

# OpTac International News Bulletin

## SWAT Tactics

**OpTac International** has researched SWAT entry tactics in use around the world and concluded that they vary widely without any specific set of tactics to be called the "best." Many teams use divergent sets of tactics that have resulted in successful outcomes. The key is to understand that all tactics work until they are challenged by a suspect, so the "best" set of tactics for the nature of your operations and jurisdiction must be selected and then rigorously tested in training. Adjustments should be made when weaknesses are discovered.

This edition of our **News Bulletin** presents sound tactical guidelines that can maximize both operational success and officer safety. While a news bulletin format does not allow for a detailed presentation of an all-inclusive doctrine, our hope is to provide several recommendations that can improve your team's effectiveness.

Below are 10 guidelines that should always be followed when performing dynamic tactical entries:

- 1) Always wear your highest level of ballistic protection
- 2) Keep your finger off of the trigger and outside the trigger guard unless preparing to fire your weapon
- 3) Never enter a room alone
- 4) Push doors completely open
- 5) Go through the doorway when entering a room; do not stop; do not stop to engage a threat
- 6) Hold your primary weapon system parallel to the ground with the front sight at or just below eye level; however, never point your weapon at any team member in front of you
- 7) Whenever possible, clear the near corner first, then stay approximately two feet away from the walls while moving through a room; the location of furniture and people will determine your precise distance
- 8) Communicate with teammates to clarify assignments, and with suspects when instructions need to be followed
- 9) All occupants should be handcuffed for both their and officer safety (exceptions can be made for small children, the elderly, and injured/ill individuals---good judgement should be used to determine what is most appropriate in these circumstances)
- 10) Always have a two-person secondary search team look for hidden suspects even after individual officers have given the "all clear" from their respective areas

The aforementioned guidelines should be followed regardless of the specific type of tactics used by your team. Further information on operations planning and execution, dynamic and stealth entry tactics, advantages/disadvantages of ballistic shields, and optimal positioning on approach and at the breach point are covered in our SWAT Tactics Program.