



## Traveling as a gray man



Be sure to check out our entire series on being a gray man:

1. [Part 1: What is a gray man?](#)
2. [Part 2: Practicing situational awareness](#)
3. [Part 3: Gray man clothing and gear](#)
4. **Part 4: Travel as a gray man** (current article)



We'll be introducing the different aspects of a gray man, how to approach day-to-day situations as a gray man, exploring a strong Mental EDC, and making recommendations on gear and tools.

In Part 1 we talked about how being a gray man is carrying yourself in a state of vagueness, or in a condition that draws little to no attention. We then defined in Part 2 what situational awareness is and why it's a key component of being gray and in Part 3, we looked at how a gray man approaches the clothing he wears and the gear he carries. Now, let's take a look at how a gray man travels and moves through everyday life.

## What is travel?

It's important to see the act of traveling as more than your once-a-year family vacation. "Travel" really is any movement you make from home, school, work, etc. When you leave these locations and go into the world, you're entering a public space. Examples include:

- Driving to work
- Eating out at a restaurant
- Going to the grocery store
- Flying domestically for a work trip
- A 2-week international trip

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If a gray man is someone who is intentional about the tools they carry and has the skills to



to be prepared (in both skills and tools) as they move from where they are to where they need to go.

## Why should you care about gray man travel?

But, why would someone need to be “gray” in terms of their travel and movement? There could be any number of reasons, outside of an illogical state of paranoia. Maybe you:

1. Have a specific person who is causing you concern, like a dangerous stalker
2. Accidentally cut someone off in traffic and they are road-raging
3. Are in a foreign country and you have drawn the attention (warranted or not) of authorities
4. Have been targeted by some folks who want to rob you
5. Live in a community that has been a victim of a natural disaster, and now you’re a target because of the resources you have

***“Travel really is any movement you make ... It’s moving from where you are to where you need to go.”***

These are specific examples that may seem far-fetched for you. Maybe you live in a safe neighborhood, in a safe town, and you try to be prepared for what can come your way. But, the reality is, no matter how “safe” you feel, bad things happen all the time. And, if they aren’t happening to you, they can happen much more easily to your teenage daughter at the mall, your school-age son playing on a playground, your elderly father as he leaves the hardware store, or your young adult child who just moved into their first apartment.

Here are just a few real-world examples of bad things happening while folks are on the move:

### **Kidnapping from a grocery store**

In this example, a 20-year-old victim was almost kidnapped when she was followed from Walmart to her home. She even noticed the suspect's vehicle making all the same turns she was making. She admitted to not paying attention and ignoring the clues clearly in front of her.

### **Spotted at the airport and robbed**

Here, a couple traveling home from a trip are identified and targeted by some bad guys at the airport. They were identified as worthwhile targets by a spotter due to their expensive clothing, accessories, and luggage. Once identified, the targets are followed home and robbed. **Read the story >**

### **Followed home and robbed**

In this final story, [the victim was leaving a casino after cashing out his winnings](#). As he was walking to his car in the underground garage, he was followed by someone who called for him to stop. He ignored the commands and saw the individual walk by his car. The victim stated he saw one car follow him from the casino to his home. He eventually got out of his car to go inside and he ended up with a knife to his neck as he was being robbed. **[Read the story >](#)**

*What do all of these have in common?* They all occurred in transitional areas during travel and they all leave ample room for improvement in terms of situational awareness and relevant response. **If the victim had been paying attention to the warning signs, each situation could have likely been avoided.**



## How to think differently in terms of travel

There could be any number of legitimate reasons occurring every day, all around the world, that would warrant someone needing to subdue their profile in terms of travel. However slim the chances may be, the knowledge you carry in your Mental EDC can prove to be invaluable.

The great news is most folks who are following or surveilling someone aren't professionally trained to do so, and it's pretty easy to turn the table on them. Score one for the good guys.

So, let's learn how you can be more aware of your travel, your movement from one place to the next, and how to take the gray man mentality as you move through everyday life.

## Vary your normal patterns

Your normal patterns are those occurring on a regular basis with little to no thought. The route you take when you are driving to work, school, or practice.



get somewhere. Instead, you should establish a new pattern that makes sense but is designed to throw someone off.

Changing your routine also gives you the ability to break free from the mundane, auto-pilot mode we sometimes find ourselves in. You know...the one where you start your commute home after work, zone out while driving, and then realize you're sitting in the driveway at your house.

## Practice situation awareness

As discussed in our [Situational Awareness article](#), situational awareness is the ability to pay attention to your environment. As we mentioned above, it's easy to get in auto-pilot mode.

Instead of zoning out, practice situational awareness while you are on the move. Don't do it just for the sake of doing it, but be present and pay attention to your "gut feeling." Three easy ways you can start practicing situational awareness is:

1. **Acknowledge you aren't always present**, like when you are getting kids in and out of car seats or loading your purchase in the back of your car. Your head is literally in the car and your mind is on getting the task done. You're likely not paying attention to what is going on around you
2. **Make the decision to start paying attention**, like getting off your phone when you're in-transit, looking around at what is happening around you, and being cognizant
3. **Always seek to be learning**, and increase your Mental EDC

You can read more in our article, [Situational awareness for a gray man](#).

Don't find yourself in a situation where you are outpacing everyone on the sidewalk to the point where you give the impression you are headed to an emergency. On the flip side, don't move so slowly that everyone has to navigate his or her way around you. Both can draw unnecessary attention. Look for the natural flow and rhythm of the environment you are in and do your best to fit in.

## **Pay attention to who is around you, and don't be afraid to act**

Using situational awareness, you want to pay attention to who is around you so you can better identify if someone is following you. How do you identify someone following you? A common acronym used in surveillance detection is TEDD. TEDD can be described as a loose set of guidelines to identify surveillance. It stands for:

- **T**ime
- **E**nvironment
- **D**istance
- **D**emeanor

Are you seeing someone, or the same vehicle, time and time again in a variety of environments, over distance, and are they displaying odd or abnormal demeanor? TEDD is just a guideline, as there is no one-size-fits-all technique; however, this is a good basis for someone with little to no experience in surveillance detection.

you, but what happens when they turn onto the same secondary street? Are they following you at an uncomfortably close distance? Mirroring every movement made by you? Using their turn signal when you do? Changing lanes when you do? Driving at irrational speeds (typically abnormally slow or super-fast, to beat a red light)? All of a sudden a reasonable person can start to get concerned enough to pay attention and not drive immediately home.

If you're on foot, identifying you are being followed or surveilled can be a bit harder.

### **What do you do?**

- Do not go home or to your final destination
- Turn a street early or take a slightly longer route and continue to use the TEDD guidelines to see what changes
- Force the person following you to take some sort of action that would normally make no sense, like multiple, non-sensical turns in a row. You may not want to make it clear that you are conducting these maneuvers in a way that would identify your level of awareness. However, making your awareness level known can be a deterrent to some wanna-be bad guys who are looking for a soft target
- If you're on foot, utilize observation points, such as glass or mirrored entryways to observe those who may be following you
- Vary your speed
- If you're on foot, turn around and make eye contact. Nothing out of the ordinary, but just enough for someone to know they have been recognized, seen, or looked at. A lot of times this creates enough of an uncomfortable situation someone will change their plans

If you identify suspicious behavior, get to safety. In the examples above, these people didn't pay attention and when they saw suspicious behavior, they blew it off. **Don't be afraid to act.**

Getting to safety can look like many different things. It may be going to a police station or a well-lit crowded area. Do not, for any reason, go to any sensitive areas like your home, hotel, or remote and sparsely populated areas that would provide an opportunity for the bad guy.

**Do not make it easy for someone to come back at a later time to finish what they started.** If possible, call the police and pass on any relevant information you have gathered. Also, don't be afraid to stop and ask for help from security or folks in public places.

Bringing it back to the gray man philosophy, don't bring attention to yourself. Keep in mind, no article, book or other publication can make you competent in identifying or mitigating surveillance, etc. This is just a primer on what to look for or potential strategies to help identify surveillance.

Never replace legitimate experience with written content. They go hand-in-hand. However, to the extent you can, at least be aware of what to look for and understand how to create opportunities to observe it.

Stay alert and stay safe!



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