



Blend In During Dangerous Situations

Unless you want an easy target on your back, you don't want to make a spectacle of yourself in most threatening situations. Attackers, thieves and other dangerous people need little more reason to target you than the fact that you drew their attention in some way. To protect yourself and increase your chances of helping others, here's some tips to help you blend in.

Avoid bright clothing. Even if you're wearing inexpensive apparel from WalMart instead of the Gucci store, there's nothing that says "look at me" like that bright pink top with the yellow smiley face on the front. Bright colors draw the eye and unwanted attention. Try for a neutral look, even if it's not all that stylish.

Don't wear your wealth. Once that mob mentality takes hold, normally law-abiding folks may begin to see a disaster scenario as a cheap excuse to rob and loot. Don't give them any added incentive to target you for your watch, jewelry and other conspicuous valuables.

Hide your stores. If you're prudent enough to have accumulated a few survival supplies, make certain you stash them in a well-hidden place. Don't brag about prepping, don't talk about your cache, and definitely don't store them in a place where they can be easily seen and stolen. Here's a few places you can hide stuff:

- Air vents
- Air ducts
- PVC pipes
- Under floorboards
- Crawl spaces
- Drop ceilings
- Wall cubbies behind pictures
- Under stair boards
- Potted plants in plain sight
- Paint cans
- Laundry soap containers
- Dry dog food bags
- Bottom of a clothes hamper
- Inside an old coat or ugly sweater

Blend In During Dangerous situations *(continued)*

Be careful what you throw away. Would-be thieves can simply check out your garbage to get ideas about your prep stash, your wealth and other personal habits. If you want to keep your life private, be sure to break down your trash to the point that it leaves little to no evidence of what it is or once contained.

Avoid reacting violently. You may have no other option left but to defend yourself, but since violence incites more violence, consider it a last resort. First, try to deescalate the situation, because it's generally safer and will help you keep a lower profile.

Don't go overboard on personal hygiene. If it's a prolonged disaster situation, you may want to consider not looking like you just emerged from the beauty parlor, especially if everyone else isn't well-groomed and clean. Don't stand out in any way.

Shed that excess weight now. Nothing says ease, comfort and a full pantry like that body fat.

Act with calm purpose, like you're supposed to be there. Your demeanor is key to having a low profile during a disaster situation. Always practice good situational awareness. Take stock of your environment without looking shifty or being on the verge of panic. Act like you belong there, as if it's just another normal situation. Even a dull one.

Hold your tongue. Frightened, nervous people often have a tendency to let their emotions come spilling out of their mouths. Don't do that. Be quiet to avoid the slightest bit of unwanted attention.

Hang with the pack. In situations with pinned-down crowds, stragglers make easy targets for predators. Try to blend into the crowd by taking up position right in their midst. Otherwise, make a run for it, especially if you've got the room to move, the resolve, and the strategic advantage to do so.

Move with ease. Once that adrenaline gets pumping, you may be tempted to move rapidly. Don't. Fast movement only draws unwanted attention and marks you as a possible threat. If you have the luxury, always move at a normal, unremarkable pace in a dangerous situation.

Kill the lights. Nothing makes for the unintentional calling card like leaving the light on. Especially if the power is down, because it may indicate an alternate power source such as a generator. Be sure to black out any windows and openings at night using thick blankets.

