

ASP SENTINELS

IF YOU CAN'T CARRY A GUN, THESE TOP-NOTCH DEFENDERS WILL HAVE YOUR BACK

BY KAREN HUNTER

Let's assume you've decided to take your protection into your own hands. That means you've earned your concealed-carry license, attended some training courses and now pack heat discreetly wherever you go to keep yourself and your loved ones safe. But there are some places that prohibit firearms, including post offices, schools and most federal buildings. So how do we maintain our vigilance when we aren't able to have our firearms? How do we protect ourselves while we're at school or even on a road trip when we enter a state that doesn't allow concealed carry?

First, do your homework and know the laws in your area

as well as those in neighboring states. But the answer will often be to opt for something "less lethal." Although these devices and tools aren't exactly ideal, something is always better than nothing.

■ STILL ARMED

The market is flooded with less-lethal products, many claiming to be the most effective. Some even claim to be the ultimate lifesaving device, which couldn't be further from the truth. "Less lethal" means it won't necessarily take a life, so at best, these devices will only buy you some time to escape if you know how to use them properly. That's why training with less-lethal

forms of protection is so crucial, and your best option is to find a company that offers defensive products as well as the training to handle them. This brings us to ASP, which offers less-lethal tools and training for law enforcement officers as well as civilians.

For more than four decades, ASP has been "protecting those who protect." The company has a single-minded focus on providing law enforcement with exceptional tools to assist in their daily duties. ASP also has a solid training division to provide professional instruction in the use of its gear. ASP products are found in more than 100 countries worldwide,

and it is easily one of the most recognizable companies in the self-defense industry.

ASP is probably best known for its expandable batons. These utilitarian impact and control devices have become standard pieces of law enforcement equipment worldwide. In fact, they've become so well known that "ASP" is now used to describe pretty much any baton used in the law enforcement arena. The company currently offers more than 60 different baton versions, with one to fit pretty much any application. ASP also makes a variety of other items, including restraints, flashlights, oleoresin capicum (OC) spray

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ASP offers dozens of less-lethal tools, including expandable batons like the easy-to-conceal Agent, to help you protect yourself wherever you go.

and training tools. ASP also provides nearly \$2 million in training to law enforcement officers each year at no cost to the agencies. This training is considered the gold standard when it comes to using batons, restraints and flashlights.

■ AGENT CONCEALABLE BATON

Recently, I was fortunate to have ASP provide me with a small cross-section of its products to test and evaluate for this article. One of the items was the Agent Concealable Baton. This particular model

is the "Airweight" version that extends to 40 centimeters and incorporates a 4140 steel striking surface. The forged 7075-T6 aluminum middle shaft and handle are precisely machined while the Crosstec grip has fine knurling for traction.

While it's small, this baton has the form, fit and striking potential of a duty baton. The Agent's reduced diameter and low-profile grip make it easy to conceal inside your waistband, for example. The Nexus clip can be adjusted to a variety of positions along the handle to enhance the baton's conceal-

ment or draw speed. Finally, as with all ASP Talon Loc batons, the Agent retracts with a simple push on the end cap.

■ SAFETY SET

Another great choice for civilians is the Safety Set. This personal-protection solution combines three proven tools in an easy-to-carry system. The first tool is the Palm Defender, which can disable even the strongest attacker with police-grade OC spray rated at 2 million Scoville heat units. Then there's the Sapphire, a small, rechargeable LED flashlight that

helps you see and be seen, and the piercingly loud Alert Whistle makes sure you're heard, too. All three elements attach to the included neck lanyard with a breakaway clip for added safety. The Safety Set is a must-have product for students, commuters, outdoor fitness enthusiasts and travelers. The kit includes a micro USB charging adapter for the Sapphire light and a replacement OC insert for the Palm Defender.

■ KEY DEFENDER

Traditional chemical irritants are little more than specially

loaded spray cans. Available in a few different sizes, ASP Defenders incorporate proprietary valves and patented OC dispensing mechanisms. Each model is precisely machined from aerospace-grade aluminum and solid brass, and the entire unit is O-ring sealed. Discharging the system requires two separate and distinct operations to disengage the safety and activate the insert. Both OC and inert training inserts are available, and I find the latter to be super helpful. The Key Defender offers six 0.5-second bursts and has an effective range of 5 feet.

■ DOT USB

One of ASP's handiest flashlights is the Dot USB. This high-end, high-performance illumination tool is manufactured in the same way as the company's full-sized tactical lights, but it's small enough to carry on a key chain. It's machined from 6061-T6 aerospace-grade aluminum and finished with durable hardcoat anodizing. Inside are premium components, including a Cree XPG2 LED, gold-plated connectors and

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an optical glass lens. Twist the bezel clockwise to turn the Dot USB on, counterclockwise to turn it off, and further counterclockwise to expose the micro USB charging port and charge status light.

■ XT DF

If you're looking for something a little more substantial, I would suggest the XT DF. This light has a maximum brightness of 600 lumens, but you can also program a secondary setting at 15, 60 or 150 lumens, plus constant-on or strobing modes. Everything is controlled via a single pressure switch on the tail cap. Just press once to activate the primary/max setting and twice to activate the user-programmed secondary mode.

Simply twist the bezel open to activate programming mode, tap through the levels until you reach your chosen setting and twist the bezel closed to lock it in. A three-position selector on the tail cap allows you to choose between constant-on or strobing mode.

Using ASP's "Duel-Fuel" technology, the light can run on the included rechargeable 18650 battery or two CR123A batteries. ASP also includes a tactical case for the XT DF as well. The company describes

the case as a "protection, portation and presentation" solution

■ LITHIUM BATTERIES

Finally, I think it's worth noting that ASP even has its own line of lithium CR123A batteries. ASP's lithium cells incorporate a positive-temperature coefficient (PTC) protection circuit and safety vent. The system prevents the battery from overheating or discharging too rapidly. Since lithium batteries are the international standard for powering tactical lighting products, ASP's offerings in this arena are a major perk to those of us who use tactical lights every day.

As you can see, ASP is a top provider of less-lethal protection products. The company's police-grade products and training will help you feel more confident on the mean streets. For

more info, visit asp-usa.com. PDW



1. Key Defender
2. XT DF
3. Dot USB
4. ASP lithium batteries

