you easier to track.
- Wear plain, non-branded clothing to reduce the risk of being singled out.

Cover Identifying Features:

- Use masks, scarves, or bandanas to cover your face and protect against tear gas.
- Cover visible tattoos and piercings to prevent identification.

Wear Protective Gear:

- **Eye Protection:** Goggles or shatterproof glasses to protect against pepper spray and projectiles.
- **Gloves:** Protect hands from chemical irritants and physical injury.
- **Sturdy Shoes:** Closed-toe shoes with good traction to allow for quick movement.



3. Essential Protest Safety Kit

Items to Bring

Basic Supplies:

- Water (for hydration and rinsing tear gas)
- Snacks and electrolytes
- First-aid supplies (bandages, gauze, antiseptic wipes)

Tear Gas and Chemical Protection:

- A bottle of water mixed with baking soda (for eye flushing)
- Saline solution or clean water to rinse eyes
- Face masks or respirators to filter air

Emergency Items:

- Sharpie to write emergency contacts on your skin
- Extra phone charger or portable power bank
- Wet wipes or tissues to clean skin from irritants

Legal Essentials:

- Government-issued ID (if comfortable carrying)
- Printed copy of your emergency contact numbers
- Know-Your-Rights cards or legal observer info

4. Navigating the Protest Safely

Stay Aware and Mobile

Situational Awareness:

- Stay alert to your surroundings and observe police behavior.
- Identify possible exit routes and fallback positions.

Move with the Crowd:

- Blend in and move fluidly to avoid drawing attention.
- Stick to the edges of the protest where it's easier to exit if necessary.

Avoid Isolated Areas:

- Stay with the group to avoid being singled out by law enforcement or agitators.



5. Protecting Yourself from Police Violence

Minimize Interaction and Risk

De-escalation Techniques:

- Stay calm and avoid confrontation with law enforcement.
- If approached, remain silent and exercise your right to remain silent.

Avoid Physical Contact:

- Do not touch officers or their equipment to avoid escalation.
- If detained, do not resist physically, but state loudly, "I do not consent to this."

Be Aware of Surveillance:

- Police may use facial recognition technology or track phones. Minimize phone use and cover your face.

6. Handling Tear Gas, Pepper Spray, and Projectiles

Neutralizing Tear Gas

Immediate Response:

- Move upwind or away from the source of gas.
- Flush eyes with cold water or saline solution immediately.

Avoid Rubbing:

- Rubbing spreads the chemicals, worsening the effects.

Neutralizing Skin Exposure:

- Use a solution of water and baking soda to rinse exposed skin.

Protection from Projectiles

Shielding Your Body:

- Use hard objects (like backpacks or shields) to protect vital areas.
- Avoid standing directly in front of police lines.



7. Managing Arrests and Detention

What to Do If Arrested

✓ Remain Silent:

- State loudly, "I am exercising my right to remain silent."
- Do not answer questions or sign any documents without a lawyer.

✓ Request a Lawyer:

- Say, "I want to speak to a lawyer."

✓ Know Your Rights:

- Trans activists have the right to gender-affirming housing and medical care while in custody.

✓ Document Mistreatment:

- Record details of any abuse or misconduct during detention.

8. Post-Protest Safety and Decompression

Debrief and Reflect

✓ Check In with Your Group:

- Ensure all members are accounted for and safe.
- Debrief to discuss what went well and what can be improved.

✓ Address Trauma and Stress:

- Seek trauma-informed care or counseling if needed.
- Engage in community healing and reflection.

✓ Report Misconduct:

- File complaints against police misconduct with organizations like the **ACLU** or **NLG**.



9. Emergency Post-Protest Checklist

Document and Review:

- Review any photos, videos, or documentation for legal and advocacy purposes.
- Share relevant information with legal aid organizations.

Follow Up with Legal Observers:

- Report instances of abuse or misconduct.

Secure Digital Evidence:

- Backup protest footage securely on encrypted platforms.

10. Trusted Resources for Protest Safety

1. **National Lawyers Guild (NLG):** Legal observers and post-arrest support.
2. **ACLU:** Legal advocacy and defense for protesters.
3. **Digital Defense Fund:** Protecting digital safety during protests.
4. **Bail Funds and Mutual Aid Groups:** Post-arrest support and legal assistance.

Protect Yourself and Resist

Protesting while trans is brave.

But bravery isn't enough, you need strategy.

This guide exists because you are **irreplaceable**. It exists to keep you alive, empowered, and resilient even when the street turns on you. Even when the news ignores you. Even when the cops treat your identity like a weapon.

Protect yourself. Protect your people. Keep the flame alive.

Legal Disclaimer

This toolkit is for educational and harm-reduction purposes only. It does not endorse illegal action or violent confrontation. All strategies are grounded in public safety best practices, protest medicine, and trauma-informed care.

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