



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 3, 2015

Nearly All Self-defense Products Illegal in U.K.

British citizens seeking advice on what's legal to use for self-defense [found some answers](#) at www.askthe.police.uk, a website sponsored and operated by the government's Police National Legal Database.

Question 589: Are there any legal self-defence products that I can buy?

Answer: The only fully legal self-defence product ... is a rape alarm.

There may be other products, according to the website, but they haven't been fully tested and "if you purchase one you must be aware ... there is always the possibility that you will arrested and detained until the product, its contents and legality, can be verified."



BrianAJackson/iStock/Getty Images Plus

In an effort to reduce any anxiety, the website goes on to point out that any product a British citizen purchases, other than a rape alarm, "must not be a product which is made to cause a person injury. Possession of such a product in public (and in private in specific circumstances) is against the law."

It offers some suggestions, along with a disclaimer. A British citizen may use a squirt bottle filled with a safe but brightly colored dye that may help police find and apprehend a criminal after the attack has been successfully completed. But, says the website, a citizen "should be aware that even a seemingly safe product ... would become an offensive weapon [if] it would be used in a way that is intended to cause injury."

And, the disclaimer: "The above advice is given in good faith. You must make your own decision and this website cannot be held responsible for the consequences of the possession, use or misuse of any self defence product," with the exception, of course, of a rape alarm.

This is not someone's idea of a bad joke, or a parody. Readers may verify the veracity on their own by going here: <https://www.askthe.police.uk/content/Q589.htm>

The National Rifle Association (NRA), when it learned of the presence of the website and its response to the question about self-defense products that are legal to own in Great Britain, confirmed "that British subjects continue to live at the mercy of their potential attackers." It reads, says the NRA, like an appeal for victims to graciously suffer criminal violence while removing "any remaining vestiges of the traditional right to self-defense."

Real people have experienced the absurdity of such rules being enforced with diligence across the country. Three knife-wielding burglars [guns are illegal in England] invaded a home in England, tied up the family members and threatened to kill the father. One of the members managed to escape and get help. The family member and the helper returned and inflicted permanent brain damage on one of



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burglars — a criminal, by the way, with more than 50 previous convictions — using a cricket bat. Authorities arrested the defendants — the victims — and sent them to prison for more than two years. The attacker? He escaped punishment.

A well-known television personality was sitting at her kitchen table with her daughter one evening when she caught several young men peering through the kitchen window. Looking around for something to defend herself and her daughter from imminent attack, she found — oh, no! — a kitchen knife and waved it in front of them, chasing them away. Hertfordshire police arrived at the scene and informed her that the knife was an “offensive weapon” and therefore was illegal. She avoided being arrested, but the *Sunday Telegraph* explained: “She was not looking to be a vigilante ... but ... police explained to her that even if you’re at home alone and you have an intruder, you are not allowed to protect yourself.”

There are precious few Hollywood actors who see the absurdity of such laws, but one of them, Vince Vaughn (*The Internship*, *The Watch*, *Couples Retreat*) was interviewed by the British version of *GQ Magazine*:

I support people having a gun in public ... not just in your home. We don’t have the right to bear arms because of burglars; we have the right to bear arms to resist the supreme power of a corrupt and abusive government. It’s not about duck hunting: it’s about the ability of the individual. It’s the same reason we have the freedom of speech.

It’s well known that the greatest defense against an intruder is the sound of a gun [being cocked].

Since 1979, *International Living* magazine has offered people advice on where to live if they are looking for alternatives to where they are. “Retiring abroad has never been more attractive,” says its website, and among the 25 countries on its list are places with great climate, excellent and inexpensive healthcare, modest living costs “and more.” American citizens observing the changes that appear to be making the United States more and more like England may be tempted to subscribe to *International Living* for advice.

Economist Gary North, on his members-only website, is often asked the same question, with variations: Where would you go if you were looking to get out of the country, Gary? North outlined his list of requirements:

A country that collects no more than 20 percent of its GDP in taxes.

A country where foreigners are trying to get in.

A country with English as the common language.

A country with a common law tradition.

A country where an entrepreneur can start a business in one day.

A country with a highly developed system of roads.

A country where cartoons lampooning politicians and their policies are not only legal but welcomed.

A country where home schooling is legal.

A country where police on the streets do not carry machine guns.

A country with no history of military coups.

Despite its problems and threats to liberty that appear to be mounting on a daily basis, America is still a



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pretty nice place to live, especially compared to Great Britain.

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