

TACTICALLY SPEAKING

STORY AND PHOTO BY JOSHUA SWANAGON

Too much of a good thing is still too much. In recent years, there has been a heavy marketing push towards “tactical” gear with everything from socks to toothbrushes. It has gone a long way towards muddying the waters of solid gear.

When it comes to tactical gear it is important to base your decision on features that would give you the advantage for your given situation. For something to truly be tactical, it should be purpose built and only include features that serve specific functions essential to the users needs in a given scenario.

As with gear, there are true tactical knives. But to know the difference we must first look at the root of the word “tactical.” For the sake of this article we will be using the third definition of the word “tactics” from Dictionary.com, which states “(used with a singular verb) any mode of procedure for gaining advantage or success.”

There are times when I’ve been discussing fighting or tactical knives and the person I am speaking with goes on at great length about how great their big fighting knife is and how superior it would be in combat. I like to offer them

The Spyderco Paramilitary 3 is a solid, small pocketknife that can be carried almost anywhere. That is a real tactical advantage.

a challenge: my pocketknife against their fighting knife. The response is always the same, “I don’t have it with me; it’s illegal to carry.” I always answer, “Then mine won didn’t it? It’s right here with me.”

For a soldier the big fighting knife offers a great tactical advantage, because they can carry it with them and it will beat a small pocketknife. But to someone living in an urban environment, a good smaller fixed blade or folder that is easy to access and legal to carry would be a better option.

Tactical is not just a sales pitch; it is a game-changer. If you want a tactical knife, pick the knife that fits your life and gives you an advantage, not the one that just has “tactical” in the name and looks cool.

Remember, if you find yourself in a fair fight, your tactics suck.

Stay sharp and keep it real. **KI**

