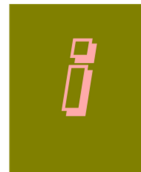


How to escape from shackles

In some circumstances it really pays to know how to make a smooth escape from stocks, hand and leg irons, chains (with associated ball), knotted ropes, concrete overshoes, handcuffs (padded or regular), leg hobbles, and similar physical restraints, which have been around for hundreds of years in one form or another. Most of the time, your plans call for you to be in a place other than where you



have had to submit to these additions, with full motion capability, despite the wishes of the party or parties who have arranged for this inconvenience. In this space, for the sake of simplicity, we will not be covering additional techniques for subduing captives such as straightjackets, chemical restraints, or vicious dogs, which might be employed in addition to or instead of hard bonds.



Evil plotpoints

1. **Assess.** If you have your hands behind your back or cannot see where you are attached to the wall, use whatever senses you have access to to determine what the restraint is and whether it is amenable to removal. If you are with someone who is not obviously your enemy, ask them to tell you what they see, perhaps in exchange for telling them the same.
2. **Key.** Is there a keyhole? Some restraints you will encounter do not (cable ties are a common example), and need to be cut or burned off. But for the ones which do, the speediest path to freedom would be if you could somehow fashion or steal a key from the jailer. You don't need the original, a photograph of the key can be used to cut a blank into the proper form to unlock yourself.
3. **Break the bonds.** Do you happen to have a knife, saw, or bolt cutter you can use? Do so, by all means. If all you have are your own bare hands, perhaps, more limited - try molecular vibration to generate high temperatures to melt through the metal. Or phase out of the normal dimensions.
4. **Body tricks.** Pass through the obstruction by contorting your hands or feet. If the shackle is around your neck it is harder, but perhaps [still possible](#). You can also try to wwitch bodies with the prison guard, using the usual techniques. This will only work in prisons which use biometrics to pass through secured doors, not passwords.

5. **Friends in need.** In up to 90% of all situations where a chained or otherwise bound captive is able to go free, it is through the agency of another, whether an ally able to penetrate the defenses of the prison where one is kept, a guard who can be bribed or coerced to betray their trust, or, rarely, a wholly disinterested party who stands no particular benefit from one's escape. Have your consort smuggle in tools secreted about her person in an undetectable way, if she can think of any, or else pass the time to think of some on your own.
6. **Acceptance.** Perhaps your ultimate aim is not incompatible with being shackled. For instance if you are chained to the wall and cannot remove your hands from the chains, perhaps you can break the bond to the wall itself and drag your chains around instead and go about your business that way. It could actually be pretty impressive-looking, if that's any consolation. If you are attached to a live bomb, perhaps the bonds are less important than actually disarming or destroying the explosives.



Strokes of genius



S

off. This is an option which has the great merit of nearly always being available, even if you happen to be an animal at the time of your entrapment. You should, in all cases, weigh the pros and cons of before committing yourself. Occasionally, if you know you will be subject to restraint, you might be able to plan ahead, by applying a tasty seasoning to your limbs beforehand. In almost all circumstances, jailers and wardens will not allow you to get away with partially cooking yourself, however, so avoid going too far along these lines.

- **Mist trick.** While we are on the subject of planning ahead for confinement, let us not forget the stratagem of implanting a device in your body which will dissolve yourself into a mist (perhaps by being eaten by nanobots where you can diffuse to safety where you will reconstitute yourself. The experience, while interesting, is

generally excruciatingly painful, so you may want to add a bit of nanoanalgesic as well.

- **Exploit your advantage.** Remember that you have a psychological edge over your captors. They have more to fear from you than you of them. They fear your getting free and know you have little to lose. It's a slim edge, but better than nothing. If you are in an epic fantasy and you are shackled, get to know the mind of your creator and keep an eye open for any opportunities to help advance the plot in some dynamic way. If you are not fictional but believe you are, you can use this as part of your delusional act.
- **To be or not to be.** The correct answer is "to be."



Traps for mere fools

- **Electric shackles.** These have been growing more popular as of late, with features ranging from combination locks, sensors, shock contacts with settings that go from uncomfortable to lethal. The most popular ones have batteries and do not require wires which can get in the way.
- **Acid treatment.** This almost never attacks steel more than it does flesh. Mild acids, such as the kind found in lemons, limes, and salad dressings, are at most able to impart a rusty appearance to untreated iron.
- **Gunplay.** Likewise it is usually a losing proposition to shoot your chains off, and noisy too.
- **Dehydration.** As a bound captive, it is almost always a good practice to remain as fully hydrated as you can. If you can arrange to consume a large amount of fluid immediately before your restraints are applied, they are likely to go on fractionally looser than otherwise, you will begin what can be a difficult situation from an optimum starting point, and if you subsequently shrink due to loss of water and fat, it may prove to be the salient point enabling your eventual escape.
- **Iron mask.** An encumbrance for the advanced escape artist. In some cases you may be able to make your getaway without actually having to remove this pesky appendage.



Precious and needful

- **Hairpin.** Or other form of jewelry if you do not have a hat or hair.
- **Lubricant.** To help slip your hands out of the cuffs. You may need to improvise, in a pinch, using mayonnaise or [Astroglide](#).
- **Heat vision.** Best if you have a glass lens to focus the rays upon a vulnerable link of chain.
- **Skeleton key.** Works best with lock mechanisms predating the Industrial Revolution.

Legcuffs

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)

This article is about physical fetters used as restraints. For other uses, see [Fetter \(disambiguation\)](#).



This article **needs additional citations for verification**. Please help [improve this article](#) by [adding citations to reliable sources](#). Unsourced material may be [challenged](#) and [removed](#).

(December 2007)



Legcuffs in use

Legcuffs, **shackles**, **footcuffs**, **fetters** or **leg irons** are a kind of [physical restraint](#) used on the [feet](#) or [ankles](#) to allow walking but prevent running and kicking. The term "fetter" shares a root with the word "foot".

With respect to humans, typically only [prisoners](#) or [bondage fetishists](#) will wear shackles. A shackled [animal](#) is typically either a dangerous animal or one prone to escape.

[Metaphorically](#), a fetter may be anything that restricts or restrains in any way, hence the word "*unfettered*".

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[\[edit\]](#) History



Cup lock shackle with no built-in lock

The earliest fetters found in archaeological excavations date from the prehistoric age and are mostly of the puzzle lock type. Fetters are also referenced in ancient times in the Bible.

In the Scriptures the Hebrew word *necho'sheth*, usually meaning “copper,” is frequently translated “fetters of copper” or “copper fetters,” because fetters were often made of copper or bronze, although wood and iron were also employed. (2Sa 3:34; 2Ki 25:7) In the British Museum there is a pair of bronze fetters from Nineveh (the capital city of ancient Assyria) in the form of a bar with a ring at each end.^[1]

Roman times already see a variety of restraint types. Some early versions of cup lock shackles can already be found. These were widely used in medieval times but their use declined when mass production made the manufacture of locks built into restraints affordable.

Simple fetter types continue to be used like puzzle lock shackles as the typical slave iron or irons riveted shut for prisoners being transported to overseas prison camps.



Standard type leg irons made in Taiwan

The first built-in locks often were of a simple screw-type but soon developed into the "Darby" type. In Europe these continued to be used into the middle of the 20th century, whereas in the US from the late 19th century onwards many new designs were invented and produced before handcuffs and leg irons of the Peerless type became the standard several decades ago.

A recent development of the last few decades are high security restraints that incorporate a cylinder lock^{[[disambiguation needed](#)]} that is more difficult to pick than the lock on standard type cuffs.

[\[edit\]](#) Controversial use



Heavy leg irons from China, including a metal plate to protect the keyhole from collecting dust or being tampered with

In comparison to handcuffs the wearing of leg irons may be found less restrictive. Thus the prison authorities in several countries deem their long term use acceptable. In order to avoid condoning this disputed practice the countries of the [European Union](#) have banned exporting leg irons into non-EU countries.^{[[2](#)][[3](#)]} The countries that continue to make prisoners wear fetters long term now tend to resort to manufacturing their own restraints.

N.S. inmates escape leg irons

Two prisoners in Nova Scotia managed to free themselves from their leg shackles today, less than three months after another inmate did the same and escaped from custody.

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By:Jennifer MacMillanTHE CANADIAN PRESS, Published on Thu Jun 26 2008

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HALIFAX – Two prisoners in Nova Scotia managed to free themselves from their leg shackles today, less than three months after another inmate did the same and escaped from custody.

The two men were being transferred to court in Dartmouth when they got out of their restraints and bolted from a sheriff's van.

They were apprehended within minutes by sheriffs and subdued with pepper spray and batons.

Justice Minister Cecil Clarke praised the sheriffs for their quick work, but pointed to a troubling trend.

"I'm very concerned now with what seems to be a pattern of people getting out of these devices," he said.

On April 3, high-risk offender Jermaine Carvery slipped out of his shackles while being transferred to a Halifax hospital. He managed to elude police for two months before he was apprehended in Ontario.

Days after Carvery's escape, the Justice Department announced it would introduce new "state-of-the-art" leg irons for use during prisoner transfers.

The new leg irons are now in use at the Central Nova Correctional Facility, where the two inmates were being held.

But Clarke said the new shackles are reserved for transfers of high-risk prisoners and likely weren't used for the two inmates.

"This was a low-risk regular transfer where regular leg irons would have been involved, and this is something I'm seeking clarity on," the minister said.

A Justice Department spokeswoman said later that officials wouldn't disclose whether the would-be escapees were wearing the older shackles.

"Until an internal investigation is complete, we're not going to comment on what type of leg irons these individuals were wearing," Carla Grant said. "We expect that investigation will last at least a week."

The justice minister said the investigation will look at whether the new shackles need to be used for all inmates.

"If that means replacing all of the handcuffs and leg irons, then that's what we'll do," Clarke said.

The leg irons worn by Carvery used a universal lock, while the new ones feature individual locks and keys.

The union representing sheriffs and jail guards said the fact the sheriffs were able to quickly apprehend the two men underscores the need to arm officers who transfer prisoners.

Unarmed jail guards were previously responsible for escorting inmates during other outside visits.

The provincial Labour Department recently sided with the guards and ordered officials to provide training and intermediate weapons such as pepper spray and batons to corrections officers during transfers.

The president of the Nova Scotia Government Employees' Union said Thursday that more sophisticated leg irons need to be put into use sooner rather than later.

"How many escapes do we have to have before the proper equipment is put into place?" Joan Jessome said.

Halifax Regional Police say both inmates are facing new charges stemming from their escape attempt.

Police spokesman Const. Jeff Carr said one of the men was caught by sheriffs after a short chase. The other man ran in the opposite direction and threatened a couple in a nearby car with a syringe that appeared to be filled with blood.

The couple rolled up their windows and the man couldn't open the car doors.

He then threatened a sheriff with the syringe but was subdued with pepper spray and batons.

Michael Slaunwhite, 38, and Vincent John Ryan Currie, 26, have each been charged with escape from lawful custody.

Slaunwhite has also been charged with attempted robbery, possession of a weapon and assault with a weapon

Prisoners Escape from Milwaukee County Deputies

Jul 23, 2002

2 convicts escape just outside prison
One caught, one at large after loosening shackles, overwhelming deputy

By JAMES H. BURNETT III
of the Journal Sentinel staff
Last Updated: July 2, 2002

Two prisoners are suspected of using a handcuff key to unlock their shackles before their escape from two Milwaukee County sheriff's deputies Tuesday, just as they were about to be turned over to prison authorities.

One of the prisoners was nabbed after a short foot chase; the other, Michael Kernohan, remained at large late Tuesday.

It was the second time in less than a year that a prisoner escaped Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department custody.

While a frustrated Sheriff David Clarke insisted he wasn't "blaming anyone," he made it clear that he was holding the deputies "responsible."

The escape occurred around 10 a.m. after Deputies Lisa M. Biro-Bauer and Steven E. Karabon had brought a van carrying seven recently sentenced convicts to the entrance of the Waupun Correctional Institution, Clarke and reports say.

All inmates had been handcuffed to belly-chains and shackled with leg irons prior to transport, Clarke said.

However, when Biro-Bauer parked the van and opened the vehicle's side door, an unshackled Kernohan kicked Biro-Bauer in the face and fled on foot.

Cesar Deleon, 19, who also had shed his shackles in the van, tried to flee, too, but Waupun guards who saw the incident quickly captured the convicted armed robber.

Kernohan, 32, a convicted burglar who escaped several years ago from the Burke Correctional Institute in Dodge County, got away. Kernohan had been in Milwaukee County Circuit Court earlier Tuesday for a court appearance on seven armed robbery charges in Milwaukee County. He also faces two armed robbery charges in Winnebago County.

Sheriff's Department records indicate Karabon was suspended for five days without pay in 1996 after another prisoner escaped his custody.

Tuesday, he was walking from the passenger side of the van to assist Biro-Bauer in unloading the prisoners when the escape occurred.

Bill Clausius, a spokesman for the state Department of Corrections, said Waupun's design doesn't allow arriving prisoners to be driven inside a secure garage or sally port.

Instead, Clausius said, prisoner transports are usually parked on a city street in front of the Waupun prison, and prisoners are led by officers about 10 feet to the entrance of the prison.

Clarke said an internal investigation was ongoing.

At a news conference, Clarke added that his sense was that there had been "a little bit of complacency and a lack of communication between these two deputies."

Other recent incidents such as the December escape of convicted killer DeCarlos Young from the Milwaukee County Jail and the May shootout inside a Milwaukee County courtroom have Clarke "extremely concerned," he said.

He defended the deputies Tuesday, saying they were caught off guard, but he also said he feared that if a complacent attitude sweeps the department, it "could cost somebody their life eventually."

Deputies need to remember that a felon who has just been sentenced to a lengthy prison term has "nothing to lose" and could act out at any time, Clarke said.

"We in law enforcement cannot afford to be lulled into a false sense of security," he said, explaining that "a deputy opening the door to a transport van shouldn't stand directly in front of the door. It's basic training that you stand off to the side."

Clarke acknowledged that many handcuff keys are universal and work on other sets of handcuffs and shackles. But

he insisted that even if the investigations revealed that Kernohan or Deleon had smuggled a key into the van, the problem that prompted their escape was apparent "human error."

"This is not a situation where we had a malfunctioning of equipment," he said. "This is an operational problem."

There are three correctional facilities in Dodge County, Clausius said. Waupun is the oldest prison in the state.





**Teen in Leg Irons and Handcuffs
Escapes**

by Erica Byfield

KMOV.com

Posted on July 1, 2010 at 9:59 PM

Related:

- [Juvenile who escaped from detention center caught add to reading list](#)

A 16 year old in leg irons, handcuffs and a belly chain was about to escape police custody today. It happened in Clayton outside of the Family Courts Building. Investigators tell News 4 that the teen was sitting in a transport van in the building's sallyport when he was able to slither out of a window. He was originally transported to Clayton for attempt to escape St. Louis City custody.

After nearly two hours of searching in the air and on the ground police found him hiding in a backyard of a home near Hanley and Wydown. We're told that the teen resisted arrest and police had to use a dog and tazer to take him into custody. In the scuffle the police dog and county officer were injured.

The teen was in custody for unlawful use of a weapon. There is no word yet on any other charges he may face.

The escapee did have a few visible injuries, to his legs. Police tell us the dog bit him on his right thigh and his leg irons created some kind of burns on his shins. Within the last 30 minutes we learned the teen may have to remain in the hospital over night.

Nova Scotia's top corrections official admits he's baffled as to how a dangerous, handcuffed prisoner managed to slip out of double-locked leg irons, then elude capture after a brief foot chase.

"It's a mystery," said Fred Honsberger, the province's executive director of correctional services. "I've never heard of anyone getting out of leg irons before."

Mr. Honsberger is facing tough questions after 30-year-old Jermaine Carvery of Halifax escaped custody while being escorted by two corrections officers to a medical appointment.

Mr. Carvery, who is described by police as dangerous, is charged with attempted murder and hostage-taking in relation to a string of high-profile robberies.

He remained at large late yesterday, though police said they had received numerous tips.

Mr. Honsberger confirmed that Mr. Carvery, still handcuffed, fled from the back of a corrections van on Thursday as the back door was opened outside a downtown hospital.

One of the unarmed officers gave chase -- the other was already in the hospital -- but lost Mr. Carvery less than 10 minutes into the pursuit.

Investigators later found the leg irons -- still locked -- in or near the van.

It's unlikely that Mr. Carvery had anything with him to pick the lock on each ankle because prisoners are typically searched before they are taken out of the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility in nearby Dartmouth, Mr. Honsberger said.

A review of video recorded at the detention centre showed that the restraints were put on properly, he said.

There were no other prisoners in the van when Mr. Carvery was taken to the Victoria General Hospital.

Mr. Honsberger said he couldn't divulge what Mr. Carvery was to be treated for, but he confirmed something that had been widely suspected: "It didn't involve his legs, that's for sure."

Although Mr. Honsberger declined to speculate, it appears that Mr. Carvery might have slipped out of the shackles without unlocking them.

Mr. Honsberger said he couldn't imagine how the prisoner could have pushed the restraints past his heels, though he said it was possible that his clothing played a role.

Mr. Carvery was wearing prison-issue sweatpants at the time.

The escape is now the subject of an internal review and a police investigation.

MLA Bill Estabrooks, the provincial NDP's justice critic, said public confidence has been shaken because the bizarre escape was the fourth miscue for corrections officers in the past four months.

In December, a man charged with assault was mistakenly released from the Dartmouth centre.

The following month, a rape suspect was accidentally set free from a jail in Cape Breton.

And later that month, another mix-up in Dartmouth led to the premature release of a man charged with aggravated assault.

Mr. Estabrooks said it's time for an independent review of the system.

"That would be a real good first step in restoring public confidence in correctional services in this province," he said in an interview.

"We don't need another internal review."

When asked whether the corrections officer who chased Mr. Carvery was fit enough to keep up with the escaper, Mr. Honsberger said that was the expectation.

"They would be in reasonable shape," he said, declining to say disclose the officer's age.

Mr. Honsberger said he was concerned that it took nine minutes for corrections officials in Dartmouth to alert police about the escape.

At 1:30 p.m. -- two minutes after Mr. Carvery leaped from the van -- the officer chasing him called his superiors to let them know which way he was headed. But corrections staff did not call police until 1:39.

"It should have been immediate," Mr. Honsberger said. "I'm concerned with the nine-minute gap."

Police arrived at the scene at 1:47 p.m., but Mr. Carvery was long gone.

Earlier reports suggested there was a much longer set of time lags, but Mr. Honsberger said those accounts were incorrect.

As I remember it all prisoners who get long sentences have to wear leg irons-not ankle irons -for the first 3 months of their sentence-possibly to keep them manageable until they come to terms a little more with their sentence? Or to let every one else the "newbie" is a long term prisoner? Or maybe it is just part the punishment?[/QUOTE]

Your guesses are BOTH right!! The standard leg irons in Thailand are two rings worn on both ankles linked by a chain. Various sizes are used. They are worn 1) by ALL prisoners when going to court (rather inhumane if you consider the presumption of innocence until proven guilty 2) by all prisoners going to a hospital outside the prison 3) by prisoners remanded for offences attracting life/death sentences awaiting trial. 4) by any prisoner for the period of punishment for disciplinary offences committed while in prison. Once a prisoner is actually sentenced to "life" or "death, he will be transported to Bang Kwang from his respective prison and there his leg/ankle irons will be taken off.

It is possible to change one's shorts while still wearing the irons. It's hard to describe in writing. Slip one side of your shorts off through one ring and over your foot, then pull it through the ring again. Then slip the other side down through the other ring and foot bringing along the side already off!!

Showing Leg Irons (13 of 78)



Chinese "Death Shackles" Leg Irons

Type: [Leg
Irons](#)

Manufacture [Unknow
r: n](#)

Once riveted on to a convict facing a death sentence, these Leg Irons are intended to stay on till the sentence is carried out, and likely on the body forever thereafter. The rivets that hold them closed are hammered in to a slot that is carved in one of the lock plates, in such a way as to prevent their removal without hard engineering effort. They are quite heavy but entirely rounded so they won't damage flesh much, one supposes.

<http://www.blacksteel.com/hcs/index.cgi?section=Collection&subsection=&type=4&manufacturer=&collector=&find=&start=13>

**Smith and Wesson Escape
Challenge**

Anonymous

January 12 2011 at 12:23 PM

I read the site off and on and have a question. I can do simple escapes, locking picking etc.

My friend has challenged me to escape from Smith and Wesson Model 1900 Leg Irons with a "special" lock, a waist chain, a blue box, and smith and wesson model 100 hand cuffs with with a "special" lock. Is it possible to do this? Am I nuts for trying he wont show me the cuffs until I agree to it. What type of lock is this? He said they are production cuffs.

I have picked plenty of handcuffs before with relative ease. Although I have never had a pair of Leg Irons on I have very small ankles and I think with the shape of the Smith and Wesson's I should be able to slip them off my ankle with ease.

[Respond to this message](#)

Author	Reply
Anonymous	<p data-bbox="639 1136 1104 1213">Re: Smith and Wesson Escape Challenge</p> <p data-bbox="1195 1125 1433 1192">January 12 2011, 12:43 PM</p> <p data-bbox="578 1297 1430 1493">I should also mention the waist chain was to be locked with a padlock and handcuffs and leg irons are to be double locked. He will give me 4 hours to escape at the end if I escape I will get a nominal \$50.00 for my trouble if I fail I will have to wear the cuffs for 8 hours.</p> <p data-bbox="578 1541 1430 1614">I am younger so the \$50.00 is quite enticing and wearing them for 8 hours if I fail doesnt seem like that big a deal.</p>
Anonymous	<p data-bbox="688 1770 976 1843">BOA Handcuff Retrofits?</p> <p data-bbox="1122 1759 1433 1822">January 12 2011, 1:12 PM</p>

<http://www.handcuffwarehouse.com/smwemo100cuh.html>

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
1:14 PM

I think those would have to be it and I looked they also do the leg irons which I dont think Ill have to pick since they should slip off with some effort.

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
1:15 PM

<http://www.handcuffwarehouse.com/cuhisetrbox.html>

Joseph Fox

S&W escape

January 12 2011, 1:41 PM

IMHO--Wearing a double-locked pair of ASSA Cuffs & Legirons...will be near impossible to 'pick'

(hint: get another ASSA key--and do a key-switch).

Good luck, and let us know how it turns out.

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
1:52 PM

What exactly does the "bluebox" do. Assuming they cant be picked how can I get them off? I dont think I can slip the handcuffs off. Are the ankle cuffs more of a challenge than I think to slip off as well? I dont think a keyswitch will be possible. Knowing him he will leave the keys at home put them on me and let me try to escape and then get the keys if necessary.

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
2:18 PM

The 'bluebox' will prevent you from gaining access to the keyhole on the cuffs. All this means is that you would have to pick the padlock that holds the box shut before you could try to pick the handcuff locks. Not knowing how small your ankles are, I would think that if the cuffs were locked tightly you would not be able to do this easily.



Paul Reardon

bluebox

January 12 2011, 2:22 PM

Hello,

"Bluebox" may be a generic term your challenger is using for a transport box, in this case one specifically made for the S&W high security retrofit, (a link for which appears in "annons" second post.) A transport box is a handcuff cover that encases the handcuff and most importantly, the keyholes. Typically used in conjunction with a belly chain and martin link, these boxes can be secured by virtually any padlock.

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
2:34 PM

Well I guess the bluebox could provide quite a bit of a problem. I think I understand what it does not but it seems it also makes the cuffs almost rigid; I have tried a waist chain he has before and the padlock was behind my back. If its behind the back and I cant reach it is another way to get around the bluebox? Is it normal for the padlock to end up behind your back? I have a 28" waist if that matters.

I asked him what kind of padlock he was using and he said its also an Abloy padlock.

I just measured for reference my ankles are 8.25" inches around just on top of the bone.

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
2:54 PM

Being new your best decision is to NOT accept the challenge. While life and limb are not at stake it is still a smart idea to pass on this one. ASSA, retro box abloy padlock, that is tough for an experienced performer let alone someone new.

I am not discouraging you, just my opinion.

Michael Lee

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
3:19 PM

This is a Tough one ! a few Yrs ago Staley Palm & Larry Weeks saw me effect a unique one of a kind Challenge escape out a pair of S&W cuffs contained in a NY sheriffs blue box locked with a challengers master padlock..

Yes I did beat this Challenge ...So the Bottom is can it be done Yes I did it !

But I would never attempt it again.. Very painful...and Not Easy.

ANONY- If it is a legit challenge as I was confronted with then all restraints , locks and chain will be available for you to look over & test to see that all components are in Working order.

To this day it never ceases to amaze me at Just how many times even Houdini was stumped because he failed to once over thoughly the restraints that he was going to be restrained in....sadly Harry should have headed these words "Trust No one"

Personally you sound like a friendly young /Novice new to the escape game.

IMHO I would Study Everything you can get your hands on , read , read and read somemore and expermintation...

Spend many, many hrs at the work bench learning the How's & Why locks work and how to Compromise them... Purchase cheap handcuffs take them apart and attempt to understand what make them tick.

Escapes should never be attempted with out a fast thinking Crew off assistants with you , they need to be made aware of what can go wrong and what to do .each one of them has to be sharp and fast thinking on there toes. also each should be paid quite well as your wellbeing is in there hands.

Until that time I would certinally Not even think of attempting any form of a Challenge as at this point in time , the cash really does not matter...at this stage its all about study and getting a Solid foundation in the escape Arts , if your not ready to dedicate a good 10-15 yrs to the study of your craft before beginning to accebt real world challenges then the field of escape may not be for you

I wish you the Best

Michael Lee
www.michaelleemagic.com

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 12 2011,
3:43 PM

Thanks for the response but I do really want to try this. It just a friendly thing its nothing serious. I can pick standard handcuffs in about a minute even double locked. I dont think a total of 12 hours in these cuffs will be bad if I fail completly. My questions more specially are:

1. What are some methods I can use/research to bypass/pick the handcuffs, blue box, leg irons, etc.
2. Is it feasible to think I can slip the leg irons off both ankles? Somebody mentioned tightness so I asked and was told they will be snug but not tight. I guess just enough to allow the ankle to flex without restriction. I was also told that it would be on my bare ankle I could not wear socks or boots or anything like that. I was told basically said the metal will be touching the skin.

3. Is the padlock normally placed behind the back when the blue box is used with a waist chain? If so is there anyway to get to it?
4. Is 12 hours in these things so uncomfortable thats its not bearable?
5. Is walking in the leg irons easy if I do get stuck for the full time?

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 13 2011,
12:44 PM

Anyone have any help on this one?

MICHAEL LEE

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 13 2011,
1:19 PM

I would READ then read again what i have written
...What you getting here for FREE is sound Real world
advice, I think the words your searching for are... 'Thank
You "

The last thing you want to experience is 12 hrs
restrained ..Should anything happen to you,, it makes all
escapist look bad.

Unless you have Experienced people around you for the
entire 12 hrs ...you should aviod this

Most people these day don't have a 12 second attention
span let alone 12 hrs ...Period !...Let this go !!!!

MICHAEL LEE

[Norman Bigelow](#)

S & W escape challenge

January 13 2011, 9:23 PM

The advice given here is the most sound advice you are going to get. There are people here who are experts on the subject of cuffs, escapes and challenge.

There are two ways to learn. Listen to the wise council given or fail the escape because your not ready. This may not be on a stage with an audience but when an if it is will you learn from the experts who are trying to help you?

Or will you fail in front of an audience?

We all have escape situations we are not ready for. That's why people study, practice and plan.

If you have any intention of being an escape artist, doing it right is important. Norm

Anonymous

Re: Smith and Wesson Escape Challenge

January 14 2011, 12:57 PM

I do thank everyone that has posted on this thread in the way of advice.

I head your warnings but this is just for fun not in front of audience. I do not plan on making a career out of it I just wanted some specifics and pointers on doing the actual escape which I asked previously. I have never seen these cuffs before so I dont know how easy or difficult they are to pick or shim.

Thanks

**Expert Handcuff
Picker**

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 14 2011,
5:41 PM

Long story short:

Abloy is a high-security lock / nearly impossible to pick by itself. Worse while you're wearing it.

Assa (or Medeco) as would be on the cuffs are also high-security locks. They were designed for crafty criminals who may have some lock knowledge.

This forum is comprised of some of the best restraint manipulators on the planet, bluntly, what you are being told is that you will virtually fail this attempt. An analogy to what you wish to challenge yourself with, is like a toddler taking his first step today, and then making an attempt to scale the Andes Mountains tomorrow. OK?

Practice with regular restraints first!!!

Good luck -

[Dennis](#)

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 15 2011,
2:41 PM

Since you're determined to do this stunt, I have a couple of suggestions.

First try it with regular S&W cuffs and leg irons and a pickable padlock. And have a spotter on hand to bust

you loose if you fail.

Second, try the punishment scene on your own, again with a safety spotter to release you if everything goes in the pot. You may decide you don't want to risk the default scene, or you may decide it is no big deal.

In any event, I would have a safety spotter on hand with absolute authority to stop the stunt and release you, including from the default scene, if you are judged to be in danger.

Martin

Fun, not an escape performance

January 15 2011,
3:46 PM

Hi,

I don't think "Anonymous" is into an escape performance here. So if he wants to do some punishment-game with a friend - why not? I assume there's an exit path using the key in case it really begins to hurt...

I also assume the friend is talking about the Assa/Medeco Cuffmaxx S&W Cuffs, he probably got them and now is very proud of these ultra-high-security cuffs. But as he wants to use the (also special) Blue box on them, he obviously doesn't trust the Lock enough?! I would say picking it while cuffed (especially the Assa) would already be a really tough challenge.

But regarding the "designed for crafty criminals" - I don't think so. They were designed to be sold, having financial constraints ruining the original design. Following the original patent the attack shown in the next video was not possible - but it would have required a slightly modified lock. The BOA prototypes had it!

To Anonymous: I think if our assumptions about the cuffs are true, your most realistic path of escape is shown in this video from a Security Conference:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cp1Hs09vidY>

But there are two really huge drawbacks:

- the presenter shows this with Peerless Cuffs. Those are MUCH easier in this respect. Try it with standard S&W Cuffs (as said, the lock is irrelevant here) and you will notice it requires really some impact to get the double lock out. This will hurt! You and possibly also the cuffs depending on the used surface. It might even be impossible if the cuffs spring is too stiff.
- If the cuffs are attached to a belly chain it is even harder, if not impossible to do, depending on the way the cuffs are attached. The Blue Box doesn't really make it better, too - even though it does not prevent the attack.

My suggestion: If you manage to use the method shown above on standard S&W cuffs talk him into leaving out the blue box. Tell him "if the locks are THAT good, why not let me try the cuffs alone?". He can't expect more for \$50 - and it also makes the punishment of keeping them on a little more realistic... If he uses Medeco you COULD also try picking, but if you never picked a Medeco M3 camlock before I assume you will not be able to do it.

Regarding the rest: yes, it is normal for the padlock to end up in the back. If done right you can't access it. Which doesn't matter as you won't be able to pick an Abloy padlock anyway. So even if you escape the cuffs the chain will remain on. Regarding the leg irons: slipping out of those is pretty unlikely if they are applied relatively tight. It's more realistic on handcuffs, but S&Ws also are not the best for that. Especially in such a challenge I would assume both will be too tight for you to slip out.

Martin

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 27 2011,
10:15 PM

Thanks to all those who have responded. I appreciate your time. Sorry I havent had time to respond in a while.

I asked him loose the BlueBox and he said no its how the cuffs attach to the waist chain. He also said I just have to get both hand and both ankles out for an escape the bluebox and waist chain can still be on. So it looks like if Im going to try it; its all or none. He did also confirm its the smith and wesson cuffs with the ASSA locks. I did as a couple suggested and tried it with some regular cuffs and I can open those with ease with a paper clip even behind my back. I dont have a pair of ankle cuffs so I cant try that but it looks like the lock is the same. The cuffs I had are Smith and Wesson and I could not smack them hard enough like the video shows to budge the double lock. I actually smacked on so hard it I could swear it tightened one notch but the double lock remained. I can easily wear the handcuffs for the time allotted if I were to fail and I dont think the ankle cuffs will be a problem nor the waist chain.

Are there any other methods to attacking the cuffs if the bluebox is on. Can I possibly get the bluebox off the waist chain somehow? I will take your word for it that the padlock is not something Im going to get open besides it sounds like it will behind my back from what you guys describe.

As far as the ankle cuffs I know you guys have said they will be hard to slip off. Is it possible if I take my socks and shoes off then try they will come off? I have pretty small ankles so Im figuring my ankles are probably smaller than the smallest setting on the cuffs. It also looks like from my research on the internet the smith

and wesson ankle ones are more oval which seems to make it easier I would think. The only thing I see as a problem is possibly the width of my ankle bone being too wide.

Dorson

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 27 2011,
10:58 PM

Does the old saying about there are bold pilots and old pilots, but there are no old bold pilots mean anything to you?

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 28 2011,
4:07 AM

Leg-irons cannot be "slipped", even if applied relatively loosely, due to the anatomy of the rear foot. So, if your anatomy is intact, which I hope, slipping leg-irons is not an option.

Anonymous

**Re: Smith and Wesson
Escape Challenge**

January 28 2011,
7:26 AM

You maybe over looking the fact that the ASSA lock is a pin tumbler, like a door lock for lack of easier explanation, and can not be opened with a simple paperclip.

Dear Anonymous,

I would like to point out a few things for you. First is anonymous. No one knows who you are. These cuffs and items are not antique out of date cuffs they are items in use today. So to post the information would not be wise at all. Most good escape artist are handcuffed by the police all the time and will not offend the police by making that information public. The police hate it and rightly so. I realize some post film of how to escape from police handcuffs but these people are a curse to our craft.

Second there is the fact that you are not an escape artist and you dont want to be one. Even if you were a student of the art you would have to learn other things before you learned security cuffs. Being anonymous and wanting this information for fun is why you wont get the information that you are looking for.

I am sure this is not the answer that you want but it is the facts about your situation.

Norm

ESCAPED FROM GAOL

[Fix this text](#)

IN LEG IRONS

- -?

Prisoner Breaks Cell Wall

Had Made Three Previous Escapes

BRISBANE, Wednesday. - John Slceth, aged 24 years, escaped from Warwick Gaol this morning despite the fact that he was in leg irons. It was the fourth time thal Slceth, who is described by the police as a dangerous criminal, had succeeded in escaping from gaol. His previous escapes were made at Albury (N.S.W.), and Towns- ville and Rockhampton (Q.).

Sleeth was placed in leg irons when he was left in a cell last night. At 6,30 a.m. to-day it was found that he was missing. He used the handle of a bucket to remove the cement covering a double row of bricks and then scraped out the mortar between the bricks, of which he removed 25. Having broken the leg irons, he scrambled into the adjoining cell, the door of which had been left open, and then climbed the wooden wall, 12 feet in height, which encircles the compound. Sleeth escaped from the police late on Friday night after several shots had been fired at him. He was subsequently arrested and charged with burglary. ,'

Cass inmate used makeshift key to escape, says he felt like 'kid at Christmastime' as he picked lock of leg irons

FARGO – An inmate who escaped custody while being escorted to a transport van at the Cass County Courthouse on Oct. 12 used a makeshift key to undo his handcuffs and leg restraints, according to internal investigative reports and the prosecutor.

By: [Mike Nowatzki](#), INFORUM

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- [Francisco Ayala Jr.](#)



Francisco Ayala Jr., 25, of West Fargo, used this 1.7-inch-long makeshift key made with a pencil and a wire to undo his wrist and ankle restraints when he escaped from custody at the Cass County Courthouse on Oct. 12, according to investigative reports. Photo special to The Forum

FARGO – An inmate who escaped custody while being escorted to a transport van at the Cass County Courthouse on Oct. 12 used a makeshift key to undo his handcuffs and leg restraints, according to internal investigative reports and the prosecutor.

Francisco Ayala Jr., 25, of West Fargo, pleaded guilty to a felony escape charge Monday in Cass County District Court.

Ayala also faced cocaine and methamphetamine possession charges, but they were dismissed because he has been indicted in federal court, prosecutor Tristan Van de Streek said.

Judge John Irby sentenced Ayala to 18 months in prison, which was between the three-year sentence recommended by Van de Streek and the one-year sentence sought by defense attorney Charles Sheeley. Ayala received credit for 98 days in jail.

Van de Streek, an assistant Cass County state's attorney, said Ayala's escape appeared to be premeditated, noting he had a makeshift key "that was apparently effective."

Ayala escaped after a bail review hearing on the morning of Oct. 12. He made a break from the sheriff's deputy escorting him and ran west of the courthouse. He was on the loose for less than an hour before authorities found him hiding in an apartment house and took him into custody without incident.

Sheeley explained Ayala's state of mind at the time, saying his final bail review hearing hadn't gone well and that he was in a stressful situation and felt escape was his only option.

"He realized he made a huge mistake" and surrendered to authorities without a fight when they found him, Sheeley said.

Probe details escape

An internal investigation into how the escape happened was completed, but Sheriff Paul Laney hasn't decided on possible disciplinary action or procedural changes, sheriff's Capt. Rick Majerus said.

According to reports from the internal investigation:

When Ayala was captured at 1114 2nd Ave. S., he wasn't handcuffed or wearing leg irons. In the apartment, an officer noticed a piece of wood with a piece of metal wire wrapped around it on the bed next to the handcuffs, leg irons and an envelope bearing Ayala's name.

Deputy Frank Froysland told the internal investigator that Ayala was persistent that day about appearing in court in person and not by interactive television. Froysland said he searched Ayala prior to handcuffing him.

Deputy Richard Garvey said he double-locked Ayala's leg irons. Ayala asked to return to his cell to retrieve some legal documents, but his request was denied; another deputy got the envelope for him and shook it out, and there was no contraband inside.

Ayala was the first defendant to appear in Courtroom 6 that morning. After Ayala's appearance, Froysland escorted him to the courthouse basement into a secure, locked cell. At Sgt. DuWayne Nitschke's request, Froysland came back down to the holding area and loosened Ayala's right handcuff because it felt a little tight.

Ayala used the restroom in the holding area, and Froysland escorted him back to the holding cell. Ayala later denied tampering with the restraints in the bathroom.

Deputy Pete Wold, who was escorting Ayala to the van when he escaped, told the investigator that Ayala was handcuffed in front and wearing leg irons and there was nothing unusual about his walk. He said he didn't recheck Ayala's restraints before leading him out to the van.

As the two were walking, Wold told Ayala to watch his step so he wouldn't slip on ice. When Wold turned away for a brief second to open the van's second door, Ayala took off.

Wold said he witnessed what looked like Ayala kicking his shoes off, pulling one leg iron off of his one heel and lifting the second iron up his calf.

'Did I really do that?'

In an interview 10 days after his escape and capture, Ayala told the investigator that he fashioned the makeshift key – referred to in the report as a "homemade key" – from two springs and a broken pencil that he found on the floor of the courthouse holding cell. He indicated he was in shock when he was able to unlock the leg iron, describing his thoughts as being "like a kid at Christmastime, thinking did I really do that?" the investigative report states.

Ayala said when he got outside of the courthouse and Wold told him to hop into the van, he bent down and used the makeshift key to unlock the leg iron.

Ayala said he didn't know where the wire came from, but he recommended that jail staff look at the laundry bags because the springs he found looked similar to those found inside the black closure ties on the laundry bags delivered to the jail inmates for their laundry.

Cass County Sheriff's Detective Patti Wasmuth raised doubts about Ayala's story, writing in her report that it seemed to her "the tool would have taken more time to assemble than the amount of time Ayala had spent in court holding." Ayala said he didn't bring the springs or pencil with him to the courthouse, saying again that he found them in the holding cell.

Ayala indicated the main reason he tried to run was so he could feel better about being in jail and give the court a reason to say he was a flight risk, the report states. However, Froysland said Ayala made a statement to him following his capture that he went to the courthouse instead of appearing via ITV because "he wanted to beat the crap out of the guy who squealed on him," the report states



Francisco Ayala Jr., 25, of West Fargo, used this 1.7-inch-long makeshift key made with a pencil and a wire to undo his wrist and ankle restraints when he escaped from custody at the Cass County Courthouse on Oct. 12, according to investigative reports. Photo special to The Forum
Read the article: [Cass inmate used makeshift key to escape, says he felt like 'kid at Christmastime' as he picked lock of leg irons](#)

SUSPECTED THIEF MAKES BLOODY ESCAPE FROM SHACKLES, IS QUICKLY RECAPTURED

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September 18, 2012

A Eugene woman arrested last week as a suspect in the theft of \$380 worth of power tools from a Rogue River hardware store twisted her wrists and ankles in shackles until they bled, but managed to slip free, police said.

Cody Nicole Murrey, 21, ran out the front door of the Rogue River Police Department, but was tackled in the parking lot, Rogue River Police Chief Ken Lewis said in a news release today.

Following her second capture, she was booked in the Jackson County Jail on charges of second-degree theft, resisting arrest, escape and illegal possession of a firearm. She is no longer listed in the jail. Court records show she has a pre-trial hearing scheduled for Oct. 22.

Lewis said Murrey was arrested Thursday when an investigation linked her to a shoplifting incident the day before at Main Building Supply, 100 Broadway St. **(Correction: The hardware store's address and the day this happened has been corrected in this story.)**

Store officials reported \$380 worth of rechargeable power tool batteries had been stolen. Surveillance cameras showed a woman and man leaving the store. Police believed the man lived nearby on First Street.

On Friday, a store employee reported seeing a 2005 Cadillac Escalade with a trailer loaded with suspicious cargo parked in front of a home in the 300 block of First Street. Lewis drove to the house to investigate and found the trailer had been packed with power tools, air compressors and other construction equipment. Four of the power tools matched the stolen battery packs, police said.

Murrey, who matched the description of the suspected shoplifter but had apparently dyed her hair overnight, came out of the house, Lewis said. When he confronted and tried to arrest her, Murrey fought back, breaking free from his grasp. Lewis sprayed her with pepper spray and, suspecting that others had helped load the trailer, retreated across the street to his patrol car to call for assistance, the news release said.

After Lewis took Murrey into custody, she asked him to "hold onto her" while she searched the Escalade's front seat for her cell phone, which she claimed had digital photos on it that would exonerate her from the crime. Lewis put her in the back of his patrol car as backup from Oregon State Police and the Jackson County Sheriff's Office arrived. Officers then found a loaded .38-caliber pistol, knife and cell phone in the Escalade's front seat, along with a second handgun sticking out of a backpack.

Police took Murrey, who initially gave a Cave Junction address, to an interview room at the Rogue River Police Department before taking her to the Jackson County Jail, Lewis said. During the wait, Murrey complained that restraints on her wrists and ankles were too tight, so police loosened them.

Lewis said Murrey twisted her ankles and wrists in the cuffs for 20 minutes until she drew blood and slipped out of the restraints. She then ran out of the police department's front doors, but was tackled in the parking lot, rearrested and taken to jail.

Police have tried to contact the SUV's registered owner, Mathew David Granger, of Grants Pass. Granger, a registered sex offender, is wanted on an outstanding felony warrant, Lewis reported.

As of today, Rogue River police had not received any calls on either the Cadillac Escalade, the trailer, or the construction equipment, which police estimate has a combined value of \$35,000 to \$40,000.

Shackles removed before Saskatoon prisoner escaped

[CBC News](#)

Posted: Apr 10, 2013 7:56 AM CST

Last Updated: Apr 10, 2013 7:27 PM CST

Video Content



Escapee back in custody1:04



[Escaper back in custody](#)1:04

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Saskatchewan's Corrections Ministry is reviewing its procedures after a prisoner allegedly pulled a razor on guards, compelling them to remove his leg shackles to enable an escape.

Steven Eric Best is back in custody today after escaping from Saskatoon's Royal University Hospital Tuesday morning.

Best, 29, was arrested at 10:25 p.m. CST after being seen downtown in a vehicle, Saskatoon police said.

Police said that Best was a passenger in the vehicle, but that no charges would be laid against the driver. Police said that Best did not hijack the vehicle, and that the driver "assisted us." Media officer Alyson Edwards would not characterize the relationship between Best and the driver, or how exactly the driver assisted police.

The arrest, which followed a search involving patrol members, a dog team and a police airplane, happened without incident at Pacific Avenue and 23rd Street East, police said.



Jail inmate Steven Best, 29, was back in custody Tuesday night after escaping from guards at a Saskatoon hospital earlier that day. (Government of Saskatchewan)

Earlier in the day, Best escaped custody at Royal University Hospital where he had been under guard since the weekend with an undisclosed medical condition.

Corrections deputy minister Dale McFee told CBC News that Best had been shackled to a hospital bed.

According to the minister, Christine Tell, Best allegedly held a razor to one of the guard's throats in order to get the other guard to remove the leg shackles.

Police in Saskatoon said Best confined the guards to the room by blocking the door and then made his getaway.

No one was injured.

The incident is now under review to see if proper procedures were followed and whether current procedures are adequate, the ministry said.

Best had been remanded at jail

Court documents show Best had been previously remanded at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre and was facing six charges related to an incident at the Senator Hotel in Saskatoon on Dec 20, 2012.

Those charges include armed robbery, discharge of a weapon and possessing an unregistered handgun — a Walther PPK.

Police said he will see a justice of the peace Wednesday night and be before a judge on Thursday.

At the time of his December arrest, Best was on parole as part of an 11½ year sentence, according to the Crown prosecutor and defence lawyer.

Police have not said yet what new charges Best will be facing in connection with Tuesday's escape.

Teen prisoner escapes during transfer, despite handcuffs, shackles

-  13  83  9  293

By [Mike Ward](#)

American-Statesman Staff

A 16-year-old state offender being transported to a maximum-security youth lockup near Waco escaped Thursday in San Antonio by hopping a train, even though he was handcuffed and shackled at his ankles.

Authorities said the youth, who was serving a sentence for a robbery in the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, was being transported from the Evins Regional Juvenile Center in Edinburg to the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility in Mart when he fled guards about 1 p.m. just off Interstate 35 near Splashtown in northeastern San Antonio.

A search for the teen, who is from San Antonio, continued late in the afternoon, but police said they had no further sightings of him.

Jim Hurley, a spokesman for the youth corrections agency, said initial information from the scene indicated the youth told guards he was sick, and they stopped to let him out of a van so he could throw up by a fence.

Instead, the 5-foot-2, 120-pound teenager “boogied through a hole in the fence. ... A work train was going by slowly, and he jumped on the train,” Hurley said.

The guards were unable to crawl through the hole in the fence to apprehend the youth and immediately called in San Antonio Police. The guards were unable to crawl through the small hole in the fence, Hurley said.

At the time of the escape, Hurley said the youth was shackled with ankle chains and his hands were handcuffed to a chain around his mid-section. Investigators said they were unsure how he could have made such a fast escape considering the chains and handcuffs.

Authorities stopped the train a short distance away, Hurley said, but there was no trace of the teen. A cadre of local police, Texas Highway Patrol troopers and a tracking dog from the adult prison system were searching a wide area in the vicinity, authorities said.

Escape Secrets: Straitjacket Escapes

By his own account, Houdini first thought of introducing the straightjacket into his act while touring an insane asylum in Canada. Peering into a padded cell, he saw a "maniac" struggling against the device, "rolling about and straining each and every muscle in a vain attempt to . . . free himself from his canvas restraint." Houdini began experimenting the next day, and soon the straightjacket, with all its sadistic fascination, had entered into his repertoire.

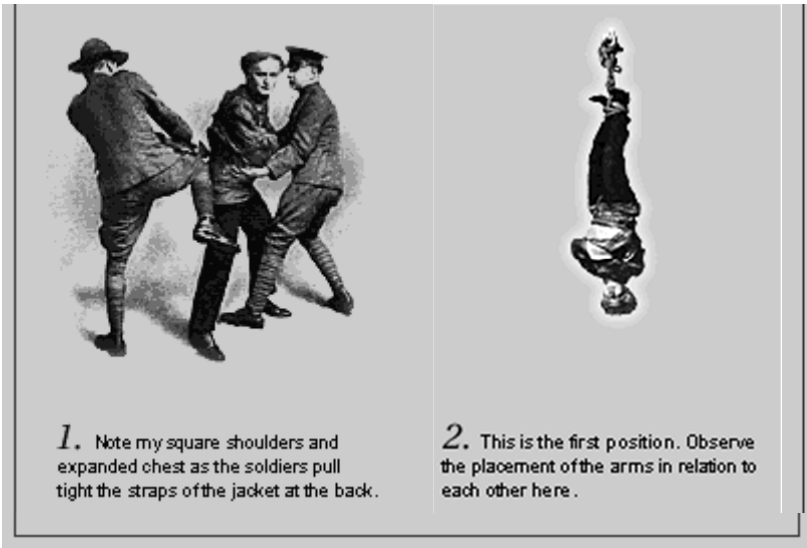


Much like his handcuff and rope escapes, Houdini's basic straightjacket escape required both technical know-how and brute physical strength. But the major difference was that he usually performed it in plain sight, at once increasing the drama and convincing the audience that there was no "trick" involved. In his 1910 book "Handcuff Escapes," Houdini described how he did it:

The first step necessary to free yourself is to place the elbow, which has the continuous hand under the opposite elbow, on some solid foundation and by sheer strength exert sufficient force at this elbow so as to force it gradually up towards the head, and by further persistent straining you can eventually force the head under the lower arm, which results in bringing both of the encased arms in front of the body.

Once having freed your arms to such an extent as to get them in front of your body, you can now undo the buckles of the straps of the cuffs with your teeth, after which you open the buckles at the back with your hands, which are still encased in the canvas sleeves, and then you remove the straitjacket from your body.





Taken from Ladies Home Journal, May 1918 - Written by Harry Houdini

The dry, technical nature of this description belies what the escape actually looked like. As old film clips show, Houdini looks like a madman writhing and jerking about; it looks painful and one gets tired just watching it. Doubtless this was part of the fascination.

Houdini often turned his straightjacket routine into a public spectacle by performing it upside down, suspended from one of the towering new skyscrapers which had begun to dominate city skylines. While requiring more strength to undo the buckles, this actually made it easier to get his arms over his head, the key to the escape.

With more difficult straightjackets, Houdini would perform shielded from view. If using a jacket he supplied, this enabled him to use specially designed devices built into the jacket; if the jacket was supplied by someone else, he was sure to have a concealed or hidden

Escape Secrets: Handcuff Escapes

When vaudeville impresario Martin Beck "discovered" a struggling Harry Houdini in 1899, it was Houdini's ability to escape from handcuffs which caught his attention. Although Houdini was hardly the first or only performer to do handcuff escapes, he would take the act to a new level over the next several years, and it was as the "Handcuff King" that he gained his first measure of fame.



There was no one "secret" to Houdini's ability to escape from handcuffs, but a combination of technical knowledge, physical skill, and trickery. It all started with what one locksmith who knew him called his "remarkable knowledge of locks and locking devices." Houdini collected and studied locks all of his life and claimed that he had "photographic eyes" that helped him remember how each type worked and could be opened.

Most of the time Houdini used a key hidden in or smuggled into the cabinet or jail cell, either on his person or by an assistant. Depending on how he was bound, Houdini would manipulate the keys with his hands -- sometimes using specially designed extension rods -- or with his teeth. But he also knew tricks for opening many of the simpler types of cuff without keys.

In "Handcuff Secrets," a book he published in 1910 to discourage the legion of imitators trying to ride his coattails, Houdini wrote that "you can open the majority of the old-time cuffs with a shoestring.



By simply making a loop in the string, you can lasso the end of the screw in the lock and yank the bolt back, and so open the cuff in as clean a manner as if opened with the original key." And as he demonstrated in his own defense during the slander trial in Germany in 1902, some cuffs could be opened simply by banging them against a hard surface, which might include a lead plate fastened at the knee under his trousers.

Houdini also used tricks that didn't involve opening locks. If presented with a particularly difficult lock, he might insist it be placed higher on his forearm, then simply slip these cuffs over his wrists once the easier cuffs placed there had been removed. And he was not above using trick cuffs, designed to pass inspection but easily opened by means of a fake rivet.

But as he reminded us in "Handcuff Secrets," the unique magic of his escape act lay in its presentation: "You will notice that some of these tricks are very simple -- but remember it is not the trick that is to be considered, but the style and manner in which it is presented."

How to Escape from a Strait Jacket



X

By braniac, eHow Contributor

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-
-
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Strait jackets are designed to control persons--usually the violently insane--so that they can't harm themselves or others. Strait jackets are made of very resilient fabric (usually canvas or duck cloth) that can't be ripped. They have very long arms which are tied or buckled to the back so that arm movement is almost completely restricted. Harry Houdini first accomplished the strait jacket escape by being able to dislocate both of his shoulders. He even performed this trick while hanging upside down in the air from towering heights.

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Instructions

1.
 - o *1*

Prepare for your escape when the jacket is being put on. Expand your chest as much as you can and hold elbows tightly to your sides when the jacket is tied around you. If possible, cross your dominant hand over the other (right over left if you're right handed). The right hand should ideally end up on the left bicep or under the left elbow. The more tightly the arms are folded at the chest, the more difficult escape will be. Fabric can be also gathered in both hands under the armholes where it won't be noticed to buy a little more wiggle room.

○ 2

Escape by breathing all of the extra air required to expand your chest and relaxing all the muscles that were tightened and held rigidly. Scrunch the shoulders forward and shrug shoulders as deeply as possible into the sleeves, loosening the back of the jacket.

○ 3

Use this slack to work the arm's buckle up to the point where they can be lifted over the head or down to where arms can be stepped over. Standing with the elbow up against a wall or another stationary object will help you move the buckle as will getting down on one knee and using the other as a brace.

○ 4

Use the hands, which now have space to move a bit, to work at the arm ties (or straps). Sometimes if there is ample room, the ties or buckles can be undone with the teeth. Once the hands have been freed, they will be in a position to undo any further straps.

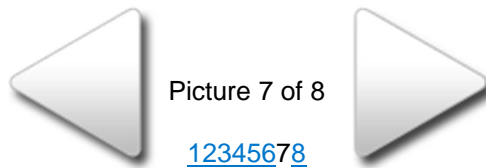
○ 5

Practice until you get it down, but remember that strait jackets are not designed to be worn for extended periods of time. They become excruciatingly painful as blood pools and swells up the elbows inside the tight sleeves. Shoulder, back and neck muscle cramp painfully and can't be moved to ease the pain.

Tips & Warnings

- Make sure there is someone with you until you are completely out of the strait jacket.
-

Read more: [How to Escape from a Strait Jacket | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_2058987_escape-strait-jacket.html#ixzz2RqWeCmndt)
http://www.ehow.com/how_2058987_escape-strait-jacket.html#ixzz2RqWeCmndt



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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-0lnCaGN4>

<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/banged-up-abroad-scott-and-lucys-story/>