

up to the task – is to stoop or crouch, but keep your back relatively straight, your torso more or less at a right angle to your thighs. When you do this, your sportcoat or blazer will drape over the gun, actually making it conceal more effect-

tively than when you are standing. If you bend your upper body forward as you do this, you’ll still profile the weapon. If you are wearing a windbreaker or a bomber jacket and you wear your pants low on your hips, you may very well still flash the gun below the level of the short, waist-length jacket.

When you have crouched in this manner, remember not to reach cross body. That will merely serve to raise and/or tighten the jacket and heighten chances for the gun to be revealed.

I rarely carry strongside at waist level because of the care that must be exercised during normal movement in order to keep the gun properly concealed. For a variety of reasons, I often carry in a position I call “Deep Crossdraw,” wherein the weapon is worn butt forward, just behind the left hip. Remember, I’m right handed, but have a fair degree of ambidexterity. And, I have reasonably long arms proportionate to my height. What might politely be called a “substantial” mid-section may interfere with such a draw, however.

When I’m wearing Deep Crossdraw, of course, I can access my handgun with either hand, using a reverse or “Cavalry” draw when accessing with the left hand. This is a real plus, for example, when driving. Successfully grasping a concealed handgun worn right-handed strongside at the waist while buckled in behind the wheel is challenging in the extreme. Drawing a handgun worn on the left side, especially when the butt is oriented to the front, is quite a bit easier.

But, germane to the body language issue, when I’m wearing Deep Crossdraw, I can reach for items with my right hand or my left hand, because the gun butt is pointing forward. When I have to reach well above my head with my right hand, I’m actually causing my weapon to be concealed better than normally, because the covering garment falls away to the left and better masks the gun.

When I’m seated at a restaurant table or in a booth or at the counter or bar, I don’t have to watch out for how my body is oriented as I actually sit or stand up, when I’m carrying in a Deep Crossdraw position. If you are carrying strongside, as you sit on a chair or in a booth – assuming your dominant side isn’t toward a wall – you’ll want to teach yourself to drop your right shoulder slightly and lean ever so slightly to the right, thus allowing the coat to fall away rather than draw tightly over the butt of your gun. Obviously, given the option, you’ll want your gun side facing the inside of a booth, the sidewall of a bar or the wall side of a chair at a conventional table.

If you are seated at a counter or bar and you carry strongside, you must be careful when reaching for items. That covering garment will draw tightly over your gun when you reach far forward or reach cross body. If you lean forward to eat or just assume a leaning posture in order to relax, the butt of the gun will very likely print under your coat. And, of course, you’re exposing one side or very likely your back to whoever might come up on you. A physically powerful adversary, noticing your gun outlined under your coat, may be able to clamp down on the gun, preventing your draw – even for just a second or two – when doing violence, to which you cannot appropriately respond.

Body language and interacting with the body’s immediate environment – the clothing you wear – can make the difference between effective concealment while providing for one’s personal security in a reliable fashion and drawing attention to oneself as being armed. As the lawfully armed good guy, you must master the body language and clothing issue in such a manner that what you do is second nature, subtle and natural. As someone who tries to stay keenly aware of one’s surroundings, body language and clothing interaction should be watched for in those persons around you. Noting how a person moves and does simple things can tell you a great deal about that person. Namely, is this person a possible potential threat who bears closer scrutiny or even immediate action? For the person who is unarmed, whatever the reason, such observed details may well be a best-defense strategy against harm. Remember that, armed or not, your brain is a formidable weapon.